

## The Kid with a Bike Le gamin au vélo

Belgium 2011

**Directed by**Jean-Pierre Dardenne  
Luc Dardenne**Written by**Jean-Pierre Dardenne  
Luc Dardenne**Director of Photography**

Alain Marcoen

**Cast***Cyril*  
Thomas Doret  
*Samantha*  
Cécile de France  
*Guy Catoul*  
Jérémie Renier  
*Wes*  
Egon Di Mateo  
*Bookseller*  
Fabrizio Rongione

87 min Subtitles

*Our next screening...***Tyrannosaur (UK)**

Tue 30 October 2012

Dir: Paddy Considine

A character driven social  
drama. Award winner at  
Sundance.

It's several years since we last showed a Dardenne Brothers film (*L'enfant*), and we're delighted to be showing their latest – the winner of the Grand Jury Prize at Cannes 2011.

"Why can't you come?" asks young Mourad when his new, equally young neighbour Cyril rejects an invitation to the cinema. "It's in 3D. It'll be fun!" Cyril's refusal to go along represents a wittily oblique encapsulation of the filmmaking aesthetic that drives the Dardenne brothers. For their films, too, eschew the eye-popping sensationalism of Hollywood blockbusters, preferring the sort of rigorous naturalism and demi-monde environs more usually associated with the oeuvre of Robert Bresson (*Pickpocket*, *Mouchette*, *L'Argent*). With the Dardenne's regular DP Alain Marcoen following Cyril's rites of passage in unobtrusive tracking shots, the film never soft-pedals the treacherous byways and alternative routes that Cyril only narrowly avoids on his road to security and happiness. Here institutionalisation, criminality, even death itself, are no more than a stone's throw away and, in a suitably cyclical depiction of morality, what goes around comes around. *The Kid With A Bike* cuts to the humanist heart of a boy's troubled 'rite de passage', without ever resorting to cheap sensationalism.

Another empathetic film by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, who have strong sympathy for alienated children and young people, and who avoid melodrama and sensation in telling their stories so movingly. The film is lean and efficient, intent on Cyril. It doesn't "explain" him, because he is all there to be seen: his need, his abandonment, his reckless determination, his unprotected youth. Young Thomas Doret fills the role with natural sincerity and focus, and not a second that seems contrived. The cast is small, but the Dardenne's use some regulars: Jeremie Renier, star of their *L'enfant* (2005), where he played a very young father who tried to raise money by selling his new baby. The man in the bar is Olivier Gourmet, who starred in the Dardenne's masterpiece *Le Fils* (2002), as a man who meets the boy responsible for his own son's death. 'The Child' and 'The Son'. Over and over, their subjects are parents, children, alienation, rebellion. But the Dardenne's love these characters and do not blame them. They attend to their pain. They find goodness and share happiness. The most mysterious character in *The Kid With a Bike* is not the kid, who after all, has a story it's fairly easy to understand. It is the hairdresser, played by Cecille De France with her sad beauty. This actress carries lifetimes in her eyes.

Roger Ebert, *Chicago Sun-Times*Anton Bitel, *Film4*Voting for *A Royal Affair*: A-57 B-13 C-2 D-0 E-0 Attendance: 81 Rating: 94.1%