



ANAÏS
DEMOUSTIER

FESTIVAL DE CANNES
CANNES PREMIERE
2023 OFFICIAL SELECTION

VINCENT
LACOSTE

ALONG CAME LOVE

A FILM BY
KATELL QUILLÉVÉRÉ



LES FILMS DU BÉLIER AND LES FILMS PELLÉAS PRESENT



**ANAÏS
DEMOUSTIER**

FESTIVAL DE CANNES
CANNES PREMIERE
2023 OFFICIAL SELECTION

**VINCENT
LACOSTE**

ALONG CAME LOVE

**A FILM BY
KATELL QUILLÉVÉRÉ**

WITH

MORGAN BAILEY HÉLIOS KARYO JOSSE CAPET PAUL BEAUREPAIRE MARGOT RINGARD OLDRA

WRITTEN BY

KATELL QUILLÉVÉRÉ AND GILLES TAURAND

PRODUCED BY

DAVID THION, JUSTIN TAURAND AND PHILIPPE MARTIN

FRANCE / 2023 / 2H03 / SOUND : 5.1 / FRENCH

INTERNATIONAL SALES

CHARADES
PIERRE MAZARS
SENA CILINGIROGLU
sales@charades.eu
0788521564

INTERNATIONAL PRESSE

RENDEZ-VOUS-PRESSE

VIVIANA ANDRIANI
viviana@rv-press.com
0680168139
AURELIE DARD
aurelie@rv-press.com



SYNOPSIS

1947. On a beach in Normandy, Madeleine, a waitress and young mother, meets François, a wealthy, and cultivated student. They hit it off immediately, as though it were fate. But as their destinies intertwine, it's obvious what Madeline wants to leave behind, while the world that François is running from is only slowly revealed.

INTERVIEW WITH KATELL QUILLÉVÉRÉ

What was the starting point for the plot?

The starting point is the story of my grandmother, whom I was very close to. She always made me feel like she had some hidden, secret story. I was also vaguely aware that I shouldn't ask any questions, that I should respect her silence. That is, until someone outside my family, who happened to be my partner, helped me uncover the truth.

In occupied France, my grandmother had a relationship with a German soldier and got pregnant. She wound up a single mother at the age of 17. She met my grandfather four years later, on a beach in Brittany. He was from a more privileged background than she was. He married her against the advice of his parents, and he adopted her child. The secret of the child's true paternity didn't come out until much later. My grandmother was in her 80s, and my grandfather had been dead for a long time. The mystery of their relationship will never cease to intrigue me.

So it's a rather personal starting point. After that, my imagination took over, and the script became fiction...

And how did you begin writing that fiction?

I wrote the script with Gilles Taurand, who I had already worked with on the adaptation of "Heal the Living," the novel by Maylis de Kerangal.

The central feature that drove our imaginations in writing the script was the mystery of the relationship: relationship as a fiction that we invent together, that we decide to believe in and devote ourselves to (for reasons that sometimes escape us). Love is "madness together," as Roland Barthes wrote.

What would bring together a young waitress, an "unmarried mother," as we used to say, and a melancholic and idle student from a good family?

We imagined that there was something precipitous about their chance encounter, as if they were both on the run. Immediately, probably unconsciously, a part of themselves recognizes itself in the other. Probably the wounded part, the inconsolable and ashamed part they had to hide away in order to survive.

Their relationship had a very difficult start, but from that, our two anti-heroes of the war become creators, builders, in their own way. For them, building a "normal" family is a real challenge to the established order. François adopts young Daniel, who changes his last name, and the three of them are carried away, condemned to invent a form of love that is theirs alone, beyond their social and sexual differences.

The title of the film evokes Douglas Sirk. But this story is much more than just a drama. It's surprisingly varied...

The film is a variation on a genre: melodrama. It contains everything that makes a melodrama: characters who unite when the whole world is against them, a romance that moves back and forth between joy and distress, the constant threat of disaster...

And at the same time, there's a lot in the film that is contradictory to the genre, particularly its modest approach to emotion. The form does not impose emotion. Its aesthetic is often the opposite of what you'd expect from a typical drama. The entire film was shot handheld. There's no sophisticated machinery at work. We used natural locations rather than studio sets. In short, everything was pared down and very modern. A lot of reenactment work was done, particularly on the sets and costumes, but the idea was to film the story as though it were taking place today.

I believed from the start that for this film to succeed, I would have to bring its content and its form into tension, combine opposing and



contradictory influences... And bring my love for Pialat and Sirk into the conversation. It was important not to have everything converge. On the contrary, I had to find ambivalence and surprise. That was my way of avoiding the pit-fall of a 'frozen' reenactment, and of making the past interact with the present.

The end of the film is also different from the typical melodrama: it's truly radiant and resilient. It goes beyond tragedy, towards redemption.

How did you design the staging of the early black-and-white scenes, where the women are having their heads shaved?

In France, at the end of the World War II, women accused of fraternizing with the German enemy had their heads shaved in public. The trauma of that public shaving is the foundation of Madeleine's journey, so it was important that the viewer experience it with her. I watched a lot of archival footage

of these women having their heads shaved in order to think about how to show it in fiction. But I soon realized that I could never live up to the truth, to the power of that archival footage. Plus, I had lost all desire to reenact it.

So I decided to edit footage from the French, American, and British archives...

It became very important for me to anchor my fiction in that reality. I felt it was important for the viewer to really get a sense of how traumatic this form of violence was. It still hasn't been sufficiently thought through and processed by our society. In fact, most of the footage I used in the film had never been seen by anyone.

From that point, the meaning of my film became clear as well. What happens to a woman when she's been through this? When she goes home, terribly humiliated, with a shaved head?

It's in that aftermath of that trauma that the fiction begins. *ALONG CAME LOVE* tells the story of a woman, Madeleine, who has lived

through this trauma. It imagines her emotional, sexual, and social journey towards resilience. Madeleine's drive to live always prevails.

The post-war period was a unique time. People were trying to move on from a war from which no one emerged entirely unsoiled. Everyone had a secret wound... It's a time haunted by ghosts...

And beyond that era and its puritanism, this post-war period speaks to issues that we're wrestling with today. All of us wear a mask, and our sexuality escapes us because we did not choose it. Yet it plays a major role in our lives, it drives us, even though we don't choose it. That's what this film is about: how our deepest desires determine the course of our lives.

The themes are indeed contemporary: lies, shame, and the unleashing of hatred, which resonates with our current era.

It gets at what human society, no matter the era, systemically generates. Models meant to control people are set up, and people who don't line up with those models are made to feel ashamed. And the hatred of the other is always intimately connected to that shame. The hatred of the other is always about rejecting some obscure part of ourselves that frightens us.

...Because desire and shame are two sides of the same coin.

Yes. In fact, that relationship between desire and the world is at the heart of the film's musical direction. Amine Bouhafa, (the film's composer) and I really tried to express that connection. The music that accompanies the suffering of the women who have had their heads shaved comes back not only when Madeleine and François' secrets catch up with them, but also when their deepest desires resurface. The trumpet cries accompany their most intimate suffering, as well as their pleasure. And in a very different register, we came up with a second theme, the union theme, which is played during Madeleine and François' first kiss. It comes back each time they go through an ordeal, when they're back together... As they progress through life, the theme becomes

richer, fleshed out by their trials and travails, and by the maturity of their love.

The scenes that address desire and sexuality are central to the film. The threesome scene comes to mind, or the encounter in the public urinal area...

In my opinion, the best sex scenes in movies are ones that are clearly linked to the plot - there's something at stake for the story -- or manage to express something about the characters that is otherwise inexpressible. In the threesome love scene, Madeleine and François' closeness is expressed as never before. They're putting themselves at risk, together, in order to try to overcome their sexual differences, but they fail. In the public urinal scene, I wanted François, just this once, to be shown just completely letting himself go, as if he could finally be himself in the arms of this young man.

Did you write the script with Anaïs Demoustier and Vincent Lacoste in mind?

I didn't write it with any particular actors in mind. Sarah Teper and I did the casting afterwards. I was looking for actors in their early thirties, and Vincent and Anaïs are among the most talented of their generation. I wanted to give them roles that weren't like them, so that they would be surprised, and the audience would be surprised along with them. I asked Vincent to really move in his acting. He does a very delicate job of composition and manages to reach his character's deepest truth. His ability to really let go just blew me away. Anaïs' role, as Madeleine, was very difficult, because the audience needs to feel ambivalent about the character. She really impressed me. She's an exceptionally precise, deep actress.

Do you let the actors have a say in the staging, especially for this kind of scene?

All the time. Sometimes they're better than I am at finding a solution to a scene that's stalling. After a while, they know their character better than I do. They aren't just performers; they're creative partners in their own right.

Beyond shame and desire, love is the central issue of the film. A little boy vows to be loved by his mother, and we wait to see if his wish will come true...

In my view, that's the common thread: how love flows despite all the prohibitions generated by shame. There's something very painful in this mother's relationship to her son, but the bond that develops between François and Daniel compensates for this. *ALONG CAME LOVE* is about the time it takes Madeleine to allow herself to finally love her son, this constant reminder of her mistake. It's also about the time it takes for Madeleine and François to invent their own love story, off the beaten path. Love carries each character in the film. You can be a mother and be devoid of maternal instinct, because a trauma is repressing it. You can be a great father without being the biological father. You can be a couple and love each other deeply in spite of your sexual differences. The love story that Vincent and Madeleine create is profoundly modern, and it raises very contemporary questions.

The film is also unique in how it addresses the passage of time: almost twenty years in two hours of film... Daniel is played by three different actors. That was a risky move.

Yes, I came back to the novelistic, elliptical construction that I explored in my film *SUZANNE*, and I pushed it further. I'm fascinated by the idea of seeing my characters grow up and age, of capturing a form of truth that can only be transmitted over time, and all within the constraints imposed by working with just two hours of film. It's a wonderful challenge. Daniel and Jeanne are both the innocent victims of secrets - how do they find their way beyond those secrets? Only the passage of time can help us get at those questions.

A family, like a country, always has an official history -- the one you want to tell your children -- and another one that's more hidden away, but which is just as important. It's a truth that sometimes has to be dragged into the light.

This is what Daniel achieves as he grows up. He is saved by his resistance to lying. His character is dark and yet very resilient. As for Jeanne, she will undoubtedly find out about her father's story, his drama hidden deep in his library...

In the end, beyond the obstacles they encounter, perhaps even in spite of them, Madeleine and François are able to convey their truth. Zweig puts it so well:

"Only if you catch fire will you know the world around you. Because it is only in the place where the secret acts that life also begins. So catch fire!"





CAST

Madeleine	Anaïs Demoustier
François	Vincent Lacoste
Jimmy	Morgan Bailey
Daniel 5 ans	Hélios Karyo
Daniel 10 ans	Josse Capet
Daniel 18 ans	Paul Beaurepaire
Jeanne	Margot Ringard Oldra

CREW

Directed by	Katell Quillévéré
Written by	Katell Quillévéré and Gilles Taurand
Producers	David Thion, Justin Taurand and Philippe Martin
Co-producers	Jean-Yves Roubin, Cassandre Warnauts
Art Director	Héliér Cisterne
Original Score	Amine Bouhafa
DOP	Tom Harari
Editor	Jean-Baptiste Morin
Production design	Florian Sanson
Costume design	Rachèle Raoult
Sound department	Thomas Grimm-Landsberg David Vranken Benjamin Viau
Casting	Sarah Teper
Assistant director	Nicolas Guilleminot
Script Supervisor	Anaïs Sergeant
Production Manager	Séphora Mayer-Esquieu
Production director	Hélène Bastide
Produced by	Les Films Pelléas, Les Films du Bélier and Frakas Productions
Co-produced by	Gaumont France 2 Cinéma Pictanovo with the support of La région Hauts-de-France Proximus VOO et Be TV RTBF (Télévision Belge) Beside Productions Canal+ La région Île-de-France
With the support of	France Télévisions Ciné+ Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée La région Bretagne Media Creative Europe de l'Union Européenne Tax Shelter du Gouvernement Fédéral Belge via BESIDE Tax Shelter La SACEM
With the support of	Centre du Cinéma et de l'Audiovisuel de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles
With the participation of	Wallimage (La Wallonie)
In association with	Charades La Banque Postale Image 16 Cinémage 17 Cinécap 6
Developped with the support of	Bleu et Jaune Productions 13 Cinémage Développement 14 et 15 Cinéventure Développement 5 et 6
Distribution France	Gaumont
International Sales	Charades