

## Rose [12A]

2022 Denmark 106 mins

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|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| UK released    | <b>28 June 2024</b>                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Director       | <b>Niels Arden Oplev</b>                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Screenplay     | <b>Niels Arden Oplev</b>                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Cinematography | <b>Rasmus Videbæk</b>                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Music          | <b>Henrik Skram</b>                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Cast           | <b>Sofie Gråbøl</b> (Inger); <b>Lene Maria Christensen</b> (Ellen);<br><b>Anders W. Berthelsen</b> (Vagn); <b>Søren Malling</b> (Andreas);<br><b>Luca Reichardt Ben Coker</b> (Christian) |

Rose, which recently premièred at Lighthouse Film Festival, is a deeply personal project for director Niels Arden Oplev (best known in English-speaking countries for *Millennium: The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo*), as it's based on the experience of his sister's illness. As such, he has an insight not just into how (this type of) schizophrenia can manifest, but how living with it is complicated by others' prejudices.

Inger (Sofie Gråbøl, who gets better with every film) is not one of the many people who are mildly affected by this illness and manage to live fairly normal lives without most people noticing the symptoms. Most of the time, she lives in a care home, getting around in a wheelchair not just due to physical weakness but because the idea of having to walk too far and adding yet more strain to her already difficult life is (understandably) unnerving to her. It's probable that she also runs out of energy easily because her mother deals with her every expression of stress by recommending that she take more valium. Her sister, Ellen (Lene Maria Christensen) has had just about enough of this, so despite her mother's objections, she and new husband Vagn (Anders W Berthelsen) decide to leave the wheelchair and the drugs behind and take Inger on a coach trip, all the way from Denmark to Paris. In this case, most of the hostility comes from Andreas (Søren Malling), a middle-aged man who feels that his family trip is being unreasonably

disrupted. He's a complicated character, however; some of his behaviours, and his wife's explanation that he likes things 'just so', suggest that he may be neurodivergent himself. He's also clearly under stress due to problems in his marriage, and he's worried about protecting his soon to turn 13-year-old son Christian (Luca Reichardt Ben Coker). Children, however, are much more inclined to take these things in their stride and he and Inger strike up a firm friendship.

Unlike her fellow tourists, Inger is fluent in French, and Christian persuades her to tell him why, giving the two of them a mission which nobody else knows about. As we wonder whether it will make or break this still vulnerable woman, we are placed in the same difficult position as her mother and Ellen, who begins to wonder if she did the right thing.

Gråbøl is superb throughout, recognising Inger as a complicated individual who has a lot more going on than just her illness, yet who is constantly burdened by it and forced to plan around it nonetheless. Although Ellen is the central character at the outset, the action is increasingly seen from Inger's perspective, and her sly sense of humour provides much of the film's comedy, with some laugh out loud moments. Gråbøl lets us recognise her behaviour, and even her posture, as normal human responses to the tremendous effort which it takes her to do many ordinary things, whilst we also see, at least from time to time, why it's worth it.

**Jennie Kermode**, *Eye for Film*, 17 Jun 2023 (abridged)

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Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September: *The Echo* (12A)

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