It might seem like it's the end but it's just the beginning.

VANITY

A film by LIONEL BAIER
SYNOPSIS

David Miller is so ill that he has decided to end it all. But despite his best efforts to choose the place, the date and the method, nothing works out as planned. All of those who said they would be at his side back out. David Miller has no choice but to rely on the help of complete strangers: Esperenza, from the euthanasia and assisted suicide association, and Tréplev, the young prostitute in the next room. At the end of this night which is meant to be his last, will Death be taking him?
LIONEL BAIER (Director)

Lionel Baier has studied at the Faculty of the Arts at Lausanne University and has been in charge of the Film Department of the Lausanne Cantonal Art School (ECAL) since 2002.

In 2000, he directed his first film, The Pastor’s, a documentary about his father, a pastor in the canton of Vaud. In 2006, his first feature, Stupid Boy, was one of the four films selected to represent Swiss cinema at the International Film Festival of Cannes in its section “Tous les cinémas du monde, and Another Man was in the international competition at Locarno Film Festival.

In 2009, Lionel Baier founded Bande à Part Films and is now the vice chairman of the Foundation Board of the Swiss Film Archive and also a committee member of the Visions du Réel International Film Festival in Lyon and of Suissimage, the agency in charge of distributing royalties.

In September 2014, Lionel Baier received the “Grande Culture” Award of the Vaudoise Fundation for Culture.

“There is not one but many European cinemas”

FILMOGRAPHY

2015: LA VANITE (VANITY)
2013: LES GRANDS ONDES (LONGWAVE)
2011: BON VENT CLAUDE GORETTA
2010: LOW COST

2010: TOULOUSE
2008: UN AUTRE HOMME (ANOTHER MAN)
2006: COMME DES VOLEURS (STEALTH)
2004: GARCON STUPIDE (STUPID BOY)
LIONEL BAIER IN 4 QUESTIONS

It is said that “VANITY” was based on true events.

A few years ago, a student of mine in Lausanne told me about an amazing story. This foreign male student worked as a prostitute in a suburban motel in order to support himself. One night, he found himself involved in the middle of an assisted suicide happening in the next room. After several twists and turns, euthanasia did not take place.

What struck my student, was the vigor with which Swiss sought to monitor their deaths while in his country they fought to survive. It seemed logical that the baby-boomers generation who experienced the most beautiful part of the 20th century, the arrival of the pill, the sexual liberation, an economic growth once imagined infinite. In short, the luxury of choice, raises almost ergonomically the question of death.

I wrote a few lines, which I submitted to Julien Bouissoux, the co-writer and we started to embrace this anecdote in the fiction.

You bring together Patrick Lapp, who you worked with on LES GRANDES ONDES, but didn’t have a breakthrough in cinema and Carmen Maura, who is a living legend of the 7th Art.

The ability to be good in front of a camera is not acquired over time but ultimately, you end up by acquiring tricks more or less efficient.

From the very beginning of PEPI LUCI BOM by Pedro Almodovar, we immediately see that Carmen is a great actress. The same goes for Patrick Lapp. He could have done 200 more films, it would have confirmed the good balance between what he is and what he gives to see.
When we did the first reading of the script with Ivan Georgiev, who plays Tréplev, Carmen told me “I believe that our trio will work as we don’t look like actors.” I understand her point. No one will pretend to be someone else. Since Patrick Lapp and Carmen Maura are great seducers … and great liars, I didn’t have to direct them, only support them.

Why was the film shot entirely in a studio?

First, for the taste of the artifice. The more we try to be concrete and realistic in the studio, the more we produce strangeness. It was important to me that VANITY would not be a drama, a tearful film about euthanasia. I wanted death to be a pretext in order to talk about the characters desire of living. This is what fascinates me with Chekhov: to refuse the tragedy in order to give the characters the choice to be tragic or not. The name Tréplev, the finale quote in the film are borrowed from LA MOUETTE.

I love the studio, because this is a place devoted to a single use, that of representation. Like a theater stage. It is therefore necessary to bring life to this place and treat it with respect. Surprisingly more than when you shot in natural settings. It’s like stepping aside to better understand the situation.

The feature film gives a funny picture of Assisted Suicide Associations.

But Electio, the association depicted in the film is completely fictional. We met, real “assistants” and doctors to know more about the procedures leading to euthanasia. Then, Julien Bouissoux and I felt free to retain only what suited us. The “assistants”, mostly if not exclusively women do a wonderful job and have been very sincere on altruism but also the very personal motivations that led them to volunteer. What is the daily life of these women? That is what caught my attention: everything that precedes the final act. Because in this kind of moment, life seems to thicken,
becoming more and more intense and rich. As if it were trying to make itself regretful. There is no better occasion to catch the human sensibility than at the threshold of death.
CARMEN MAURA (ESPERANZA)

Carmen García Maura is born in Madrid in 1945. She studies Philosophy and Letters, languages and Fine Arts in Paris. “Las gatas tienen frío” marks her film debut in 1969. Her first success was “Tigres de papel” by Fernando Colomo. During the countercultural “movida madrileña” movement she meets Pedro Almodóvar and together film his first production, “Pepi, Luci, Bom y otras chicas del montón” (1980). Many of her best performances, like the character Pepa in “Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios”, have been under the orders of this Manchegan director. Maura has acted in over 50 movies, working with the most prominent Spanish film directors. Likewise, she is also very successful in film productions from other countries, especially France.

AWARDS

National Film Award (1988)
Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France (1996)
Gold Medal for Merit in Fine Arts (1999)
Silver Shell for Best Actress at the International San Sebastian Film Festival (2000)
Best Actress at the International Cannes Film Festival (2006)
Cesar Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role (2012)
Donostia Award. San Sebastian International Film Festival (2013)
PATRICK LAPP (DAVID MILLER)

Born in 1944 in Rolle, Switzerland. Actor and an ex-radio host for Swiss Radio. He studied at Atelier Theater under supervision of François Rochaix. Patrick Lapp was seen in many plays. In 1982, he stars “Mérette” of Jean-Jacques Lagrange. The swiss audience knows him through his appearances in Bergamote, a series of plays from Claude Inga Barbey. Patrick Lapp has also cohosted for many years the radio show Aqua concert with Jean-Charles Simon. The part of Bob in “Longwave”, sets his big-screen comeback. 2016 Swiss Film Award, Best Actor for his role in “Vanity” by Lionel Baier.

FILMOGRAPHY

As actor (a selection):
2016 Martin Champion by Timothée Zurbuchen
2015 La vanité by Lionel Baier
2013 Les grandes ondes (à l'ouest) by Lionel Baier
1998 Le trésor de l'anse du bout – (L'instit) by Igaal Niddam
1997 L'Année du Capricorne by Jean-Luc Wey
1997 Le rideau de feu by Igaal Niddam
1996 Le rieur aux anges by Patricia Terrapon, Christian Marthe
1982 Mérette by Jean-Jacques Lagrange
IVAN GEORGIEV (TREPLEV)

Born in 1985 in Sofia, Bulgaria, agend seven years he arrives in Switzerland. After his academic studies of psychology and film, he trained at the the Scuola Teatro Dimitri in Switzerland. 2016 Swiss Film Award, Best Performance in a Supporting Role in “Vanity” by Lionel Baier.

FILMOGRAPHY

2015  La Vanité de Lionel Baier
**TECHNICAL DETAILS**

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<thead>
<tr>
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| CAST: | Patrick Lapp (David Miller)  
| | Carmen Maura (Esperanza)  
| | Ivan Georgiev (Tréplev) |
| DIRECTOR: | Lionel Baier |
| SCREENWRITERS: | Julien Bouissoux & Lionel Baier |
| CINEMATOGRAPHY: | Patrick Lindenmaier |
| EDITOR: | Jean-Christophe Hym |
| SOUND ENGINEER: | Vincent Kappeler |
| SOUND EDITOR: | Raphaël Sohier  
| | Matthieu Fichet  
| | Bruno Reiland |
| SOUND MIX: | Stéphane Thiébaut |
| PRODUCTION DESIGNER: | Anne-Carmen Vuilleumier |
| PRODUCERS: | Frédéric Mermoud, Bande à part Films (CH)  
| | Estelle Fialon, Les Films du Poissons (F) |
| EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: | Agnieszka Ramu |
| CO-PRODUCERS: | RTS Radio Télévision Suisse, SRG SSR  
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| | cinéma et de l’image animée et TV5 Monde |
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