



LOUISE-MICHEL

Autumn
Season
2011

Peter Bradshaw, in the Guardian, says '*Gustave de Kervern and Benoît Delépine have created a black comedy with the courage of its bad-taste convictions, partly sending up big-hearted Anglo-Saxon films such as The Full Monty and Calendar Girls.*' David Jenkins, Time Out remarked '*this tale of two genderless freaks fighting the good fight for the little man also offers a rousing reminder of the power (and eccentricities) of the pissed-off proletariat*'.



This is a comedy in the same vein as 'Micmacs'. Dark and anarchic, it is the story of the closure of a small French toy factory and the resulting attempt at revenge by the workers, lead by Louise. She is given the go ahead to hire a hit man to kill the boss, and she finds Michel. Unfortunately, he turns out to be totally incompetent, as do the other would-be assassins he sub contracts the job to. To add to the deliberate confusion, Louise is a male-to-female trans-sexual, while Michel is female-to-male.

The title is based on a French anarchist Louise Michel who was active in the Paris Commune, deported, and returned to be active with Kropotkin and in the Dreyfuss Affair. She spent much time

in prison, but died a legend of the French Labour Movement.



The co-directors of Louise-Michel – Benoît Delépine and Gustave de Kervern – also wrote the screenplay and even have small parts in the film itself. They had a similar partnership in '*Aaltra*' - a film we showed at the 2005 Festival, in which they played the starring roles - and '*Avida*', in which the kidnapping of a plump billionaire's dog by a deaf-mute and 2 ketamine addicts goes wrong. They also have directed and written this year's '*Mammouth*', starring Gerard Depardieu, which we would have shown but it is already scheduled for the Alhambra (26th September). Their background, then, is clear; they love jet black, surreal comedy. Expect to come out of this film with a strong opinion, one way or the

other.

Louise is played by Yolande Moreau, who has become a favourite of these directors. She is the only Belgian actress to have won 3 Cesar Awards and has been acting since 1984 (when she appeared in a short by Agnes Varda), through more recent films such as '*Amelie*', '*Gainsbourg*', '*Micmacs*', and '*Mammouth*'.

Michel, played by Bouli Lanners, is himself a writer/director and has appeared in 55 films, including all four de Kavern/Delepine films.