



## BORDERLINES FILM FESTIVAL

### **LOVE ME TENDER** (15)

Director: Anna Cazenave Cambet

Starring: Vicky Krieps, Antoine Reinartz, Monia Chokri

France/Luxembourg, 2025, 2 Hours 14 Minutes, French + English subtitles

The film is inspired by the autofiction of the same name by Constance Debré, which begins in that rather classically French tradition\* of frankly questioning assumptions and norms about love – *"I don't see why the love between a mother and son should be different from other kinds of love. Why we shouldn't be allowed to stop loving each other."*

Anna Cazenave Cambet's oeuvre, though slight (she is only 35, this is her second feature) largely focuses on romantic love. *Love Me Tender* seems to indicate a shift in her interest – her next film (as a writer, in collaboration with Thierry Klifa, directing) also features a woman going through an important life change alongside a young son. However, there remains what Cambet describes as her *"wish to draw the portrait of a woman. To stay close to a character and experience with her the different states and the different spaces she goes through"* (**Semaine de la Critique**). Cambet discovered the book as *"a very young mum...I was looking for books which posited different ways of being a mother, which touched upon taboos around the all-consuming commitment we're expected to make to parenthood. The incredibly strong character...was fascinating, iconic and very film-friendly...it made me think about a few things on a more personal level"* (**Cineuropa**).

In her last feature, *Gold for Dogs*, Cambet created a coming-of-age story in reverse, also exploring sexual identity. Here we see Clémence (Vicky Krieps, perhaps best known for her brilliant breakout performance as co-star in Paul Thomas Anderson's *Phantom Thread*) grappling with how to balance her new life, out as a queer woman dating other women, and her old life, a straight, traditional marriage with a son. However, Cambet *"didn't want to turn this...into yet another film revolving around the character's homosexuality...the fact she's gay doesn't make what she's going through any less universal"* (**Cineuropa**).

\**The Guardian* likens this to Albert Camus's *"famously deadpan opening"* from *L'Étranger* (*The Outsider*) – *"My mother died today. Or maybe yesterday"* (Olivia Laing, 1st January 2023)

Notes compiled by Sarah Nicol (Community Engagement Coordinator and Marketing Assistant)

Preview courtesy of Peccadillo Pictures

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