



FILM: **MARGUERITE**

FDG RATING: 4.1 ☺☺☺☺○

Film Discussion Group (FDG) Scale is 1-5 (5 is best)

Xavier Giannoli: *Director and Writer*
Catherine Frot: *Actress: Marguerite*

DATE: May 22, 2016

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **MARGUERITE**

Hurrah for those of us who can't carry a tune. (I'm one of them.) We loudly applauded the film Marguerite even though we were subjected thankfully only for short interludes to her painfully piercing screeching voice as she devotedly sang her beloved operas. The story was told with sensitive humor so we really cared about her and even slightly sympathized with her husband who repeatedly had car troubles timed to avoid hearing his wife sing to audiences as she unknowingly made a fool of herself. Marguerite was a genuine, kind, humble, person with a warm personality.

Set in the golden era of the 1920s, the film was populated with colorful, engaging characters and extravagant operatic sets and costumes. The acting was excellent. As the star, Catherine Frot, explained, it's hard to sing bad good. And she did sing very badly perfectly, often sounding like the screeching of peacock which we see strutting on her estate in the French countryside. We can understand why she was awarded the Cesar (European version of the Oscars) for Best Actress. The film also received nominations for best costume design, best sound, and best production design.

But what are the film's thematic messages?

- pursue your dream no matter what...
- it's Ok to have aspirations higher than your abilities...
- it's amazing how many people delude themselves into believing they are a fabulous attraction or talent when, in reality, they are actually the opposite...
- should we burst that delusional self worth bubble at the risk of destroying a person's self esteem?...
- money often buys success (even if unworthy)...
- beware of those who follow success like parasites scheming to get what they can... (such as the butler who seemed to protectively adore Marguerite, as he photographed all her performances and staged in-house photography sessions using the servants as costumed extras. At the end we learn he was cunningly creating a memoir of her life so he could profit by it at her death.)

Messages aside, some of the funniest scenes were her voice lessons. And the most touching scene was at the end when she gave her final performance and momentarily sang beautifully as her husband lovingly looked at her on stage.

For some of us the film got a little slow but for the most part was extremely entertaining, original and sprinkled with surprises. The film's partnership production resulted in a perfect blend of French film ingenuity and Czech film edgy characters.

As did the audience at her opera performances, we loudly applauded the film, Marguerite, with a cumulative score of 4.1 (including one fan's zealous 5 declaring it a perfect film). 5 is the highest score on our scale of 1 to 5.



See you at the movies!

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[Film Discussion Group](#) (FDG) organizer