

cinéSARNIA Winter 2009 presents:
I've Loved You So Long



Director: Philippe Claudel
Cast: Kristin Scott Thomas, Frédéric Pierrot, Claire Johnston
Year: 2008
Runtime: 117 minutes
Country: France
Language: French with English subtitles
Distributor: Mongrel Media
Ratings: ON NR / BC NR / AB NR / SK NR / MB NR / QC NR / Maritmes NR

I've Loved You So Long
Il y a longtemps que je t'aime

A Special Presentation at the 2008 Toronto International Film Festival®, *I've Loved You So Long* is the touching and emotional debut of director Philippe Claudel, who also wrote the screenplay. The film tells the profoundly moving story of two sisters rediscovering their relationship after years of separation. Reaching beyond the traditional family drama, Claudel's film, which won the Prize of the Ecumenical Jury at the 2008 Berlin International Film Festival, crafts a sophisticated examination of forgiveness.

Immediately following her release from prison after serving a fifteen-year sentence for committing an inexplicable crime, Juliette (Kristin Scott Thomas, *Gosford Park*, *Tell No One*) reunites with her sister Léa (Elsa Zylberstein), having not seen her since childhood. Léa, who is now married with two adopted children, warmly accepts her older sister into her home, doing everything she can to reconstruct their stunted relationship. As Juliette struggles to find and maintain a job, overcome her demons and keep her dark secret under wraps from her sister's gossipy social circle, she finds it increasingly difficult to adapt to her newfound freedom.

In what can best be described as a career-defining achievement, Scott Thomas delivers a commanding performance that underscores the dynamic relationship of the two siblings. Given its serious subject matter, the film could have remained dramatically downbeat throughout, but Claudel interweaves flashes of dry humour and moments of uplifting warm-heartedness with extremely smart dialogue, offering additional complexity to a visually stunning film.

CRITICAL NOTES

"Rarely do head and heart coalesce to such sublime effect in film as in I've Loved You So Long, the debut feature by Philippe Claudel, who directs like a veteran." – Maggie Lee, The Hollywood Reporter