

FROM THE 2005 CESAR WINNER

SPECIAL JURY PRIZE - MOSTRA 2007



the secret of the grain



venezia 64.
"Marcello Mastroianni" Award for
Best Young Actor or Actress



venezia 64.
Special Jury Prize

THE NEW FILM BY ABDELLATIF KECHICHE





HIRSCH AND PATHE RENN PRODUCTION PRESENT:

ABDELLATIF KECHICHE'S

the secret of the grain

Featuring

HABIB BOUFARES, HAFSIA HERZI, FARIDAH BENKHETACHE,
AND ABDELHAMID AKTOUCHE

Run time: 2:31

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SYNOPSIS

The city of Sète, on the harbor.

Mister Beiji, a weary sixty years old, is still grinding it out at the shipyard, in a job that has become more painful as the years have worn on. A divorced head of family, he desperately tries to remain close to his loved-ones, a task made the more difficult because of family break-ups and seething tensions which seem to be about to erupt, and which financial difficulties only exacerbate. In this delicate part of his life, it seems like everything contributes to his feeling of uselessness. He has carried the weight of what he sees as his failure for a long time and his only thought is to overcome it by founding his own business, a restaurant. But it isn't going to be easy. His income is insufficient and irregular, and falls far short of what he'll need to realize his ambition. That doesn't keep him from dreaming about it, talking about it, mostly to his family. That family is, little by little, drawn together around the plan, which has for one and all taken on the symbolic value of a quest for a better life. Thanks to their can-do attitude and all their hard work, the dream will come true...

Well, almost...



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I began with a popular fantasy, the kind of story they like to tell about in the projects, the myth of those who "made it," or in other words, those who escaped the modern slavery of a nowhere career path by starting their own businesses. And I wanted to treat it with a certain irony, unbridled the story in the way you can with a narrative tale.

So this is an adventure story, one where the narration is closer to that of a tale, with all the digressions, suspensions, etc. that implies, rather than an action film per se.

He is old, poor and Arab and he wants to create something big in order to regain his dignity and help his loved ones get a leg up. Even as I confined myself to concentrating and maintaining interest in this central action, which because of its euphoric and symbolic value was very important to me, paradoxically, I allowed the parentheses to freely pile up, like so many escapades justified by the simple pleasure of contemplating the events in the daily life of a family drama.

In the end, that is the dimension which interests me most. It's about getting close to these characters who are my loved ones, in order to show little things from everyday life. That's why I had to adopt a singular narrative rhythm. Generally, an ongoing action doesn't allow you to stay on one thing too long, but a real family meal or the beginnings of an emotion showing through on someone's face needs screen time to happen.

This marriage between a novelistic dimension and the accurate portrayal of the characters and their environment is crucial to me, in part because I belong to the milieu described and so I am emotionally invested in it. But more importantly, it is a reaction to the still all-too-frequently broad and schematic portraits, I wanted to show all the complexities of this Franco-Arabic family, all of them deeply involved in the opening of this family restaurant, and therefore looking to a future which does not necessarily mean the denial of their own identity.

It seemed important to me to make a frank and energetic plea for the right to be different, without falling into the trap of the blithe and approximate stigma inherent in exoticism. A fine line to walk, and an essential one, which I believe I am particularly predisposed to because of my own emotionally invested point of view.

Abdellatif Kechiche



ABDELLATIF KECHICHE FILMOGRAPHY

DIRECTOR

- 2006 LA GRAINE ET LE MULET (THE SECRET OF THE GRAIN) Venice Mostra 2007
- 2003 L'ESQUIVE (GAMES OF LOVE AND CHANCE) César 2005 (Best Film, Best Director, Best New Actress)
- 2001 LA FAUTE A VOLTAIRE (BLAME IT ON VOLTAIRE) Venice Mostra 2000 (Golden Lion for First Film, Youth Award)

ACTOR

- 2005 SORRY, HATERS by Jeff Stanzler
- 2001 LA BOITE MAGIQUE (THE MAGIC BOX) by Ridha Behi
- 1996 MARTEAU ROUGE by E. Plumet et L. Phan - LE SECRET OF POLICHINELLE by Franck Landron
- 1992 BEZNESS (BUSINESS) by Nouri Bouzid Best Actor Festival Francophone de Namur 1992
- 1991 UN VAMPIRE AU PARADIS (A VAMPIRE IN PARADISE) by Abdelkrim Bahloul
- 1987 LES INNOCENTS (THE INNOCENTS) by André Téchiné - MUTISME by Philippe Ayache
- 1984 UN THE A LA MENTHE by Abdelkrim Bahloul

CAST

SLIMANE Habib BOUFARES • **RYM** Hafsia HERZI • **KARIMA** Faridah BENKHETACHE • **HAMID** Abdelhamid AKTOUCHE
SOUAD Bouraouia MARZOUK • **JULIA** Alice HOURI • **SERGUEÏ** Cyril FAVRE • **LILIA** Leila D'ISSERNIO • **KADER** Abdelkader
DJELOULLI • **MARIO** Bruno LOCHET • **JOSE** Olivier LOUSTAU • **MAJID** Sami ZITOUNI • **OLFA** Sabrina OUAZANI
RIADH Mohamed BENABDESLEM • **LATIFA** Hatika KARAOUI • **HENRI** Henri RODRIGUEZ • **SARAH** Nadia TAOUIL

CREW

DIRECTOR Abdellatif KECHICHE
SCREENPLAY Abdellatif KECHICHE
ADAPTATION AND DIALOG Abdellatif KECHICHE and Ghalya LACROIX
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Lubomir BAKCHEV
EDITOR Ghalya LACROIX, Camille TOUBKIS
SETS Benoît BAROUH
COSTUMES Maria BELOSO HALL
SOUND Nicolas WASCHKOWSKI, Olivier LAURENT, Eric LEGARÇON, Eric ARMBRUSTER, Jean-Paul HURIER
FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Carlos DA FONSECA PARSOTAM
CONTINUITY Dominique ARCE
CASTING Monya GALBY
PRODUCTION MANAGER Benoît PILOT
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER Pierre GRUNSTEIN
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER Nathalie RHEIMS
PRODUCED BY Claude BERRI

A HIRSCH / PATHE RENN PRODUCTION • Co-produced with FRANCE 2 CINEMA

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