

“LA PETITE JERUSALEM”

(French with English subtitles)

-- AN INTERFAITH DIALOGUE VIDEO NIGHT --
7 P.M., ON THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 2007

AT

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, CROSSWICKS, NJ
(shown in cooperation with Temple B'nai Abraham, Bordentown
and Dorothea Dix Unitarian Universalist Community, Crosswicks)

¶ Writer-director Karin Albou is nothing if not intrepid: in LA PETITE JERUSALEM she grapples with three of life's most loaded and complex issues -- faith, family, and sexuality. Set in a drab and aptly named housing project, Little Jerusalem, on the outskirts of Paris, the film focuses on a family of Algerian Orthodox Jewish immigrants. Albou's two main characters, the stunning sisters Laura (Fanny Valette) and Mathilde (Elsa Zylberstein), think about the movie's themes in completely opposite ways. Laura is that classic overly rational cynic -- a philosophy student, who, firmly grounded in the realm of the profane, rejects sentimental notions about love and favors an emotionless approach to sex. Her sister -- unhappily betrothed and devoutly religious -- clings fiercely to the Torah's mandate against female sexual pleasure. Not surprisingly, both women become subsequently unmoored by relationships with different men -- Laura finding herself irrationally in love with Djamel, a handsome Algerian, and Mathilde opening herself up to a feminist-fuelled sexual revolution via an extramarital affair. ¶ Using handheld photography, tight framing, lingering close-ups, and moody lighting, Albou crafts a movie that is texturally delicate and aesthetically intimate. The subjects and story are made particularly riveting by Albou's wonderfully chosen cast of magnetic performers. In particular, the exotic Valette's facial nuances and glassy doe-eyes emit a depth of thought that bespeaks inner turmoil and philosophical doubt. LA PETITE JERUSALEM, though small in budget, is large in resonance and scope -- a welcome existential treatise that satisfies the heart and the mind. (~Movie.com)

LA PETITE JERUSALEM is a critically acclaimed “Not Rated” foreign film that deals in a sensitive manner with mature themes that would be deemed unsuitable for children and youth. Viewer discretion is advised, esp. for those of tender conscience.

~ **ADMISSION IS FREE** ~