

El joven Werther desencadenado

by Jesús Palacios

Translation of the last two paragraphs from Spanish:

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In the XXI century, teen-age suicide is still a plague. Juvenile angst and problems have changed little or not at all. Internet, cell phones and social networks have only magnified with their new fuel, the possibilities of voluntary extinction, facilitating not only the methods, the opportunities and the tools, but also suicide pacts amongst previously unknown individuals, a truly virtual "suicide shop". And to the crisis of the transitional period from puberty to adolescence, the economic and moral crises of a new millennium which is devoted to an unknown future or present, are added. That is why Alex K Lee's film *La vie nous appartient* seems so beautiful, simple and necessary. The story of Sarah and Philippe, two adolescents that establish a suicide pact through internet and who meet in the lonely immensity of the Swiss {sic} alps in order to abandon –together- an existence they think rejects and isolates them, turns into an intelligent, fun and sensible review of the romantic myth. A myth that has its foundation in the real anxieties that we may have forgotten as adults, but when they are suffered, they convey the deepest pain –the same, of course, as juvenile happiness is the most profound that we could ever experience-. Such pain when not comprehended becomes even more excruciating. Let's not forget this myth is also and above all, a tragic reality for many families and friends, who loose young beloved ones due to the attractiveness of death romantically reified as an absolute value (and also economically by a consumer society capable of converting even death into merchandising), and from which, by the way, no one has ever returned (religious myths left aside).

Alex K Lee places his ingenuous suicidal couple –who are not at all lacking the malice and even the tolerable cruelty also inherent to adolescence- in the middle of an impressive natural scenery, precisely following the romantic tradition of the *Sturm und Drang*. Woods, mountains, canyons and precipices, worthy of the paintbrush of Caspar David Friedrich, Carus or Schinkel, surround with their splendor the suicidal plans of the main characters, whose constant and beautifully written dialogues that are provided with an accurate sensitivity towards the reality of emotions and nontransferable adolescent experiences, contrast with the sublime beauty of Nature. A Nature that in every rock, in every leaf and in every sun ray, defies and denies the lure of death with the conveying exit of life. This is how *La vie nous appartient* attempts –any success will be up to the spectator to decide- to pull the main characters apart from death, forcing them to gain conscience of the beauty of being alive. The beauty of being young: The young Werther finally breaks the chains that tied him to death in order to, once freed, face reality. *La vie nous appartient*, is the world premiere of this young and unchained Werther of the XXI century, who can and must live so that we all have a future.