

DAMON SMITH

154 NGUTON GAZETTE 6/3/08

A FILM about an 80 year-old prison piano teacher's obsession with a violent but talented young inmate, **FOUR MINUTES (15)** is certainly strange.

Frau Kruger (Monica Bleibtreu) has been teaching piano at Luckau Women's Prison since the Second World War.

When Jenny von Loeben (Hannah Herzprung) arrives for her first lesson with Kruger and attacks a guard, it seems unlikely that the two women will find much in common.

The relationship that develops is a fascinating one however, helped along by rich performances from both Bleibtreu and Herzprung (in her first ever role).

The plot is far-fetched and contradictory and writer/director Chris Kraus tends towards cliché, but the flaws do not spoil the atmosphere.

Some truly inventive moments, as well as an evocative score keep the viewer involved.

Four Minutes poses questions about the relationship between talent, beauty, age and moral goodness, and doesn't quite find any answers.

But with such a captivating central pairing that doesn't matter in the slightest. - **JO CAIRD**



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