

France / UK / Czech Republic
(Légende, TF1 Film Productions,
Songbird Pictures, Okko Productions
Canal+, Sofica Valor 7, TPS Star) 140m
Color

Language: French / English

Director: Olivier Dahan

Producer: Alain Goldman

Screenplay: Olivier Dahan, Isabelle
Sobelman

Photography: Tetsuo Nagata

Music: Édith Piaf, Christopher
Gunning

Cast: Marion Cotillard, Sylvie Testud,
Pascal Greggory, Emmanuelle
Seigner, Jean-Paul Rouve, Gérard
Depardieu.

Oscar nominations: Marion Cotillard
(best actress), Marit Allen (best
costume design), Jan Archibald,
Didier Lavergne (best make up &
hair).

LA VIE EN ROSE (2007)

La Vie En Rose follows the travails and tragic life of diminutive French songstress Edith Piaf. The daughter of a street singer and an acrobat, Edith was unceremoniously dumped by her mother, then again by her father to her grandmother, the matron of a whorehouse. One of the prostitutes there, 'Titine' (Emmanuelle Seigner), 'mothers' Edith through bizarre and awful childhood experiences, including a disease which temporarily blinds her. Later, her father snatches Edith back and drags her to work with him in the circus. He gets fired and takes his contortionist act to the streets. When the audience demands she be in the show, Edith sings 'La Marseilles' and the star is born.

Even with her fame and fortune one fresh tragedy befalls Piaf after another. Her two-year-old daughter Marcelle dies; her first manager is murdered and she's to blame. In the best sequence of the film, the love of her life dies in a plane crash after she begs him to visit her.

Olivier Dahan and his collaborator Isabelle Sobelman eschew the typical structure of a biopic and take on the daunting darkness of Piaf's life. By ricocheting back and forth from childhood to adulthood they try to make sense of her substance abuse, her brilliance and her severe melancholy. While the feverish kaleidoscope can be confusing, her physicality, her voice and her evolution are all flawlessly portrayed. 'Piaf', which translates to 'the little sparrow', had a brief life and a booming voice. Dahan's biopic gives us an extraordinary view. **ST**



Steven Jay Schneider, one of the true connoisseurs of movie horror, has written, talked, taught and published extensively on all aspects of film, from aesthetics and psychoanalysis to the joys of the slasher flick. Here he has brought together over 50 of the finest writers, reviewers, critics, professors, aficionados and filmmakers from across the globe.

From *Le Monde's* Jean-Michel Frodon in Paris to *Undercurrent's* Chris Fujiwara in Tokyo, the team comprises the best that film writing has to offer and includes contributors to *Empire*, *Sight and Sound*, *Time Out*, *Rolling Stone*, *New York Times*, *Total Film*, *International Film Guide*, *LA Weekly*, *CineAction*, *Film Quarterly*, *NME*, *Washington Post*, *Filmmaker*, *Moviemaker* and many more.

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