



Robert Mitchum is dead

a feature film of
Olivier Babinet and Fred Kihn

all photages in this documentation are stills of the film

proposed by
Ferris & Brockman
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Synopsis

Franky, an unemployed actor with insomnia, and Arsène, his manager, are about to find themselves in dire straits. Franky, totally depressed, Arsène's friend, spiritual son and main source of income, is unable to get up in the morning and misses out on the jobs, few and far between, that the manager is able to unearth for him.

Arsène, a former rocker and a compulsive thief, makes one last-ditch attempt at success. Wielding a gun, he steals a car from a dealership and heads off for the Arctic Circle with his "promising young actor", Franky.

The manager claims that he has an appointment there with Georg Sarrinef, a director Franky idolizes and who is preparing an American movie.

Entrusting himself to Arsène's unshakable energy and will, Franky, moonlike, a sleepwalker and befuddled by sleeping pills, allows himself to be led off on this fantastic odyssey across Europe where he occasionally finds it hard to distinguish between dreams and reality.

Above the Arctic Circle, after no end of pitfalls and disappointments, but also a few successes, the encounter with the filmmaker takes place at last. But he doesn't turn out to be worthy of the myth surrounding him and this eagerly sought meeting leads nowhere. Arsène, whose will to fight to the bitter end gradually transforms into obsessive raving, decides to continue to journey at all costs.

Measuring the full scope of his manager's neurosis, Franky decides to head home, choosing to fend for himself at last.



Presentation

Feature Film (100mn) - Shooting from august 24th to october 16th 2009
Principal language : French

Co-writers / Co-directors

Olivier Babinet and Fred Kihn

Artistic Head Of Department

Pierre Pell

(Set Designer of Michel Gondry's Science of Sleep)

Timo Salminen

(DOP of Aki Kaurismaki)

Fred Cambier

(Wardrobe Styliste of Gaspard Noé's Irreversible)

Yann Dedet

(Editor of Maurice Pialat, Cédric Kahn, Amos Gitai and François Truffaut)

Co-Productions :

Ferris & Brockman - Igor Wojtowicz - France

Studio Agart - David Szurmiej - Pologne

Panache Production - André Logie - Belgique

Sweet Films - Joachim Lyng - Norvège



Director's Note of Intent

As the title itself hints, Robert Mitchum Is Dead is a film positioned at the point where myth meets reality. The myth in question is that of American cinema and, more specifically, the cinema of the 1950s and 60s. The matching reality is that of Franky, an actor at the end of the line whose manager, Arsène, desperately tries to keep motivated. But this border between myth and reality is suddenly shattered when Arsène, driven by despair or the lust for life, takes out the gun that he hides in his bathroom and decides to set off for the Arctic Circle, whatever the cost, to meet Georg Sarrinef, a famous European director who is about to make his first film in America.

In deciding to fight for their ideal, Franky and Arsène immediately attain the truth of this myth: action. And yet, at the end of their long journey, the two men discover that the myth embodied by Mitchum is well and truly dead. Sarrinef, the famous director won't make his film and the Arctic Circle is just a white line on the ground in the middle of a village that resembles a hideous ski resort, built around a concrete tree that plays Christmas songs performed on the electric guitar.

Locating the film in Europe is the result of an approach that has allowed us to define the kind of cinema that we want to make. This cinema is neither purely French cinema nor a pale imitation of American film. Instead, we are seeking a third way that aims to show how American cinema haunts the European imagination, while retaining our identity and taking full responsibility for the position that we speak from.

The whole of America is in Europe, but it's a fake, a cut-price version of the original. This is why, during Franky and Arsène's journey, the old continent is viewed as a block, a single territory where everyone speaks the same European-Esperanto-English and where only the accents change.

Concerning the rhythm of the film, it will have a relatively slow base-line, corresponding to the characters' drifting, but intercut with moments of rapid acceleration that evoke the drive of Arsène, a genuine locomotive eating up the miles. The music will play a major part in giving the film its beat. We wish to work with

a composer who, in creating an original score made up of soft, mysterious and synthetic "layers", will help to give the film a "mental" dimension in order to hint at Franky's inner state. To achieve this we shall work with Etienne Charry (composer of the orchestral score for Michel Gondry's latest film "Tokyo" and of the music for "Bidule", directed by Olivier Babinet).

The photography of Timo Salminen (Aki Kaurismaki's DOP) will be neither minimalist, nor complacent in relation to the beauty of the scenery that is, in itself, sufficiently cinematic.

We would like to show that the progressive standardization of urban landscapes has a both terrifying and fascinating aspect. This modern, post-industrial architecture is the reflection of the standardization of the world and we wish to evoke this by filming it.

The main idea is to show, through precise and incisive framing, how reality can seem like a film set when viewed from a certain angle.

Robert Mitchum Is Dead is, in essence, a European co-production. In an "organic" way.

Casting

Arsène : Olivier Gourmet

Franky : Pablo Nicomedes

Katia : Danuta Stenka (Poland)

Douglas : Bakary Sangaré (de la Comédie Française)

The Barmaid : Maria Bock (Norway)

Head of Film School : Wojciech Pszoniak (Poland)



Arsène



Franky



Katia



Douglas



The Barmaid



Head of Film School

Financing Mitchum

Total Budget : 1 500 000 euros

Lead Producer :

France : Ferris & Brockman (Igor Wojtowicz)

Co-Producers :

Belgium : Panache Production (André Logie)

Poland : Agart Production (David Szurmiej)

Norway : Sweet Films (Joachim Lyng)

Fund :

TPS Star (1st Window Canal+)

Cinécinéma (2nd Window Cana+)

Eurimages

Belgium Film Fund (Communauté Française de Blegique)

Norwegian Film Institute

TVP (Poland National TV)

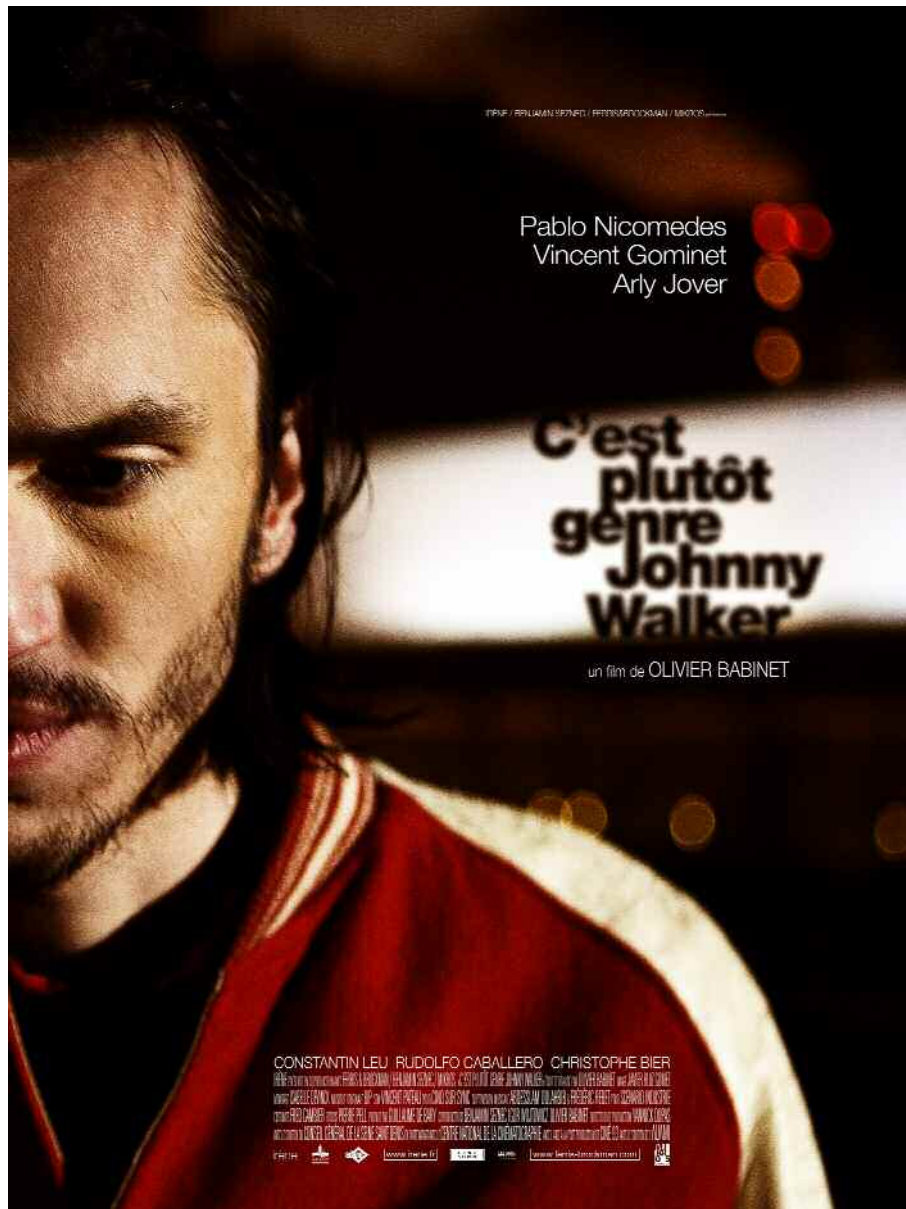
Film Camp (Local Norway)

Tax Shelter (CCE)

Polish Film Institute







Poster of the last Short Film of Olivier Babinet

Awards :

Pantin 08 : Prix de la Jeunesse (youth price)

Aix-en-Provence 08 : Mention Spéciale du Jury Jeune (youth price)

Angers 09 : Prix de la CCAS, Prix de la meilleure création musicale, Prix des Bibliothécaires

Clermont Ferrand 09 : Prix Spécial du Jury (Jury Special Price)

Nice 09 : Grand Prix

The short was screened in ACID Cannes 09 selection.

Watching the short help a lot to understand the script of "Robert Mitchum is Dead"