

ADCB FILMS PRESENTS

**CATHERINE FROT
ALBERT DUPONTEL**

THE VILLAIN

**A FILM BY
ALBERT DUPONTEL**

WITH BOULI LANNERS NICOLAS MARIÉ PHILIPPE DUQUESNE BERNARD FARCY CHRISTINE MURILLO



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ILLUSTRATION: MARCEL

SCREENPLAY AND DIALOGUES ALBERT DUPONTEL PRODUCED BY CATHERINE BOZORGAN ORIGINAL MUSIC CHRISTOPHE JULIEN PHOTOGRAPHY PIERRE-YVES BASTARD CAMERA OPERATOR STÉPHANE MARTIN
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR MICHAEL WIEBER COSTUME DESIGNER PIERRE-YVES GAVRAUD SET DESIGNER BERTRAND SEITZ SOUND JEAN MINONDO GERMAIN BOULAY CYRIL HOLTZ
EDITING CHRISTOPHE PINEL PRODUCTION MANAGER YVON CROUIN WRITERS ADOLPHE BRUNO STUCCO CANAL+ FRANCE 3 CINEMA EURO MEDIA TELEVISION COPRODUCTION
WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF CANAL+ CINECINEMA AND FRANCE TELEVISIONS IN ASSOCIATION WITH LA BANQUE POSTALE IMAGE 2
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STUDIO CANAL

ADCB Films
presents

GATHERINE FROT ALBERT DUPONTEL

**THE
VILLAIN**

SCREENPLAY AND DIALOGUES ALBERT DUPONTEL

WITH
BOULI LANNERS NICOLAS MARIÉ PHILIPPE DUQUESNE CHRISTINE MURILLO
WITH THE KIND PARTICIPATION OF BERNARD FARCY

AN ADCB FILMS PRODUCTION
A STUDIOCANAL - FRANCE 2 CINÉMA - EURO MEDIA TÉLÉVISION COPRODUCTION
WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF FRANCE 2, CANAL+ AND CINÉCINÉMA
IN ASSOCIATION WITH SOFICA LA BANQUE POSTALE IMAGE 2

PRODUCED BY CATHERINE BOZORGAN

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THE STORY

The Villain is a bank robber who returns after a 20-year absence to hide out at his mother Maniette's place. She's naïve and extremely religious – it's the perfect hideout. But this time, Maniette discovers her son's true nature. She decides to set him on the straight and narrow, triggering a battle between mother and son as comic as it is unrelenting.



INTERVIEW WITH **ALBERT DUPONTEL**

Where did the idea for the Villain come from?

Initially, the idea was to tell a serious story about redemption but something must have happened along the way.

As in your previous films, the moral fable is never far away...

The characters' motives are legitimate but the way they express them is a little excessive, I'll admit. It's a fable performed with ferocity...

Why did you cast Catherine Frot?

I really liked the work she did on ODETTE TOULEMONDE by Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt where I saw a sweet craziness that I didn't suspect. In life and in work, it's like a standalone character that fits perfectly with Maniette's.

Why didn't you choose an actor who was the same age as the character?

I thought of Catherine for the role very early on. An actress the same age as the character would have brought more realism and less comedy. I really needed Catherine's "clown" to make this moral story work.

Did you have her in mind when you were writing?

Amazingly, she was the first actor I thought of to play Maniette. But I did imagine her as an old woman and I wasn't sure – far from it – that she'd like the idea. In the scene with the real estate guy played by Bouli Lanners, it was in "hearing" her in the role that I moved forward with the dialogue. I'm a bit like Joan of Arc in that respect!

How did you prepare the character?

I let her get on with it and in particular, I gave her the time she needed to find her way, to find that “clown” of an old woman. She’s a great actress, you have to leave her to it, let her look around. And I wasn’t disappointed. She throws herself into a role, she’s rigorous, painstaking, very precise and on top of all that, she has fun. That was what I’d hoped for – in a free and personal composition. She exceeded all my expectations. I was delighted.



What about the other actors?

I really like Bouli Lanners. He’s extremely talented, sincere, off-beat with unusual humanity – his ELDORADO really knocked me out. I was very lucky to get him as he doesn’t make so many films.

I need to have Nicolas Marié in all my films, and he has been since DÉsirÉ, a short film I made in '92. He really gives his all and he’s exceptionally enthusiastic and full of energy. He has no limits as far as I know and others are starting to notice...



Philippe Duquesne has an extremely rich nature, he’s a natural clown and is astonishingly rigorous in his flights of fancy.



Bernard Farcy is an actor with a great deal of potential combined with a natural melancholy that he skillfully hides in his other films. I used that a lot in the small role he kindly agreed to play.

Christine Murillo is inventive, rich and generous – in a word, marvelous. Her surreal arrival in the Villain’s bedroom is one of my favorite scenes.

A word about Pénélope?

She is the first minor character in the film that I thought of! I was looking for a pet that could have been around during the Villain’s childhood, and who would also be drunk on revenge. I should point out that she did all her own stunts, even though we were considering using 3D and all kinds of puppetry.





After four films, are you still able to handle the transition from behind the camera to before it?

My idols have always been the great actor-directors – Chaplin of course, but also people like Woody Allen, Welles, Tati, Guitry and Keaton – and in my infinite megalomania, I've never stopped wanting to be like them. But I have to admit I'm a cheat! I work, I rehearse and I'm helped out by my loyal collaborator, Philippe Uchan, which directs me down to the last detail. Moreover, getting out there and doing it brings me closer to the other actors and helps me draw a lot out of them.

And at one point in the film, you put on your own make-up?

That's in the Villain's twisted logic and in the similar logic of the film. Wearing a mask is easier for me than performing bare-faced. I'd do it again.

What was it like writing the script?

As usual, a huge exercise in letting go mentally put into practice by locking myself at home, combined with DVDs, books and music, with one or two outings per week to go drinking with a few contacts including the film's producer, Catherine Bozorgan, who came close to a nervous breakdown several times. And then several months later, there was a script to read, although not necessarily to shoot...

In almost all your films, the relationship between children and their parents is central. Could you tell us about that?

We are not the children our parents think we are and our parents are not those we imagine. And it's from this quid pro quo that what we call filial love is born.

Why do you often set your films in an undefined spatio-temporal universe? In THE VILLAIN, there is no mention of the country in which the story takes place – even if it's obvious – nor of the era.

I think it's about giving the film a chance to take off, to distance itself from this shared reality which is sometimes so tenacious.

Do you have any visual influences?

I'd have to say that I especially enjoy films by the great English-speaking independents: Terry Gilliam, the Coen brothers in their heyday, the Pythons, Paul Thomas Anderson, Mackendrick with his comedies and plenty more besides. But I should make it clear that these are references and in no way do I compare myself to these people.

And if one had to situate this film in movie terms?

It could be Tex Avery meets Franck Capra. But that's only to answer your question.



This film seems less “trash” than its precedents, less than BERNIE in any case.

Granted, it's less trash but it is more nuanced. BERNIE expressed a very sincere anger against the world around us. In the same way, THE VILLAIN expresses a real tenderness for people. As with BERNIE, I have no wish to suppress my current humor. And we'll see about what happens later.

Since BERNIE, you seem to be developing both a standpoint and a visual universe. Are they compatible?

No, you're right. I won't do it anymore!

But?

Instead of creating a traditional comedy, I talk about things that move me, that aren't necessarily funny in fact, which I then twist through the script, the dialogues, the casting and the camera.

I think that it's the most sober of my films but the camera remains a fascinating tool. And moreover, in this film, I wanted it to serve the comedy and Catherine in particular.

All your characters, even the worst of them, have a lot of humanity. Why?

Because I love them all. I make excuses for them all. And I owe it to myself to "save" them all.

There's a real connection between the characters of Bernie, Roland, Darius and the Villain.

No relationship in particular and every relationship in general. I'm just me, but with time, I'm finding that less and less intolerable.



A word about the crew?

Most of them were involved in LOCKED OUT and I was delighted to be working with them again. I'm not sure if the opposite is true – you'd have to ask them. Well, ask the survivors at any rate.

What about the sets on the film?

The house was the main set where the confrontation happens. We worked a lot with the rooms and the props so that this old-fashioned world with its outmoded colors would provide the background to Maniette's character.

Most of the music is original. Who composed it?

A young composer called Christophe Julien, who was very responsive to what I wanted. We wanted HARRY POTTER-style themes or other ersatz cinema music that young people hear all the time, but which would make it a little deviant, a little cunning. A little villainous, if you like!

The special effects?

They were designed by Mikros, as for the two previous films. It's very efficient and precise work, carried out by a very inventive team. Their biggest challenge was the scene with the cats. In the end, it's impossible to say where they were involved which means, and not being sure, the producer didn't want to pay them. That'll teach them for being talented.

Did you have any problems?

None, to be perfectly honest, which worried me throughout the film. It's worrying when everything goes well because it's not normal.

An idea for your next movie?

I've been working on it for several months. It's a highly-unlikely love story, but then what love story isn't?



MANIETTE BEFORE...

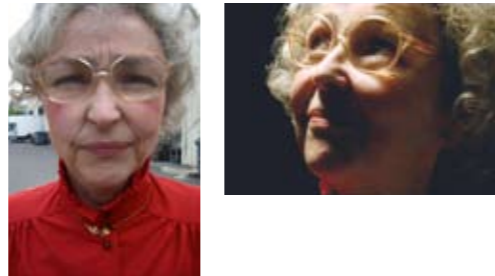


IN THE BEGINNING,
THERE WAS A PORTRAIT
BY DAVID HOCKNEY...

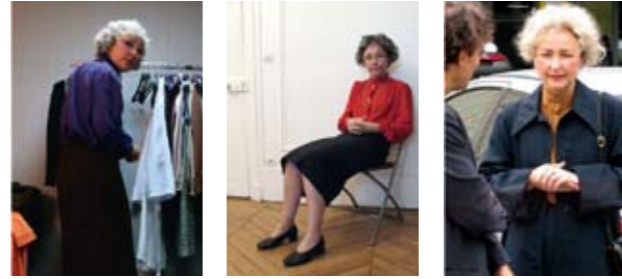
1ST SERIES OF TESTS



2ND SERIES OF TESTS



3RD SERIES OF TESTS



4TH SERIES OF TESTS



...MANIETTE





INTERVIEW WITH **CATHERINE FROT**

You play the role of Maniette, the Villain's mother. Who is she?

Maniette is a sweet old lady who wouldn't hurt a fly. She wears her heart on her sleeve. She's almost a caricature of an old lady fighting tooth and nail to save her neighborhood from destruction. Her son is nasty piece of work, a villain, and she decides to put him on the straight and narrow. A struggle between good and evil.

Why did Albert Dupontel choose you?

We got on very well in ODETTE TOULEMONDE but I was still surprised at his suggestion because Maniette is 78 years old! True, I enjoy transformations and I've already played some very diverse roles but with this character, it was extreme. I still don't know why he chose me. With Albert, I really like the combination of truth and falsehood.

How would you define this film?

It's a very funny comedy but it's also a story of love and hate. There's a real Tex Avery feel to it but also a sense of pure tragedy.

What were the different stages in your transformation?

There were many stages and quite a lot of work upstream. I wanted to find the right make-up, the right hair, the right look and behavior, the little hunchback, the accessories, her little mackintosh. I needed to fix on all that. Albert really gave me the time to work with Chantal Léothier on the make-up and Pierre-Yves Gayraud with the costumes.



Who inspired your performance?

Helen Mirren in *THE QUEEN* by Stephen Frears, David Hockney's portrait of his mother, my own grandma and all the faces of the old ladies I pass in the street. Looking back, when I saw the film *UP* by Pixar, I automatically identified Maniette with Carl, the amazing old grandpa who fulfils his dreams at 78.



Did you enjoy this preparation work?

Yes, I did enjoy the preparation which lasted two months. We did lots of tests and maintained a strong dialogue between the three of us; Albert, producer Catherine Bozorgan and myself, and I really found the character, just before shooting started. Afterwards, I didn't worry about it anymore and just threw myself into it.

Playing an old lady of 78 must have nonetheless been quite a challenge?

I didn't want to deliver a performance but to enter into the character and embody her as best as possible, as accurately as possible and as truthfully as possible. I always put a lot of energy into my roles and Maniette has a big personality. She's combative and mean – in the end, it's like mother, like son.

Did that image of old age frighten you?

Initially, I thought it was funny, and then afterwards it was scary. It was like looking at a picture of myself as an old lady. It was breathtaking. In fact, it was like a foretaste – I looked at it and I felt it intimately, which was profoundly disturbing. It was something I had to do and I needed some time to come to terms with the idea. But for an actress, it was a pretty unusual adventure.



Tell us about acting with Albert Dupontel.

I have admired Albert for a long time and I know all his films. I really enjoy his work, whether he's working with Becker or Schmitt. In *THE VILLAIN*, his direction was very clear because he had a very precise vision of what he wanted and I had to get into his universe. I chose it, I wanted to do it and I think it went very well.

How would you define his universe?

He's dreadfully funny and dreadfully serious. He has this urgency and this poetry about him. I love his enthusiasm and energy. He is full of life and always seeking more. He's an artist who turns things upside-down.

What do you think of the dialogues?

I think that Albert is very drawn to British cinema. In THE VILLAIN there's something of THE LADYKILLERS or of WHISKY GALORE, those old films of the 1950s by Alexander Mackendrick. There is also a touch of Monty Python. Once again, it's great laughs and great seriousness and the dialogues are memorable:

"You don't walk around with a bullet in your arm, it's not healthy."

"If only killing me were enough to make me die!"

"When I want to kill you, you complain; when I want to be nice, you complain too!"

"I'm not being mean to annoy you, it's so you'll die."

What was the shoot like?

There was a lot of urgency and incredible speed. You have to work fast because he has these visions and you have to get into the performance. During the shoot, I was working opposite Albert the Villain with his face, his nose and his carnivorous smile. I felt like a puppet and I liked that.

You seem to be something of an adventurer...

I like new experiences and I like it when things are turned upside-down. Albert turned me upside-down in his own way. He's one of a kind.

How do you think actors work?

I'd like to quote Stanislavski: "Man has within him all the elements of all human faculties for good and evil. His task is to discover those traits he must develop in his character." And: "The audience who takes falsehood for truth has a sense of truth."

What will you remember from this experience?

A taste for risk.

What would you say if you had the chance to do it again?

Jackpot!

What is your secret for such beautiful skin?

You just have to take the latex off.



CAST

MANIETTE
THE VILLAIN
KORAZY
DOC WILLIAM
Miss SOMOZA
INSPECTOR ELLIOT
THE PAINTER
KORAZY'S SECRETARY
THE PAINTER COLLEAGUE
HUGUETTE
SIMONE
RAYMOND
HIPPOLYTE
LÉONIE
Mr COZIC
Mrs COZIC
THE VILLAIN'S FATHER

Catherine FROT
Albert DUPONTEL
Bouli LANNERS
Nicolas MARIÉ
Christine MURILLO
Bernard FARCY
Philippe DUQUESNE
Xavier ROBIC
Husky KIHAL
Jacqueline HERVÉ
Jenny BELLAY
René MORARD
André CHAUMEAU
Jeanne CELLARD
Philippe UCHAN
Brigitte AUBRY
José FUMANAL

Directed by
Produced by
First assistant director
Script supervisor
Casting
Production manager
Production administrator
Unit production manager
Assistant production manager
Cinematography
Camera operator
First assistant operator
Photographers

Making-of
Sound

Albert DUPONTEL
Catherine BOZORGAN
Michaël VIGER
Chantal PERNECKER
Jeanne MILLET
Yvon CRENN
Fabrice TOUZE
Albert BLASIUS
Amélie SUPAU
Pierre-Yves BASTARD
Stéphane MARTIN
Lise DREVILLON
Catherine CABROL
Patrick ROBERT
Julien BOEUF
Jean MINONDO

Costume designer
Chief wardrobe
Key make-up Catherine Frot
Chief make-up artist
Chef maquilleur effets spéciaux
Key hair stylist Catherine Frot

Chief hair stylist
Set designer
Stunt coordinator
Key grip
Film editor
Assistant film editor
Chief sound engineers

Mixing

Original music

CREW

Pierre-Yves GAYRAUD
Karine CHARPENTIER
Chantal LÉOTHIER
Françoise QUILICHINI
Jean-Christophe SPADACCINI
Joëlle DOMINIQUE
M.T.L. PERRUQUE
Frédérique ARGUELLO
Bertrand SEITZ
Christian HENING
François COMPAROT
Christophe PINEL
Carlos PINTO
Germain BOULAY
Serge ROUQUAIROL
Cyril HOLTZ
Damien LAZZERINI
Christophe JULIEN