

EIFF – Just Charlie (2017) 99 mins ***



Charlie (Harry Gilby) is a talented footballer, being scouted for some major teams fulfilling his father's long held dreams.

But he is inwardly tormented by the feeling that he looks all wrong for how he feels inside. He begins wearing his sister's clothes secretly and eventually is discovered by his father (Scot Williams), fully made up and dressed like the girl he believes he is. His dad finds it increasingly difficult to come to terms with his son's trans-gender journey the further it progresses. His mother (Patricia Potter) and sister (Elinor Machen-Fortune) support Charlie in her new women's football team and her change of school uniform but Charlie's best friend Tommy (Travis Blake Hall) feels betrayed and horrified.

Soon the family is in crisis.

Harry Gilby portrays the young boy transitioning into a girl with sensitivity and is quietly assured in his debut role.

Director Rebekah Fortune uses Tamworth locations such as the rivers and castle (big shout out to my Tamworth cousins) to make the story realistic and believable. There is a nice little twist at the end which gives an optimistic air to what must be a traumatic and difficult journey for many young trans-gender people and their families.

Just Charlie is Rebekah Fortune's first feature film.

