LET IT RAIN
(PARLEZ-MOI DE LA PLUIE)
A FILM DIRECTED BY AGNÈS JAOUI
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Agathe Villanova is a feminist and recent entrant to the political scene. She returns to her childhood home in the South of France to spend ten days helping her sister Florence sort out their mother’s affairs following her death a year earlier.

Agathe doesn’t like the region and left it as soon as she could, but for reasons of gender balance in electoral lists, she’s been parachuted back there for the next elections.

The house is home to Florence, her husband and her children. There is also Mimouna, the housekeeper whom the Villanovas brought back from Algeria when it became independent.

Mimouna’s son, Karim, and his friend Michel Ronsard decide to make a documentary about Agathe Villanova, for a collection of programs on “Successful Women”.

It’s August. It’s grey and it’s raining. It’s not normal. But then again, nothing is normal....
LET IT RAIN is your third feature film. Did you approach it differently to the first two?

Agnès Jaoui: Yes and no. I was perhaps more relaxed. With experience, you realize that nothing is definitive, that you can redo things — differently — and that each decision is less important than you thought. And I was surrounded by people I’ve already worked with; a top-notch crew that I trusted. I think I’ve also made progress in the way I get what I want from the actors. They come from very different backgrounds, some are very experienced, others less so, or not at all, but we were all on the same wavelength, we were all making the same film, and that was a real pleasure.

Are you still as attached to sequence shots?

A.J.: I have a complex when it comes to cutting, same as I do with math! I do as many sequence shots as possible because I’m not very keen on over-edited films, in any case to tell our kind of stories with the excellent actors involved. I like to see everyone in the same shot, like in the theatre. Rather than showing emotion in close-ups, I prefer to make it well up within a sequence shot, so you’re not aware of the camera’s presence, but at the same it’s still cinematographic. That’s why we chose Scope, which is a format I love, and one that I can’t move away from because for me it represents the symbol of cinema itself.

With this film, it feels like you’re widening your register: you are at once overtly funnier and more sentimental in your way of dealing with love between the characters.

A.J.: From the writing stage we wanted something funnier. LOOK AT ME was a fairly somber film and we wanted to get back to comedy. As for the more sentimental side, that is no doubt less in our control, perhaps because it comes a great deal from the actors.

J-P B.: Perhaps it’s the overall theme we chose which led us to concentrate more on the intimate relationships between people than on their social position, what they do in life, and situations of power. In LET IT RAIN, the bonds between the characters are essentially those of friendship or family, of proximity. That said, every group situation implies power relationships.
Would you say that the central thread of the film, to pick up on a line from Karim, is “everyday humiliation”?

A.J.: Everyone feels humiliated, or more exactly a victim of injustice or discrimination: Agathe from sexism, Karim from racism, Florence for not being loved as much as her sister, Michel for not having custody of his son. It seemed to us that today, lots of people experience life as victims and shut themselves in this position, because their suffering is not fully acknowledged. As long as victims have not had their status as victim recognized and that they have in fact suffered some wrong, they cannot move on. The problem is that everyone thinks they’re more of a victim than the next person.

J-P B.: A minority position can very quickly become comfortable for the individual. The status of victim can blind us and make us not face up to our responsibilities. Hence the idea to focus on characters with a tendency to brandish their status as victim before considering the responsibility they have in their exchanges with others. But we will have more sympathy for the weak, even if their complaint is unjustified, rather than for the strong who put them in the situation to complain.

At the end of the film, all the characters seem to have moved forward on this question. Except Florence, the eternal victim who decides to sacrifice her love for Michel so she can stay with her husband, supposedly weaker than her lover...

A.J.: In fact, Florence is one of those people – and there are many – who are too accustomed to their role as victim to change it. The more this attitude is adopted early in childhood, anchored in the family structure, the harder it is to get out of. Florence has too much to gain from staying as that woman who can’t really do what she wants to do but whose husband needs her. She’d like to be free, she espouses feminist discourse about freedom and independence but she doesn’t have the means to actually apply it to her life.

J-P B.: A game has been established between her husband and her: he is like an abandoned little boy who can’t do without her and she is very happy to play that role.

Why did you want to portray a woman politician?

A.J.: At the start, it wasn’t necessarily going to be a woman – at one point, Jean-Pierre was going to play a mayor. But yes, we definitely wanted to tackle politics. I’m afraid that no one will want to go into politics, it’s so discredited, and we’ll end up with just crazies representing us. Luckily there are still some politicians; otherwise it would be the Wild West.
I’m against the generally received idea that all politicians are crooks.

J-P B.: We like political life and we wanted to say so, and to show it. I hope that comes across. Agathe Villanova goes into politics because she’s a feminist. And then she realizes that there is a major contradiction between her politics and who she is: a woman of theory wrapped up in that world. She realizes she doesn’t understand ‘concern’, neither in her vocabulary – the word escapes her – nor in her behavior. She learns on the hustings that people need to be liked and seen, that it’s not just words.

What about your choice of Jamel Debbouze to play Karim?

J-P B.: The film came out of a wish to work with Jamel. He’s a great guy who I adore, both personally and professionally. He is talented and incredibly funny. We were really looking for a way to work with him. I’ve known him for almost 10 years.

A.J.: They tried to write a screenplay together and when I saw them both, I said to myself we have to get that on film! There’s an alchemy between them, like a natural magnetism. They transmit this pleasure of being together, a very strong human, artistic and even cultural complicity.

Your filmmaking is based on a sort of dialogue that is all your own. Were you wary about Jamel’s style, which is also singular?

J-P B.: Given that the role was written a certain way and we have faith in his acting ability, we said to ourselves he’ll leave his personal style in the dressing room and he’ll play in ours with the same talent because he’s smart. Not only does he have talent but also he’s always looking for the talent in others. That’s what makes him so lively. He’s not only about performance, but he’s also listening, waiting to be surprised.

A.J.: Exactly. In the test screenings, there were a lot of good actresses, then all of a sudden Florence Loiret-Caille arrived and he opened up. It was physical; you could see his interest. When Jamel detects talent, his senses are in overdrive, he soaks it up, it’s a joy to watch, and therefore to work with. When I saw them together, I didn’t have the slightest doubt. The sequence during tests was already nearly as magical as the one in the film.

Mimouna is the only non-professional actress...

A.J.: Part of her story inspired the character in the film. I couldn’t imagine that she’d be played by someone else. I love that woman. She came from Algeria aged 17 with her
husband and we met her because she was housekeeper of a place we rented. She’s a very surprising woman and exceptionally endearing. After three days, she was taking the set decorators by the hand and was adored by the whole crew.

Did you have any reticence about throwing her in with so many professionals?

A.J.: On the contrary, it’s stimulating to work with non-professional actors, a bit like working with children. They don’t have the same codes, there’s a sort of truth, sometimes clumsy, but I quite like that mix, both as an actor and as a director. I did a few tests and lots of rehearsals with Mimouna but she made such good progress that very quickly I was confident. In the film she is magnificent and very moving. I’m moved when she says to my character: “I’ll be happy when you have someone, someone who is there to give you some medicine when you’re not feeling well”. To my mind, the scene was a critique of that attitude. Of course I don’t think we have to necessarily be in a couple, but Mimouna says it in such a way that you want to agree with her.

Why did you choose the title “Parlez-moi de la pluie” [which translates literally as “Talk to Me About the Rain”]? A.J.: At the start, this title came from the Georges Brassens song lyric: “Talk to me about the rain and not about the fine weather. Fine weather drives me mad and makes me grind my teeth.” A guy who writes that, I like him right off. It’s unconformist. “The land of imbeciles where it never rains”, that says a lot. The myth of California or the French Riviera, we know what there is behind it. I heard that song by chance. For me, it went perfectly with a scene in which Agathe, Michel and Karim are in a lorry, after being caught out in a storm. It stayed in the edit for a while, but in fact it didn’t really work. So we cut it, but the title remains.

J-P B.: For me, this title has an echo of Kierkegaard’s phrase quoted by Florence’s husband at the beginning of the film, which basically says that anxiety is the dizziness of freedom. And then we wanted some rain well before this title. Well, Agnès wanted some rain.

A.J.: Unlike Jean-Pierre, I’m very sensitive to bad weather, it depresses me. Fifty percent of people are chemically sensitive to it, and of them, 80% are women. And so it depresses me. But in the cinema, rain is pretty.
What was your reaction on reading the screenplay of LET IT RAIN?

I said to myself: “That’s great, at last I can be part of their family!” I’ve always dreamed of that, and now they’re offering it to me on a silver platter, with a character made to measure. The character of Karim is like me; he’s not far from me.

Karim is a role written for you but you’ve never been seen before in such a moving register...

I’ve never played an adult, above all. But that’s why I say it was tailor-made: they knew me well; they knew I’d be up to it. Agnès and Jean-Pierre are very attentive and kindly towards me, they really like me, they know what moves me. We’re friends in real life, with all that that implies. They looked for things in me that they like. I have a childish side, of course, and I hope I’ll keep it all my life. But on this film, I felt myself becoming a man, with all the questioning and the unease which that supposes, and which until now I had preferred to bury. I used to think I was in a sort of permanent funfair and Agnès and Jean-Pierre brought me out of that. I was already aware of all that, I’m kidding a bit. But what is true is that I’d never had the opportunity to act that.

How did you experience this “passage to adulthood”?

It was hard, it was a question of blocking my excesses; those natural reflexes that we all have. Whenever there’s a camera, I straightaway act the pretty boy or the hoodlum: I just have to frown and I look like a bad guy! Agnès, instead, tried to soften me, make me more feminine. She is sensitive in a way I like; she knows how to draw the best out of you for a scene. She has a softness, a way of listening; she knows how to reassure you. I never heard her become irritated, she’s always constructive in her criticism. She comes up with ideas straight away, which allows you to resolve a situation, to get over an obstacle. Because she’s an actress herself, she goes straight to the essentials. And she always has Jean-Pierre nearby. There is such complicity between them. She knows what she wants and he always has a little something to add, which he murmurs delicately in her ear. She gets a little annoyed,
they talk, and in the end... they agree! And you just get the distillation of their ideas, it’s the best seat in the house: two great actors who have put their minds together to give you directions for acting. Agnès and Jean-Pierre are like a pair of conductors with their score. They have written their screenplay, they experience it, hear how it sounds. It’s music. There mustn’t be any off notes, and at the same time, they give you full latitude to find the right key. Working with them is sheer pleasure. You have the feeling of being in real life. Except there’s a camera and a director of photography nearby, which almost make you want to say: “Could you leave us alone? I’m living life here!” With them, I really experienced acting real life.

From the start of the film, when you are seen in the same shot with Jean-Pierre Bacri, you can sense an incredible chemistry.

You wouldn’t necessarily put Jean-Pierre and me together, but I’ve always felt very close to him. It’s cultural and physical: we’re two Semites side by side, Jean-Pierre could be an uncle, a big brother. I’ve had a few important relationships in my life, but with him it’s really special. I take everything he has to offer like a gift. I like his mental construction; I like his heart, his way of looking at things. Agnès is cast from exactly the same die. They are complementary. I think of them as part of my family. I haven’t had the opportunity to tell them, but there we are: now they know. A family with whom I have discussions about the job, the relationship with success, about life, family, culture. Putting their trust in me as they did with this film has made me progress hugely. Even before I knew them, Jaoui and Bacri’s cinema already made me question myself because they succeed in depicting people in all their complexity. You can identify with their characters, you could run into them in the street, and seeing them in the cinema brings us face-to-face with ourselves.

Karim at one point talks about “everyday humiliation”. Could this expression sum up the heart of the film?

What touched me right away with Agnès and Jean-Pierre is that one day I arrived late at a restaurant because I had just been stopped by the police, which has happened to me a thousand times. I told them the story to explain my lateness. And in that situation, there are those who don’t believe you, and those who laugh and say: “That kind of thing always happens to you.” And then there are those who don’t laugh but who get annoyed, just like it annoyed you at the time it happened: that’s Agnès and Jean-Pierre.
Between us, we talk a lot about everyday humiliation, the racism of the baker who serves the little old white lady ahead of the black kid. That kind of condescending behavior is the most pernicious today and it’s essential to expose it. I am in a very advantaged position but I still suffer everyday humiliation at times. Can you imagine what it’s like for others? It’s our daily routine, a common experience, but it is still dangerous, nasty, and it hurts. I like the way Agnès and Jean-Pierre handle this 20th century evil: they stop and look at the detail because the devil is in the detail. They haven’t got preconceived ideas about it; they never cease to scrutinize humanity.

*Everyday humiliation is most in evidence for Karim, but all the other characters also experience it in different ways.*

Of course. That’s what I like about their way of looking at life and writing: they have understood that man is an animal in the jungle and that being in civilization, behaving with civility, requires an effort. The theme of the film is kindliness: making the effort to ask yourself what is the matter with someone else, and respecting his space for living.
interview with
How did you come on board the project LET IT RAIN?
I think Agnès saw me at the theatre in “Adultères” by Woody Allen. I did an initial test with her, then another with her and Jean-Pierre. She took a month before telling me she’d chosen me. And it was a shock.

What did you think on reading the screenplay?
I immediately thought of Chekhov and I didn’t stop going on about it to Jean-Pierre and Agnès: “It’s Chekhov!” Although the screenplay of LET IT RAIN is very solidly constructed, it’s at the same time extremely elliptical and impressionistic, without any dramatic fireworks. It picks up on some people in the course of their lives and unravels everything surrounding that, like a scan of their lives and their times, built up of small, impalpable things and little unsaid thoughts that the actor must try and express. Jean-Pierre and Agnès deal with human subjects that they know well. I think they observe people a lot. LET IT RAIN poses some very universal questions and deals with subjects that are much more profound than they seem. It deals with politics, religion, and women’s freedom. In the same space-time, you see two sisters who represent two opposite poles of femininity. One has children and a husband, and is a housewife; the other one works, has no children, and is single. And then there’s Mimouna, apparently the slave, humiliated. But one of the things that moved me the most was that it’s her who makes a choice at the end of the film. What if she was the most liberated of the three?

At the end of the film, your character is the one whose future seems the most sealed, with the least chance of discovering freedom.
That’s right. Florence wants to change, but as soon as it’s a question of doing something about it, she backs off. When she says that Stéphane is weak and needs her, it’s to justify her not going off to explore the unknown, which is what Michel represents. She doesn’t want to leave her children; she doesn’t want to destroy the reassuring life
she has. But it’s not simply a non-choice. I think that deep down, she doesn’t want to change her life. What she finds during the film is perhaps a moment of complicity with her sister. Florence has gained nothing from this chunk of her life, but two years down the line, I don’t think you’d find she was more unhappy than the others. I don’t feel she is condemned. Florence is maybe one of those people who finds a balance in their suffering, who feeds on it. The film also carries that message; it’s a sometimes-painful mirror on our lives.

**How did the shoot go?**

I can’t exactly say why I became an actress, but when I was on the set with Agnès, I said to myself: “I want to do this all my life!” We were working from a text carefully crafted around every word and we were surrounded by incredibly competent people. We were doing an exacting job without getting hung up about it. There was a sort of gentleness, concentration and amusement. I really felt in the service of something bigger than me, and that’s very agreeable. There was an utter abandonment in the director’s vision. Agnès shows absolute trust in her actors. That’s already 50% of the work done. I would arrive in the morning and if I was struggling on a scene, I knew I’d end up nailing it because Agnès was certain that it was going to happen. Agnès sees right away how to deliver a line, she understands right away when you get stuck, no doubt because she’s an actress, but above all because she’s someone with intimate knowledge of the human soul, Jean-Pierre too. Their way of working together is so natural that I don’t know exactly how it functions.

**What is your reaction on seeing the film?**

I was surprised. In the same way that I wanted to re-read the screenplay after reading it the first time, I have the feeling that I can’t be satisfied with watching the film only once. Generally, I hate watching myself on screen. Going back over my work leaves me with an almost morbid feeling. Here, it’s the first time in my life that I didn’t see myself, and that I wasn’t watching other actors that I know. I saw characters flowing with a story. I felt the film physically.
interview with
What was your reaction on reading the script?

It was like reading music. Agnès Jaoui and Jean-Pierre Bacri’s filmmaking is extremely delicate and precise in terms of tempo, mood changes and sensations. Everything is told in terms of mood, at times deeply sad and at times melancholic. Their dialogues are like the blues followed by a ballad and then swing. In the lines, there’s not one comma out of place. It’s wonderful. All that’s left is having fun.

How did the shoot go?

When Agnès is concentrating on her acting, there’s always Jean-Pierre who is looking on, watching and listening. I love their partnership; I find it delicate and funny. Agnès manages the technical side of the film, the camera, the sets, the lights and the costumes. Jean-Pierre is very present on the shoot and very involved in directing the actors.

What did you think about your character?

Early on, I thought my character could have been an architect, but Agnès told me she thought he was a journalist. It was funny she should say that because I’d just got back from Rwanda where I’d been playing a journalist in OPERATION TURQUOISE by Alain Tasma. I’d just got off the plane. I hadn’t even had the time to go home, and was still dressed for the bush. And Agnès asked me to bring those travel clothes for the film. I decided that given Agathe is a politician and he’s a foreign correspondent, they’d always be really happy to see one another, but that there would always be a part of their relationship that would be up in the air. Imagining that Antoine had come back from Rwanda also helped. It gave me a kind of gravity and philosophy: he’s at a point in his life where he’s thinking he’s only got one life and it’s important he doesn’t miss the boat on their relationship.
I felt very close to my character; to his willingness to simplify his life and get down to what is essential. He loves this woman. He’s not going looking for anything else. When he says that it’s better not to see each other again, that’s not a calculation but a way of indicating to her that his love is sincere and committed. He’s over 45, he’s thinking about having kids and thinking seriously about having them with her. He hopes to, in any case. Agathe’s complicated timetable at that point in the film is nothing but a micro-accident; nothing serious in terms of what he’s known in Rwanda. That’s what I told myself anyway.

**What was your reaction on seeing the film?**

Whether the movement of the film was fast or slow, there’s always a tension: the tension of life. I didn’t necessarily feel it when I read the script but it struck me on seeing the movie. For the entire screening, I had a physical sensation that everything was going to explode all the time. Explode with love, with anger or malaise... It’s pretty amazing to be able to create that. And at the end, when the film comes to a conclusion, you get a sense of what life could be like when you shrug off pointless anxieties. Once more, it’s a musical metaphor that comes to mind: their cinema is like a jazz riff – it speaks to you of an era, of an air du temps with accuracy and humor.
What was it like when you met up with Agnès Jaoui?
I arrived for the test in a state of hyper-concentration, but because of the way the place was laid out, I could hear the actress who was before me. When it was my turn, I’d lost it; I didn’t know the words anymore and I was empty. I felt that Agnès wanted me to succeed but I was blocked. So I improvised. I don’t remember what I did but I did everything but speak the lines; I was in a state. I came out and I was distraught. And then one day, I was surprised to have a message from Agnès, offering me the part.

How did you reach that state of performance?
Agnès lets you be very independent. From the moment you’re selected, it’s left up to you. That’s not always easy but I think it’s what makes the shoot very intimate. Because behind Agnès’ apparent discretion, there’s an amazing generosity and presence. Agnès, Jean-Pierre and the rest of the team are always right up to speed with what’s going on. And that creates very strong relationships between people. You feel like you’re surrounded 360° and you have to abandon yourself completely to that. Agnès is watching the images and Jean-Pierre monitoring the

How do you explain her choice?
I think she firstly chooses her actors as people. On the shoot, I didn’t feel like I was acting; more that I was living. It’s not so much that I improvised, but I gave some very intimate things, as if I wasn’t aware of what I was doing, as if I hadn’t realized. Like being truthful despite oneself. That experience may seem unexpected within the framework of her filmmaking, which is above all about a very carefully-written script and dialogues. Yes, it’s a total paradox. When you read Agnès and Jean-Pierre’s script, you think that the dialogues are exceptionally precise. You feel like you’ve seen it all; that the scenes are simple and intelligent and that you just have to speak the lines and it’ll be fine. In fact, her movies oblige you to feel things inside in order to perform properly. If you don’t appropriate things physically, you’re barking up the wrong tree. Especially as they work a lot with long takes.
sound when he’s not performing himself. His reactions also hit home. If you’re not right on the words, you can’t be in an Agnès Jaoui and Jean-Pierre Bacri movie. The sound engineer, Jean-Pierre Duret, is not just a technician. He’s a musician and he makes you deliver your voice. Each time he comes to speak to you, it’s not to tell you about a technical problem; he comes to talk to you as a person. He’s not just there to record; it’s as if he’s physically there, at your side, in the scene, as if his presence helps you to completely forget yourself and to be totally submerged in the moment.

**What can you say about your character?**

I read the script with Agnès round at her place. It was a moment we spent together more to help us build a connection and establish trust than to talk about the character. But on the shoot, I kept Aurélie’s diary. I imagined what she’d feel after the scenes I was playing. It was the first time I’d done that on a film.

To me, the most emblematic phrase, even if it is relatively tame, is when Aurélie says to Karim: “It was lovely earlier, and now it’s cold.” All these characters follow the whims of their feelings. Even if they deprive themselves of many things, they also know how to ride the wave together, and share moments. They live very ephemeral experiences, but they change them. At the end of the film, each one has come though an experience.

**Is the experience of being in this film important to you?**

Yes. I came out of it wowed by this experience that has really made me grow up. Agnès and Jean-Pierre taught me that acting isn’t just preparing a role, thinking and taking notes; it’s also letting yourself be seen. Usually, you act to mask yourself. With this film, I also learned to not hide who I am.
How would you define the universe of Agnès Jaoui and Jean-Pierre Bacri?
Agnès and Jean-Pierre truly make films about characters, on the question of how best to deal with situations life throws up, how to find oneself and how to find others. I like the humanity of their filmmaking; the place they give to how your heart beats faster, how you breathe, the feelings of those around you. Each of the characters is taken on an eventful journey that is thrown off course by meeting the others. Time is very marked in their writing. It’s fascinating to see how a phrase said by one character will change the life of the person it is directed at. It’s in these moments, inscribed in the script, that the character hears the words of the other person and is then transformed.

How would you describe Stéphane, your character?
Stéphane has hit 40, but he’s still a young man with precise ideas on what a successful life should be. He wants to give a framework to his life; he’s reined in his desires a great deal. That’s what makes him touching, mainly in his relationship with his wife. Agnès and I decided that they’d been together since the end of adolescence and theirs is still a childish relationship. Stéphane wants to be mothered and reassured by Florence and at the same time, he’s the one reassuring and supporting her. Florence is like a moth that is constantly smashing against the light. She burns her wings and goes back again. Stéphane is like an anchor in her life; her port in a storm. I am lucky enough to have already worked with Pascale Arbillot in the theater in “Hedda Gabbler”, directed by Polanski. The intimacy created during that play helped us a lot to be this couple whose relationship is definitely indestructible.
...and at the same time, a little regressive. Florence ends up enfolded in Mimouna’s arms at the end of the film.

More than regression, it’s a reassuring relationship that Florence needs. Granted, Stéphane’s character is very ungrateful; he’s a bastard – he’s like a lot of men out there. But he’s not seeking to hold Florence back. Perhaps he’s realized she had a lover? He says nothing and it’s more interesting that way. When you play a character like Stéphane, you have to be his advocate and not judge him. You have to forget yourself and get into his head with a lot of sincerity to try and really exist, and make him as human as possible. I wanted to reveal the hidden faults behind his apparent rigidity, behind the codes he’s created and which he no doubt partially inherited.

What did you think when you saw the movie?

I felt pretty strange, very emotional. With your consent, Agnès steals part of you. When you see the movie, you don’t really know if it’s you on the screen or your character. Agnès steals your soul in the most gentlemanly manner!

How did the shoot go?

Jean-Pierre and Agnès have backgrounds in theater and I felt we were part of the same family; that there was a legitimacy in working together. There was a kind of team spirit reigning among the actors and with the crew. We were all making the same movie, telling the same story and acting the same script. There was a deep concentration, everybody was very open and at the same time, it was very relaxed.
How did you meet Agnès Jaoui?
I was working for some people who rented their country house to her. In LET IT RAIN, Mimouna’s cubbyhole is inspired by the one where I lived in that house. I had a lot of personal problems and that brought Agnès and I very close together. We’ve known each other ten years now. She’s become more than just a friend. I can confide in her easily – she’s like a daughter to me. She’s been helping me with my divorce.

How was the shoot like?
Because I don’t know how to read, Agnès recorded my part on a cassette. Every day, I’d listen to it on my Walkman to memorize it. And as soon as I had a scene to play, I’d hide in my little cubbyhole with my headphones on to rehearse. Every thing came naturally to me with Agnès. I didn’t feel at all intimidated – it was like being with family. I’m used to spending holidays with Agnès so it wasn’t very different. Everyone took great care of me – I was the film’s mascot! I wasn’t acting every day but I stayed for the whole shoot, sitting on my little stool watching what was going on. I didn’t miss a single day and I never stayed at the hotel. It was the first time I’d ever seen anything like that in my life and I never thought a film needed so much work. But the team also organized parties and meals, and we had a good laugh together. The atmosphere was magnificent and I was a little sad when it came to an end.

You aren’t a professional actress. How did you end up getting involved in LET IT RAIN?
One day, she asked me if she could use my story. I said yes and then she asked me if I would play myself. I didn’t know if I’d be able to do it but she told me to come and try. I spent two weeks at Agnès’ place, I met Jamel, and we did a casting and rehearsed to see if we clicked. And we did. I’d seen Jamel on TV – my grandson buys his DVDs. He talks like my son in the film.
How did you feel when you saw the movie?

It was a little tough, watching myself on screen. But Agnès was there with Jean-Pierre. LET IT RAIN is a very fine film. And it introduced me to people I’ve stayed in touch with. They have become like my children and they love me like a mother.

Did this experience make you want to be in other movies?

No. I accepted this role because Agnès was behind the camera. If it had been anyone else, I wouldn’t be able to do it.
agnès jaoui

Cinema
LET IT RAIN by Agnès Jaoui
NINA’S HOME by Richard Dembo
LOOK AT ME by Agnès Jaoui
THE ROLE OF HER LIFE by François Favrat
24 HOURS IN THE LIFE OF A WOMAN by Laurent Bouhnik
THE TASTE OF OTHERS by Agnès Jaoui
AN OUTGOING WOMAN by Christophe Blanc
LE COUSIN by Alain Corneau
SAME OLD SONG by Alain Resnais
LE DÉMÉNAGEMENT by Olivier Doran
FAMILY RESEMBLANCES by Cédric Klapisch
KITCHEN WITH APPARTMENT by Philippe Muyl
CANTI by Manuel Pradal
HOTEL DE FRANCE by Patrice Chéreau
THE HAWK by Paul Boujenah

Theater
FAMILY RESEMBLANCES directed by Stéphan Meldegg
(Théâtre La Bruyère, Théâtre Montparnasse)
KITCHEN WITH APPARTMENT directed by Stéphan Meldegg
(Théâtre La Bruyère)
IVANOV directed by Pierre Romans (Théâtre des Amandiers)
CHRONIQUE D’UNE FIN D’APRÊS-MIDI directed by Pierre Romans
(Festival d’Avignon)
PLATONOV directed by Patrice Chéreau
PENTHESILEE directed by Pierre Romans
L’ANNIVERSAIRE directed by Jean-Michel Ribes
(Théâtre Tristan Bernard)

Director
LET IT RAIN Productions Les Films A4
LOOK AT ME Productions Les Films A4
THE TASTE OF OTHERS Productions Les Films A4/TÉLÉMA

Writer
SAME OLD SONG by Alain Resnais
(co-written with Jean-Pierre Bacri)
FAMILY RESEMBLANCES by Cédric Klapisch
(co-written with Jean-Pierre Bacri)
SMOKING NO SMOKING by Alain Resnais
(co-written with Jean-Pierre Bacri)
KITCHEN WITH APPARTMENT by Philippe Muyl
(co-written with Jean-Pierre Bacri)
jean-pierre bacri

Cinema
SELON CHARLIE by Nicole Garcia
LOOK AT ME by Agnès Jaoui
FEELINGS by Noémie Lvovski
A HOUSEKEEPER by Claude Berri
THE TASTE OF OTHERS by Agnès Jaoui
KENNEDY AND I by Sam Karmann
PLACE VENDÔME by Nicole Garcia
SAME OLD SONG by Alain Resnais
DIDIER by Alain Chabat
FAMILY RESEMBLANCES by Cédric Klapisch
KITCHEN WITH APPARTMENT by Philippe Muyl
THE MAN OF MY LIFE by Jean-Charles Tachella
THE TRIBE by Yves Boisset
C’EST LA VIE by Diane KuryS
LES MEILLEURS COPAINEs by Jean-Marie Poiré
BONJOUR L’ANGOISSE by Pierre Tcherinia
LES SAISONS DU PLAISIR by Jean-Pierre Mocky
L’ÉTÉ EN PENTE DOUCE by Gérard Krawczyk
DEATH ON A RAINY SUNDAY by Joël Santoni
ETATS D’ÂMES by Jacques Fansten
THE KING’S CAKE by Jean-Michel Ribes
HE DIED WITH HIS EYES OPEN by Jacques Deray
SUBWAY by Luc Besson
STAIRCASE C by Jean-Charles Tachella
THE SEVENTH TARGET by Claude Pinoteau
TANGO by S. Kurc
THE BIG CARNIVAL by Alexandre Arcady
BETWEEN US by Diane KuryS
GRAND PARDON by Alexandre Arcady

Theater
SCHWEIK IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR directed by Jean-Louis Martinelli
FAMILY RESEMBLANCES directed by Stéphan Meldegg
KITCHEN WITH APPARTMENT directed by Stéphan Meldegg
L’ANNIVERSAIRE directed by Jean-Michel Ribes
BATAILLES directed by Jean-Michel Ribes
ARGENT MON BEL AMOUR directed by Roger Hanin
LE GRAIN DE SABLE directed by Jean-Pierre Bouvier
LE COCU MAGNIFIQUE directed by Roger Hanin
CEUX QUI FONT LES CLOWNS directed by Jean-Pierre Bouvier
DON JUAN directed by Jean-Pierre Bouvier
RUY BLAS directed by Jean-Pierre Bouvier
LORENZACCO directed by Jean-Pierre Bouvier
LES CATCHEUSES directed by Jean-Louis Manceau

Writer
LET IT RAIN (co-written with Agnès Jaoui)
LOOK AT ME (co-written with Agnès Jaoui)
THE TASTE OF OTHERS (co-written with Agnès Jaoui)
SAME OLD SONG (co-written with Agnès Jaoui)
FAMILY RESEMBLANCES (co-written with Agnès Jaoui)
SMOKING NO SMOKING (co-written with Agnès Jaoui)
KITCHEN WITH APPARTMENT (co-written with Agnès Jaoui)
LE TIMBRE
LE GRAIN DE SABLE
TOUT SIMPLEMENT
Cinema
LET IT RAIN by Agnès Jaoui
DAYS OF GLORY by Rachid Bouchareb
ANGEL-A by Luc Besson
ASTERIX & OBELIX MEET CLEOPATRA by Alain Chabat
DINOSAUR by Eric Leighton, animation, voice of Zini
AMELIE FROM MONTMARTRE by Jean-Pierre Jeunet
ZONZON by Laurent Bouhnik
BOYS ON THE BEACH by Djamel Bensalah

Shorts
GRANTURISMO by Denis Thybaud
LES PETITS SOULIERS by Olivier Nakache and Eric Toledano
Y A DU FOUTAGE DE GUEULE DANS L’AIR by Djamel Bensalah

Theater One-Man Show
JAMEL EN SCÈNE La Cigale, tours in France, L'Olympia de Paris

Misc.
Regular spots on “Nulle Part Ailleurs” on Canal+: “Le Cinéma de Jamel”
Regular spots on Radio Nova
The Les Yvelines improv. league
Cinema
- LET IT RAIN by Agnès Jaoui
- NOTRE UNIVERS IMPOSSIBLE by Léa Fazer
- UN PRINTEMPS À PARIS by Jacques Bral
- HELL by Bruno Chiche
- CLARA AND ME by Arnaud Viard
- EDY by Stephan Guérin-Tillée
- GRÉGOIRE MOULIN VS. HUMANITY by Artus de Penguern
- L’EXTRATERRESTRE by Didier Bourdon
- THE CLOWN SMILES by Eric Besnard

Shorts
- LA POLYCLINIQUE DE L’AMOUR by Artus de Penguern
- QUAND FOND LA NEIGE OU VA LE BLANC by J. Maubray
- SCÈNES DE LIT by François Ozon
- LES VOISINS by Artus de Penguern
- RIEN QUE DES GRANDES PERSONNES by Jean-Marc Brondolo
- DOUBLE GAME by Emmanuel Oberg

Theater
- ADULTÈRES directed by Benoît Lavigne (Théâtre de l’Atelier)
- HEDDA GABLER directed by Roman Polanski (Théâtre Marigny)
- LECON DE NUIT directed by Christophe Lidon (Petit Théâtre de Paris)
- LE COMEDIEN directed by Annick Blancheteau
- LA NUIT DU CRIME directed by Robert Hossein (Théâtre de Paris)
- LA MAMMA directed by Jacqueline Boeuf (Théâtre Tête d’Or de Lyon)
- LA PAIRE DE GIFLES directed by Yves Lecat (Musicales d’Oppede)
Cinema
LES FRILEUX by Jacques Fansten
LET IT RAIN by Agnès Jaoui
I’VE LOVED YOU SO LONG by Philippe Claudel
RED ANTS by Stephan Carbiaux
VERY WELL, THANK YOU by Emmanuelle Cuau
LA RAVISSEUSE by Antoine Santana
HOLY LOLA by Bertrand Tavernier
AVANT L’OUBLI by Augustin Burger
CLARA AND ME by Arnaud Viard
THEY CAME BACK by Robin Campillo
THAT WOMAN by Guillaume Nicloux
A SIGHT FOR SORÉ EYES by Gilles Bourdos
MONSIEUR N. by Antoine de Caunes
IMMORTAL by Enki Bilal
VA PETITE by Alain Guesnier
THE DEVILS by Christophe Ruggia
ONE SWALLOW BROUGHT SPRING by Christian Carion
IMAGO by Marie Vermillard
LA FILLE DE SON PÈRE by Jacques Deschamps
MODERN LIFE by Laurence Ferreira Barbosa
APRIL CAPTAINS by Maria de Medeiros
TELL ME I’M DREAMING by Claude Mourieras
DISPARUS by Gilles Bourdos
FOR SALE by Laetitia Masson
ÇA NE SE REFUSE PAS by Eric Woreth
INSIDE OUT by Rob Tregenza
ARTEMISIA by Agnès Merlet
PORT DJEMA by Eric Heumann

FOR EVER MOZART by Jean-Luc Godard
CAPITAIN CONAN by Bertrand Tavernier
LES AVEUX DE L’INNOCENT by Jean-Pierre Améris
MY MAN by Bertrand Blier
LAND AND FREEDOM by Ken Loach
CIRCUIT CAROLE by Emmanuelle Cuau
THE SURVEYORS OF MONTMARTRE by Boris Eustache
COMMENT FONT LES GENS (mid-length feature) by Pascale Bailly
L 627 by Bertrand Tavernier
SNOW AND FIRE by Claude Pinoteau
LIFE AND NOTHING BUT by Bertrand Tavernier
PAPILLON DU VERTIGE by Jean-Yves Carree

Shorts
MANÈGE by Jacques Nolot
LES VAUTOURS by Didier Lepecheur
COMME D’HABITUDE by Bruno Herbulot
CONSTANCE by Pascal Deux
DEMAIN by Agnès de Sacy
COMME UN DIMANCHE by Olivier Jahan
ALONG THE FREEWAY by Olivier Jahan
ANIEL by François Roux
DANS TES RÊVES by Blandine Lenoir
GROSSESSE NERVEUSE by Maxime Sassier
ROSA by Blandine Lenoir
À COEUR DÉFENDANT by Raphaël Etienne
WAITING FOR YESTERDAY by Julien Lecat and Sylvain Ploutaz
LES COUILLUS by Mirabelle Kirkland

Theater
GRAND ET PETIT by Botho Strauss - directed by Philippe Calvario
(Bouffes du Nord, tour)
Cinema

LET IT RAIN by Agnès Jaoui
LES DEUX MONDES by Daniel Cohen
SANS ARME, NI HAINE, NI VIOLENCE by Jean-Paul Rouve
WAITING FOR SOMEONE by Jérôme Bonnell
L'HOMME QUI MARCHE by Aurélia Georges
VICTOIRE by Stéphanie Murat
UNE AVENTURE by Xavier Giannoli
TO PAINT OR MAKE LOVE by Arnaud & Jean-Marie Larrieu
THAT WOMAN by Guillaume Nicloux
L'ENNEMI NATUREL by Pierre-Erwan Guillaume
THE INTRUDER by Claire Denis
THE TIME OF THE WOLF by Michael Haneke
FRIDAY NIGHT by Claire Denis
OLGA'S CHIGNON by Jérôme Bonnell
TROUBLE EVERY DAY by Claire Denis
THE MECHANICS OF WOMEN by Jérôme de Missolz
CODE UNKNOWN by Michael Haneke
LOVE BANDITS by Pierre Lebret
SEVENTH HEAVEN by Benoît Jacquot
ALONE by Eric Zonka
WOMEN by Luis Galvao Teles
TROIS FEMMES by Roula Ragheb

Shorts

LA PETITE CHAMBRE by Elodie Monlibert
UNE ÉTREINTE by Eskil Wogt
LES RÉSULTATS DU BAC by Pascal Vincent
STOP by Rodolphe Marconi
O TROUBLE by Sylvia Calle

Theater

LES PROVINCIALES based on the work by Blaise Pascal,
directed by Bruno Bayen
LA PROMISE by Xavier Durringer, directed by Xavier Durringer
ROBERTO ZUCCO by B.M. Koltès, directed by Nicolas Klotz
guillaume de tonquédec

**Cinema**
- LET IT RAIN by Agnès Jaoui
- LOVE ME NO MORE by Jean Becker
- THE HOUSE by Manuel Poirier
- LE CACTUS by Michel Munz and Gérard Bitton
- LES PARRAINS by Frédéric Forestier
- SHUT UP! by Francis Veber
- MOST PROMISING YOUNG ACTRESS by Gérard Jugnot
- LISE ET ANDRE by Denis Dercourt
- MARIE’S COUNTER by Sophie Tatischeff
- THREE LIVES AND ONLY ONE DEATH by Raoul Ruiz
- HONOR ROLL by Charles Nemes
- THE DOUBLE LIFE OF VERONIQUE by Krzysztof Kieslowski
- ROMUALD ET JULIETTE by Coline Serreau
- TWO by Claude Zidi
- FRANTIC by Roman Polanski
- TRAVELLING AVANT by Jean-Charles Tacchella
- ON A VOLÉ CHARLIE SPENCER by Francis Huster
- COURS PRIVÉ by Pierre Granier-Deferre

**Theater**
- LE JARDIN directed by Jean Bouchaud (Théâtre des Mathurins)
- LA SAINTE CATHERINE directed by José Paul and Agnès Boury (Petit Théâtre de Paris)
- LE MEILLEUR PROFESSEUR directed by Stéphane Hillel (Théâtre de Paris)
- LE SÉNATEUR FOX directed by Jean Luc Tardieu (Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin)
- HEDDA GABLER directed by Roman Polanski (Théâtre Marigny)
- LES DIRECTEURS directed by Etienne Bierry
- JEFFREY BERNARD IS UNWELL directed by Jean-Michel Ribes (Théâtre Fontaine)
- APRÈS LA PLUIE directed by Marion Bierry
- LE SÉNATEUR FOX directed by Jean Luc Tardieu (Espace 44 Nantes)
- UNE TABLE POUR SIX directed by Alain Sachs (Théâtre du Palais Royal)
- LES JUMEAUX VÉNITIENS directed by Gildas Bourdet (Théâtre Eldorado)
- LES FEMMES SAVANTES directed by Gilles Bouillon
- TARTUFFE directed by Jacques Weber (Théâtre Antoine)
- LA MEGÈRE APPRIVOISÉE directed by Jérôme Savary (Théâtre de Chaillot)
- L’ÉCOLE DES FEMMES directed by Jean-Luc Boutté (Théâtre des Célestins, Théâtre Hébertot)
- LE MAGICIEN PRODIGIEUX directed by Jacques Nichet (Théâtre de la Ville)
- LE BALADIN DU MONDE OCCIDENTAL directed by Jacques Nichet
- LE DORMEUR DU VAL directed by Michel Reynaud
- LA NUIT DES ROIS directed by N. Vincent
- L’ÉVENTAIL directed by C. Narovitch (Théâtre de Sens)

**Shorts**
- LE BAISER by Stefan Le Lay
- AU RENDEZ-VOUS DES AMIS by Olivier Monot
- MON PAPA À MOI by Stefan Le Lay
- LE LIBRAIRE DE L’AMBIGU by Joachim Lombard
Agathe
Michel
Karim
Florence
Stéphane
Antoine
Mimouna
Aurélie
Séverine
Guillaume
Peasant 1 / Ernest
Peasant 2 / Didier
The producer
Man at christening
Waiter
The priest
Rodolphe’s mother
Florence as child 1
Florence as child 2

Agnès JAOUI
Jean-Pierre BACRI
Jamel DEBBOUZE
Pascale ARBILLOT
Guillaume DE TONQUEDEC
Frédéric PIERROT
Mimouna HADJI
Florence LOIRET-CAILLE
Anne WERNER
Laurent JARROIR
Jean-Claude BAUDRACCO
Luc PALUN
Marc BETTON
Bernard NISSLIE
Alain BOUSCARY
Candide SANCHEZ
Danièle DOUET
Sacha ROUSSELET
Sonam ROUSSEL

Rodolphe
Agathe as child
Florence as child
Young Mimouna
Mrs. Villanova
Mr. Villanova
Hotel owner
Aurélie’s friend
Receptionist

Alexandre DOBROWOLSKI
Victoria COHEN
Morgane KERHOUSSE
Myriam ARAB
Isabelle DEVAUX
Antoine GARCEAU
Jacques REBOUILLAT
Amélie BARDON
Sarah BARRAU
Hair & Make-Up
Make-Up Designer Jackie REYNAL
Key Make-Up Artist Françoise QUILICHINI
Hairdresser Rémy PILOT

Sets
Production Designer Christian MARTI
Props Philippe CABRIE
Graphic Artist Isabelle GIRARD
Location Production Manager Bertrand FREMAUX
Set Design Intern Joëlle DELOR
Removals Raphaël MITTET
Set Dresser Baptiste CUMMINGS
Head Builder Robinson
Head Carpenter Claude VINCENT
Carpenters Jean-Robert OUVIERE

Head Painter Christian GIAMBIASI
Sculptor Arnaud BEAUTE
Painter Christian PETER
Painter Béatrice FERRAND
Artist Delphine BONNAUD
Local help Lucas VINCENT

Special Effects
Sfx Rain Supervisor Olivier ZENENSKI
Sfx Rain Prop Master Jonathan ZENENSKI
Sfx Wind Prop Master Benoît SQUIZZATO

Electricity & Stage Hands
Head Gaffer Michel SABOURDY
Electricians Sébastien COURTAIN
Generator Handler Sophie MOLLARD
Key Grip Philippe GIBIER
Grips Martin DEFOSSEZ (Titoune)
Removals Giovanni QUENE
Set Dresser Sophie MOULIN
Head Builder Antony DIMUNDU

Editing & Finishing
Head of Post-Production Judith HAVAS
Editing François GEDIGIER
Assistant Image Editor Sylvie LAGER
Sound Editing Nadine MUSE
Assistant Sound Editor Jean-François VIGUIE
Dialogue Editor Guerric CATALA
Sound Mixer Armelle MAHE
Mixer Gérard LAMPS
Co-mixer Dorian DARCOURT
Audi Boom Operator Lionel LE BRAS
Foley Artist Pascal CHAUVIN
Assistant Foley Artist Franck TASSEL
Foley Recordist Eric FERRET

Misc. & Advisors
Music Supervisor Christian CHEVALIER
Director of Making Of François HERNANDEZ
Canteen Antoine PAUTROT

Axel RICHET