MK2 presents

MK2 IN CANNES:
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an Abbas KIAROSTAMI film
starring Juliette BINOCHE and William SHIMELL
106 minutes - 35 mm - Colour - 1.85:1 - Dolby SRD - France/Italy - 2010

certified copy

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This is the story of a meeting between one man and one woman, in a small Italian village in Southern Tuscany. The man is a British author who has just finished giving a lecture at a conference. The woman, from France, owns an art gallery. This is a common story that could happen to anyone, anywhere.
How can one tell yet another story about love in Tuscany? Certified Copy: by playing around with the clichés. With the usual settings, the small love-nest hotels, the cups of coffee cooling as the lovers drink each other in, the narrow streets where they go astray, hurt themselves, find themselves, their heels clattering on the cobblestones: “If I’d known we’d be coming here, I would have worn other shoes,” says the woman played by Juliette Binoche. Other paths following in the same footsteps: in a little street, the film takes a new turn. Words take on a disconcerting twist, a detour into the unfamiliar, the uncanny. This man and this woman who have—it seems—only just met are playing at being a couple. They pretend so well, in fact, that they seem to become one, or to have already been one for fifteen years. They have already come here. They have already played this scene. As have all couples who come to make love in Tuscany, to invent their own love story, to play in their own film.

“I have a train to catch at nine o’clock.” The man is, according to the woman, “always absent.” The first thing the camera films is an empty chair: all we see is a book, Certified Copy. We await the author. The credits scroll over a long shot of this absence and its only legacy, the work. A self-portrait of Kiaroskar? “He can’t claim he’s stuck in traffic, he’s staying in an apartment upstairs,” explains the translator, the first double of the author. Who finally arrives. And who is pleased by the recognition accorded him here, in Tuscany. His book hasn’t enjoyed even the faintest echo of acclaim in his own country. Recognition and echo: the film is off and running, the copy is rolling. Reflections, rearview mirrors, windows and glasses, everything shimmers. And that assessment the woman will keep seeking, so that others will tell her who she is, whom she loves.

The author is English, played by William Shimell, a well-known opera singer, a baritone. The film is also about voices. Full shot of the audience at a lecture, showing their faces, their reactions. The sonorous voice drones on; sitting between her son and the translator, the woman fidgets. Then grows annoyed. It’s annoying, to be seduced. The opposite is true, but not completely symmetrical: the eternal misunderstanding between men and women: Around the older couple twirl young brides and grooms, suits and white dresses. The copies they make, the model ancestral couples, the rehearsals and repetitions from parents to children: three generations keep intersecting, discreetly, in the film. A draconyly pendant dances between the woman’s breasts: a mayfly. A lifetime of love in a single day: the film disrupts the great classic pattern, but without losing through deep shifts in time—we’re not in Maminshch, here. Without any psychological nostalgia, either. The love affair of a single day that opens into life: this is a film neither of phantoms nor regrets, and where all illusions are not lost.

The focus of the camera seems to be the mayfly, between her breasts. The weather is warm; the shadow there gleams softly. The woman takes her shoes off first. There is no end to her modesty and sensuality. Binoche is an actress who has always had a birdy, blunt fingerprints, full breasts. Here she embodies a whole woman, who sweats, wears earrings that leave marks, lipstick that smears. “I made myself beautiful for you, and you’re not looking at me?” He doesn’t remember their wedding anniversary. Time—honored complaints, in every language. Except that we hear the words as if for the first time, thanks to the actors, their voices, their bodies, carried along by the way in which the story is “out of sync” . . . Words spoken to seduce? To find each other, or to lose each other? She takes off her bra underneath her dress, in that manner so soon mastered by women who wear one. She wants to show him the mark where it was bering her, hurting her. Is she the wife of fifteen years, languidly at home in the physical routine of flesh and fluids? Is she the held seductress of barely a moment’s acquaintance, who wants a man and has the courage to show that she does? And he, does he want her? Does he know her? As of an hour ago, a whole lifetime ago, what does he know about her? And about art, and love, and his desire, and what he must make of his life, this evening at nine, and every evening?

Marie DARRIEUSSECQ
One woman may hide another. To an actress, the director’s role is to reveal this hidden woman. His ear, his camera, and his expectations push her to look deep within and face herself. She did not know before who she was. She finds out at the same time as he does. But there is an even stronger force at work, a call travelling with the winds, like the slightest kiss: The Unknown. When each step, each thought, each sensation joins the physical matter completely as if in weldlock, the actress awaits her fiancé, she acquires his like a wound waiting to be soothingly sealed.

She waits for him at the edge, at an inner crossroads, ready, from within her black hole, to give the unspeakable, the inaudible, the untouchable, a flow, a broken bird, a crooked stripe, from the darkness at the heart of her soul.

Once upon a time, I went to Iran to meet Abbas (I had seen him in Cannes, at UNESCO, at Jean-Claude Carriere’s). He told me, “Come to Tehran!” I took him up on his offer and went. Twice. One night he told me the story we shot together this summer. He told me every detail: the bra, the restaurant, the hotel. In short, he told me that the story had happened to him.

At the end, after talking for 45 minutes in perfect English, he said, “Do you believe me?” I said, “Yes.” And he said, “It’s not true!” I burst out laughing so hard, and I think that may have been what made him want to do the film! Reality and fiction here always made me laugh because I truly believe that anything is possible. To this day, I’m sure he lived this story. Just as I’m sure that he didn’t.

Tuscany is one of those places where miracles can happen. It’s no surprise that there are so many saints, oils and greens there. We lived through this film as a family made up of old friends, just like the dream of films. We were a small team, in a village, the coldness inside, the heat outside.

Time had no place there. Everyone’s eyes sparkling with passion, and we were all happy to be together. Abbas was about to make his first feature film away from the cocoon of his homeland, and his native tongue. And the actor, William, left the Opera to join Abbas’ world. I watched him, nervously, courageously cross the actor’s space, slowly letting go of what he believed, of what he had learned, in other words, letting go of the script he had learned by heart!

Juliette BINOCHÉ
When rehearsals started in Aix-en-Provence in the summer of 2008, I liked Abbas and his assistant and translator Massoumeh Lahidji, straight away. I don’t speak Farsi and Abbas’ English is a work in progress, but we didn’t seem to have too much trouble understanding each other and I was intrigued by his ideas for Costas. Tutte and more particularly for ‘Don Alfonso’, the role I was playing. We’d been working only a few days when he asked if I’d ever been in a film. ‘Well no’ I said. A few days later he asked: ‘Would you like to be in a film?’ ‘Well yes, that might be interesting’ I replied rather more casually than I felt. I didn’t think much more about it but it turned out that he was serious. Frankly if the offer had come from anyone else I would probably have politely refused, for although I am moderately successful in Opera I know nothing of the cinema. But I enjoyed working with him enormously and knew that he was accustomed to working with non-professionals. However, I was somewhat taken aback to find that I was to work with Juliette Binoche and I realised that Abbas was taking a huge risk in casting me in the role of James especially since several established film actors had shown an interest in working on the film. Once we started to rehearse I saw that Juliette was prepared to do everything she could to help me, and her generosity and support were, simply, beyond value. In fact the whole crew, from the wardrobe assistants to Luca Bigiatti behind the camera were unfailingly patient. After almost 30 years of conveying an emotion by singing about it, acting for the camera presented quite a challenge. However I found James’ sympathetic character and working with my mouth shut made a refreshing change. I’m really rather glad I said yes.

William SHIMELL
Abbas Kiarostami was born on 22 June 1940 in Teheran, Iran. He showed a keen interest in drawing early on and, at age 18, entered a graphic-art contest and won. He studied at the fine arts school in Teheran whilst making ends meet as a graphic designer, poster illustrator and commercial ad director.

In 1969, he founded the cinema department of the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children & Young Adults, which is also where he directed his first short films.

In his first film, THE BREAD AND THE ALLEY (1970), Abbas Kiarostami explores the weight of images and the relationship of realism and fiction. His preferred theme, the universe of childhood, is expressed over a long series of short, medium-length and feature films, during which he has managed to establish a subtle balance between narrative and documentary style. HOMEWORK (1989), his last childhood film, is a good example of warm and poetic cinema that discreetly denounces the heavy aspects of Iranian society.

With CLOSE-UP (1990), he turned a page. In less than one week, the director embraced a new story and, with the participation of the real-life protagonists, made it a pretext to introduce reality into the realm of fiction. LIFE AND NOTHING MORE (1992) and THROUGH THE OLIVE TREES (1994) complete a trilogy that began with WHERE IS MY FRIEND’S HOUSE? (1990).

In the latter, the devastating effects of an earthquake in northern Iran serve to uncover the lie that is cinema. A TASTE OF CHERRY (1997) marked the director’s coming into his own, and his entry into the ranks of award winners. The film, which tells the story of a 50-year-old man’s obsession with suicide, is an ode to individual freedom. The film was praised by critics and denounced by religious authorities in Iran.

A slow and contemplative pace, limited intrigue, and references to Persian poetry and Western philosophy are the trademarks of this deeply original director’s work. His taste for improvisation is grounded in loosely written scripts, amateur actors, and his own editing. THE WIND WILL CARRY US (1999), the story of a group of city dwellers who go to find something in a rural village, is yet another example of his unique style.

The film was also his first creative collaboration with Marjane Satrapi and MK2. Since 2001, Kiarostami has been involved in a love affair with a small camera and, as a result, works only with digital film. He has gained more freedom with this ‘camera-pen’ of his and has with its help, directed several nature films of varying lengths, among which we find ABC AFRICA (2001), TEN (2002), FIVE DEDICATED TO OZU (2003), 10 ON TEN (2004), ROADS OF KIAROSTAMI (2002) and SHIRIN (2008). CERTIFIED COPY marks Kiarostami’s first production outside of his native Iran.
2010  CERTIFIED COPY
   (original title: Copie Conforme)
2008  SHIRIN
2004  FIVE
2004  IO ON TEN
2002  TEN
2001  ABC AFRICA
1999  THE WIND WILL CARRY US
   (original title: Baad ma ra   khahad bord)
1996  TASTE OF CHERRY
   (original title: Tam'e Guilass)
1994  THROUGH THE OLIVE TREES
   (original title: Zir-e   derakhtan-e zeytoun)
1992  LIFE AND NOTHING MORE...
   (original title: Zendegi edamé  dârad)
1990  CLOSE-UP
   (original title: Nema-ye Nazdik)
1990  HOMEWORK
   (original title: Mashgh-e Shab)
1987  WHERE IS MY FRIEND'S
   (original title: Kuneh-ye doust kojast ?)
1984  FIRST GRADERS
   (original title: Avali ha)
1982  THE CHORUS
   (original title: Hamaseyjan)
1981  ORDERLY OR UNORDERLY
   (original title: Be tartib va   bedoun-e e taraf)
1980  DENTAL HYGIENE
   (original title: Behdasht-e Dandan)
1978  SOLUTION NO 1
   (original title: Raha-ye hal-e yek)
1975  TWO SOLUTIONS FOR
   (original title: Dow rahe hal    baraye yek massaleh)
1974  SO I CAN
   (original title: Man ham mitounam)
1973  THE TRAVELER
   (original title: Monafefe)
1972  THE BREAKTIME
   (original title: Zang-e tafir)
1970  THE BREAD AND ALLEY
   (original title: Maan va koucheh)

FILMOGRAPHY
Raised in a family of artists (her mother was an actress and her father a sculptor), Juliette Binoche began taking acting lessons from her mother at a very young age. After performing in several stage productions, she was propelled into the world of Godard (HAIL MARY, 1984), Doillon (FAMILY LIFE, 1984) and Téchiné (RENDEZ-VOUS, 1985). She met director Louis Carax in 1986 on the set of BAD BLOOD and became romantically involved with him. She began work on his THE LOVERS ON THE BRIDGE, a love story involving two vagabonds. The film was beset by problems and took three years to finish. The completion of the film marked the end of their relationship.

Her strong and sensual performances in the English-language films THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING (1987), directed by Philip Kaufman and starring Daniel Day-Lewis, and DAMAGE (1992), directed by Louis Malle and starring Jeremy Irons, inspired Hollywood to take an interest in her. Affectionately called “La Binoche” by the French press, she also piqued the interest of Steven Spielberg, who offered her the role of Dr. Ellie Sattler in JURASSIC PARK. She declined the offer, choosing instead to join Krzysztof Kieslowski on the set of BLUE (1993), a performance for which she won the César for Best Actress. She shined as a romantic heroine in Jean-Paul Rappeneau’s THE HORSEMAN ON THE ROOF (1992) and Anthony Minghella’s THE ENGLISH PATIENT (1996), for which she was awarded an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress, thirty-seven years after Simone Signoret, the first French actress to win an Academy Award. Binoche was nominated to an Academy Award for Best Actress three years later for her performance in Lasse Hallström’s romantic comedy CHOCOLAT, starring Johnny Depp. Binoche is currently in production on Dito Montiel’s SON OF NO ONE, starring opposite Al Pacino, Channing Tatum and Katie Holmes.

FILMOGRAPHY (selection)

2010 CERTIFIED COPY directed by Abbas Kiarostami
2008 SUMMER HOURS directed by Olivier Assayas
2008 DISENGAGEMENT directed by Amos Gitai
2008 PARIS directed by Cedric Klapisch
2007 DAN IN REAL LIFE directed by Peter Hedges
2007 FLIGHT OF THE RED BALLOON directed by Hou Hsiao Hsien
2006 BREAKING AND ENTERING directed by Anthony Minghella
2005 MARY directed by Abel Ferrara
2005 HIDDEN directed by Michael Haneke
2000 BEYOND SEASON directed by Scott MacGillivray and David Siegel
2004 IN MY COUNTRY directed by John Boorman
2002 JET LAG directed by Danièle Thompson
2000 CHOCOLAT directed by Lasse Hallstrom
2000 CODE UNKNOWN directed by Michael Haneke
2000 THE WIDOW OF SAINT PIERRE directed by Patrice Leconte
1999 THE CHILDREN OF THE CENTURY directed by Diane Kurys
1998 ALICE AND MARTIN directed by Andre Téchiné
1996 THE ENGLISH PATIENT directed by Anthony Minghella
1995 THE HORSEMAN ON THE ROOF directed by Jean-Paul Rappeneau
1993 THREE COLOURS: BLUE directed by Krzysztof Kieslowski
1992 DAMAGE directed by Louis Malle
1991 THE LOVERS ON THE BRIDGE directed by Louis Carax
1988 THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING directed by Philip Kaufman
1986 BAD BLOOD directed by Louis Carax
1985 RENDEZ-VOUS directed by André Téchiné
1984 HAIL MARY directed by Jean-Luc Godard
William Shimell has made his screen acting debut alongside Juliette Binoche in Abbas Kiarostami's CERTIFIED COPY.

Born in 1952, he is one of Britain’s most accomplished operatic baritones and has earned himself an international reputation in the world’s leading opera houses.

William is well known for his interpretations of Don Giovanni, which he first sang in Britain for Welsh National Opera and ENO, and has since sung in opera houses throughout the world. He has recorded the role for EMI with Riccardo Muti.

His reputation has been further enhanced by his worldwide performances of Marcello in LA BOHEME, as Nick Shadow in THE RAKE’S PROGRESS, as Sharpless in MADAME BUTTERFLY, as Count Almaviva in LE NOZZE DI FIGARO, as Don Alfonso in COSI FAN TUTTE and as Dourrlinski in Cherubini’s LODOISKA at La Scala, which was recorded live for Sony.

In 2005 William took the title role in Handel’s HERCULES in a Luc Bondy production, which was filmed for broadcast and DVD release.

He is also much in demand on the concert platform, appearing at a range of venues including Orange Festival, and recording performances with the likes of Sir Georg Solti and Riccardo Chailly.

Forthcoming plans include THE RAKE’S PROGRESS at La Scala and Brussels’ La Monnaie and a return to Covent Garden for COSI FAN TUTTE and MANON.
2009  WHITE SPACE directed by Francesca Comencini
2009  THE SICILIAN GIRL directed by Marco Amorena
2008  IL DIVO directed by Paolo Sorrentino
2007  THE MISSING STAR directed by Gianni Amelio
2006  L’AMICO DI FAMIGLIA directed by Paolo Sorrentino
2006  A CASA NOSTRA directed by Francesca Comencini
2006  ROMANZO CRIMINALE directed by Michele Placido
2005  MARIO’S WAR directed by Antonio Capuano
2005  AN ITALIAN ROMANCE directed by Carlo Maccarani
2005  I LOVE TO WORK directed by Francesca Comencini
2005  THE CONSEQUENCES OF LOVE directed by Paolo Sorrentino
2004  THE KEYS TO THE HOUSE directed by Gianni Amelio
2003  CARLO GIULIANI, RAGAZZI directed by Francesca Comencini
2003  A JOURNEY CALLED LOVE directed by Michele Placido
2002  THE WORDS OF MY FATHER directed by Francesca Comencini
2000  BREAD AND TULIPS directed by Silvio Soldini
2000  I PREFER THE SOUND OF THE SEA directed by Mimmo Calopresti
1998  TOTO CHE VISSE DUE VOLTE directed by Daniele Capri, Franco Maresco
1998  SHOOTING THE MOON directed by Francesca Archibugi
1997  THE ACRONAUT directed by Silvio Soldini
1995  NASTY LOVE directed by Mario Martone
1994  L’AMERICA directed by Gianni Amelio
1993  UN ANIMA DIVISA IN DUE directed by Silvio Soldini
1990  THE PEACEFUL AIR OF THE WEST directed by Silvio Soldini
1983  PAESAGGIO CON FIGURE directed by Silvio Soldini

FILMOGRAPHY (selection)
production

MK2 - MARIN KARMITZ

The producer, distributor and exhibitor Marin Karmitz has during the last 30 years produced over 100 films and distributed close to 350 films. Jean-Luc Godard, Alain Resnais, Claude Chabrol, Gus Van Sant, Jonathan Nossiter, Ken Loach, Jacques Doillon, Pavel Lounguine, Hong Sang Soo, Michael Haneke, Raphaël Nadjari, Olivier Assayas. The films under his banner have been graced with an impressive list of awards: three Golden Palms at Cannes, three Golden Lances from the Venice Film Festival, a Golden Bear from the Berlin Film Festival, three Oscar nominations, 25 César Awards and over one hundred international film festival awards.

Gus Van Sant’s PARANOID PARK (60th Anniversary Award in Cannes 2007) and Olivier Assayas’ SUMMER HOURS are among his recent productions. MK2 is currently in production with Abdellatif Kechiche’s BLACK VENUS.

CERTIFIED COPY is the latest in a long line of collaborations between Abbas Kiarostami and Marin Karmitz, a creative partnership that started out over a decade ago with THE WIND WILL CARRY US (1999).
After starting out in production in 1979, working mainly with Marco Bellocchio, Angelo Barbagallo founded the production company Sacher Film with Nanni Moretti in 1986. Sacher Film produced among others Carlo Mazzatenta’s ITALIAN NIGHT, Nanni Moretti’s RED LOB, Daniele Luchetti’s IT’S HAPPENING TOMORROW, Daniele Luchetti’s THE YES MAN, Mimmo Calopresti’s THE SECOND TIME AS WELL, as Nanni Moretti’s DEAR DIARY, APRIL, THE SON’S ROOM and THE CAIMAN. Since 1995, while continuing to work with Sacher Film and Nanni Moretti, he has produced films for Bibl Film TV, among these Marco Tullio Giordana’s THE BEST OF YOUTH and THE FUTURE, Stefano Consiglio’s COMIZI INFANZILI, Marco Tullio Giordana’s WILD BLOOD, Marco Rui’s FORTAPASC, Stefano Consiglio’s HYMN TO LOVE, Abbas Kiarostami’s CERTIFIED COPY and Italo Spinelli’s DIETRO IL CORSETTO.