



presents

LOST IN PARIS



Written and Directed by **Dominique Abel and Fiona Gordon**

Produced by **CG CINÉMA**

Starring **Dominique Abel, Fiona Gordon, Emmanuelle Riva, and Pierre Richard**

World Premiere: 2016 Telluride Film Festival

Run Time: 84 minutes

Rating: Not Rated by the MPAA

Publicity Contact:

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SYNOPSIS

Filmed in Dominique Abel and Fiona Gordon's signature whimsical style, **LOST IN PARIS** stars the filmmakers as a small-town Canadian librarian and a strangely seductive, oddly egotistical vagabond. When Fiona's (Gordon) orderly life is disrupted by a letter of distress from her 93-year-old Aunt Martha (delightfully portrayed by Academy Award®-nominee Emmanuelle Riva) who is living in Paris, Fiona hops on the first plane she can and arrives only to discover that Martha has disappeared. In an avalanche of spectacular disasters, she encounters Dom (Abel), the affable, but annoying tramp who just won't leave her alone. Replete with the amazing antics and intricately choreographed slapstick that has come to define Abel and Gordon's work, **LOST IN PARIS** is a wondrously fun and hectic tale of peculiar people finding love while lost in the City of Lights.

DIRECTORS' NOTES

Like our other films, LOST IN PARIS is a burlesque comedy. The story is simple, in order for the performances to take centre stage, however, this time, the plot is akin to an amateur investigation, giving it a different tone from our previous films.

We place performance at the heart of our story, filming bodies that struggle against adversity, that fight to live, to reach or to preserve a certain dignity, and to surpass themselves.

Almost all the events take place over two days and two nights. The characters are in a constant state of emergency, running around and bumping into each other the whole time.

In Essence

Alone, deprived of all familiarity or comfort, three lost individuals battle one another, or come to each other's aid. LOST IN PARIS uses humour to talk about essential things like death, freedom of choice, solitude, and solidarity.

The Characters

Martha is headstrong, independent, happy and audacious. At 88 years old, she sometimes forgets where (and who) she is, but her freedom is non-negotiable. She represents liberty, light-heartedness, and *joie de vivre*.

Fiona, a spinster librarian, lives in rural Canada. She's a wonderstruck tourist lacking life experience, stumbling with every step she takes throughout her poorly prepared trip.

Fiona has admired her aunt since childhood but, unlike Martha, has never dared do anything adventurous or romantic – that is, until the day when, thanks to Martha, she dives in headfirst before even realizing it.

Fiona is a Martha in the making. She resembles and understands her.

Dom, is a selfish, impulsive, and conceited hobo. At first glance, he is a thorn in Fiona's and Martha's side, but his obnoxious company slowly transforms into a useful and, ultimately, liberating presence.

Dom is described in the script as an elegant man in spite of his dirty and torn clothes. Our desire is to tell a funny, contemporary story without being bleak or sordid. Whether they are homeless, tourists, or gendarmes, our characters all carry non-conformist beauty, resistance, hope, laughter, and innocence within themselves.

Our Raw Material: The Actors

Fiona Gordon is well-known for her unique physical language. In this film, she brings out her Olive Oyl-side. The evolution of her character with respect to previous films: more fragility, vulnerability, and emotion.

Dominique Abel plays **Dom**, a selfish and resourceful homeless man who has a very poor sense of propriety, but who is always up for trying things. The evolution of his character with respect to previous films: more mischievous, seductive, and autonomous.

Emmanuelle Riva plays **Martha**. We are happy to be able to share a period of creativity with this incredible actress, and to be part of her astonishing and uncompromising career. When we

imagined the character's playful side, a dimension she has rarely explored in her work, we offered her the role. But she has brought so much more. She was immediately pleased by Martha's tragicomic side. Our first meetings convinced us that she embodied the character's strength, audacity, and poetic qualities with simplicity, liveliness and – as with every role she accepts – by wholeheartedly committing herself to it. This will be her first return to the screen since Michael Haneke's AMOUR.

Pierre Richard plays **Norman**. We needed someone who could embody this elderly, independent and charismatic artist; a lover who resurfaces three times throughout the story. Pierre Richard has a strong personality, combining charm, humour, and physical presence.

Paris

In addition to being a mythical city, a symbol of dreams and grandeur, Paris is also an active character in the film. We first discover it through Fiona's naïve eyes, during her chaotic arrival. Then we meet Dom in his daily environment: l'Île aux Cygnes, where the historical centre transforms into a modern city. On one side, there are stone bridges and the Eiffel Tower; on the other, express lanes, concrete walls, and rows of skyscrapers. Dom is a hobo who lives in a tent at the foot of the Statue of Liberty (the miniature replica). Our characters move about in real geography. Although the film sometimes uses the city's famous monuments, it does not do so for their postcard or picturesque quality (even if the Eiffel Tower is deeply enchanting for Fiona), but for their symbolic power. Climbing the Eiffel Tower to die is a poetic image. Just like a homeless man's tent, pitched under the Statue of Liberty, is a nod to his being a vagabond...

The Style

LOST IN PARIS is firmly anchored in the contemporary world. But, as burlesque authors, we do not comment on this cruel time through cynicism or parody. We do this through the body, conveying the hazards and whims of life via immediately recognizable physical sensations. The body becomes the funny, poetic, pathetic, or heroic text of human beings, who are knocked about by life, and flail in order to exist.

Poetic License

- Can you go from a tree to the Eiffel Tower? In reality, you can't. But we'll do our best to make it look believable.

- Can you climb a tree at 87 years old? Not so sure. But, rest assured, we have other solutions for these night scenes.

- Can you get your tie stuck in a coffin as it is being wheeled inside an incinerator?

We like excess, but we're careful about how we get there. For us, the challenge consists of pulling the spectator into a world where fantasy is not only possible, it is wonderful.

Writing the Script

Our burlesque, larger-than-life characters do not behave psychologically, or even like comic actors performing in a comedy.

At the heart of our writing is a clownish vision of the world, and the search for a form of laughter and poetry that are specific to writer-clowns. We seek ways to stimulate performances and guide them without curbing them, for it is through this physical language that our style takes on all its meaning. Locations and sets are chosen in the very early stages of writing. Shapes, the geometry of spaces, and physical obstacles fuel the narrative, while objects and urban architecture become true acting partners.

Directing Duo

Our three previous feature films were written and directed by three people. LOST IN PARIS was written and directed by two. This change reflects our desire to embrace a new dynamic. Initially, our duo formed and came to fruition in the theatre. Bruno Romy came on board to help us direct our first short film. We felt that directing a burlesque film demanded decisions that could not be partially conceded or delegated, and that the centre of gravity had to remain anchored in physical performance. We directed our next two films, ROSITA and WALKING ON THE WILD SIDE (our most prize-winning short film), as a duo.

We wanted to reinforce our own external eye, and give it its share of creative weight – one which may be atypical in film, but essential to burlesque cinema.

After feeling more vetted as directors, we decided to return to being a trio for our first feature, ICEBERG, out of a desire to work together. At the time, we shared every decision, and continued this collaboration for RUMBA and THE FAIRY.

Our trio functioned well throughout our three features but, like all collaborations, it also demanded compromises. We now feel the need for renewal, and a need to evolve, and wished to do this as a duo.

Universality

Our last film, THE FAIRY, opened the Director's Fortnight at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival. Since its release, it has been sold in over 40 countries. Little by little, we are making a name for ourselves on the international film scene. With very little dialogue and few cultural references, our films are able to circulate easily. And, who knows? Perhaps this style, which is both outside the present – and outside time in general – guarantees they might be around for awhile.

AN INTERVIEW WITH DOMINIQUE ABEL &

FIONA GORDON

(Adapted from Mara Fortes's conversation for Telluride Film Festival's *Film Watch*)

Your characters are always named after yourselves, is there an autobiographic element in your work?

Fiona: Yes, it's intended so that people feel that it's coming from us, that our humor is very much based on our own vulnerabilities, and on our own strengths as well.

Dominique: It's how we attempt to bring our colors, our material, our vision, the little ideas that move us in life.

You work is bright and optimistic, which is rare given the general dark mood of our time.

F: It's funny that you mention that because we are in the process of putting together our press kit and we wrote "the spirit of our times is pessimism, violence, cynicism, darkness." And in a way, though we don't do it deliberately, we resist this spirit of the times. We're not more optimistic than any other person, but there is another way of looking at humanity in all its idiosyncrasies, and in all its hideousness as well. A more carefree perspective. Lightness for us is not synonymous with triviality or thoughtlessness, but a synonym of joy, liberty, vitality. That's what we want to uphold and defend.

There is also a social consciousness in your films—your characters tend to be people existing on the margins of society.

D: Beauty, non-conformism interests us. The beauty of difference, of aging too. We deal with everything that affects us in real life. We also think that a story about rich happy people wouldn't be that interesting.

F: No, it wouldn't be funny. We are funny in our weaknesses.

Through your characters you also establish a different kind of relationship to place, to Paris in this case.

F: Yes, it's Paris above and below the bridge. And it's beautiful below the bridge, it's a kind of dented, damaged beauty which renders it even more beautiful.

D: Right next to the Eiffel tower we discovered this little patch, which is not very frequented. And it's a place where a lot of people live, where homeless people sleep, people with whom we built a relationship, full of poetry and beauty and suffering as well.

You also collaborate with two great icons of French cinema, Emmanuelle Riva and Pierre Richard. How did this come about?

D: In the beginning we had a different actress in mind but she didn't speak French or English, and it was going to be very difficult for her to come. Then Régine Vial told us to look at Emmanuelle Riva." She showed us a video she made for the *New York Times* where she dances, imitates Chaplin, very innocently, very joyfully. And we thought, "well, it's not the Emmanuelle Riva we know, but she is definitely open to physical comedy." When we met her we were blown away because we had never worked with a star of that caliber. She is very curious about life, constantly observing and has this beautiful childish laughter. She would tell us, "Inside, I am 14 years old. I discover life every day, even though by body is 88." And the film

speaks to that, to someone who will never let go of their desires. For her character, freedom is non-negotiable. And that really inspired her as an actress. After we met her, we still had to find financing for the film, which took a really long time. And in the meantime, she was acting in the theater and broke seven vertebrae. And she continued to play on stage, with her broken vertebrae! That is Emmanuelle Riva for you—her life IS the theater and the cinema.

For the other role, we had Pierre Étaix in mind. But he was frail and couldn't do it. So our friend suggested Pierre Richard. Pierre read six sentences about the film and right away said yes. For me it was a moment of great emotion, because he was my hero when I was little.

Any anecdotes about the shoot you want to share?

D: When we had Pierre and Emmanuelle improvise the “foot dance” scene on the bench they took great pleasure in doing it. Then, all of a sudden, he turned to her and said “they had told me that you were such a pain in the ass, but in fact, you're not at all.” And Emmanuelle Riva just laughed. She burst out laughing in her fourteen-year-old laugh.

As a spectator, you sense a kind of spontaneity in your films. Is there a place for improvisation in your work?

D: There isn't much improvisation during the shoot, because we prepare a lot beforehand. But our style is very much nourished by improvisation. And we built our universe originally onstage, as clowns, with very little dialogue, so naturally, our ideas tend to be very physical.

F: But we do write by improvisation. The body has a logic that the mind cannot fathom, and we try to tap into that.

D: It requires a very simple, sober writing, which leaves room for physical play. But we are also influenced by the necessities of cinema. I mean a pure burlesque script would be even simpler.

F: It would be NO script actually.

Your style embraces a very strong aesthetic: fixed shots, long takes, very artisanal special effects.

F: That's how we import our experience in theater into cinema, because in our films, there is always a reminder to the spectator that this isn't real life, this is our vision of life as artists, and we want to maintain, in a Brechtian fashion, this relationship with the audience. This idea that to represent a tree you hold a branch, this branch is a tree: to represent the sea, we have a few glasses of water that we splash around, and that practically becomes the sea. This reminder that it's our imagination that is at play, and not real life that we are in the midst of observing.

Do you identify with this classic tradition of cinema clowns (Tati, Keaton, Chaplin) or is there a place where you consciously break from this tradition?

D: They are all people who have inspired us, because they are true clowns, they make us laugh. But there isn't a preconceived idea or form in our work. It's a constant search, so there's no nostalgia.

F: We recognize that we belong to the same family, but we don't consciously seek to be part of this tradition. In the beginning, we referenced it more so that people could anticipate the types of movies we made. Let's say it's not really a break with that tradition, but we do hope to offer something new, in the fact that it's us, our imaginations. We are new, not with a capital "N," but with a little "n."

DOMINIQUE ABEL & FIONA GORDON BIOS

Dominique ABEL (he) is Belgian.

Fiona GORDON (she) is Canadian.

For over 25 years, they have been creating original theatre together. Their visual style of humour has taken them all over the world. They live and work in a converted factory space in Brussels, never tiring of their favorite topic: the awkwardness of human beings.

In the 90's, A & G took their first steps in filmmaking, as actors at first, with Bruno Romy's LA POUPÉE. They have been making films ever since.

Filmography As Directors

LOST IN PARIS (2016)

THE FAIRY (2014)

RUMBA (2008)

ICEBERG (2005)

WALKING ON THE WILD SIDE (short, 2000)

ROSITA (short, 2000)

MERCI CUPIDON (short, 1994)

CREDITS

SCREENWRITERS / DIRECTORS

Dominique Abel & Fiona Gordon

PRODUCERS

Abel & Gordon - Courage mon amour Films

Christie Molia - Moteur S'il Vous plaît

Charles Gillibert - CG Cinéma

COPRODUCERS

Geneviève Lamal - SCOPE pictures

Philippe Logie - VOO & Be tv

Tanguy Dekeyser - Proximus

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

CANAL +

CINE +

Centre du Cinéma et de l'Audiovisuel
de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles

CINEMAGE 10

CNC - Nouvelles technologies en production

MEDIA program of the European Union

Belgian government Tax Shelter

via SCOPE INVEST

mk2 Développement - Nathanaël Kartmitz

U.S. DISTRIBUTOR

Oscilloscope Laboratories

CAST

Fiona	Fiona Gordon
Dom	Dominique Abel
Martha	Emmanuelle Riva
Norman	Pierre Richard
Bob the Moun ty	Fred Meert
Mr. Martin	Philippe Martz
Canadian Embassy employee	Olivier Parenty

and in order of appearance

Fiona as a child	Emmy Boissard Paumelle
Martha as a young woman	Céline Laurentie
The readers	Charlotte Dubery, David Palatino
The postman	Céline Laurentie
The jogger	Guillaume Delvingt
The porter	Fabrice Milich
The DJ	Jean Loison
The jumping family	Annabelle Cocollos, Bruno Romy Mika Romy-Cocollos
The waiters	Yvan Legoff, Jessica Hinds
The laundromat couple	Isabelle de Hertogh, Dominique Pozzetto
The barman	Michel Vivier
The café patron	Alice Veret
The cook	Gagny Diop Balla

The funeral parlor lady	Brigitte Lucas
Gaby	Grégory Legeai
Cyril, Martha's agent	Salifou Bangoura
A friend of Martha	Annick Le Perchec
Marthe's photo	Sarah Bensoussan
Madame Gentil	Françoise Lauwerie
Norman's nurse	Roberta Casa Nova
The man at the cemetery	Dominique Prié
The blind man	Marc Le Gall
The policewoman	Valérie Thoumire
The taxi driver	Niryis Pouscoulous

CREW

Directors of photography	Claire Childéric & Jean-Christophe Leforestier
Sound recorders	Fred Meert & Arnaud Calvar
Set designer	Nicolas Girault
Costume designer	Claire Dubien
Editor	Sandrine Deegen
Sound mixer	Emmanuel de Boissieu
Production manager	Patrick Armisen
First assistant director	Camille Pawlotsky
Location manager	Maud Quiffet

THE WHOLE CREW

Directors of photography	Claire Childéric & Jean-Christophe Leforestier
Puller	Alex Xenakis
Monitor manager	Cyrille Hubert
Key gaffer	Gérald Durand
Gaffers	Baptiste Brousse, Adrien Chata Hugo Delahoutre, Quentin Jorquera Julien Malichier, Mukendi Tshiakatumba
Key grip	Pascal Banizet
Grip	Bruno Dransart
Set photographer	Laurent Thurin-Nal
Sound recorders	Fred Meert Arnaud Calvar
Boom operators	Cédric Berger - Nicolas Gilou Xavier Rémy
Set designer	Nicolas Girault
Props designer	Gilles Barbier
Assistant props designer	Juliette Bailly
Costume designer	Claire Dubien
Seamstress	Sylvie Thévenard
Make-up artist	Lucky Nguyen
Hairdresser	Claire Dubien
First director's assistant	Camille Pawlotsky

Second director's assistant	Bruno Laurec
Script supervisor	Cécile Bergès
Third director's assistant	Ivan Legoff
Emmanuelle Riva's assistant	Sandra Choquet
Auxillary director's assistants	Mathilde Gourou, Kali Romy Savannah Delcamp Risse
Production manager	Patrick Armisen
Administrator	Fethia Dahenane
Production secretaries	Eliott Kayhat Anne-Laure Berteau
Production assistants	Morgane Baudin, Anjély Rais, Mathilde Théret, Alice Abbat
Chief location manager	Maud Quiffet
Location manager	Magalie Germa
Location manager's assistants	Antonio Paterniti Thomas Le Govic Jean-François Barre, Paul-Emmanuel Brand Jean-Jacques Busseuil, Ali Diallo, Frédéric Keller, Quentin Legendre, Pablo Leger, Samuel Lumbruso, Félix Roue
Set builders	Alizée Goudard, Marie Lelievre
Chief painter	Jean Loison
Model constructor	Patrick Demière
Set designer's assistant	Blaise Barbier

Special effects supervisors	Benoît Talenton, Franck Carpentier
Editor	Sandrine Deegen
Assistant editor	Juliette Achard
Sound editors	Fred Meert Héléna Réveillère
Color grader	Kevin Le Dortz
Sound mixer	Emmanuel de Boissieu
Foley	Philippe Van Leer
Foley's sound recorder	Luc Thomas
Assistant foley	Pierre Greco
Post-production boom operator	Yanna Soentjens
Studio assistant	Antoine Hurdebise
Press agent	Monica Donati
Distribution France	Potemkine films - Nils Bouaziz Priscilla Gessati - Miliani Benzerfa
Distribution Benelux	Cinéart - Stephan De Potter
International sales	MK2 - Juliette Schrameck, Fionnuala Jamison Ola Byszuk, Benoît Claro, Anne-Laure Barbarit
Motion Partners	
Director of post-production	Célia Simonnet
Post-production assistants	Eugénie Gorlier, Nicolas Hauser

Assistant editor	Sarah Dumesnils
VFX coordinator	Laurie Kotfila
VFX supervisor	Anthony Lestremau, Jérémy Maillard
VFX graphic artists	Rémi Dupont, Howard Gozelin Claire Le Teuff, Maxime Poidevin François Puget

Courage Mon Amour production team

Director of development	Marina Festré
Pre-production manager	Elise Bisson
Production secretary	Aya Kasasa

Moteur S'il Vous Plaît production team

Director of post-production	Erwan Elies
Chief accountant	Gilbert Henrique
Financial director	Herminie Rouleau
Assistant editor	Morgane Fougeri

CG Cinéma production team

Producer	Nathalie Dennes
Casting assistant	Princia Car
Production assistants	Alexis Genauzeau, Camille Ibanez, Simon Inazuma, Anja Hansen Love

SCOPE production team

Production coordinator	Maryline Maia
Production coordinator	Charlotte Culière

VOO & Be tv production team

Production coordinator	Gilles Réunis
Press agent	Marie-Pierre Dinsart

ADDITIONAL CAST

Huguette	Huguette Accursi
The fisherman	Cyril Colmant
Other fishermen	Gilles Barbier, Gérald Durand
Teens with baseball caps	Clémence Chevreux, Kevin Mangovo Vladimir Zongo
The couple taking a photo	Aurélie Vatin, Patrick Armisen
The lady with a small dog	Emmanuelle Bottelin Lescoutre & Attila
The patrons in the café	Diana Smith, Serge Cadec, Thérèse Rivière
The jumping couples	Jane Monnaie, Bertrand Landhauser Benjamin Kauffmann, Maya Elisa Sarac Sandrine Morin, Clémentine Serpereau
The two police officers	Mark Konick, Julia Domenge
Young Martha's voice	Véronique Vermeeren
Background actors	
Susana Alcantud	Denis Lefrançois

Claire Chollet	Suzette Delaleuf
Jean-Louis Authier	Pierre Belli
Aline Bichotte	Denise Gordet
Caroline Dallem	Franck Guerin
Françoise Dussour	Lola Heude
Michel Demasse	Catherine Lefroid
Frédérique Davarat	Jacqueline Longuemare
Philippe Patois	Natacha Mendes
Amélie Portal	Colette Platre
Jacqueline Quentelot	William Prunck
Nicole Thomas	Marina Reynaud

Gibson the dog, managed by her owner, Malika Boulahli-Brichomme

MUSIC

KATAJJAIT MELODIES

Baffin Land / Hudson Bay / Aquausiq

Katjjait of Annahatak (Ungava Bay)

from the recording entitled

Canada : Inuit Games and Songs UNESO8032

Courtesy of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

(p) © 1976 - Used by permission

SWIMMING SONG

de Loudon Wainwright III

performed by Kate & Anna McGarrigle

© 1975 Warner Bros Record Inc

used by permission of

Down Town Music publishing

EL ESQUINAZO

JAZZ SUITE NO.1 – FOXTROT

performed by Juan D'Arienzo y su Orquesta
Tipica

(p) 1938 BMG Ariola Argentina
used by permission of
Sony Music Entertainment France

HAPPY CAMPERS

de Daniel May & Marc Ferrari
© First Digital Music/ZFC Music
Authorised by UNIPPM

ESPINITA

by Barovero, Paci, Carbonel
performed by Banda Ionica
With the permission of
© Felmay srl

LITTLE MAN YOU'VE HAD A BUSY DAY

by Wayne, Sigler & Hoffman
performed by Ray Noble and his orchestra
© Universal Polygram Intl. Publishing Inc.
Authorised by Universal Music Vision

by Dmitri Shostakovich

performed by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra
dir. Riccardo Chailly
(p) 1992 Decca Music Group Limited c/o Universal
Authorised by Universal Music Vision

CHUNGA'S REVENGE

inspired by Zappa & Previn
performed by Gotan Project
(p) 2001 Ya Basta Records c/o Universal
Authorised by Universal Music Vision

JAZZ SUITE NO.1 – WALTZ

de Dmitri Shostakovich
Interprété par le Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra
dir. Riccardo Chailly
(p) 1992 Decca Music Group Limited c/o Universal
Authorised by Universal Music Vision

LAST TANGO IN PARIS

by Gato Barbieri
performed by Gotan Project
(p) 2001 Ya Basta Records c/o Universal
Authorised by Universal Music Vision

PREMIERE GYMNOPIEDIE

by Eric Satie

performed by Daniel Versano

(p) © EMI Music Publishing Italia Srl

(p) 1979 Sony Entertainment France

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DON'T BE AFRAID

de Kurt Weill & Bert Brecht

interprété par Mary-Margaret O'Hara

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