

Peterborough Arts Cinema

Films that make you think

Thursday 12th Feb
7:30 pm

The Kitchen Brigade

Fra, 12A, 97 mins, 2022

Director; Louis-Julien Petit

Stars; Audrey Lamy, Francois Cluzet, Chantel Neuwirth

The Kitchen Brigade (La Brigade) is a French feel-good film about Cathy-Marie, a talented but frustrated sous-chef who quits her high-pressure restaurant job and ends up running the kitchen at a youth hostel for unaccompanied migrant minors, transforming their lives and her own by teaching them to cook real food, overcoming cultural clashes and limited resources to find purpose and community. It's a story of mentorship, empathy, and finding dignity through food, blending social commentary on migrant struggles with a charming culinary narrative.

The film "La Brigade" is inspired by a true story, that of Catherine Grosjean. The chef officiates at the hotel school in Treignac (Corrèze). There, she heads a brigade composed of unaccompanied foreign minors. Their common goal: to obtain a CAP hotelier, option kitchen or service in the room.

The director of the film, Louis-Julien Petit, met Catherine Grosjean in her kitchen. He had previously watched the documentary "[Les couisniers de Treignac](#)", released in 2017 and directed by Sophie Bensadoun, also a co-writer on the film "La Brigade". *"Sophie tells me that there is 100% success in CAP cuisine, and 100% of students who manage to have a job and therefore integrate into French society,"* explains the director.

At the age of 18, young people became expellable. Graduation is therefore essential to be able to stay in France. The hotel school in Treignac belongs to the lap of the Claude Pompidou Foundation. The Maison d'enfants sauto, Les Monédières, welcomes 72 young people aged between 14 and 18 years. *"Being proud to play in a film that tells our story"* is also the testimony of one of the young actors of the film, now a chef party in a restaurant.

Audrey Lamy did not meet the young actors before the beginning of the shooting, to keep the *"freshness of the meeting"*. On the other hand, she spent five months in the Apicius brigade of Chief Mathieu Pacaud. *"I did not know this environment, very masculine, authoritarian and military. I also learned real technicality. I have gathered a lot of small ingredients on several chefs, their passion and their desire to transmit."*

Audrey Lamy did not try to copy the personality of Catherine Grosjean.

At the premiere, Catherine Grosjean, who traded a long hug with Audrey Lamy at the exit, is very satisfied with the final result.

Gazing at some of her former students in the room she said, *"The goal of the game is that they gain confidence, that they have their CAP and then they can be in the professional world. They must not be in the bitterness, tell themselves that they do not succeed or that no one helps them,"*

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