

Miroirs no.3

Review by Sofia Racco

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An enigmatic slice of life about the puzzling and twisted paths to healing. *Miroirs no.3*, the latest work by Christian Petzold, is an unconventional and delicate glance (due to its limited timing of 86 minutes) to the matters of loss, grief, and all the other kinds of sadness and loneliness. A car crash is the junction point where Laura, a young woman stricken by an undefined and profound sadness, and Betty, a woman living in the German countryside and dealing with grief.

During *Miroirs no.3*, through the development of Laura and Betty's relationship, we get to know more about Betty's past: while the reason for her melancholy slowly emerges, Laura remains a mystery. At first she unknowingly becomes a replacement for Betty's dead daughter: she wears her clothes, she plays her piano, she takes care of her garden.

But as the story unravels, the lines get more and more blurred: Paula Beer's performance conveys excellently the ambiguity of her character, her undefined nature between a ghost and a reflection. As Laura, she's a haunting and mysterious presence that lives on the line between life and death: the sadness that permeates her face has the consistency of something timeless and inscrutable that precedes every event, including the death of her boyfriend Jakob in the initial car crash.

In this encompassing heartache, the lives of Laura, Betty, her husband and her son intertwine, break, and then observe each other from afar, hoping to once again grasp that common, heartbreaking, and familiar feeling that unites them all.

In this poignant space of unbridgeable distance, Petzold's gaze embroiders the evanescent fabric of *Miroirs no. 3*, a minor work that condenses his previous filmography into its reduced space.