

Film Review: Michael Haneke's 'Amour' Turns Inevitability of Death Into Art

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on January 11, 2013 - 1:27pm

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Rating: **4.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – One of the most shocking developments at yesterday's Oscar nominations was the widespread inclusion of one of international cinema's most controversial directors, Michael Haneke ("Caché," "The White Ribbon"). His newest film, "Amour," opening in Chicago theaters today, was nominated for Best Director, Best Original Screenplay, Best Actress, Best Foreign Language Film, and Best Picture of the Year.

It is a devastating and brutal portrayal of the final days of a multi-decade love affair, the end of the road we will all eventually reach and how we hope we will have a companion next to us when we do. Although even that brief description makes it sound more sentimental than it is. This is not sentiment. This is not melodrama. It is nearly clinical in its realism and, by being so, becomes true art. Haneke doesn't offer easy solutions or pat emotions. He merely offers us a chance to eavesdrop and holds a mirror up to our own fears of old age, hopes for love, and challenges through life.



[Read Brian Tallerico's full review of "Amour" in our reviews section.](#) [11]

Anne (Emmanuelle Riva) and Georges (Jean-Louis Trintignant) have what appears to be a happy, satisfactory life. They were both heavily involved with music and the film opens with the pair attending a concert performed by Anne's former pupil. Shortly after that happy moment, Anne literally freezes at breakfast one morning. She stares off into space and doesn't respond to Georges. He begins to get dressed to take her to the hospital when she suddenly snaps back to reality. It is arguably the most horrific scene of the year and it's in something that's far from a horror film because it conveys to the audience that things are not going well for Anne. We know from this moment, especially those of us who know the general trajectory of Haneke's work, that the opening scenes of a deceased woman in her bed and Anne's frozen moment will bookend a physical tragedy. And we know we are about to watch the final chapters of a true love story.



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico's full "Amour" review.](#) [11]

"Amour" stars Jean-Louis Trintignant, Emmanuelle Riva, and Isabelle Huppert. It was written and directed by Michael Haneke. It was released in Chicago on January 11, 2013.



Amour

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Classics

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