

AXEL FILMS PRODUCTION PRESENTS

TAREK BOUDALI PHILIPPE LACHEAU CHARLOTTE GABRIS ANDY MARSAIS DAVID MARSAIS JULIEN ARRUTI BAYA BELAL PHILIPPE DUQUESNE

MARRY ME, DUDE

DIRECTED BY TAREK BOUDALI



COMING SOON

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF ZINEDINE SOUALEM DOUDOU MASTA YVES PIGNOT FATSAH BOUYAHMED RAMZY
 SCREENPLAY BY TAREK BOUDALI NAJAT AKHOUAR KHALED AMARA PIERRE DUDAN DIRECTION MANAGER DAVID DIANE PRODUCTION MANAGER BACHIR ARFAOUI
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AXEL FILMS WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF CANAL+ CINE+ M6 W9 STUDIOCANAL

LE SERVICE HOMME POUR M6 AXEL FILMS PHOTOGRAPHY: GUY HERRE

AXEL FILMS PRODUCTION PRESENTS

TAREK **BOUDALI** PHILIPPE **LACHEAU** CHARLOTTE **GABRIS** **ANDY**

DAVID **MARSAIS** JULIEN **ARRUTI** BAYA **BELAL** PHILIPPE **DUQUESNE**

MARRY ME, DUDE

DIRECTED BY TAREK **BOUDALI**

FROM THE TEAM WHO BROUGHT YOU

ALIBI.COM

AND

BABYSITTING 1 AND 2

Running time: 92 minutes

INTERNATIONAL MARKETING
Lucie MICHAUT
Lucie.michaut@studiocanal.com

INTERNATIONAL PUBLICITY
Alexandre BOURG
Alexandre.bourg@studiocanal.com

Press kit & photos available at <https://www.extranetstudiocanal.com/>

SYNOPSIS

Everyone in Yassine's village in Morocco has contributed to send him to study architecture in Paris. A brilliant future seems assured, until Yassine unexpectedly fails his exams and loses his student visa. Disappointing his family is not an option, so in his desperation to stay in France, Yassine decides to marry his best friend Fred to get immigration papers. But a suspicious inspector is on the case and determined to uncover their fake wedding. When Yassine's super-protective mother turns up unannounced, and Claire, the love of his life, makes an unexpected come-back, Yassine's perfect plan soon starts to fall apart...

INTERVIEW WITH TAREK BOUDALI AND PHILIPPE LACHEAU

Tarek, where did you get the idea of making MARRY ME, DUDE?

Tarek Boudali: It first came to me when the same sex marriage law was being voted on in France, so about three years ago. I thought that for people who wanted to get papers through a fake marriage, it would open up more opportunities. Starting from there, I thought, if I needed papers, I would ask my best buddy to marry me. That's when I realized there was a comedy there. I talked to my pals to get their opinion – that's important for me – and they told me it was a great idea, that it was funny, so it gave me confidence and I started writing, first on my own. Once I had more or less the entire plot and the characters down, I called for other writers: Nadia Lakhdar, Khaled Amara and Pierre Dudan. And in the end, it was a four-person operation.

Did you get in with the gay community to write the script? Did you do research?

Tarek Boudali: We have many gay friends, so we're tuned in to the community. But I didn't do any specific research! It wasn't going to be a documentary.

Philippe Lacheau: It's a comedy, so naturally characterization is over the top, exaggerated. What interested us in the film was the two main characters' – Yassine and Fred's – perspective. Both are complete fools. We're making fun of them because the way they look at things is so far off! Their cluelessness is what's funny. They're like a certain amount of people in France nowadays who think, gays all have lap dogs, they're like this or like that... They're the ones we are making fun of.

Tarek Boudali: It was important for Yassine and Fred to be really clueless at the beginning, full of clichés, so that they can evolve and see that the gay world is not as they imagined it.

Are you scared of possible negative reactions from the gay community?

Tarek Boudali: With each of our films, the idea is to not offend people. On the contrary, humor is supposed to bring people together. So it was important for me not to offend anyone, neither gays nor undocumented immigrants. I want for everybody to go to the movies and laugh together at the same jokes.

Did Philippe make you want to go into directing?

Tarek Boudali: I always wanted to direct, but honestly, I didn't think it was going to happen so soon. I thought I needed more experience, and chiefly, to have a great idea. It needed to come naturally, not like something planned or premeditated. When I started writing, images quickly appeared. I could see how I wanted the scenes to be shot, acted and how I wanted the lines to sound. So I thought pretty early on that I had to direct it. Plus, I didn't feel like writing for two or three years and pass this baby on to someone else! I thought, I just have to do it. Now is the time!

Philippe Lacheau: Tarek came to terms with directing! It's a kind of coming out! (laughs)

How was the first day of the shoot? Because saying "I just have to do it" is one thing but actually being on a set in front of an entire crew and directing a film in another!

Tarek Boudali: I never asked myself, how should I behave on the first day of the shoot? It all flew pretty naturally from the get-go, with the cast and the crew. It was quite fluid, and I had great professionals working with me. All the technicians had worked on BABYSITTING 1 and 2 (Philippe Lacheau, Nicolas Benamou, 2014 & 2015) and some of them on ALIBI.COM (Philippe Lacheau, 2017), so we all know each other well and I felt quite at ease. I was very lucky to be surrounded by such an amazing team.

Philippe Lacheau: And you spent a lot of time on sets, for either film or TV, for the show "En famille" (Florence Levard, Alain Kappauf, 2012-2018) that airs on the M6 channel... You know how it works.

Tarek Boudali: That's true, we have a few films behind us already. And I'm always quite attentive during shoots... It's the best school there is, the best way of learning, as a director and an actor.

Philippe, how's Tarek as a director?

Philippe Lacheau: Well... he totally sucks! (laughs) No, seriously, it was really interesting. All the people who've known Tarek for a long time, like Julien (Arruti) or my brother who was shooting behind-the-scenes footage and was on the set day in, day out, were really impressed to see him direct. Because we all started together, we've been through good and rough times together, and today seeing each of us directing our films... well, it's something to be proud of! We tell ourselves, how wonderful! But we keep it real between us: since we're friends, we talk frankly to each other. When Tarek thinks I'm not doing a good job, he tells me so. There's no filter. We think in terms of efficiency. If I'm the one directing, Tarek will do his best to give me what I had in mind, to help the film. It works both ways. We cut our teeth together and we have complete trust in each other. If he tells me "go this way," I just do, without even thinking. I totally let go, I just trust his

judgment.

Tarek Boudali: And we always try to boost each other up. Before shooting, I sent Philippe and Julien the last draft of the script to get their opinion, their comments. They'd done the same with ALIBI.COM and I'd gotten back to them with my little notes. We're just a group of friends trying to bring the best out of each other!

Now, tell us about your character. Who is Yassine?

Tarek Boudali: Yassine is a nice guy, he doesn't want to cause pain to anyone. That's how he ends up lying to his family and breaking up with his girlfriend. He'd rather flee than come to terms with his failures. Nowadays appearances are so important, so much so that instead of confessing his setbacks, he prefers to tell his family: I got my diploma and my papers! It all starts from there...

Philippe, who's Fred?

Philippe Lacheau: Fred is some lazy dude who lives with Lisa (Charlotte Gabris) when the film starts. He has no prospect for his relationship nor his career, so he agrees to help his pal by marrying him. And he's going to get totally into it. For the first time in his life, he's motivated to do something, a bit too motivated at times... It is kind of an epiphany for him, something really positive that's going to have major effects on him. He's a bit clueless, a bit stupid and carefree, which often has him caught in some kind of comical situations. I have a friend who's a bit like him, Fred takes after him.

Tarek Boudali: Through Fred, we explore another idea: how far are we willing to go for a friend? That's a serious question.

Philippe Lacheau: I'm really lucky because Fred is a riot... But I do have to get back at Tarek because, in MARRY ME, DUDE, he didn't spare me the least in terms of costumes, between a latex body suit and tiny denim shorts! Just wait for my next film!

Did the costumes help you get into character?

Philippe Lacheau: Of course! And we had a lot of fun with it: Yassine and Fred aren't hip at all, their wardrobes are totally tacky. It was so much fun.

Tarek Boudali: I'm fond of all the characters. They were quite funny on paper, but the actors brought so much more. I'm so grateful to them. They're all pretty top-shelf but Philippe just kills me. Honestly, he's so good!

Philippe Lacheau: He's only saying it because I'm sitting right here with him! When I'm not around,

that's not what he says! (laughs)

In your film, Yassine is in love with Claire played by youtuber Andy. Why her?

Tarek Boudali: It's Andy's first step on the big screen and when you see her up there, it's hard to believe, I swear. When I was looking for an actress to play the part, her agent suggested Andy. I met with her and we clicked. We had a little work session and it was impossible to deny the obvious. She was comfortable from the first reading on, and charming, and lovable... Plus she has a real instinct for comedy. When I would ask her for some adjustments, she would do it in a heartbeat. It's great to be able to work with such actors, it makes things really easy. They get it right away.

Her lack of experience didn't have you worried?

Tarek Boudali: No, I didn't mind it. You know, before making BABYSITTING and PARIS À TOUT PRIX (Reem Kherici, 2013), we didn't have any experience in moviemaking either and we still did it.

Indeed, but you had worked for TV. It wasn't the first time you were on a set...

Tarek Boudali: That's true, but it's not like anyone had offered us parts in any movie! And Andy does have her YouTube channel going on! Before I started making movies, I would have loved for people to offer me parts despite my lack of experience. Only seasoned players get offers while there are thousands of excellent actors in Paris who aren't given their first break. I find it more interesting to work with actors who are a good match for the part, than because they've been in five films before and made millions at the box office.

The films you made with Philippe were very successful. Did it allow you to bring in anyone you wanted?

Tarek Boudali: I don't know. Maybe it played a bit in the balance, but objectively I don't know if I could have secured big names on this first film. For ALIBI.COM, Philippe was able to get Nathalie Baye, Didier Bourdon, Kad Merad or Michèle Laroque because they knew his work and where they were going. Which isn't the case with me. It's only normal for people to hesitate to embark on a first adventure like this one. It should get easier with the next film.

Let's talk about Charlotte Gabris now. You knew her well...

Tarek Boudali: Indeed, we worked with her on BABYSITTING 1 and 2, but there was a side of her we hadn't used: her endearing quality. We'd mostly taken advantage of her comic talent, and she's amazing at it! But there is also this moving quality to her that I wanted to bring out.

Philippe Lacheau: I know Charlotte quite well and I'm proud I gave her her first part in a film. It was just a cameo in BABYSITTING but she killed it...

Tarek Boudali: She stole the show.

Philippe Lacheau: So much so that we enlisted her for BABYSITTING 2! When Tarek told me she was going to be Lisa, I was thrilled. I love her! And I say this while she's not even in the room, which should prove it's not a lie.

There's another member of your "cinema family" in the film: Julien Arruti who plays the blind guy. One wonders if this character was not just written for Julien to be on the set with you.

Tarek Boudali: I wish I could have given him a bigger part. We're a three-guy's act to start with. I was a bit bummed out to give him such a small part, even if it's one of the funniest in the film. But I don't want just to make up parts for my friends if it doesn't serve the story. It shouldn't be forced. Once the script was written, I looked at which part Julien could play and I thought he'd be great as the blind guy.

Was it seeing Philippe Duquesne on the set of ALIBI.COM that gave you the idea to offer him the part of Dussart?

Tarek Boudali: No, actually MARRY ME, DUDE was shot right after ALIBI.COM, so it had been decided a few months before. We love Philippe Duquesne, he cracks us up. In ALIBI.COM, he had me on the floor, which he already did in BABYSITTING! I think he's the one who get me going the most. People we like, we want to work with them. And Philippe is very precise and easy to work with. He's a Rolls-Royce, as we say.

As for David Marsais, he plays the mean guy in the film...

Philippe Lacheau: Which he's really good at!

Tarek Boudali: He loved playing the bad guy. He called me right after finishing reading the script to tell me: "I totally dig the part!" He's another Rolls-Royce. What I asked of him wasn't easy, playing a bad, but not too bad, egg.

Philippe Lacheau: He must have a nasty side to him because this jerk is really good at it! (laughs)

Did you have any panic attacks during the shoot?

Tarek Boudali: Yeah, I had a big one when we had to shoot the scene on the bridge in which I try to rescue Fred and smack my face into the barge. Technically, it was the biggest scene in the film.

It involved heavy equipment and rigor. We just couldn't miss it. And it was quite dangerous as well... But it all went well at the end.

After shooting comes editing. It was your first. How did it go?

Tarek Boudali: For me, writing comes three different ways: first, the script; then on the set, because with the actors, the film can really evolve; and finally, the editing process. There again, I was really lucky to work with editor Antoine Vareille who's pretty amazing. I didn't know him. We had lunch and I told him how I envisioned the film. As it turned out, he'd read the script and had quit a similar take. So I said, we're on! During shooting, he pre-edited the scenes we'd shot, and he'd come once a week to the set with his iPad to show them to me. We'd tweak them a little, then he'd go back to his machine and apply these changes. It really helped to put my mind at ease! When we then locked ourselves up for three months in the editing room, it all went smoothly.

Is the final film close to what you had first envisioned?

Tarek Boudali: Yes. Honestly, I'm really happy with the result. Now, it's not up to me to say if the film is good or not, but I'm quite happy to have carried the project to completion. I have no regrets whatsoever: the sets, the cast, the crew, the editing, the music... I went all the way through with what I had in mind.

Philippe, what do you think of the final film?

Philippe Lacheau: It's hard to stay unbiased: Tarek is one of my best friend and I'm in the film. And it's my first time with such a big part in a film I didn't write myself. I don't like to look at myself, I'm very critical, but I know the film is good, it works and people like it. We set up a screening for the crew and for friends, and people laughed a lot. That's enough to know the film is good.

How about you, Tarek?

Tarek Boudali: It was hard to see my face every day for three months... even longer, including mixing and color grading! I had to suck it up, to see past it... Honestly, I did the best I could, I put my heart into it... now it's up to the spectators to say if they like it or not.

What will stay with you from this entire adventure?

Tarek Boudali: My best memory from the shoot is the moment I realized I had made a movie! It was at the end. Until then, I wasn't getting it, I was too deeply involved in the process. As a director, you spend your days solving 20,000 problems! You put all your energy into shooting, overseeing the staff, dealing with different issues that might come up... and you don't have a

minute to tell yourself, I'm making a film. So it only occurred to me on the next to last day of the shoot, when we were in Morocco. We still had the big wedding sequence to shoot and we were quite tight with only one day to get it right. But at the end of this day, I then was able to relax and I thought, holly shit, that's it! I'm really doing it! Plus, we were in Morocco. It reminded me of the kid I used to be and the tough times I had gone through. I would go back there, in the countryside, and there was nothing to do. I was twelve or thirteen and would take my dad's camera and shoot my little sister, or what have you... There I thought, if someone had told this kid with his camera in the desert that one day he would shoot a film right there, on this very ground... well, I wouldn't have believed it, and I almost let out a teardrop. I don't know if the film is going to be a success, or if I will ever make another movie, but I realized at that very moment that I was doing something with my life and I felt quite emotional.

INTERVIEW WITH ANDY AND CHARLOTTE GABRIS

Andy, how did you hear about MARRY ME, DUDE being made?

Andy: I'd seen BABYSITTING 1 and 2, and I remember telling my agent that the only films being made in France that I liked – and would want to be in – were these kinds of films. She called me two days later telling me that Tarek wanted to see me about a part in MARRY ME, DUDE. What a happy coincidence!

Charlotte, how long had you known about the project?

Charlotte Gabris: Tarek first told me about it while we were shooting BABYSITTING 2 in Brazil. He was in the middle of writing and would talk to me about it. I thought the idea was genius. But I had no clue he had me in mind for the part of Lisa. When he did tell me, I was thrilled. I read the script and thought it was extremely funny. This and shooting with Fifi and Tarek, I naturally wanted to jump on board.

As for you Andy, you didn't know anything about it. How did you like the script?

Andy: I really enjoyed it, I read it in one go. I'm not used to reading scripts. I thought it was going to be tedious and a bit boring... But it wasn't! I loved the characters and was already cracking up just reading it!

You go through quite a drastic physical transformation in the film. Was the makeup process difficult to endure?

Andy: At the beginning I was really up for doing it, but once you slip into this fat suit, you just want to take it off! And it makes for long workdays, waking up at 3 in the morning because the whole process takes about 5 hours. It wasn't easy because somehow the makeup didn't agree with my skin and was always coming off! We had to touch it up all the time... in the middle of August! But it's fun to see the result onscreen. The transformation is mind-boggling.

Charlotte, how did reuniting with your pals from BABYSITTING go?

Charlotte Gabris: I was thrilled because, in BABYSITTING 2, I was Julien's girlfriend and now, I'm Fifi's. I'm hoping for a film in which I'll be Tarek's, so I'll have gone through the entire gang! (laughs) I had a great time. It was pleasant to play a more genuine, less aggressive character than

before. Less vulgar too. I loved teaming up with Philippe, but since we're close friends, it felt borderline weird to be his girlfriend. We were a bit childish about the whole thing. We had to kiss only once but we were like "Yuk, that's gross!" At the end, it went really well and it was nice to see him under a different light. He's quite sincere and moving.

You know Tarek quite well. What did you think of him in the director's seat?

Charlotte Gabris: I was baffled because I really thought he was going to suck at it! (laughs) No, quite frankly, I thought he was very assertive, knowing exactly what he wanted to do. He also picked the right people to work with, David Diane for example, who had already been their technical advisor on BABYSITTING 1 and 2. I thought Tarek was very calm, patient and very gentle with the actors. It's like, when he directs, he puts himself in our shoes, he finds the right words and makes himself understood right away. I was impressed, I think he'll be directing more movies, even ones he won't necessarily act in.

Andy, you were thrown onto a movie set with tens of people around. Was it stressful for you, coming from YouTube?

Andy: Honestly, I wasn't comfortable at all. When I do my videos, there are three of us at the most! There, I found myself in front of thirty people scrutinizing what I was doing when I had no idea what I looked like onscreen... It was quite painful. But once again, Tarek knew how to put me at ease and it all went well. Admittedly though, it felt weird at the beginning, compared to a small YouTube shoot. It was really interesting.

Were you dreading this change of scale?

Andy: I thought I really was going to have a hard time. For YouTube videos, you do one or two takes and, in one day, it's over and done. On a movie set, it takes half a day or even an entire day just to do one scene! I was afraid I was going to get bored... and I was also dreading that my followers would dislike the whole thing... Changes of register aren't usually well accepted by the YouTube community. But for now, it is all going smoothly.

Going from the Internet to films isn't well accepted by fans on YouTube?

Andy: Since we're really tight with our followers, they have a hard time accepting we can venture out elsewhere and maybe leave them for another medium. So it's always a bit complicated. A film like BABYSITTING would fly well with the YouTube community, which is why I thought MARRY ME, DUDE would be the perfect film for transitioning.

As for you Charlotte, transitioning from stage to screen was easier, right?

Charlotte Gabris: Yes, it went smoothly. Then again, I never used the stage to get into films. For me, the two things go hand in hand. And although I don't have my one-woman show going on any longer, I'm still doing plays, and I don't see myself neglecting one for the other. I think that for youtubers, lines are also going to shift little by little.

Since you're already writing for the stage, don't you feel like writing for films, or even directing, like Tarek?

Charlotte Gabris: Absolutely, and I'm actually doing it: I'm currently writing a script with a girlfriend of mine who's a scriptwriter. We'll codirect, and the shoot is scheduled for next summer, if it all goes well. And since I'm also going to be in it, I'll experience what Tarek has gone through!

For the first time, the character you're playing in MARRY ME, DUDE isn't strictly funny...

Charlotte Gabris: Yes, and I'm grateful Tarek thought about me. He told me he wanted to see this different side of me. I really enjoyed acting up my emotions and not necessarily being the comic relief. I find it very interesting to be at the receiving end of the comic act or situation. And Lisa is moving which also makes the job interesting.

Andy, can you picture yourself in something other than a comedy?

Andy: I have a bit of a hard time with anything too serious. For now, I really feel like having fun and, for me, that means comedy, so I'm fine with sticking with this register for now.

How about the stage?

Andy: I've acted on stage for ten years! People have a tendency to think that youtubers happen just like that, that they haven't done anything prior, but most of us have some theater background. We don't just start making videos out of nowhere! YouTube is just an avenue for having people see what we do. It has opened doors for me which might not have opened if I'd only stuck to drama classes.

Both of you have seen the film, what do you think of your performances?

Charlotte Gabris: I think I'm amazing! (laughs) Well, no... I usually don't really look at myself actually. I was so happy to see the film, I almost forgot I was in it. But otherwise, I usually think, that's over and done, it doesn't help being critical now. During the shoot, I go over to the video monitor once in a while, but I really don't over-analyze myself because I know there's a director there whose job it is and who knows how to do it. If he's happy then it means it's good. If I start giving my opinion, it's going to be impossible and no one is going to want to work with me anymore! So I just don't look at myself too much. That's also the reason why I stopped doing my

one-woman act: I thought it meant too much time looking at myself, it was too self-centered. And in the end, my acting was affected because I was influenced by people's reactions. In films, there's a sense of giving it all up which I appreciate.

Andy, getting feedback from the director and the crew on the spot must have felt different for you than reading comments from Internet users?

Andy: It's totally different. On YouTube, people would comment on the content more than the form, but I don't read comments any longer because they don't help for making better videos. They most often are personal attacks. On a movie set, you get a professional assessment on your work as an actor, which is completely different because it comes from a good place. People just want to make the best possible film. That's where the gap lies between YouTube and moviemaking. On YouTube, people rarely give you advice on how to do it better...

What's the strongest memory you've kept from the shoot?

Andy: For me, it's my very first scene, which was being shot at night. I was alone outside, in the dark, and I could see everything that was going on on the set, and I thought it was amazing and how much I wanted to be part of it. It really impressed me and I think it'll always stay with me.

Charlotte Gabris: For me, it's seeing Fifi or Tarek come out in their new outfits and seeing them rehearsing their choreography with great poise, like "five, six, seven and eight!" (laughs) That's what I love about them, they are extremely precise even in their silliness! They're not like, "we're going to quickly do this thing"... They went through ten days of intensive dance classes to do this choreography! Every little detail that can become a comical element, they work at it very seriously, and that's why they are so good: they don't leave anything to chance. That's why their films are so well put together.

CAST

TAREK BOUDALI	YASSINE
PHILIPPE LACHEAU	FRED
CHARLOTTE GABRIS	LISA
DAVID MARSAIS	STAN
JULIEN ARRUTI	THE BLIND GUY
BAYA BELAL	IMA
PHILIPPE DUQUESNE	DUSSART
ZINÉDINE SOUALEM	YASSINE'S FATHER
DOUDOU MASTA	DAOUD
YVES PIGNOT	THE MAYOR
FATSAH BOUYAHMED	THE MOROCCAN INSPECTOR
RAMZY	ONE OF THE QATARI

CREW

DIRECTED BY	TAREK BOUDALI
PRODUCED BY	CHRISTOPHE CERVONI
	MARC FISZMAN
UNIT PRODUCTION MANAGER	BACHIR ARFAOUI
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY	ANTOINE MARTEAU
PRODUCTION DESIGNER	SAMUEL TEISSEIRE
COSTUME DESIGNER	AUORE PIERRE
SOUND BY	ARNAUD LAVALEIX
EDITOR	ANTOINE VAREILLE
MUSIC BY	MAXIME DESPREZ and MICHAEL TORDJMAN
EXECUTIVE PRODUCTION	AXEL FILMS PRODUCTION