



EDOUARD LOUIS, OU LA TRANSFORMATION

# THE MANY LIVES OF EDOUARD LOUIS

A FILM BY  
FRANÇOIS CAILLAT

THE MANY LIVES OF EDOUARD LOUIS IMAGE JEAN-BAPTISTE DELAHAYE LAURENT FÉNARD SOUND JEAN-MARIE DALEUX STEPHAN BAKER CHRISTIAN VIGNAL DÉBORAH BRELON PRODUCTION  
MANAGER HORTENSE QUITARD ASSISTED BY PAULINE CAILLAT EDMÉE DOROSZLAI ORIANNE BARBAUX CÉCILE GUIONNET EDITING EMMANUEL MARZANO ASSISTED BY RAPHAËLLE IRACE  
SALOMÉ EMMELIN CALIBRATION AXELLE GONAY MIXING CHRISTIAN CARTIER AUDITORIUM DE MIXAGE LE FRESNOY STAGE DIRECTORS JESSICA GAZON LAURENTE NATAT AND EMMA GUSTAFSSON  
STANISLAS NORDEY THOMAS OSTERMEYER A CO-PRODUCTION TEMPO FILMS JACQUELINE SIGAAR HORTENSE QUITARD ACQUA ALTA CHRISTOPHE GOUVERNÉ LE FRESNOY - STUDIO NATIONAL DES  
ARTS CONTEMPORAINS PICTANOVV WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE HAUTS-DE-FRANCE REGION AND IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CNC WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF FRANCE TELEVISIONS AND TV5 MONDE WITH  
THE SUPPORT OF THE CENTRE NATIONAL DU CINÉMA ET DE L'IMAGE ANIMÉE OF THE PROCIREP - SOCIÉTÉ DES PRODUCTEURS AND L'ANGDA

outplayfilms

THE MANY  
LIVES

OF  
EDOUARD  
LOUIS

DOCUMENTARY / 72 MIN / FRANCE  
LANGUAGE : FRENCH, GERMAN / SUBTITLES: ENGLISH

A FILM BY  
**FRANÇOIS CAILLAT**

INTERNATIONAL SALES  
& FESTIVALS

OUTPLAY FILMS  
DIEGO CARAZO-MIGEREL  
+ 33 1 40 38 94 52  
[diego@outplayfilms.com](mailto:diego@outplayfilms.com)

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

At a time of debate about gender, identity, belonging, and borders, this film seeks to represent the issue differently. It seeks to go beyond the strict opposition between oneself and others, it imagines a fluid passage between «here» and «elsewhere». It dreams that one can be able to transport oneself, make oneself different, modify oneself at will: to go through a permanent transformation.

The writer Edouard Louis embodies such a process.

Here is a young man who has not stopped transforming himself for twenty years. His entire career has been marked by renewal.

At the end of the 1980s, the young man accomplished a first metamorphosis in Amiens. Leaving his sub-proletarian village environment, he discovered the bourgeois city and its children who had a strong cultural capital. He wanted to acquire its codes. He changed his habits, his language, his body... and finally his first and last names. He invented a new character for a second life.

Once this metamorphosis was complete, he went to Paris. There he built a third life for himself. In a few years, he became one of the most mediatized players of the French cultural life.

Édouard Louis had said little about this spectacular personal and social transformation up to that point. This film is an illustrated and critical account of this transformation.

It is an embodied story of transformation.









# SYNOPSIS

The **metamorphosis** of a young boy from a sub-proletarian background in Picardie into a star of French cultural life. **Edouard Louis**, who in a few years has become the spokesman writer of a generation, encourages each of us to make permanent transformation a **new way of life**.

# THE TRANSFORMATION

## AN OLD RELATIONSHIP WITH EDOUARD LOUIS

I met Édouard Louis in 2012, when he was writing the manuscript of his first novel, *The End of Eddy*.

In this reflective autobiography, the young man recounted his youth in an underprivileged village in Picardie and dealt more broadly with the issue of social violence. Édouard Louis, alias Eddy Bellegueule, told what no other French writer seemed able to at the time: he spoke of the people, of the under-proletarianized condition of forgotten populations (in Picardie and elsewhere), of the feeling of exclusion that inhabits them, of their thoughts and way of life (downgrading and social solidarity, but also homophobia, machismo, and creeping xenophobia). Six years before the Yellow Vests movement, he told of a France kept under wraps.

Édouard Louis could talk about it because he had experienced it first-hand, in his own family, and had since made a dizzying social leap leading him to the École Normale Supérieure and the status of apprentice novelist.

He was also able to do so because he coupled his personal account with a theoretical analysis, largely nourished by the thought of Pierre Bourdieu, and he worked alongside a small group of intellectuals who guided and inspired him - among them Didier Eribon, a sociologist at the University of Amiens, and Geoffroy de Lagasnerie, a young philosopher who wrote several works on Michel Foucault.

These are the people I knew and worked with for my film *Foucault contre lui-même*, a 1x52 produced by Arte and broadcast in spring 2014. To write this film, I had taken on as an 'advisor' a young ENS student whose theoretical relevance had been recommended to me. This young man was Édouard Louis and this took place a year before the release of his first novel. The man who was still called Eddy Bellegueule was unknown, but I discovered in him a reflection, a maturity of thought, which seemed unusual for a twenty-two-year-old boy. Very naturally, while working with him, his fellow thinkers Didier Eribon and Geoffroy de Lagasnerie found themselves in my project, along with Arlette Farge and Georges Didi-Huberman. And together we made the film about Michel Foucault.

What struck me a lot at that time was the way in which Édouard Louis had changed the course of his life to get to where I was meeting him. I was seeing an intellectual and he was telling me about his childhood in an almost illiterate environment. I listened to a wise speaker and he described a village where beer binges and TV romances formed the core of existence.

When his book *The End of Eddy* came out shortly afterwards, I understood the background better. But the author didn't tell us how he got out of it.

The second text, *History of Violence*, set in Paris, did not provide me with any more keys. After having told a «before», the writer was now telling an «after». But he did not say how the transformation from one to the other had taken place.

The third text, *Who Killed My Father*, did not provide any explanation either.

But it was this transformation that interested me most. I wanted to know how such a metamorphosis could have brought a young sub-proletarian man from Picardie to the status of a budding media star. But I was left alone with my questions.

Édouard Louis, in our private conversations, did give me some clues. It all seemed to happen in Amiens, during four years spent in high school and at the Faculté de Picardie. There was a pivotal period in the late 1990s, between leaving the village of Hallencourt and arriving in Paris. But he wrote nothing about it in his texts and rarely referred to it in his interviews. He only mentioned this stage in Amiens without going into detail.

Years passed and it seemed very strange to me that this follower of Pierre Bourdieu (cultural capital and social determinism) did not take the opportunity to make a detailed analysis of his own case. For his itinerary seemed to me to be very significant, as a Bourdieusian counter-example. Through Édouard Louis, we discover a way of transforming oneself, of leaving one's original social condition, of changing one's cultural background, of becoming an intellectual in twenty-first century France, which is usually more favorable to the born elites. We see how an ill-born young man succeeds, in a surprising way, in escaping the rankings that were intended for him.

However, it must be recognised that this path is in line with a very current concern. Transformation appears today as one of the keys to modernity. Transformation is to be understood here in the sense of 'crossing over', breaking down fixed codes, abandoning norms, admitting total otherness in the form of mixing or renewal. In short: to transport oneself elsewhere.

The contemporary vocabulary is permeated by such imperatives: defector\*, trans-class, transgender, trans humanity... Everything that crosses and cracks the categories stemming from old Western humanism; everything that can found a new approach to the human being — and, beyond that, to the living.

Numerous debates currently revolve around this question, in France and abroad. The debate is taking place in university colloquia or during militant actions that receive media coverage. It is often led by well-known authors. This is the new field of study of the beginning of the 21st century.

This is the horizon in which this film project emerges:  
***The Many Lives of Édouard Louis.***

\*defector : Someone who escaped their social destiny and who's facing an identity conflict as used in Pierre Bourdieu studies.



## HOW DOES ONE BECOME A CLASS DEFECTOR\* ?

The strength of a writer is often the subtle blend of a character and a piece of work. Whether we think of Proust, Céline, or Duras, these authors combine a strong personality with new writing. Telling the story of a writer's birth is like venturing onto a double front, that pair that traditionally was called *life and work*, with the inevitable question: how did one influence the other?

In the case of Édouard Louis, the task is made more interesting because the author deliberately reflects himself in his work. He provokes it, accompanies it, comments on it. He puts himself on stage as both actor and playwright. He gets involved in its most intimate details.

Édouard Louis is a creative and critical writer. He is born as a novelist and extends as an analyst. He tells the story of his life (in Picardie, in Paris) and turns it into an object of thought. He talks about the working classes from which he comes and uses his experiences to analyse social violence.

He is certainly not the only one to mix biography and reflection — contemporary literature offers several other examples of that: Annie Ernaux, Emmanuel Carrère, Didier Eribon, etc. But Édouard Louis is the first to make such a great leap; to cross the chasm that separates a child of the Picardie sub-proletariat, where dispossession was such that workers are perceived as privileged, from the young ENS student celebrated from the moment he wrote his first novel, which has been translated in many countries. He is the epitome of the critical gap.

This gap is what makes it possible to describe Édouard Louis as a *defector writer*. He was born somewhere, he detached himself from it through his writing, and he returns to it through his writing. He can move back and forth, from one world to the other, between working-class environments and intellectual elites. He speaks accurately of his social milieu because he comes from it; he speaks of it forcefully because he has acquired the words to express it.

The defector writer is the one who can tell about the mute world from which he comes.

But how can one speak of the world from which one comes? Can one leave without betraying? How is writing born of a rip.

### ***I did everything to stay.***

When *The End of Eddy* came out, a few skeptical journalists rushed to investigate in situ, to see if the writer had not built a fictional hell. Some imagined that he had deliberately blackened his past to boast that he had got out of it. They were wrong because the author did not take any pride in it. On the contrary, Édouard Louis made it clear that he had never organised a triumphant departure. This was his world. He was not prepared to leave it, to deny it. For a long time, he had tried, with all his heart, to be a happy Eddy Bellegueule.

Édouard Louis: "Eddy Bellegueule doesn't try to leave, but he does everything to stay.

It is the people in his environment, his family - my family - who are chasing him (...) I had not dreamt of leaving. I did everything I could to stay."

***I fled by transforming myself.***



The second part of *The End of Eddy* is entitled *Failure and escape*. The young boy wanted to stay with his family, but they did not want him. So, he left for Amiens and then to Paris, unlike the Stendhalian hero who leaves his native village to fulfil the destiny that awaits him.

The author refuses to invoke, like other authors before him, the roots of his intelligence, or the need to have his qualities recognised. He is a class defector, but in a different way. He left because he had no other solution than to escape by transforming himself. Since nothing had happened the way, he wanted it to, he now had to face "the end of Eddy" and start again.

The film will explore these questions: should we talk about escape or alienation to understand the uprooting of an individual from his past?  
How can a radical transformation of the self be achieved?  
Can one really be rid of what one has been?

Édouard Louis: *"I had noticed that in almost all the great stories of escape in literature - whether it be Bourdieu's «Esquisse pour une auto-analyse», Marguerite Duras' escape from Saigon, Peter Handke's or James Baldwin's, in short, in the entire literary tradition that explores the theme of the individual who leaves their childhood environment, who detaches themselves from it - each time the person escaping presented themselves as someone who had always wanted to escape. And the story of the first part of their lives was always the story of a struggle against circumstances, a struggle against an environment into which they had been born by accident. These individuals, always more or less free in an alienated world, would have struggled to become something else, against their environment, and to achieve their difference. I wanted to break with this long tradition."*

## Coming to write

When his first novel was published, Édouard Louis aroused interest and questioning, not only for what his books said, but also for what they did not say. Many readers asked: how did we get from Eddy Bellegueule to Édouard Louis? How did this critical gap develop? The newspaper *Libération* described this metamorphosis as a "mystery".

The film proposes to unravel this mystery as much as possible.

Édouard Louis: *"I wanted to change everything about myself. Not to keep the slightest trace of my past. And very quickly, for me, this transformation meant: writing - like Eribon, like Duras, like all the models who had inspired this desire for transformation in me. Not only to live but to try to reflect on life."*

When Édouard Louis says that *«very quickly this transformation meant writing»*, we would like to know more. To understand how Eddy Bellegueule's break with his miserable village could have led him to a desire to write - rather than, for example, to a desire for social revenge that would have encouraged him to become rich and seek the most visible counterpoint to his initial condition. What was the author able to say through literature that he could not have said otherwise?



## The language of the working classes

*History of Violence* takes up the theme of the defector on another front. This time the story features a series of characters at both ends of the social divide: a young Kabyle son of an immigrant (Reda, the lover turned rapist), Eddy's sister (Clara, discovered in the first novel), and the intellectual duo of friends Didier and Geoffroy.

The episode narrated, brief and brutal, is as devastating as the Picardie childhood could slowly be destructive. In both cases, Édouard Louis seeks to write about violence: with words that do not dull it, but also leave room for the distance of analysis. In a way, it is a question of embodying in writing the exact position of the defector: one who does not forget the language of the working class from which he comes, but who also possesses another language to be able to speak about it.

Édouard Louis has decided to write in order to reflect. To transform autobiography into a thinking machine.

Édouard Louis: *"In History of Violence, I wanted to try to take the research started in The End of Eddy further: to put the language of the working classes at the heart of my writing. When I started to read, to discover literature, I was struck by the fact that I never found the language of my childhood, the language of the most dispossessed working classes. In fact, everything happened as if making a legitimate literature meant excluding this popular language. Even the writers who wanted to get closer to it, like Faulkner and Céline, would say in the end: «But what I write is not popular language, it's something else». As if, in the last instance, it was always necessary to exclude that language, that it constituted the absolute outside of literature, what it excludes in order to affirm itself, to exist."*

### **A «sociological literature»**

What the film can show is the kind of literature we are led to here. To write a *History of Violence* is to formulate violence as an experienced expression and observable process. In the description of his tormented childhood, as in the account of a rape, the author relates different episodes of violence - societal, sexual, familial, linguistic, etc. - and shows that these forms of violence are not mutually exclusive. They respond to each other and form the thick layer of social violence under which a process of domination is revealed.

Édouard Louis stages this process. He wants to use literature as a privileged instrument of reflection. He asks what the idea of a 'sociological literature' could mean. He poses the question of thought at the heart of writing.

Édouard Louis: *«In recounting Eddy Bellegueule's childhood, in painting a portrait of his village and the people around him, it is the experience of domination that I wanted to show first. The violence and humiliation that run through our lives and constitute us, that are like the somewhat invisible foundations of our existence (...).*

*To succeed in expressing this violence required two things.*

*The first was to write against Jean Genet, who, in a scene from Miracle of the Rose, is spat upon because he is homosexual and transforms this spit into roses - as if literature were an experience of aestheticization, as if it were necessary to make things lyrical, beautiful, metaphorical, in order to reappropriate them.*

*The second was to write against Pasolini, that is, against the mythification and idealisation of the working classes. His entire work is permeated by a vision of the working classes as simpler, more authentic, truer, the bon vivants.*

*It is this double refusal, this bias towards showing violence in its crudeness, that has perhaps produced this dialogue with the people who have read the book.»*

## The topicality of the debate

The question of the class defector runs through many writings today. We see it in France with the recognition of Annie Ernaux's work, the success of Didier Eribon's *Returning to Reims*, or Chantal Jaquet's book, *Transclasses*, which attempts a synthesis of the subject. We also see it abroad, for example in the United States with Zadie Smith, Toni Morrison, Ta Nehisi Coates...

The question of the defector is not only a subject of study in its own right (what is the change of social environment, what does it say about the place of shame in our lives?). It is, more broadly, a way of re-interrogating the theme of social class, domination, fabricated identities, and social determinism.

[1] *The words quoted in quotation marks are taken from an unpublished interview with Édouard Louis*

## IDENTITY OR CHANGE

Choosing Édouard Louis to talk about transformation is not accidental. The writer embodies this process better than any other, he carries it beyond himself. He is not locked into a narcissistic or solitary process. His process of reinvention is not reduced to a personal movement.

On the contrary, it expresses a current collective concern.

We must admit that the idea of transformation appears today as one of the keys to modernity. This idea must be understood in the sense of: crossing over, breaking old categories and fixed codes, moving elsewhere, admitting otherness - in the form of mixing or renewal.

As if it were urgent to never remain the same again.

The contemporary vocabulary is shot through with such imperatives: defector, trans-class, transgender - trans, to put it bluntly.

Many current debates revolve around this question, in France, and even more so in Anglo-Saxon countries with gender studies. This reflection, which is shaping a new field of study, is conducted in colloquia and university meetings by well-known authors (of whom Judith Butler remains the leading figure). But it also leaves the scholarly circles to express itself in militant interventions and a highly mediatized activism.

Édouard Louis's trajectory is part of this horizon. No doubt he became involved in it in spite of himself, and with pain, since he initially wanted to remain the Hallencourt boy loved by his parents. But then, when the metamorphosis proved inevitable, he accepted it and continued without stopping.

He went from a change of life to a permanent aesthetic of transformation.



## Reinventing himself now defines his new impermanent being.

One does not have to share all the requirements of this thought. But we must at least acknowledge that it is quite radical and undoubtedly subversive. The metamorphosis and the crossing of genres engage a profound critique of the notion of identity. They do not only concern the individual, they extend on a collective and social level to a desire for crossbreeding, for the crossing of borders, for the hybridisation of cultures, for deterritorialisation. And this growing movement has now become a goal in itself for many, an imperative, the priority battle.

It is clear that the stakes are high. This fight, which may have been theoretical once, has become very political. In the camp opposite, there are the fierce defenders of identity. In France, we know the active militants: *Identité française* among pamphleteers like Éric Zemmour, Christian identity in the «tradi» Catholic movement, civilisational identity among the ardent critics of the Great Replacement... All these *Identitarians* of the "fachosphere" (extreme right-wing groups) give free rein to their fantasies, taking advantage of the deleterious effects of globalisation and migratory fears. But there are not only such extremists. Many people, of all religions and political colours, think in these terms: a rediscovered identity will be the only remedy for the tremors of the present. As if it were possible to stop the flows. As if the contemporary world could stop *leaking* from all sides.

## The debate could probably be put differently.

To temper the imprecations of identity, we would like to think of new solutions, to think of change without seeing it as a danger, to connote the idea of mutation differently. In truth, we should admit that transformation does not impoverish the being - this mythical being invoked as a threatened totem - but that it can expand it, inscribe it in time, give it a longer history.

Individuals, like peoples, have never benefited from being fixed in their present. The idea of transformation allows us to get out of a Manichean alternative - stay the same or disappear.

## THE THREE LIVES OF ÉDOUARD LOUIS

### Hallencourt: a thwarted identity

Édouard Louis's childhood in Hallencourt is largely recounted in his first novel, *The End of Eddy*, and then alluded to in fragments in his next two texts, *History of Violence*, and *Who Killed My Father*.

The writer describes a community - his family and friends - where everyone struggles to survive the difficulties of life. In this Picardie village, misery is found in housing, work, food, health... Every facet of daily life can be read through the prism of social violence. The microcosm of Hallencourt represents a paradigm of the forgotten working classes.

Édouard Louis is not only defined by his proletarian birth. He is also, from the outset, the different boy. Contrary to the criteria of masculinity which serve here as compen-

sation for social impotence, he presents unexpected behaviour. His body does not fit in with the general discourse, he is accused of being a *faggot* and he already has a feeling that he is. He does not belong in this village where the usual course of events should make him, like his older brother and his schoolmates, a fighting, drinking, football-loving, girl-chasing teenager. A tough guy. Instead, the boy indulges in feminine stereotypes, dance steps, and graceful manners. He does not take on the role that was prepared for him.

From the outset, Édouard Louis's journey is thus marked by contradiction. He belongs to a world whose criteria he does not meet. He fails to satisfy the milieu that carries him. He is in a difficult position. So he has to hide, to pretend, to pass himself off as what is expected of him.

The rest of his life will always bear the mark of this discrepancy. Concealing oneself. Believing only what is shown, affirming it. Living the truth of appearances. In this ambiguous process, the notion of identity quickly becomes irrelevant. Who is Édouard Louis?

### **Amiens: the reinvention of the self**

After arriving in Amiens to study at the Madeleine Michelis high school, the boy decides to undergo a transformation. He wants to get rid of his past and find a new self-assertion. He will therefore transform himself and be reborn. But he does not expect to find an authentic nature, a true identity of which he would have been deprived until then. He does not believe in the myth of a limited destiny; he does not see himself as the Stendhalian hero finally throwing off his chains (social destiny and family weight). He doesn't know what he's going to become, he just knows that he doesn't want to keep anything from his original environment. He must reinvent himself.

The years in Amiens accomplish this twisting movement. It is not without surprises. The boy is constantly betrayed by behaviours from his former way of life. Hallencourt marked him more than he thought. He decides to make his transformation process more systematic.

He carefully observes his high school friends, young, bohemian, cultured bourgeois, and tries to behave like them. He does not want to be like them, but he understands that this is the necessary step to make his original social condition disappear. The reinvention of the self requires models.

After the high school students, who were the epitome of a festive and relaxed life, Édouard Louis discovers the more serious world of university students. He starts a History course and does his utmost to become studious. He soon meets Didier Eribon, professor of sociology at the Faculty of Amiens, who pushes him to study and encourages him to prepare for the École Normale Supérieure. Édouard Louis finds a new mentor there. Didier Eribon, who had also had to escape a proletarian and homophobic family environment, was the ideal advisor for reinvention.

In a few years, Édouard Louis manages to combine the profound transformation of his habitus with the open affirmation of his sexuality. He becomes a renewed young man.

## Paris: "I am what I become"

Édouard Louis arrives in Paris. He has been admitted to the École Normale Supérieure, but he has not yet decided to become an intellectual. He would also like to do theatre, which he has always practiced as an amateur in his native village and in Amiens. He dreams of being on stage with famous partners and is involved in the circles that could propel him into a life of art.

### Why not become an actor?

At the same time, through the ENS, he frequents the Parisian intellectual milieu and meets benevolent writers and thinkers (Annie Ernaux, Arlette Farge, Geoffroy de Lagasnerie). These accomplished or studious authors point him in the direction of a wiser path.

### Why not become a writer?

He decides to write a novel as a trial balloon of his future. He takes the subject of his childhood and treats it with the distance of one who has escaped from it. *The End of Eddy*, immediately published by the Éditions du Seuil, is a huge success. He becomes a famous novelist in a few months. He is twenty-one years old.

What would have become of Édouard Louis had this first novel remained confidential, or even unpublished? Would he have pursued a career as a teacher? Would he have preferred a theatrical adventure? Nothing is ever granted in this unpredictable trajectory. Édouard Louis had not planned to become a writer. Nor did he plan to enter the ENS or to teach at American universities. He is the product of what he does. He does not seek to reveal his inner self, he has no long-term intentions. He is what he becomes.

Since *The End of Eddy*, Édouard Louis has published two other novels, both of which have been well received, and he is currently finishing a new one. He continues to write, which he is good at. But everything could change tomorrow. With him, reinvention never stops.

Text by François Caillat,  
included in the initial film project.



# BIOGRAPHY

## ÉDOUARD LOUIS

Édouard Louis, born Eddy Bellegueule, is a French writer born in 1992 in Hallencourt.

He attended the Collège des Cygnes in Longpré-les-Corps-Saints and then went to boarding school in the tenth grade at the Lycée Madeleine Michelis d'Amiens, where he was a member of the theatre section.

From 2008 to 2010, he was a delegate of the Academy of Amiens to the National Council of High School Life, then studied history at the University of Picardy.

From 2011, he studied sociology at the ENS de la rue d'Ulm despite not taking the competitive exam as he was admitted to take courses as an «auditor» on application file. He completed a third year of his bachelor's degree, then a master's degree. He graduated in 2014. He also studied social sciences at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales.

In 2013, he changed his name to Édouard Louis. That same year, he directed the Pierre Bourdieu collective work: *L'insoumission en héritage* with the Presses Universitaires de France.

In March 2014, he announced that he would direct a collection, «Des mots», devoted to transcriptions of conferences, interviews, and short texts, for this publisher.

In February 2014, at the age of 21, he published *The End of Eddy*, a novel with a strong autobiographical influence. Widely commented in the media, and widely praised for its qualities, the book also gave rise to several polemics. In 2014, he won the Pierre Guénin prize against homophobia and for equal rights.

In 2015, he was ranked by the magazine *Les Inrockuptibles* among the hundred creators who, in all fields, invent the French culture of today.

In May 2018, Édouard Louis released his third book: *Who Killed My Father*. In this story he revisits his relationship with his father. His first three novels have been translated into about thirty languages.

In 2019, he adapted his book *History of Violence* for the stage with Thomas Ostermeier.

Since 2019, he has been a regular speaker at La Manufacture - Haute école des arts de la scène in Lausanne, Switzerland.

In 2021, he wrote *A Woman's Battles and Transformations and Changer: méthode*, both published by Éditions du Seuil.

Édouard Louis announced that Oscar-winning director James Ivory has adapted and written *Who Killed My Father* and *The End of Eddy* into a television series, entitled *The End of Eddy*.

In parallel, the writer collaborates with filmmaker Ken Loach on another artistic project.

Édouard Louis is the narrator of the film *Nous nous reverrons*, a short film directed by filmmaker Morgan Simon and about the migration crisis in Paris.

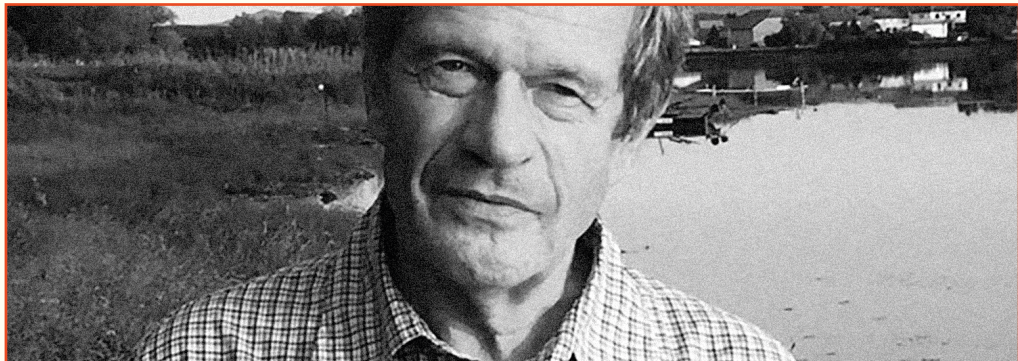
He has collaborated with many directors such as Stanislas Nordey and Thomas Ostermeier. He is also one of the translators of Canadian poet Anne Carson.





# BIOGRAPHY

## FRANÇOIS CAILLAT



François Caillat, born in 1951, spent his childhood in Lorraine.

In Paris, during his school years, he was introduced to theatre (he studied dramatic art with François Florent; created a high school troupe after May 68; participated in the collective experiments of Ariane Mnouchkine and the Théâtre du Soleil in the early 1970s).

He then studied philosophy: he was admitted in 1972 to the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Saint-Cloud (now ENS Lyon), and passed the agrégation in philosophy in 1975.

He also studied ethnology, musicology, and aesthetics (thesis on Pierre Boulez) at the Universities of Nanterre and Vincennes and at the Sorbonne.

He taught philosophy for a few years, then finally turned to cinema. He trained by shooting several short fiction films and musical films, before tackling feature films.

For the past twenty years, François Caillat has been making films on the borderline between documentary and essay.

He is interested in representations of the past, traces, absence, and forgetting. He defends the concept of a «documentary novel», which favours staging and personal narrative.

### FRANÇOIS CAILLAT SEEN BY...

*FRANÇOIS CAILLAT, THE DIRECTOR OF ABSENCE*  
by Patricio Guzmán, filmmaker

One could say that François Caillat is a filmmaker of the word. Because, without a

doubt, a significant part of his documentary work is based on the voice of the narrator, on a voice that tells.

There is a way of narrating, making up stories, or commenting on facts, which form «a Caillat style» and which constitute the structure of his documentaries.

One could not understand his works without this voice, which outlines the true development of the story.

However, where do these voices come from? On which images does François Caillat begin to speak?

This is one of the surprises of this author's language.

Caillat speaks of death while we see a wood at dusk.

He talks about money while we see a stretch of water.

He talks about the world war while we watch a bird fly.

He almost never talks about what we see on the screen.

However, behind these images that have no apparent relation to the text, we begin to «visualise» the story he is telling us, that is, we begin to see what is not seen.

We still have to reveal François Caillat's second secret.

This brilliant director introduces us to the world of 8 mm. Caillat uses long fragments of 8 mm film that he shoots with his own camera. These are fleeting, unforeseen visions that come to us like gusts of wind: fallen trees, church towers, railway tracks, smoking chimneys, silent rivers.

These are images that often appear without their original sound, which arrive enveloped by a gentle gust of wind, or with almost inaudible, minimalist, mysterious music that transports us to an unreal reality...

The slightly blurred texture of 8 mm, its lack of definition, its lightness, its weightlessness, open the door to a documentary fantasy.

The third secret is that he refilms twice, on different occasions.

On the wall of his home, he projects his 8mm images, then films them again with a film, which multiplies the texture of the 8mm. In other words, he makes his own archive on the wall of his home. By framing for the second time, Caillat transforms the 8mm into a dreamlike medium, into a substance that seems to come from another time.

All this without even mentioning the science of editing, which he deepens with each film, with the magic of the associations between nature and human beings, which he offers us in an unexpected way.

*The Chilean filmmaker Patricio Guzmán, author of a renowned body of work (from «La Batalla de Chile» to his latest film «The Cordillera of Dreams»), created and directs the FIDOCs festival in Santiago de Chile. He has written this presentation text for François Caillat's visit to FIDOCs with six of his films.*

# INTERVIEW

WITH FRANÇOIS CAILLAT, ABOUT *THE MANY LIVES OF EDOUARD LOUIS*

**Images Documentaires:** *Before addressing the question of speech - how to film speech, a central question in your film - can you tell us how the project of this film with Édouard Louis came about?*

**François Caillat:** I already knew Édouard Louis, we had worked together on my film *Foucault contre lui-même* [2]. It was in 2012 and I was looking for a philosophy student to think with me about this film, to reread Michel Foucault, to make useful notes for the script. I had been recommended a young ENS student from Ulm who was willing to collaborate. At the time, this twenty-year-old boy was called Eddy Bellegueule and was unknown. We got on well and worked together for several months to prepare the theoretical content of my film. We had regular discussions and conducted an intellectual confrontation on the subject that brought us together: the work of Foucault and, more broadly, philosophy - a discipline in which I had also been trained (I had taught it in the past, before becoming a filmmaker). So I got to know Édouard Louis very early on, before he became a writer and acquired the fame he has today. This explains our very free, simple, and direct relationship, impervious to any fashion or celebrity phenomenon.

The film on Foucault was broadcast on Arte in 2014, for the thirtieth anniversary of the philosopher's death. Édouard Louis's first book, *The End of Eddy* [3], came out at the same time, with the success that we know. Since then, Edouard and I have maintained a friendly relationship. Several filmmakers were planning documentaries about him, but he refused. One day, it was I who started.

I believe that the trace of this old relationship shines through in this film. It's about trust. Mutual trust is fundamental in a documentary film, in the talking and listening to each other. This is the seventh film I've made with writers or intellectuals, and it's the first time there's been this level of trust. I believe that this is felt in the film, it is one of its keys.

**I.D.:** *But your previous films weren't about living authors.*

**FC:** Michel Foucault had disappeared, yes. But I made a film in good conditions with Jean-Marie Le Clézio [4], for example. I went to shoot at his place. He was living in Korea at the time, so I went to Seoul and Jeju Island. I also shot in Mexico, where he had lived for a long time. In short, it wasn't a quick interview at his publisher's, it was a *meeting film*, I spent weeks with him. But there is never the same level of reciprocity as with Édouard Louis. Maybe because he was too big, it was the year of his Nobel Prize, etc. Maybe I didn't manage to put myself on the right level with him, or he didn't want to put himself on an equal footing with me. This is felt in the film and I regret it.

In the film I made about Julia Kristeva [5], on the other hand, there is already much more reciprocity. I deliberately spread out the filming over a whole year, in order to have time to build a relationship of mutual esteem over time, and then a friendly

relationship. In the end, Julia Kristeva had confidence in the film and gave a lot of herself. It was no longer just the portrait of an intellectual.

**I.D.:** *Before shooting with Édouard Louis, did you prepare the film with him, or did you discuss it? Did he know that you were going to take him to certain places?*

**FC:** We had some discussions beforehand, but we didn't talk about the film itself. Édouard Louis left it completely to me. He didn't know the project and didn't even read the text written for the production. He just knew that I wanted to work on the theme of transformation.

The film is built on a return to Amiens. I took Édouard to this city because it is the main stage of his transformation. Between his village of Hallencourt and Paris, he spent four years in Amiens: his high school years and then his university years, years during which he discovered literature and theatre and met Didier Eribon. In Amiens, the young Eddy Bellegueule made encounters that were decisive for his transformation. I organised the film around these pivotal years, around this change of direction. Especially since Édouard had not spoken much about it in his books at that point: there was a sort of «black hole» that I was interested in exploring.

During my shoots, generally speaking, I like to improvise a lot. In this film, I used the town of Amiens as a fixed setting in which I could improvise on the idea of transformation. I wanted to take Édouard there, but without preparing too much. I did a brief scouting of the city, where I had never been. I noted down a few possible locations (the high school, the cultural centre, etc.), and we set off on an adventure one summer day. I didn't tell Édouard what we were going to do, in fact I didn't know myself. I simply used the Amiens set and improvised.

I had chosen to shoot with a steadycam to facilitate this improvisation: to be able to move around more freely, not to be dependent on staging and static shots, lighting and other devices that take a long time to set up. I wanted to «walk down memory lane» with Édouard. We did most of the shooting outside. I really like shooting outdoors, decisions are made quickly, choices are made immediately. However, it was still very organised in my head. I had the idea of a «ghost town», I wanted to film Édouard's return to a town he had forgotten, rejected, to which he had never returned. It was his town, and it was no longer his town. Édouard was returning to his Eddy Bellegueule years, the town had changed as much as he himself had changed. He was returning to a ghostly past: deserted places, a floating scenery, a blurred image.

Technically, it was very complicated for the director of photography: I asked him to work with a steadycam, for a fluidity of improvisation; but I also wanted a long focal length, so that the image of the set would be blurred: the focus was only on Édouard's face, while the surroundings were uncertain, as in a ghostly city. It was difficult: keeping the focus on a moving character at long focal length is a feat...

This technical experience obviously excited me a lot, I was diving into the unknown. Like most of my colleagues, I hate doing what I already know how to do. I had never used a Steadicam before, even in a three-minute shot. The whole shooting of Amiens

was done with a Steadicam, it seemed risky, the producers thought that I was heading for trouble. I came back very happy. This technical choice made possible both the *floating* aesthetic of the film and a very free speech: with Édouard, we could improvise according to the location, the weather, our mood of the day...

**ID:** *This technique is reminiscent of several films, and in particular Rithy Panh's S21. When, in order to film people, they make them return for the first time to the places of a past that may have been painful, this brings back very vivid memories as well as body memory.*

**FC:** That's what I was hoping for, and it worked. And that's why I hadn't prepared anything. I had just determined a few places where I knew Édouard had once been, and I took him there without telling him. The way I was shooting meant that I was ready to film what might happen. When someone is surprised, you can't ask them to wait for the camera to be set up, otherwise they'll reenact the surprise and that will be pointless. So I filmed Édouard in those moments when he was surprised: he was put, like the operator and me, in a situation of improvisation.

What I am saying here may seem obvious to any documentary filmmaker, it is banal. However, in this case there was a particular requirement: I expected Édouard Louis to produce a discourse from these situations that he discovered unexpectedly. A discourse: a real reflection, not a few memories or occasional remarks. This is what I call *live thinking*. Not everyone can do it.



There was also the idea of a ghost town that I was keen on. I accentuated it by going to shoot in Amiens in the middle of summer, at the end of July, because I knew that everything would be closed. The high school, the university campus, the cultural centre, all the places were closed or deserted. When he got to the campus, Édouard did something I was hoping for but hadn't asked him to do: he went to the window of the refectory and looked in. He couldn't get in and saw again the places he used to frequent ten years earlier. This scene was unexpected. Same thing at the theatre, I knew that it was closed because of construction work, but Édouard didn't know that. He entered the empty stage and developed a speech from there.

In order to get an interesting speech, that is to say, one that is not prepared beforehand, a repetition of knowledge already mastered, one must create these moments



of possible surprise. But this is often complicated because cinema is also an art of organisation.

**ID:** *And he says things there that he has never said or written?*

**FC:** I didn't come to the shooting with ready-made questions, with a questionnaire. Here too, everything is improvised. But I still have a method. This is how I proceed. I start talking to Édouard Louis, I talk a lot (the things I say can't be kept in the editing, otherwise there would be three times the film, I sometimes talk for five minutes straight). So, without him realising it, I lead him into the territory I want. Until he starts talking, sometimes cutting me off: he continues, expands, and goes somewhere else. This is how it always happens, it's infallible. The discussion arises because the bow was already stretched to the limit.

But it's not over, obviously. While Édouard is talking to me, I'm thinking at full speed: how can I continue, how can I already start the next part, without a break? So I start talking again, building on what he has just said, and so on. We never go from one question to another. It's a conversation that continues and enriches itself.

It's all quite tiring! During the first shoot, we had two days of almost non-stop conversation. Édouard left exhausted, that had never happened to him. This method, which I had already tried out on other films, has many advantages. You don't look for a synthesis or an easy summary. There is no pretence of putting together content, of putting a thought on cards, of framing the word - as we unfortunately often see on television. It is the opposite of «ready-to-think».

In this respect, the project of this film was clear, I absolutely wanted to avoid Édouard Louis reproducing what he does in the media. Édouard is very effective on television, as we have often seen on French and foreign channels. But on a television set, the guest does not speak for an hour, they are entitled to a set amount of time. They are therefore obliged to calculate their speech, they are in a situation of urgency, of efficiency. Someone who comes to defend their book, for example, has to calibrate their speech. This is exactly what I wanted to avoid. I wanted us to hear Édouard Louis differently, as we had never heard him before. I wanted us to hear him speak in a continuous way, without worrying about the passage of time.

**ID:** *There is a great elegance, I think, in the writing of the film. For example, I really liked the fact that childhood is very discreetly alluded to with a few photos. I think there is only one photo of the childhood home. The description comes from the text read in voice-over. It's a way of using image and sound in counterpoint, which is both economical in terms of means and effective. You don't see the misery in the image, you imagine it from a few signs. And that is much stronger.*

**FC:** In the film, there are three stages, three places mentioned. Amiens is the main stage, the switch between Hallencourt and Paris, the transition. I had to mention the time before and after Amiens, otherwise we wouldn't have understood this transition. I had to talk about the beginning, the childhood in the Picardy village of Hallencourt, which is the setting for the first novel *The End of Eddy*. When the book came out in 2014, journalists rushed there. There had been all sorts of reports insisting on the extreme crudity of things, the strong naturalism, a Zola-like quality to make the rich

cry - all things I hate. I didn't want to go down that road.

Rather than filming a dilapidated village and a family in misery, I preferred to shoot images of quite beautiful landscapes. And over these shots of attractive countryside, I placed the voice-over of Édouard Louis who talks about his childhood while reading extracts from his book. I thought that this contrast would produce something interesting. It was also a way of distancing myself from any naturalistic aim and avoiding making a sociological documentary. Just as I filmed Amiens as a blurry city, I showed his native village in stylised way. I did not want to make a film of social denunciation through images. I think that Édouard Louis' speech is quite strong, it is enough.

**ID:** *What is interesting is also the way you show the ambiguity of his relationship with his father. I can't help but compare him with Annie Ernaux, who I find much harder, colder, with her family.*

**FC:** There is a gentle ambiguity in Édouard Louis. In his first book, *The End of Eddy*, he painted a harsh picture of his village and his family. And yet he has remained very attached to them and has written some extremely tender texts about them over the last few years. That was one of my objectives in this film: to present someone full of gentleness, tenderness, empathy - all benevolent things that he willingly masks with his sense of humour. Gentleness and humour: these are qualities that do not immediately appear in his image as an intelligent young man conveyed in the media. I wanted to show them in my film.

A film is made of choices. I chose this aspect of Édouard Louis that I like. He is sometimes seen as a harsh person. He defends radical political positions; he participates in committed movements. He has written some well-known public figures (Manuel Valls, Chirac, and others), he does not disdain lampoons. His close friends, Didier Eribon and Geoffroy de Lagasnerie, are also rather bold, sometimes divisive. I wanted to show another image of Édouard Louis because I know that he is all of these things, but also the opposite. He is capable, after having written a first book that violently denounces his family, of writing a book about his father [6], then a book about his mother [7], to tell them that he loves them.

**ID:** *His words are precise and fair and, if his experience is particular, this self-analysis that he carries out in the film is a model of lucidity and penetration.*

**FC:** What's amazing about him is that he always thinks about very simple examples: a meeting, an outing with his friends, an evening with his family. He tells an anecdote and he starts to draw threads. You don't see it coming. For example, he describes how they ate at his house in Hallencourt. Then, imperceptibly, he talks about meals «at the bourgeois'» - and it's not the same at all. In his family, they like to pat themselves on the stomach when they've eaten well: a meal is meant to nourish them, they don't hide their hunger, they're happy to have remedied it. In an affluent environment, on the other hand, you don't eat just to feed yourself. It is also a ritual, a form of sociability around the table, an opportunity to spend a pleasant moment together: in general, you are not hungry when you arrive for lunch, you don't rush to eat! Édouard Louis uses many such anecdotes from everyday life, often amusingly. He starts with concrete examples and manages to draw effective analyses from them.

**ID:** *And generalisable. It is aimed at everyone. This film is not a simple portrait.*

**FC:** Absolutely. Édouard Louis seeks to develop a reflection that goes beyond his own case. He does a kind of «sharing of thought». When talking about *transformation* (the theme of the film), he does not only talk about *his* transformation. He calls on each of us to change.

I come back to the way of shooting, which I mentioned earlier. The most important thing in my filming relationship with Édouard Louis was to manage to create real time. That's why I did improvisation. Nothing had to be prepared: neither on my part (with restrictive staging, with questions), nor on his part (with content already known, a speech ready to be given). Everything had to be played out (formulated, heard) there and then. If we had shot the film fifteen minutes later, everything would have been different.



**ID:** *You never asked Édouard Louis to do another take.*

**FC:** No, never. Besides, if we had done it again, it would have generated other answers. What interests me most in this kind of shoot is to see an activity: not so much the thought itself as its formulation in front of me. If I want to know a thought precisely, I can buy a book, thought is embodied in it at best: it is inscribed, re-touched, completed. Thought is standardised in the written word. In fact, there is no need for mediation by the author, his eyes, or his body. I can read and understand Aristotle without listening to the man in front of me. On the other hand, when you film someone, what is great - and what you never get in a book - is to see them thinking out loud, sometimes hesitating. In a way, you see him preparing a book. He gives us the preliminary stages, the articulations. He is drafting his book.

**ID:** *This is what Jean-Louis Comolli did with Carlo Ginzburg for his film on the Sofri case. He went to his home for more than two years to film the gradual development of the book.*

**FC:** Yes, some people are passionate about this process of developing the work. Their obsession will be to find the twenty-seven drafts of a text, to study its most minute variations until the final state. This is done a lot with novels and literary

works. I think it is less common with works of thought, where only the published text is considered to be a proof. The preliminaries remain a sketch, of little use to the reader (except, of course, in the case of particularly obscure texts, or of authors who deliberately practice the floating of thought!)

Filming thought in action is what interested me. I wanted to give Édouard Louis the opportunity to search, to doubt, to rethink in real time. And in the end, if the viewer of the film finds him convincing and effective, it is not because his words are calibrated and well-framed. It is because he is sincere. You can tell that he really means what he says. I didn't put him in a performance situation, I put him in a support situation, a guidance framework.

**ID:** *How did the experience of the previous films serve you?*

**FC:** I can do this kind of shoot because I've been doing it for a long time: in my documentaries on thinkers, but also in my other films which are narratives, fictional films. I've always enjoyed taking people where I want them to go - gently, surreptitiously, by conducting a directed conversation. In *Bienvenue à Bataville* [8], for example, people ended up telling me things they hadn't planned to say at all. The same thing happened in *L'Affaire Valérie* [9], where I had a good method (but this one in a few words) for getting the unspeakable out. It's what we call maieutics: making people deliver a word that they already possess without knowing it. More prosaically, it is anti-television. Television documentaries are quite frontal, brutal, and have to produce an effect. Maieutics is slower, its dynamics move by gradual touches. I have often conducted my interviews in this direction.

**ID:** *Could you talk about the editing of the film?*

**FC.:** The film was made simply, both during the shooting and the editing. The editing took six weeks, which is nothing at all - I object to such short times, it's the time imposed by television for 52-minute films, and I regret these deadlines that prevent films from blossoming. But, strangely enough, this one came together quickly. Perhaps because it is a very unitary film, centred on its subject, never losing its focus. I see it as a first draft, drawn in one go. I'm happy with this simplicity.

**ID:** *I don't quite believe you, because I've always thought that editing is a complicated, slow, and mysterious thing.*

**FC:** In general, yes. Except here! But it's true that I had prepared the editing. I knew exactly what was in my rushes, I had thought about it before working with the editor Manu Manzano. It should also be pointed out that this is a film with few parameters, concentrated in three locations: Amiens, the main location ; the village of Hallencourt, in a few shots of the countryside ; a Parisian studio with a set of screens (recording of texts, extracts from TV programmes, theatre scenes: the media system). These three places carry the character of the transformation: the high school student we find in Amiens ; the boy we hear in Hallencourt ; the public man of today, whom we see on stage or through screens.

**ID: What was the reception of the film?**

**FC:** I think that the spectators are surprised to discover Édouard Louis from this angle. There are those who already liked the writer, appreciated his works or his public interventions. And there are those who didn't like him, but came because they were told about the film, and they wrote to me: *I don't agree at all with what he says, but he is a radiant person... The things he makes us feel are beautiful.*

In this case there is a kind of respect, imposed by the film. I'm very happy about that. That's the objective I had set myself: to show a sensitive, touching boy. Of course, he is very intelligent, but people already know his intelligence, while the other aspect seems less obvious. The film wants to shed light on this side.

**ID: What did you take out for the short version?**

**FC:** Mostly the theatre pieces. I found it interesting to talk about theatre because it is yet another possible life of Édouard Louis. When he arrived in Paris to study at the ENS, he didn't want to be an intellectual at all. He wanted to be an actor and enter the Comédie Française. And now, for two years, he has been acting in the theatre. He was recently in New York in Thomas Ostermeier's play *Who Killed My Father*.

Theatre poses interesting questions about transformation, because in principle, on stage, you become someone other than yourself. But what is this self? What does authenticity mean? This is the big question of the film. Who is the real Édouard Louis, if he even exists?

Édouard Louis theorizes on the inauthenticity of beings, he says that there is no original, there is no real self to approach. I am in the truth each time, I am in the becoming. That is what transformation is: a permanent transformation. So, theatre adds this additional reflection: who are we on stage? It's another possible way of talking about transformation, a digression in the film.

**ID: There are two versions of the film.**

**FC:** There is a 52-minute version, which has already been broadcast on France 3 Hauts-de-France. We would like to do a theatrical release with the 72-minute version, which was shown in March at the Cinéma du Réel festival.

**ID:** About the Hommes-livres collection, Jérôme Prieur said that the interview does not allow us to know the truth, but to glimpse it, to glimpse it between the words, between the images [10].

**FC:** Would that mean that there is a truth of the other? No, I don't believe that there is a truth of the other. There is not some kind of secret treasure that the director would try to unearth. For me, everything happens at the moment of the film. The truth that is in the film is the truth of the film. It is not the truth of the character; it is the truth of the moment.

The third text, *Who Killed My Father*, did not provide any explanation either.



But it was this transformation that interested me most. I wanted to know how such a metamorphosis could have brought a young sub-proletarian man from Picardie to the status of a budding media star. But I was left alone with my questions.

Édouard Louis, in our private conversations, did give me some clues. It all seemed to happen in Amiens, during four years spent in high school and at the Faculté de Picardie. There was a pivotal period in the late 1990s, between leaving the village of Hallencourt and arriving in Paris. But he wrote nothing about it in his texts and rarely referred to it in his interviews. He only mentioned this stage in Amiens without going into detail.

Years passed and it seemed very strange to me that this follower of Pierre Bourdieu (cultural capital and social determinism) did not take the opportunity to make a detailed analysis of his own case. For his itinerary seemed to me to be very significant, as a Bourdieusian counter-example. Through Édouard Louis, we discover a way of transforming oneself, of leaving one's original social condition, of changing one's cultural background, of becoming an intellectual in twenty-first century France, which is usually more favorable to the born elites. We see how an ill-born young man succeeds, in a surprising way, in escaping the rankings that were intended for him.

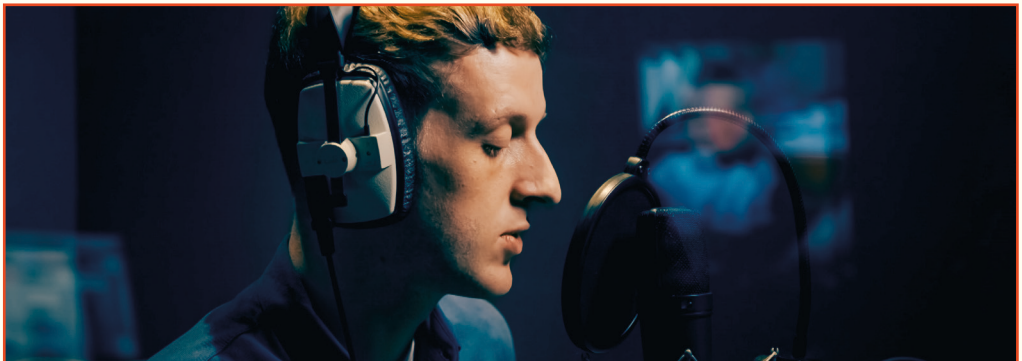
However, it must be recognised that this path is in line with a very current concern. Transformation appears today as one of the keys to modernity. Transformation is to be understood here in the sense of 'crossing over', breaking down fixed codes, abandoning norms, admitting total otherness in the form of mixing or renewal. In short: to transport oneself elsewhere.

The contemporary vocabulary is permeated by such imperatives: defector (*transfuge*), transclass, transgender, trans humanity... Everything that crosses and cracks the categories stemming from old Western humanism; everything that can found a new approach to the human being — and, beyond that, to the living.

Numerous debates currently revolve around this question, in France and abroad. The debate is taking place in university colloquia or during militant actions that receive media coverage. It is often led by well-known authors. This is the new field of study of the beginning of the 21st century.

This is the horizon in which this film project emerges:

***The Many Lives of Édouard Louis.***



# FILMO- GRAPHY

FRANÇOIS CAILLAT

## Essais documentaires :

- **UNE JEUNESSE AMOUREUSE**, récit d'éducation sentimentale dans le Paris des années 70. (Films du Tamarin/ Ere Productions/ Ina - 105', 2012)
- **BIENVENUE À BATAVILLE**, fable sur le bonheur obligatoire au 20ème siècle (Unlimited/ Films Hatari/ Ina - 90', 2007)
- **LA QUATRIÈME GÉNÉRATION**, saga historique sur la famille lorraine du réalisateur. (Arte/ Gloria Films/ Ina - 80', 1997)
- **TROIS SOLDATS ALLEMANDS**, recherche d'un disparu de la guerre de 1940. (Arte/ Gloria Films/ Ina/ Films de l'Observatoire/ RTBF - 75')
- **L'AFFAIRE VALÉRIE**, enquête sur le souvenir d'un fait divers. (Arte/ Archipel 33/ Ina - 75', 2004)
- **ESPÉRANCE**, lettres sur l'engagement, réflexion sur le communisme et l'humanitaire. (Tempo Films/ Ina - 90', 2017)
- **TRIPTYQUE RUSSE**, trois volets de l'histoire héroïco-tragique du Belomorkanal (Tempo Films/ Le Fresnoy/ Pictanovo - 78', 2018)

## Documentaires sur des penseurs et écrivains :

- **EDOUARD LOUIS, OU LA TRANSFORMATION** (Tempo films/ Acqua alta / DDN/ Pictanovo/ Le Fresnoy - 73', 2022)
- **FOUCAULT CONTRE LUI-MÊME**, réflexion sur le pouvoir et le sujet. (Arte/ The Factory/ Ina - 52', 2014).
- **JULIA KRISTEVA, ÉTRANGE ÉTRANGÈRE**, portrait raisonné d'une intellectuelle. (Arte/ Ina - 60', 2005)
- **PETER SLOTERDIJK, UN PHILOSOPHE ALLEMAND**, entretiens sur la modernité. (Arte/ Ina - 55', 2003)
- **J.M.G. LE CLEZIO, ENTRE LES MONDES**, portrait d'un « voyageur en littérature ». (France 5/ The Factory/ Ina - 52', 2008)
- **ARAGON, MALRAUX, DRIEU LA ROCHELLE : D'UNE GUERRE À L'AUTRE**, portraits croisés de trois intellectuels engagés dans la décennie 1930. (France 3/ Ina - 56', 2012)

## Trilogie sur les neuro-sciences :

- **LE TROISIÈME OEIL**, l'organisation du regard dans le cerveau. (Arte/ Films d'Ici/ RTBF - 60', 1993)
- **L'HOMME QUI ÉCOUTE**, chronique du monde sonore : musique, langage, bruits. (Arte/ Gloria Films/ Ina - 90', 1998)
- **NAISSANCE DE LA PAROLE**, l'acquisition du langage : pédopsychiatres vs neuro-scientifiques. (France 3/ Gloria Films - 56', 2000)

# TECHNICAL INFOS

## THE MANY LIVES OF EDOUARD LOUIS

**Image:** Jean-Baptiste Delahaye Laurent Fénard

**Sound:** Jean-Marie Daleux Stephan Bauer Christian Vignal Déborah Drelon

**Production manager:** Hortense Quitard

**assisted by:** Pauline Caillat Edmée Doroszalai Orianne Barbaux Cécile Guionnet

**Editing:** Emmanuel Manzano

**assisted by:** Raphaëlle Irace Salomé Emmelin

**Calibration:** Axelle Gonay

**Mixing:** Christian Cartier Auditorium de mixage Le Fresnoy

**Stage directors:** Jessica Gazon Laurent Hatat and Emma Gustafsson Stanislas Nordey Thomas Ostermeier

**Music (DR):** Magnolia Electric CO : Almost was good enough Girls : Lust for Life Asaf Avidan : Different Pulses

### **A co-production :**

Tempo films Jacqueline Sigaar Hortense Quitard

Acqua alta Christophe Gougeon

Le Fresnoy - Studio national des arts contemporains

Pictanovo with the support of the Hauts-de-France Region and in partnership with the CNC

with the participation of France Télévisions and TV5 Monde

with the support of the Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée of the Proci-rep - Société des Producteurs and L'Angoa

ISAN 0000-0005-8CDA-0000-C-0000-0000-1