

EIFF – The Midwife (Sage Femme) (2017) 117 mins ***



In French with English subtitles, we meet Claire (Catherine Frot) calmly and competently delivering babies in a small Parisian maternity unit. She is vehemently against the imminent closure of the unit, which is being replaced by a large 'baby factory'. She leads an ordinary existence, cycling to work and her allotment. It is there she meets Paul (Olivier Gourmet) and they are attracted to one another.

Suddenly her life is turned upside down by the reappearance of her father's former mistress Beatrice (Catherine Deneuve).

Her coolness to the older woman is eventually explained by the fact that, shortly after Beatrice's betrayal of him, her father took his own life. Beatrice is devastated by this revelation but then she tells Claire that she has a brain tumour and Claire ultimately finds she cannot reject the woman she once loved more than her birth mother.

Though rather too long, Martin Provost directed and wrote the screenplay of this film which explores birth and rebirth and the responsibilities we have in looking after those we love.

Les deux Catherine make the film eminently watchable and support us to ponder on life's joys, sadnesses and surprises.

See it:

Friday 30th June 1800 Odeon 2

Saturday 1st July 1515 Cineworld

