

Film Review: ‘Transit’ is an Absorbing Thriller with a Perplexing Conclusion

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on March 17, 2019 - 10:57am

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CHICAGO – What if a new fascism were to sweep the land, and affects Paris, as it did in World War 2? “Transit” postulates on that very theory and creates a paranoid atmosphere that is stunningly real, but brings that emotion to a conclusion that I believe is redundant, and pretends to be deeper than it is.



Rating: **3.5/5.0**

The film is based on a 1942 novel by Anna Segher, which was set in World War 2, and is updated to our modern world by writer/director Christian Petzold, which adds a chilling layer to the story. Franz Rogowski, who I would assume is Germany’s Joaquin Phoenix (they look remarkably alike), carries the film on his back like a hired mule, sweating the details of everything that happens. The deception and reality is mixed, and the human chattel is a reminder of a harsher (and more real) version of Casablanca, as the French port town of Marseille becomes where refugees wait, and wait and wait.

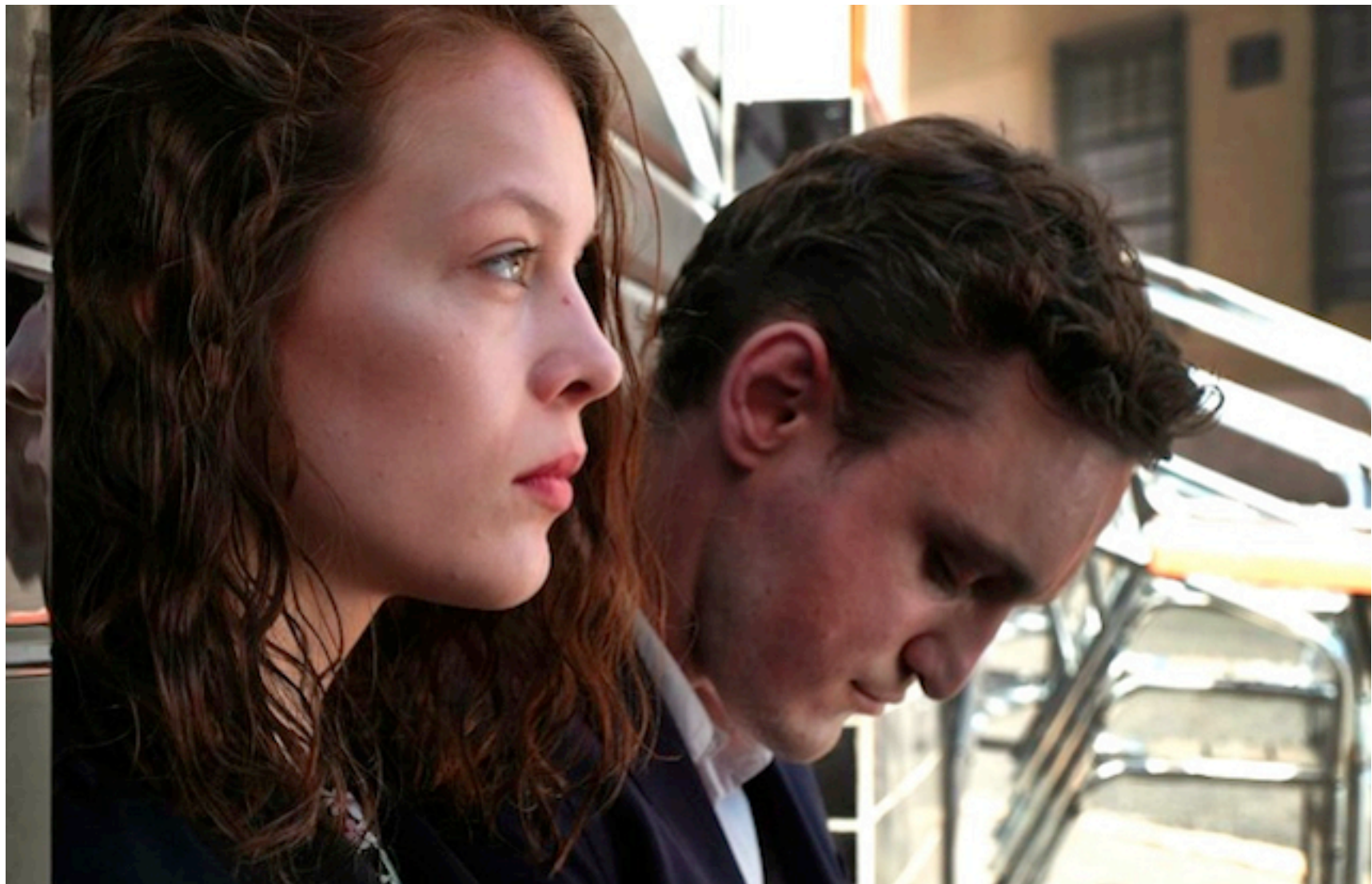
Georg (Franz Rogowski) is a cynic waiting for Paris to fall around his ears (a new fascism has risen in Germany, and they are about to be an occupying power). A friend gives him a chance to make transit money by delivering some letters to a radical writer at a hotel. When Georg makes good on the errand, he finds that the writer is dead.

He wants to find a way to Marseille, the port town to freedom, and volunteers to transport another friend while under heavy surveillance. The friend dies in transport, and Georg finds his wife (Maryam Zaree) and son Driss (Lilien Batman) to tell them the news. This begins a connection to them, plus Georg’s willingness to take on the identity of the dead writer and to get passage to Mexico. The wrench in the plans is the writer’s wife Marie (Paula Beer), who is fervently searching for her husband.

“Transit” opened in Chicago on March 15th. See local listings for theaters and show times (locally at Music Box Theatre, 3733 North Southport). Featuring Franz Rogowski, Paula Beer, Godehard Giese, Lilien Batman and Maryam Zaree. Screenplay adapted and directed by Christian Petzold. Rated “R”



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Marie (Paula Beer) and George (Franz Rogowski) in ‘Transit’
Photo credit: Music Box Films

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