VERSAILLES

CAST

Nina
Judith Chemla
• Enzo
Max Baissette de Malglaive
• Nadine
Aure Atika
• Jean-Jacques
Patrick Descamps

SYNOPSIS

Paris, today. A child and his young mother sleep on the streets. Nina is unemployed and has no ties. Enzo is 5. Their drifting leads them to Versailles. In the woods near the palace, a man lives in a hut, cut-off from everything. Damien, Nina spends a night with him. Early the next morning, Nina leaves the child and vanishes. When he wakes, Damien finds Enzo alone. As the days and seasons pass, the man and the child yet acquainted, start to get along and grow fond of each other. Their bond will be as strong as their destitution. However, they will have to leave the hut one day…

CREW

Written and directed by Pierre Schoeller, Pierre Schoeller
• Producer
Géraldine Michelot
• Director of Photography
Julien Hirsch
• Editor
Mathilde Muyard
• Sound
Yves-Marie Omnès, François Mereu, Stéphane Thiébaut
• Original Music
Philippe Schoeller
• Production Designer
Brigitte Brassart
• Costume Designer
Marie Cesari
• Line Producers
Philippe Martin & Géraldine Michelot
• Produced by
Les films Pelléas
• With the participation of Centre National de la Cinématographie (CNC) and Région Ile-de-France et de Centre Images - Région Centre
• With the support of Procirep and Angoa Agicoa and the programme MEDIA of the European Union

PIERRE SCHOELLER


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With
Guillaume Depardieu
Max Baissette de Malglaive
Judith Chemla
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Patrick Descamps

VERSAILLES
Versailles is a film marked by strong contrasts. Firstly, between the title and its subject...

The title lies at the origin of the project. In France today, 908,000 people live in makeshift shelters: huts, tents, garages, phones... And even in Versailles, at the grounds of the palace, a few vagrants have found refuge in the woods. I met some of them. This is a decisive encounter, even if the film does not tell their story. Our country lives in a state of latent social decomposition, and I am off in a simple hypothesis: what if French society had never turned its back on the adversity of privileges after all? Talking about the present three films referring back to a society that has a little ghost but still presents with the palace, in magnificence and ambition. Talking about what not to say in the country while bringing its golden years, Versailles. At the same time, I wanted a modern mechanism, a metaphor of everyday life in which the characters do not submit to the story they are in. During writing, the whole challenge was to come into the inner lives of these three outcasts: the mother, the child and the steadfast loner.

Nina and Damien don't experience their role as outcasts in the same manner. Is that a major difference between the characters? Yes, Damien, like his neighbours in the woods, asserts his exclusion. He is one of those people who cannot live where they are born. After escaping death and prison, he has found a... a life worthy of the word. In the meantime, she raises her child in spite of everything, giving him all the love she can. Damien and Nina are bound by the trim of their lives.

Nina and Damien are two personalities who stand at the heart of the film that changes the course of the story again... That's a dilemma: on one point, the child needs the person who never sleeps. Damien and Nina are bound by the trim of their lives.

Does the child play a revelatory function in the film? The child's a mystery. He is in his nature to grow. And if it's not progress, his nature as a child is jeopardised. Damien says this to Nina: “You won't be able to live long on the streets, this kid...” I won't go into detail. Easy reader's things. We wanted a good deal on the notion of a frontier, which is indicated in the lighting of the half-light of characteristics. The heart of the film was that without additional lighting, he daylight or by the light of the campfires. We asked ourselves a great number of questions about the distance that the camera should have in relation to the character. How could the contact be held on the subject of the fiction? How could we preserve reality of the outside be brought to life? This explains the long shots, indeed extreme long shots, and the other frontal point of view. We then retain the notion of scale between the adult and the child, between the woods and the hut, between Nina and the city. The editing and mix created the accent we had during shooting. Later material equation in the rhythm, for the film to the town. The main thing to give the gaze time to settle.

Later on, Enzo saves Damien. This is a very powerful scene at the heart of the film that changes the course of the story again…

That's a classical twist: at one point, the child saves the person who saved him. Damien and Enzo are bound for their rest of their lives.

Does the child play a revelatory function in the film? The child has a future. It's in his nature to grow. And if there is no growth, his nature as a child is jeopardised. Damien says this to Nina: “You won't be able to live long on the streets, this kid...” I won't go into detail. Easy reader's things. We wanted a good deal on the notion of a frontier, which is indicated in the lighting of the half-light of characteristics. The heart of the film was that without additional lighting, he daylight or by the light of the campfires. We asked ourselves a great number of questions about the distance that the camera should have in relation to the character. How could the contact be held on the subject of the fiction? How could we preserve reality of the outside be brought to life? This explains the long shots, indeed extreme long shots, and the other frontal point of view. We then retain the notion of scale between the adult and the child, between the woods and the hut, between Nina and the city. The editing and mix created the accent we had during shooting. Later material equation in the rhythm, for the film to the town. The main thing to give the gaze time to settle.

Why does Nina choose Damien when she barely knows him? That's one of the questions of the movie. Nina meets this man completely. She meets a man who is classified but that he is rebel. Damien is rebellious that Nina is involved in. Nina is involvement in turning away from home into town... When does Damien rescue Nina, this child who appears out of the night? Nineteen years old, Damien is two personalities who stand at the heart of the film that changes the course of the story again... That's a dilemma: on one point, the child needs the person who never sleeps. Damien and Nina are bound by the trim of their lives.

Who did you work with your director of photography, Jean-Bernard Blin, who also had the photography on “Lady Chatterley”? We knew each other since we had worked together on my TV movie, “Zero defect”. He is a master in his job. We worked a great deal on the notion of a frontier, which is indicated in the lighting of the half-light of characteristics. The heart of the film was that without additional lighting, he daylight or by the light of the campfires. We asked ourselves a great number of questions about the distance that the camera should have in relation to the character. How could the contact be held on the subject of the fiction? How could we preserve reality of the outside be brought to life? This explains the long shots, indeed extreme long shots, and the other frontal point of view. We then retain the notion of scale between the adult and the child, between the woods and the hut, between Nina and the city. The editing and mix created the accent we had during shooting. Later material equation in the rhythm, for the film to the town. The main thing to give the gaze time to settle.

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The contrasts at work within the film are also found in the direction. What was your basic approach? The problem was tackling the choice of poverty while avoiding gloom and powering the film with a fine energy. I wanted to remain sensitive and sensitive, in the immensity, to... I worked on the notion of a borderline, which is indicated in the lighting by the notion of half-light, of characteristics. The heart of the film was that without additional lighting, he daylight or by the light of the campfires. We asked ourselves a great number of questions about the distance that the camera should have in relation to the character. How could the contact be held on the subject of the fiction? How could we preserve reality of the outside be brought to life? This explains the long shots, indeed extreme long shots, and the other frontal point of view. We then retain the notion of scale between the adult and the child, between the woods and the hut, between Nina and the city. The editing and mix created the accent we had during shooting. Later material equation in the rhythm, for the film to the town. The main thing to give the gaze time to settle.

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