

LES FILMS DU LENDEMAIN & JPG FILMS PRÉSENT

INSPIRED BY THE MEMOIRS OF
CASANOVA

VINCENT
LINDON

STACY
MARTIN

CASANOVA LAST LOVE

A FILM BY
BENOIT JACQUOT

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF VALERIA GOLINO
SCRIPT & DIALOGUES BY CHANTAL THOMAS JÉRÔME BEAUJOUR & BENOIT JACQUOT

D'APRÈS HISTOIRE DE MA VIE DE GIACOMO CASANOVA ET AVEC JULIA ROY, NANCY TATE, ANNA COTTIS, HAYLEY KARMICHAEL, CHRISTIAN ERICSSON, NATHAN WILCOCKS, ANTOIVYTHASAN, JESITHASAN, IMAGE CHRISTOPHE BEAUCARME, SIMO PIERRE MERTEENS, PAUL HEYWARDS, OLIVIER GOINARD, ASSISTANT MISE EN SCÈNE ANTOINE SANTANA, DIRECTEUR DE PRODUCTION ALBERT BLASINS, CASTING ANTOINETTE BOULAT, SCÉNARIO GENEVIÈVE DUFOUR, RÉGIESS KATA WYSZCZOP, COSTUMES PASCALINE CHAUVAINE, MONTAGE JULIA GREGORY, MUSIQUE ORIGINALE BRUNO COULAIS, PRODUCTION DÉLÉGUÉE KRISTINA LARSEN, JEAN-PIERRE GOERIN EN COPRODUCTION AVEC JEAN-PIERRE ET LUC BARDEWINE, DEL PRINTE TODOSIO, CHARLES S. COHEN, PRODUCTION EXÉCUTIVE LES FILMS DU LENDEMAIN, UNE PRODUCTION LES FILMS DU LENDEMAIN, JPG FILMS EN COPRODUCTION AVEC VITO D'ONOVI, FRANCE 3 CÔTE D'AZUR, LES FILMS DU PELOU, COHEN MEDIA GROUP, AVEC LA PARTICIPATION DE CANAL+ CINE+ FRANCE TÉLÉVISION, AVEC LE SOUTIEN DE LA RÉGION ÎLE-DE-FRANCE DU PRÉFET DE LA RÉGION ÎLE-DE-FRANCE, DU MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE, DU MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉQUIPEMENT FÉDÉRAL, DE LA CASINO PICTURES, DE CASA KAPPA PICTURES, DE VIVE TAX SHELTER, COPRODUIRE BY BELTUS DU PROGRAMME EUROPÉEN CREATIVE MEDIA, DU L'UNION EUROPÉENNE, DE LA PRODIGER, DE LA SACOM, EN ASSOCIATION AVEC SOUTIENS 5 ET SOUTIENS 6, PALATINE ÉTOILE 16, CINÉMAGE 13 DÉVELOPPÉ AVEC DEVIVICINE 3, SOUTIENIA 12, DÉVELOPPEMENT CORTINOVA DÉVELOPPEMENT 3, DU DISPONIBLE SUR BORISIGNAL, VENTES INTERNATIONALES ELLE DRIVER, DISTRIBUTION DIAPHANA

CASANOVA, VALERIA GOLINO, CHANTAL THOMAS, JÉRÔME BEAUJOUR, BENOIT JACQUOT, VINCENT LINDON, STACY MARTIN

films... JPG... wuburn... cinema... CANAL+ CINE+ france-tv... SOUTIENS 5... SOUTIENS 6... DEVIVICINE 3

Synopsis:

London, 18th century. Casanova, famous for his taste of pleasure and gambling, arrives from Paris, forced into exile. In this city he knows nothing about, the libertine meets on several occasions a young prostitute, Marianne de Charpillon. She attracts him to the point he starts disregarding all other women. The legendary seducer is ready to do anything to get her, but La Charpillon always escapes under various excuses. She challenges Casanova: "You will only have me if you stop desiring me!"

Long Synopsis:

Who is Casanova ? Born in the 18th Century, Venetian adventurer, Citizen of the World. Child of the Enlightenment Century, he is obsessed with the tastes of pleasure, gambling, and adventure. This last obsession leads him to London, where he has never set foot yet, a city he knows nothing about, starting with the language. The only place he knows is the one that was given to him in Paris by his friend, Cardinal de Bernis : the most famous and posh brothel in London, whose French owner is quickly going to turn himself into Casanova's friend and « partner in crime ».

In a neighbouring park, Casanova regularly encounters with a young prostitute, who goes by the name of Charpillon, and who he will end up meeting during a country house party. He's very attracted to her, to the point where other women don't matter any longer. She invites him at her place, to have sex together - he thinks, whereas she only proposes him to partner into a nebulous and wooly matter (the fabrication of a « life balm »). He's willing to participate, only to achieve his carnal aim, but she manages to shy away from it. And she'll continue to do so, whenever possible, under every potential excuse, all the more diverse and inventive.

Charpillon faces Casanova with a challenge that could drive him mad : he will have her only when he stops lusting after her.

Director's Note

Casanova (1725-1798) is not Don Juan. The story of his life isn't a catalogue of women one counts like prey. He loved womankind as a friend and friendship is what he aims for, whether he is in love or not. This may explain the incredible ease with which he approaches the women who cross his path, which is a far cry from the calculated self-interest of a roué.

Casanova had the talent to live twice: first his own existence, intensely, and then, during his miserable retreat in Bohemia, as creator of a myth of himself by writing his memoirs: the myth of a man eternally in love. The script links these two periods of his life to create a parallel between his exile in London and his final retreat that tells of the constant exile - forced or voluntary - in which Casanova lived his life. Certain episodes are alluded to: his Venetian past, his escape from The Leads, the fortune he amassed with the lottery started in Paris, his decision to speak only French and write his memoirs in that language, thus making it his own to the exclusion of his mother tongue. What motivates him isn't a taste for conquests but a sturdy appetite for seizing an opportunity and braving the games of desire. We want to show the importance his partners' pleasure has for him – which distinguishes him yet further from Don Juan. Women's singularity, the world of women (one woman at a time), that is what moves him.

The usual immediacy with which his desires are fulfilled contrasts with the delay imposed by Marianne Charpillon, and this unconsummated love leads him to committing acts of violence against her and to the temptation of suicide. Casanova is in love with Charpillon, and it is neither the first nor the last time he falls in love. What is exceptional in the London episode is that he sees himself forced to be patient by a prostitute, a woman typically paid in advance who forces him to play a game in which he doesn't master the rules. Charpillon is the first woman to shake the self-image he has built for himself, to the point that he abandons all attempt at controlling what is happening to him: He will be forced to resign himself to deciding that she is "really dead" to escape the sway she has on him, as he knows that with her "The faintest breath is enough to rekindle the flame." That said we'd like to suggest - if only through the actresses acting - that Casanova is probably mistaken about Charpillon and the sincerity of her feelings. She too has lost herself and she has had to submit to her mother's wishes, reluctantly. Perhaps she doubts Casanova's ability to love a girl like herself, someone whom "people don't court." We can believe Charpillon when she speaks of "the temptation [being] too strong" for her too. As the young woman repeatedly comes back towards Casanova every time he decides to free himself of her, more than the perverse games of one trying to maintain their sway over another person, we see the effects of a genuine need to be a part of his life.

Through the acting and the tone of the reconstruction we'd like to offer a world where emotions are extracted from yesterday to reach today. We would like the representation of the past shown in the film to produce the effect of a here and now.

Benoit Jacquot

Interview with the Director

Kristina Larsen: Why direct a Casanova today, considering the numerous films we already know? Where does the originality of this Casanova lie?

Benoit Jacquot: The uniqueness of this film about Casanova is intrinsic to its subject: It's the first time Casanova's "blown out," it's his first romantic failure. This man who has known many successes with women, all of a sudden meets a woman who holds him by her constant refusal. So when we read this unique episode in his *Memoirs*, we see romantic failure from a man's perspective; a failure which confronts a man with his own weakness and vulnerability. What's at stake here, instead of the usual succession of successful sensual pleasures, is a passion that grows proportionally to the obstacles. In this case, we can only see him as vulnerable. And that vulnerability contributes to making the choice of Vincent Lindon interesting. This project tells the story of a man turned into "weakling" by a woman who is anything but.

KL: Besides reading Casanova's *Memoirs*, which is a bit of a "bedside book," the desire to make this film was heightened by the main actor's, Vincent Lindon's, immoderate desire to play the leading role?

BJ: When an actor wants a role that badly, I can't help but think – as a filmmaker and as a filmmaker who knows actors well – that there's an overwhelming desire to feel needed, unique, original and surprising in the eyes of the person making the film. My resistance at what initially seemed like casting Vincent against type turned into curiosity and a desire to answer his wish because I know – and the history of film is there to testify to it – that it engenders the most interesting movie picture experiences, the most powerful moments between a director and his actor.

KL: This is the first time that a masculine character is alone at the heart of your narrative structure.

BJ: ... and it could very well be the case from here on out. *Three Hearts*, initially written for Vincent Lindon although Benoit Poelvoorde ended up playing the role, was a first step towards having a man as central character. Today, I'm interested in this shift. Especially when dealing with wild passion. In final analysis, as soon as there is true passion – and there lies the paradox of mad love between men and women – why is it that this desire for intense closeness necessarily, at best, turns into a misunderstanding or, at worst, comes screeching to a halt? It touches on the differences between the sexes. It's not an issue of equality. It's a difference problem that causes inequality. Like all kind-hearted people, Casanova is always looking for a path to friendship. In the first seduction scene, he entices the young woman head-on in a charming, very friendly manner. He seems to want to help her in some way: She has been "placed" into marriage, so to speak, and he offers her the possibility of doing something akin to freedom with her body - everything that was refused to women at the time. Unfortunately, he can't take her away. She asks him to "take her," but he can't, he's an adventurer. He lives for chance, first and foremost for chance encounters of the amorous kind. Yet each time he is sincerely in love and represents for each woman the prospect of a freedom he offers.

KL: How will you render the literary and storybook impact of his *Memoirs*?

BJ: Casanova's *Memoirs* isn't a novel. It's a chronicle, a succession of episodes. Casanova's XVIIIth century was devoted to narration, to "memoirs." I chose this particular episode for the reasons discussed previously. But my intention isn't to make Casanova into something he is not, i.e. the character of a novel. The fabrication of a storybook adventure would be anachronistic with the original narrative. However, according to me, he's absolutely a film character and even more so during this episode of his life.

KL: What will the intention behind the mise en scène be?

BJ: I'm putting the greatest care into reconstructing the period and at the same time I intend to treat the film with a style and means that are resolutely contemporary. I envision the lightest camera (or cameras), as mobile as possible, with a flexibility and a camera setup that belong to current film techniques – as far as possible from classicism. I envision a mise en scène using no tracking shots, few shot breakdowns and that distances me as little as possible from the main character. Proportionally to this desirable inventiveness, I envision extreme precision in the details and rendering of the period; no stylization. I want to implement this incredible paradox for a period piece: a very contemporary film, that feels as old as the hills and as if it had happened yesterday. I want to give the past a feeling of immediacy. I want the audience to have the impression they're seeing him act, live. I want a near documentary quality, something like a Rossellinian report on Casanova.

KL: In the current "post-Weinstein" context, some reactions to the script – even benevolent ones – have questioned this being the "right time" to make a film about Casanova...

BJ: Casanova is an anti-predator. This line of thinking is something of a cliché that confuses Casanova with Don Juan and, therefore, the XVIIIth century with the XVIIth. Don Juan is an enemy to women. He wishes death on everything, including women. Casanova is the exact opposite. He yearns for eternal life and therefore eternally yearns for women. He can't feel attraction without feeling "friendship." He can't have sexual relations without being intensely desired and loved. These days, bringing Casanova back to the forefront can only be beneficial.

CAST

Casanova	Vincent Lindon
Marianne de Charpillon	Stacy Martin
La Cornelys	Valeria Golino
Cécile	Julia Roy
Hortense Stavenson	Nancy Tate
La mère de la Charpillon	Anna Cottis
Anna	Hayley Carmichael
Christian Erickson	Lord Pembroke
Claremont	Nathan Willcocks
Jarba	Antonythasan Jesuthasan

TECHNICAL SHEET

Directed by

Benoit Jacquot

Written by

Chantal Thomas, Jérôme Beaujour and Benoit Jacquot

Based on

Histoire de ma vie by Giacomo Casanova

Cinematography

Christophe BEAUCARNE

Sound

Pierre MERTENS, Paul HEYMANS, Olivier GOINARD

First assistant director

Antoine SANTANA

Production manager

Albert BLASIUS

Casting

Antoinette BOULAT

Script supervisor

Geneviève DUFOUR

Production design

Katia WYSZKOP

Costume design

Pascaline CHAVANNE

Film Editing

Julia GREGORY

Original Score

Bruno COULAIS

Executive producer

Kristina LARSEN, Jean-Pierre GUÉRIN

In coproduction with

Jean-Pierre and Luc DARDENNE, Delphine TOMSON, Charles S. COHEN

Line producer

Les Films du Lendemain

A production

Les Films du Lendemain, JPG Films,

In coproduction with

Wild Bunch, France 3 Cinéma, Les Films du Fleuve, Cohen Media Group

With the participation of

CANAL +, CINÉ +, FRANCE TÉLÉVISIONS

With the support of La Région Île-de-France

in partnership with

the CNC, the tax shelter from the Belgium federal government, Casa Kafka Pictures, Casa Kafka Pictures Movie Tax Shelter empowered by Belfius Europe Creative programme - MEDIA of the European Union, the PROCIREP

In association with

Sofitvcine 5 et Sofitvcine 6, Palatine Etoile 16, Cinémage 13

Developed with

Devtvcine 3, Soficinema 12 développement, Cofinova développement 3

International sales

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