

MAESTRO

A FILM BY LÉA FAZER

MANDARIN CINÉMA
PRESENTS

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WITH

PIO MARMAÏ

MICHAEL LONSDALE

DÉBORAH FRANÇOIS

ALICE BELAÏDI NICOLAS BRIDET DOMINIQUE REYMOND MICHA LESCOT

SCALI DELPEYRAT

GREGORY MONTEL

MARIE-ARMELLE DEGUY

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SYNOPSIS

Henri is a young actor who dreams to act in FAST & FURIOUS. He is hired by Cédric Rovère, a famous auteur cinema director. The working conditions are not what he expected... But the charm of his partner and the kindness of the director will instil in him unknown feelings. And Rovère, seduced by Henri's youth and his imagination will live this shooting as an unexpected gift

INTERVIEW WITH LÉA FAZER

WHAT IS THE GENESIS OF THIS FILM?

After NOTRE UNIVERS IMPITOYABLE, Jocelyn Quivrin called me to ask me if I wanted to help him write his film. I refused saying that I was over my head with work... but I asked him what was the film about. He told me that it was what he experienced with Eric Rohmer on the shoot of AMOURS D'ASTREE ET DE CELADON. It was the story of young actor interested in cars who wants to play in FAST & FURIOUS and, by a misunderstanding, finds himself in a film with a famous auteur cinema director and how this experience changed him.

I remember me laughing and saying that I will find some time. Behind the comedy, I detect a moving aspect of a young man who finds a way towards culture and love thanks to an old man. I think of the topic as essential because I believe that a world where culture is abandoned becomes pointless. AMERICAN BEAUTY showed well the family and love bonds fading away. That frightens me. It happens when you don't have anything to share but materials.

We wrote a synopsis, we gave it to read to the Mandarin team. Isabelle Grellat, who works with the Altmayer brothers, produced the short film that Jocelyn directed, ACTEUR: a satirical film about a young comedian who feels excluded from the auteur cinema, from a certain world. With Rohmer, he had access to this world...

The night Jocelyn died, I called him and left a message on his voice mail saying : « You 'll receive the first draft, tell me what you think ». He never listened to this message, the film stopped.

AND THEN?

The project seemed meaningless without Jocelyn. That was him who wanted to direct it and be the leading actor. We mentioned me playing in it, which amused me. I was very affected and I worked hard to end the first draft, arranging a few things. I am Charlie's godmother, he is the son he had with Alice Taglioni: when Charlie will read, he will discover that his father was writing a scenario when he died. I gave it to Alice.

Few months later, I received a phone call from Eric and Nicolas Altmayer: they read the script and think that, beyond the emotional, there is a film to be made...

They convinced me, eventually I was really excited about doing it. Because Jocelyn's death overwhelmed me of course: it is very weird to lose not only your friend but your leading actor as well. It was turning point in my own path. I started the rewriting. I needed to make this story mine. I have always done films from my point of view but hidden. Jocelyn hid himself by calling his character Henri. With me, it is going to be hidden twice. It will be a film about what Jocelyn told me because I didn't experienced the shooting with Rohmer. That gives me distance and space in order to add fiction to it.

WHERE ARE YOU, YOU PERSONALLY, IN THIS FILM?

Everywhere. In Cédric Rovère's character because I dream about this kind of life, a life which has the luxury of culture, a life into a work, an era. This is my inconsolable regret of public theatre: I have a very chaotic cultural path, I have played in theatres very young, I have always been in the middle of the debate elitist culture or culture for everyone. I was in companies where we played classical plays and, at the same time, I was doing cafe theatre with friends.

Both sides insulted me because I liked playing Corneille as well as « Le Père Noël est une ordure »... I am also in Gloria's character the young debutante: she lives something weird, she witnesses a wonderful father-to-son hand-over from which she is excluded because she is a girl.

CONCRETLY, THINGS HAPPENED FOR JOCELYN JUST LIKE THEY HAPPEN TO HENRI IN THE FILM?

When he met with Rohmer, Jocelyn was already an actor with a career. I don't know why he dreamt about working with Rohmer. But it is him who called Françoise Etchegaray, telling here that he wants to meet with him. He spent the shooting snickering and asking himself where can he be. Then, he saw the film at the Venice Film Festival and it was a shock. This is where it meets with my own biography. I was thirteen or fourteen years old, in secondary school, when the French teacher told us: « we are going to see a film ». I only knew the Italian cinema, thanks to my origin and De Funès. Period. We saw PERCEVAL LE GALLOIS. Huge cultural shock: from this moment, I have been faithful to Rohmer's career and his films pass on to me. Just like LES AMOURS D'ASTREE ET DE CELADON for Jocelyn...

THE TRANSMISSION IS AN IMPORTANT MATTER TO YOU...

When I saw LES AMOURS D'ASTREE ET DE CELADON, I was touched by picturing Rohmer surrounded by all these young people, in this poetry, fantasy and sensitive humour. It is so unusual, a man of this age being so passionate about youth and poetry. It is cheerful and alive. I have the feeling that our parents avoided the matter of transmission that is was outdated: it will be up to the youth to reinvent all of it... We are cultural orphans. That the film's story: a young man, a cultural orphan, who meet with an older man interested in this transmission. He is not interested in this young man because he sees himself into him but because he is interested in the transmission. Jocelyn didn't understand how the transmission occurred, he was surprised and writing the scenario was a way for him to understand what happened to him. He didn't quote Nicolas Bouvier, like in the film, but he could perhaps have done it one day. I dreamed about this access to poetry and the film became a learning story- which pictures my own learning.

WHAT IS TRUE, WHAT IS DREAMT, IN MAESTRO?

The shooting conditions are real. But, once again, I wasn't there: I know them by Jocelyn, who enjoyed impersonate Eric Rohmer, I know them by Cécile Casel who brought him in the adventure and who told me lots of anecdotes after Jocelyn's death. I realized that Jocelyn hadn't said it all: the shock he felt when he saw the film exceeded his naivety during the shooting, this snicker that Rohmer noticed... But Rovère's character is not Rohmer, it is a paradigm. The experience of AMOURS D'ASTREE ET DE CELADON was the most mysterious for Jocelyn but in Maestro's character, there is a lot of Roger Planchon. LOUIS ENFANT ROI was his first shock but it wasn't enough... When, during the shooting, just before the kiss, Rovère is severe with Henri: « I trusted you etc... », this mix of authority and generosity, it really is Planchon.

There are also in Rovère the masters I met during my life. Not necessarily famous people from the cinema industry, « masters of life » who by their words or their examples gave me the will to go further.

GLORIA'S CHARACTER?

It is a total invention. Jocelyn told me: "I want to tell my story with Alice". But he soon admitted that there is no story: they met during a shooting, they have seen each other, they loved each other! We pictured an antagonistic character, who is fond of classical culture, who doesn't understand Henri nor the feelings she has for him.

HOW DOES THE SCENARIO TRANSFORM ITSELF UNTIL THE SHOOTING?

At the beginning, it was thought as a comedy and step by step we went towards emotion. It is thanks to Isabelle Grellat: As for her as for me, it is a search, not a declaration of identity status. I liked Rohmer's capacity to immerse himself into the culture of the past. For example, in LA MARQUISE D'O, the reference to Greuze's paintings, the work on the 17th century gesture, everything shows that he had a taste for things that have disappeared nowadays. Maestro shows this. Rovère talks about "the inevitable entropy of the universe"...Jocelyn and Rohmer died three months one from the other. What to do with what disappeared? People we love, of course But not only: in the film, we hear the Super 16 camera's

noise, the one Rohmer used. Soon, we will never hear it again. But I not only regret that we don't film like before. We are losing a way of looking nature, even a way of eating... Who, in the next generation, eats beef tongue like Rovère's character in the film?

COMMENT RENDRE COMPTE À L'ÉCRAN DE LA TRANSFORMATION DU PERSONNAGE ? COMMENT FILMER LE MOMENT DE LA TRANSMISSION ?

I stick with Henri's character, when love and art touch him. I am surfing with him. When we developed the project, the part I believed in was the one the others doubt about: the shooting. The scenario was divided in three equal parts, during the editing the shooting becomes important again. And obviously, Henri's moment of epiphany: when he sees the rushes. He realizes that the film is different, everything but ridiculous. My filming style is not the same from this moment: until this moment, I was still showing LES AMOURS D'ASTREE ET DE CELADON...being done, the team in the field; step by step we see the camera is supposed to film. In the setting, the costumes are less ridiculous than during the fitting. The rhythm is not the same: the shots, I try to be prisoner of the story, to suspend the time. Clément Ducol's music, who is Camille's arranger, changes his key as well. The choice of the poems is not random. This is the waking of a sleeping spirit which was set aside. Quote a verse, even if it is in order to seduce a girl, it is quoting a verse for a start...

HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE COMEDIANS FOR MAESTRO?

When we were about to choose Cédric Rovère's character, we asked ourselves: do we choose someone « rohmérian »? I argued that we needed something different. We can't ask an imitation to a made-up comedian... Michael Lonsdale is the complete opposite of Eric Rohmer, they never worked together, I don't even know if they liked each other. Together, we worked something else: the idea of a master living for his project, a fanciful master, capable of living completely each minute. He seems generous because Micheal Lonsdale puts his particular aura in it, a generous aura, but Rovère is also a bit indifferent. He is not a typical master. If he is interested in Henri, it is because of what Henri can offer him. And it is pretty important, to think that a youth can offer something instead of thinking that

he must live far from us. I have to say that I counted on Michael Lonsdale's extreme singularity, his particular phrasing. But when I saw the rushes, I was deeply moved.

AND TO PLAY HENRI'S CHARACTER?

When he decided to name the main character "Henri", it is not Jocelyn anymore. And when I met with Pio who red the scenario he told me: "Henri, this is me. You can't imagine how much Henri is like me: I have played literary texts even though I'm a simple-minded". Obviously, the fact that he said that demonstrate the opposite. Just like Rovère, it is about the essence of the character, not a resemblance. Pio has a vital asset for the role: the an actor of the instant. In a film where we repeat that we have to live things and deeply feeling them., his capacity to invest the moment, to be fully there, here and now, favoured the character. In my opinion, Déborah François has a rohmérian physique: despite being talented, she has an original way of being gorgeous. Alice Belaïdi has an exceptional temperament for comedy. There is always someone in my films who hasn't the good origin. Usually, Astrée is blonde and has blue eyes. But I can't stand non-Caucasian actors only in socio-cultural roles. A Marivaux's princess can be black. Around them, there are my friends from the public theatre, my family: Micha Lescot, Marie-Armelle Deguy, Dominique Reymond, Scali Delpeyrat. They were kind enough to come and with our small budget, the short schedule, their profession, their playing flow did us some good. And on the set, there were Jocelyn's friends: the chief cameraman Lucas Leconte, the comedian Nicolas Bridet who plays Henri's friend.

YOU DO NOT COME BACK AT THE PLACES OF ROHMER'S SET...

No, I don't want to do what Rohmer did. We filmed in the south of the Indre county, south of Châteauroux, it looks like a protected enclave. I have to say that I also had my dream of "l'Astrée", Honoré d'Urfé's novel. At that time, influenced by Rohmer and PERCEVAL in particular, I wanted to adapt on stage "l'Astrée". It was never done... I find my inspiration in English pre-Raphaelites I do not reproduce the 18th century like Rohmer, the time of Honoré d'Urfé. I see in "l'Astrée" the idea of a golden era, during which nature is a paradise. Then, what is an Eden? It is a bit more

mountainous, a bit more romantic. Rohmer would have been furious of this anachronism! There is also in the film this idea that some work scare because we are afraid to not understand Sometimes, we just need to feel, to be there... Myself, I am less interested in a intellectual cinema than in a cinema that shows the world as a sensation. Examples? BRIGHT STAR, IVRE DE FEMMES ET DE PEINTURE, LE DEJEUNER SUR L'HERBE...

ABOUT MAESTRO

BY FRANÇOISE ETCHEGARAY

I knew Jocelyn quivrin since he was fifteen, I saw him, he was living near by our office. For a long time, he wanted to meet Eric Rohmer so bad, who didn't because he wanted new, fresh actors and Jocelyn had played with Planchon. Eric finally met with him and immediately liked his way of talking, of moving, of being.

I don't know if Jocelyn had seen many Eric's films but he admired him. He was a kid, a fun person, he had a lot of fun with Cécile Cassel, who he brought on the set of AMOUR D'ASTREES ET DE CELADON. He found the adventure a bit strange: he hadn't play in a film in these conditions, with a reduced team, with accommodations that weren't hotels, without a chauffeur...

Eric didn't care what his actors were doing out of the set, but he was confused when he saw Jocelyn coming two times in a row in huge gleaming convertible cars that someone lend him. Jocelyn used to make quick starts in front of the Fougères-sur-Bièvre castle, raising dust, Cécile Cassel at his side, black sunglasses on. It was not really the tone of the set!

The real eye-opener for Jocelyn was during the Venice Film Festival. At the end of projection, the entire audience rose for a twenty-minute standing-ovation. Jocelyn just discovered the film and the reception moved him. He understood that he didn't participate in a little outlandish and funny thing but

to a great film that would be remembered.

Léa Fazer's film moved me. Michael Lonsdale is not Eric Rohmer, the film is different from the true set with Eric. But the spirit is there, the spirit of this adventure lived by very young people next to a master. Eric liked the idea of transmission. He would have liked knowing that he could change someone with the mind. After Henri's transformation, the film takes a solar tone, it tends to the grace and it is the essence of Eric Rohmer's work, which itself was going towards the light.

Françoise Etchegaray worked for twenty years with Eric Rohmer. She was one of the producers of AMOURS D'ASTREE ET DE CELADON.

MANDARIN CINÉMA

SINCE 2008

- 2014
- MAESTRO by Léa Fazer
 - FASTLIFE by Thomas Ngijol
 - SAINT LAURENT by Bertrand Bonello
 - FLORE by Jean-Albert Lièvre
 - UNE NOUVELLE AMIE by François Ozon
- 2013
- LE GRAND MÉCHANT LOUP by Nicolas & Bruno
 - PARIS À TOUT PRIX by Reem Kherici
 - JEUNE & JOLIE by François Ozon
- 2012
- DE L'AUTRE CÔTÉ DU PÉRIPH by David Charhon
 - DANS LA MAISON by François Ozon
 - LES KAÏRA by Franck Gastambide
- 2011
- UN HEUREUX ÉVÈNEMENT by Rémi Bezançon
 - LA CONQUÊTE by Xavier Durringer
 - PHILIBERT by Sylvain Fusée
 - MÊME LA PLUIE by Iciar Bollain
- 2010
- POTICHE by François Ozon
 - 600 KILOS D'OR PUR by Éric Besnard
- 2009
- LE SYNDROME DU TITANIC by Nicolas Hulot and Jean-Albert Lièvre
 - UNE SEMAINE SUR DEUX (ET LA MOITIÉ DES VACANCES SCOLAIRES)
by Ivan Calbérac
 - OSS 117 RIO NE RÉPOND PLUS by Michel Hazanavicius
- 2008
- LA POSSIBILITÉ D'UNE ÎLE by Michel Houellebecq
 - LE PREMIER JOUR DU RESTE DE TA VIE by Rémi Bezançon
 - LE NOUVEAU PROTOCLE by Thomas Vincent

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Gloria
Pauline
Nicoballon
Francine
José
Le druide
Sam
Marie-Jeanne

PIO MARMAÏ
MICHAEL LONSDALE
DÉBORAH FRANÇOIS
ALICE BELAÏDI
NICOLAS BRIDET
DOMINIQUE REYMOND
MICHA LESCOT
SCALI DELPEYRAT
GRÉGORY MONTEL
MARIE-ARMELLE DEGUY

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Image
Setting

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Casting
First assistant director
Script supervisor
Music
Sound

Editing
Production manager
Post-production manager
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