

LES FILMS DU BELIER PRESENTS



FRANÇOIS SAGAT CHIARA MASTROIANNI

# MAN AT BATH

A FILM BY CHRISTOPHE HONORÉ

( HOMME AU BAIN )



Festival del film Locarno  
Concorso internazionale  
**In Competition**

## STORY OF THE FILM

Between the Paris suburbs and New York, Omar and Emmanuel do everything they can to prove to each other that they are no longer in love.

## STORY OF THE SHOOT

Certain films happen unexpectedly. That doesn't mean that there is any less desire behind them; just that their production is organized at a pace and in ways that are unforeseen, given that the film emerges there where you only thought of "trying something". That was the case for this film. It was a strange and joyful experience to find oneself directing a film that is at once intimate and, I hope, accessible to everyone. The skills I acquired with the films I've shot before certainly allowed me to have this relaxed freedom, meaning I could write freely. Like all filmmakers, I know only too well the endless difficulties in putting together a feature-length film, which meant I could revel in the insolent way this one came together.

As someone from Brittany, I've always struggled to think of the Parisian suburbs as anything other than a province where Paris is accessible yet untouchable. I come from a province where Paris is a far-off place that one fantasizes about and dreams of. I had this somewhat facile idea that a province so close to Paris – at arms length, but nonetheless ignored – does not result in dreams, but in frustration; a logic based on humiliation and defeat. One which conjures vengeance rather than desire. I wanted to seize on an invitation from Pascal Rambert to shoot at Gennevilliers to overcome my preconceived ideas about a suburb that must surely be envious. And in choosing the neighborhood considered one of the hottest in town (Le Luth, where the municipality, for this very reason, chose not to grant us permission to film), I wanted to treat the word "hot" more in an erotic sense than violent, which it can mean in French. I imagined a utopian setting there, where desires are expressed without fear.

I had no images of Gennevilliers, apart from that of the theatre and its impressive hall and the containers on the port where I illegally photographed a friend shortly after arriving in Paris. But the name Gennevilliers inevitably evokes the name of the artist Gustave Caillebotte, who lived there for many years. Then this painting comes to mind, *Homme au Bain* (Man at Bath). In it, we see a man from behind drying himself with a gray towel in a white room by a zinc bathtub. He has just climbed out of the bath. His wet feet leave traces on the floor. This was quite a bold painting at the end of the 19th century; this virile figure, caught in an interior situation, usually an ideal backdrop for feminine eroticism. The male nude in painting was mainly reserved for heroes or gods. But just a nude man, observed with tenderness, a man caught in an intimate moment, vulnerable and touching; at the time, this was genuine transgression. In my films, I have given an increasing amount of space to language. This time, I wanted above all to film bodies. The sculpted, mistreated, exaggerated body of Emmanuel's character. And the easy-going, pleasurable, mixed-race bodies of his successive lovers.

That is how I defined my subject: Building a narrative at the start of the 21st century in response to this Man in the Bathroom from the end of the 19th. A narrative of virility without the initiation to Virility with a capital V: An everyday, domestic virility that is rarely seen.

But happily, films are not subjects, and they change according to the circumstances of their production. So, when I had begun scouting for locations in Gennevilliers, I had the opportunity to leave for New York with Chiara Mastroianni. I took a little DV camera with me, and since I was impatient to shoot this fiction in Gennevilliers, I began to make a more personal, more sentimental echo of it. Like pre-shoot notebook, I invented sequences according to our encounters in the Big City. And gradually, I fashioned the screenplay of the Gennevilliers narrative from this counterpoint of New York that I was experiencing. The project of Man at Bath became more complex with the unexpected wish to integrate this filmed diary in the fictional material of the film, as well as the inclusion in the project of an actress through a documentary element.

In the end, there are two towns; Gennevilliers and New York; Two characters; François Sagat and Chiara Mastroianni: Two forms; drama and documentary.

**CHRISTOPHE HONORE**

"The (beautiful) women alongside me in this film (Kate, Chiara) were almost enough to make me forget the presence of all those insolent and predatory little faggots, with their hairless adolescent bodies. I suddenly felt quite old. It was a challenge playing the role of Emmanuel, one which was genuinely pieced together, and therefore difficult to act because I've never fallen in love with a boy in my life. Here, I'm constantly surrounded, accompanied, followed, pursued, observed; I am exploited, desired, manipulated, toyed with, borrowed, in love, but terribly ALONE."

## **FRANÇOIS SAGAT**

"I admit that for Man at Bath, I somewhat forced my way in. I didn't even know if there was going to be a girl in it, I'd only heard them talk about boys, I just went for it! There was no script, I didn't always know when Christophe was filming, nor what he was filming. It made things very unreal, especially because we were shooting partly in New York, and I loved shooting like that. It wasn't the least bit stressful; on the contrary. And it was possible because Christophe knows that I know that he knows exactly what he wants. In other words, we trust each other. I haven't seen the film yet; I can't wait."

## **CHIARA MASTROIANNI**

"I never thought I'd find myself one day in front of a camera. I didn't want to be in front of the camera one day. The journey is short. I arrived in New York on a Tuesday, I left on a Sunday. I didn't know anything. I didn't get any answers in the end. I just had faith. Throughout the stay, strangers intimidated me. I thought again about the balcony, the hotel room, about Making Plans for Lena. I thought again about Christophe, about Chiara. I tried to imagine what the film would be like. I don't know."

## **DUSTIN SEGURA-SUAREZ**

"Gennevilliers (outside Paris), early spring, a few days during which I met and then left my lover in the film. It was he that left me, but it's me that goes away. Well no, I ask him to go and he disappears."

## **OMAR BEN SELLEM**

"My moment with the boys. APRIL 2010, I am in Hamlet by Koltès, in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. Christophe asks me to be in the film. I want to do it. He says, we will find a solution. We do. Sunday: Hamlet finishes at 7pm, my bag is packed, I leave for the airport from the back of the dressing room. 9pm: Atlanta to Paris. Monday: CDG, 11am. Shower, change, 3pm: on set. 5pm: Shooting begins. Monday to Tuesday 4am: Francois' soft voice, speaking endlessly on a cab ride from Gennevilliers to Boulevard Magenta, stressing about singing, Francois' very cute ass, Sebastien (my Cat Stevens) saving my "musical" ass, Marlboro Reds, three in the bed. Wednesday: 10am, Paris to Atlanta. 6pm: On stage for Hamlet. Thursday morning: The volcano stops all air traffic in Europe."

## **KATE MORAN**

"The only experience in front of a camera that I'd ever had before was about 10 years ago when I was fooling around with my sister taking my father's camera and replaying scenes from films that we knew by heart. The musical sequence in Girls was the one I liked most, it was the scene I most wanted to act out. With a spanking from François! That left a big impression on me."

## **RABAH ZAH**

"I had never acted or even considered acting until Christophe invited me to be in his film. As I've been a great admirer of his films for a long time, I was excited and honored to think that having a role in this film would allow me to intersect his work in even a small way. He described the character he wanted me to play and something of the character's circumstances, and he asked me to improvise some dialogue. I wrote a possible text to use, and I spoke/remembered it as well as I could during the filming, while also devising some spontaneous dialogue with Francois Sagat. The experience was fantastically interesting. Christophe, the actors, and the members of the crew made what I expected to be a very nerve-wracking situation feel strangely comfortable. I'm hugely grateful to have had the opportunity, and I hope that what I managed to do is in service to Christophe's work."

## **DENNIS COOPER**

FRANÇOIS SAGAT CHIARA MASTROIANNI

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( HOMME AU BAIN )

## CHIARA MASTROIANNI ACTRESS

2011	POULET AUX PRUNES by M SATRAPI et V PARONNAUD	1998	BRACCIA DI BURRO by Sergio CASTELLITTO LA LETTRE by Manoel de OLIVEIRA Jury Prize - Festival de Cannes 1999 LE TEMPS RETROUVÉ by Raoul RUIZ Official Selection - Festival de Cannes 1999 SIX PACK de Alain BERBERIAN
2010	MAN AT BATH by Christophe HONORÉ		
2009	MAKING PLANS FOR LENA by Christophe HONORÉ nomination for best actress - Globes de Cristal 2009		
2008	PARDON MY FRENCH by Sophie FILLIÈRES CRIME IS OUR BUSINESS by Pascal THOMAS	1997	À VENDRE by Laetitia MASSON
2007	PARK BENCHES by Bruno PODALYDÉS A CHRISTMAS TALE by Arnaud DESPLECHIN Official Selection - Festival de Cannes 2008 LOVE SONGS by Christophe HONORÉ Official Selection - Festival de Cannes 2007	1996	CAMELEONE by Benoit COHEN
2006	TOWARDS ZERO by Pascal THOMAS	1995	MY SEX LIFE...OR HOW I GOT INTO AN ARGUMENT by Arnaud DESPLECHIN Official Selection - Festival de Cannes 1996 LE JOURNAL D'UN SÉDUCTEUR by Danièle DUBROUX NOWHERE by Gregg ARAKI TROIS VIES ET UNE SEULE MORT by Raoul RUIZ Official Selection - Festival de Cannes 1996
2004	AKOIBON by Edouard BAER IL EST PLUS FACILE POUR UN CHAMEAU... by Valéria BRUNI-TEDESCHI	1994	PRÊT À PORTER by Robert ALTMAN N'OUBLIE PAS QUE TU VAS MOURIR by Xavier BEAUVOIS Jean Vigo Prize 1995 Jury Prize - Festival de Cannes 1995
2001	CARNAGES by Delphine GLEIZE Un Certain Regard section - Festival de Cannes 2002	1993	LA BELLE ÉTOILE by Antoine DESROSISIÈRES
2000	ZENO - LE PAROLE DI MOI PADRE by Francesca COMENCINI Un Certain Regard section - Festival de Cannes 2001 HOTEL by Mike FIGGIS	1992	MY FAVORITE SEASON by André TÉCHINÉ Nomination for best female newcomer - César 1994
1999	LA FAUTE AU VENT by Emmanuelle BERCOT		

## FRANÇOIS SAGAT ACTOR

2010	HOMME AU BAIN by Christophe HONORÉ LA ZOMBIE by Bruce Labruce
2009	SAW VI by Kevin Greuter PLAN CUL by Olivier NICKLAUS
2008	TELESCOPE BREAKERS FEAR
2007	LA NUDITE TOUTE NUE STRETCH FOLSOM LEATHER SHACKED UP H2O SPY QUEST 3 BREATHLESS FOLSOM FILTH
2006	BEDROOM EYES MANHATTAN CENTURION MUSCLE II - ALPHA ESCAPE FROM SAN FRANCISCO TOUGH AS NAILS ARABESQUE

## CHRISTOPHE HONORÉ DIRECTOR

2010	MAN AT BATH (Homme au Bain)
2008	MAKING PLANS FOR LENA (Non ma fille tu n'iras pas danser)
2007	THE BEAUTIFUL PERSON (La Belle Personne)
2007	HÔTEL KUNTZ short film
2006	LOVE SONGS (Les Chansons d'amour) Official selection - Festival de Cannes 2007 César for Best Music - 2008
2005	IN PARIS (Dans Paris) Directors' Fortnight, Cannes 2006
2004	MY MOTHER (Ma Mère)
2002	SEVENTEEN TIMES CECILE CASSARD (17 fois Cécile Cassard) Un Certain Regard section - Festival de Cannes 2002
2001	NOUS DEUX short film

## CREW

Director	CHRISTOPHE HONORÉ
Producer	JUSTIN TAURAND
Production manager	CLAIRE BURNOUD
Casting	SEBASTIEN LEVY
First assistant director	FRANCK MORAND
Location manager	NATHALIE AUBARET
Photography	STEPHANE VALLEE
Sound	NICOLAS WASCHKOVSKI
Head electrician	ANTOINE DUCEP
Grip	FREDERIC OLIVER
Set designer	SAMUEL DESHORS
Make-up	THOMAS MAJOROSI
Editing	CHANTAL HYMANS
Sound editing	VALERIE DE LOOF
Mixing	THIERRY DELOR

A Les Films du Bélier production.

In coproduction with the Théâtre de Gennevilliers.

With backing from the Centre national des arts plastiques (Image/Mouvement)

Ministère de la culture et de la communication

With support of the Procirep and the Angoa

## CAST

FRANÇOIS SAGAT	EMMANUEL
CHIARA MASTROIANNI	THE ACTRESS
DUSTIN SEGURA-SUAREZ	DUSTIN
OMAR BEN SELLEM	OMAR
RABAH ZAH	RABAH
KATE MORAN	KATE
LAHCEN EL MAZOUZI	HICHAM
ANDREAS LEFLAMAND	ANDREAS
RONALD PIWELE	RONALD
SEBASTIAN D'AZEGLIO	THE BOY WITH MUSTACHE
SÉBASTIEN POUDEROUX	KATE'S FIANCE
DENNIS COOPER	ROBIN

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