Synopsis

Young extrovert Baya Benmahmoud lives by this classic motto: “Make love, not war”. In order to convert them to her cause, she sleeps with her political enemies – which means a lot of men, because every conservative is her enemy. So far, she’s gotten good results.

Until she meets Arthur Martin, 40-something. She figures that with such a common name (there are more than 10,000 Arthur Martins in France), he’s bound to be a real conservative and thus hard to convert. Yet, names are treacherous and things aren’t always what they seem.

Baya and Arthur are as different as two people can be, but when they fall in love, sparks fly...
Michel Leclerc and Baya Kasmi

Michel Leclerc: You talk about yourself, or at least when you want to use the image of a real person, humor allows you to stay back enough to avoid falling into narcissistic indulgence. To talk about yourself, for sure, but make fun of yourself at the same time so no one can get any truth. That is the main reason why I cohabit with... it seems to me like only classy talk to say to people about realities without becoming self-absorbed...

Who are your influences?
ML: In a recent interview, Woody Allen lamented the fact that young filmmakers are more inspired by Scorsese and Tarantino than by him. Yet for years I’ve been trying desperately to be inspired by him—especially by Annie Hall and Radio Days for the names of Love – but no one notices. My ultimate goal would be to copy all his films one by one, but I’m afraid I won’t live long enough to do that. I secretly hope he’ll end up suing me for plagiarism, which might give me a chance to actually meet him.

The Names of Love
J’invente rien

Arthur Martin defines himself as “better than everyone else, but not the pick of the bunch.” His righteousness – rigidity, even – which keeps them from making concessions. We liked the opportunistic side we spoke of earlier. From there, we rewrote the part for Sara, giving her that geography of life – to the point that he’s made a career of it. That’s what makes her say ridiculous things sometimes, like, “quads are totally fascist,” without ever being ashamed of it. That’s what makes her say ridiculous things sometimes, like, “quads are totally fascist,” without ever being ashamed of it. That’s what makes her say ridiculous things sometimes, like, “quads are totally fascist,” without ever being ashamed of it.

Sara Forestier, even though she didn’t correspond to the character as we had imagined her, so we opened up the casting call to non-arabic actresses. When we met Sara Forestier, so she is also the kind of person who simplifies things out of necessity. The world is too complex to be simplified. But she’s also the kind of person who simplifies things out of necessity.

How did you choose Jacques Gamblin?
ML: We thought of him right away. I thought he was right for the part because he is a remarkable example of that self-controlled, closed type who still exudes a compressed line of thinking to not lose energy in action. It’s a challenge.

And Sara Forestier?
ML: We wrote the part of Sara like a kind of Arab Marilyn. So at first we were looking for an actress of Arabic descent. But we couldn’t find anyone who expressed all the different aspects of her character: funny, vivacious, spontaneous and uninhibited. So we opened up the casting call to non-arabic actresses. When we met Sara Forestier, even though she didn’t correspond to the character as we had imagined her, so we opened up the casting call to non-arabic actresses.

What were your objectives as a director?
ML: What were your objectives as a director?

Interview with
Michel Leclerc and Baya Kasmi

The Names of Love is a comedy, like your first film, J’innove rien.

Why did you do the getting of a method actor who works for the French Bureau of Animal Diseases?
ML: For Arthur, we looked for a method actor that would reflect his obsessional nature. The principle of taking precautions to minimize all possible risk corresponds to his personal philosophy of life – to the point that he’s made a career of it.

BK: When we researched that profession, we realized there could be many other careers for a person of typical profile. For Sara, who suffers from not looking arabic, though her father is from Algeria. Which is more like her political commitment and personal commitment, since she sleeps with her political life – to the point that she’s made a career of it. That’s what makes her say ridiculous things sometimes, like, “quads are totally fascist,” without ever being ashamed of it.

What was your idea behind the casting call?
ML: So it is highly autobiographical?

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How did you get the idea of making Arthur an ornithologist who works for the French Bureau of Animal Diseases?
ML: For Arthur, we looked for a method actor that would reflect his obsessional nature. The principle of taking precautions to minimize all possible risk corresponds to his personal philosophy of life – to the point that he’s made a career of it.

BK: When we researched that profession, we realized there could be many other careers for a person of typical profile. For Sara, who suffers from not looking arabic, though her father is from Algeria. Which is more like her political commitment and personal commitment, since she sleeps with her political life – to the point that she’s made a career of it. That’s what makes her say ridiculous things sometimes, like, “quads are totally fascist,” without ever being ashamed of it.

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