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Review: 'The Pleasure is All Mine'

The clitoris is a funny thing — literally — in *The Pleasure is All Mine*, the lively personal odyssey of an adorable young Parisian whose previously vivid capacity for sexual pleasure goes on the blink.

Never vulgar, this consistently amusing urban comedy is a buoyant alternative to the loosely federated school of dour (*Romance*) **or sordid and violent** (*Baise-moi*) **femme-helmed sex-as-battlefield films.**

An irresistible central perf from Marie Gillain and a light but firm touch from co scripter/helmer Isabelle Broue in her feature-length fiction debut should caress satisfying box office on Gallic release mid-August.
Already sold in a healthy cross-section of territories, **pic also has remake potential.**

Refreshingly direct, but never explicit, pic opens with heavy breathing.Radio reporter Louise (Gillain) is receiving oral sex from easygoing attorney Francois (Julien Boisselier) prior to a mutually satisfying climax. There's not a complex or inhibition in sight: These two are made for each other.

However, when Louise abruptly starts to feel nothing, what most young women would accept as a temporary mental or physical block throws the take-charge Louise into frantic disarray..

Francois is unfailingly courteous. But slightly neurotic Louise is so preoccupied with her own problem that she's given to blurting out, « *My clitoris is gone! I've lost it!* » in less-than-appropriate circumstances — such as a fancy reception with most of Francois' co-workers in attendance.

She asks female strangers about their masturbation techniques the way others might ask for the time.

She also consults a gynecologist, a sex therapist, a sex shop and an African healer.

Louise's AWOL clitoris is an excellent pretext for avoiding her true feelings about Francois. Although impatient Louise is way too impetuous for her own good, her ordeal leads to an avalanche of newfound sexual discovery in her immediate family, including married sister Felicie (Garance Clavel) and their mom Nicole (Brigitte Rouan — whose

own 1997 film *Post Coitum, Animal Triste* took an infinitely more wrenching look at the power of sex).

Louise's 80-year-old upstairs neighbor Gaby (irrepressible vet Tsilla Chelton) reps the senior citizen take on getting one's jollies.

In addition to Boisselier's appealing turn as Francois, male characters are given a fair shake in the proceedings. Plugged into the tale are Louise's father (Francois Marthouret), brother-in-law (Laurent Bateau), and gay best friend (Lionel Abelanski).

Faux-docu « interviews » with women discussing their intimate relationship to sexual pleasure entertain and inform.
Well-cast and well-thesped pic sports a clean, communicative look that makes nice use of Paris locations.

Reviewed at Saint-Malo Festival of Summer

by Lisa Nesselson