



CASSE SCRAP YARD

A FILM BY NADÈGE TREBAL

SYNOPSIS

Every day, hundreds of men pace through the self-service automobile scrap yard, spending hours taking carcasses to pieces, looking for the missing part. They come from all over the world, often more impoverished than others, which makes them more creative. The film meets them within the open sky maze of wrecks, false desert where these men give the impression of being unearthed.



INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR

**What was your first thought when you discovered this scrapyard?
How much time did you spend there?**

This place impressed me immediately. It seemed overladen, strange, organised, dangerous and de-industrialised. I immediately liked this endlessly huge sea of wrecks, this artificial desert in which men unearth things and the way they stroll around there looking for a missing part. The junkyard immediately told me something trivial and simultaneously poetic about the state of the world; it seems like a metaphor for the human condition. In the seven weeks I spent shooting the movie there, I was never bored, because the various men who come and go there are constantly changing and transforming the place.

How did you get to know the protagonists of your film and what

was their reaction to your attempt to make a film about this place?

Meeting with these men is the theme of the film. The scrapyard is merely the open-air stage. Initially, observation of and intuition about their presence in the film were needed. On my first visit to the junkyard, I just watched the men and intuitively imagined their effect in my film. Then I decided to go there a second time and get to know them. So I had to address them and find the courage to persuade them to be part of the film. While we were shooting, a strange energy suffused me, as if I had fallen in love. But at first I got a lot of rejections; many of my attempts failed. The people at the scrapyard were astonished by my plans. Some of them were annoyed, others amused. But as a matter of fact, being a woman – a stranger in relation to these men's areas of

competence – was helpful. Things always clicked when they wanted to be filmed as much as I wanted to film them. From that moment on, a certain kind of confidential work began between us. Curiosity on both sides made this film possible. Casse is not a film about information, but about the presence of these men, their language, their silence and their stories.

The film unfolds different individual stories, which form in their entirety a certain image of society. How did you select the stories you actually used in the film?

It was in part a tedious filtering process, but some things resulted quite naturally. The men who are now to be seen in the film simply prevailed. The essential criterion for selection was that they gave something of themselves. The most fruitful talks were with the immigrants. Many of them were poorer than the others and at the same time more inventive. They allowed me to film their intelligence, to show their shrewdness and their courage, the way they overcome obstacles and deal with difficulties. In this junkyard, I got to know not only mechanic virtuosos, but also failed, inexperienced, impatient and fragile people who form an opposite pole to the other men in the film. The contours of these people give rise to a picture of France that is very seldom seen in movies. This France is far removed from confronting the topic of immigration; instead, it has been interested for decades primarily in employers' profits.

The camera is often very close, sometimes at unusual angles. How would you describe your view through the camera?

The camera was not especially close; I always set it up at least two metres away, but usually two-and-a-half metres. I also used a focal length sufficiently long to devote enough calmness and attention to the beauty of the gestures and bodies in contact with the material. The work of the auto mechanic demands the use of physical abilities, and I wanted to give that enough scope. I also owed this distance to the space that the bodies take up at work. It corresponds to the basic situation in which the film was created: the work of these men, their livelihood, stood above mine. That was one of the most important preconditions for the film, and at the same time, its chance. It was the reason why three-quarters of the pictures were taken from behind with off-screen sound or silence. This tendency for the men to be inaccessible, however, brings us closer to their mystery, their heroism and their reserve. Sometimes one doesn't see much, almost nothing; sometimes one only hears something. That, too, is a challenge in this film: to forget the ambient noise of this place, which is very loud. To make this possible, I sometimes cut out the original sound of the place – because my interest was less the scrapyards themselves than the men who keep coming back to it.

Interview: Gabriela Seidel-Hollaender, January 2014



DIIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Nadège Trebal obtained her degree from the Fémis Film School in 2006, where she specialised in screenwriting. She is fascinated by the documentary element involved in the writing of fictional films. In this vein, she has collaborated on the screenwriting of several feature-length films: Claire Simon's *Ça brûle* and *Les Bureaux de Dieu*, and Simon Collardey's *Comme un lion*. *Casse* is her second feature-length film, following on from *Bleu pétrole* (2012).



CREDITS

FRANCE / 87' / HD / FRENCH / COLOR / 2013

Director & Writer NADÈGE TREBAL

Image OLIVIER GUERBOIS

Sound DANA FARZANEHPOUR

Music LUC MEILLAND

Editing CÉDRIC LE FLOC'H

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