

Chapter 2 and ARP present

Izia Higelin, Arthur Dupont  
Carole Bouquet, Bob Geldof

# Bad Girl

a film by

**Patrick Mille**

Runtime: 108 mins

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## **Synopsis**

Simultaneously, Louise finds out that she's pregnant and that her mother is gravely ill. Joy clashes with guilt, euphoria with sadness, a daughter's love with love itself.

It's going to take a full nine months to get your head around.

## **Interview with Justine Lévy**

*Screenwriter - Novelist*

### **Did you think that your novels could be adapted for the cinema?**

No. What's more, the first time someone suggested it, I didn't take it very seriously. Then just after she had directed "Pardonnez-moi", Maiwenn came to see me to say she very much wanted to adapt "Nothing Serious". I really liked her film and she won me over, I found her delightful. But when later she wanted me to get involved, and for me to give her my opinion, my approval, it started to scare me a bit. I wanted her to take my book and transform it into something else – to put her own stamp on it. In fact, I wanted her to take it off my hands and she was asking me all the time to say yes or no. It just wasn't working. In the end, it was she who called me to say: "I can't do this, I don't want to do it anymore." From that point, I thought it was better to just forget about cinema. Then Patrick [my partner in real life] began talking to me about his wish to adapt a novel – one by another novelist, and I took it very badly. It was as if he preferred someone else over me. So it started from there, a sort of fit of jealousy.

### **What did his vision change compared to the novel?**

Quite a lot. Patrick is more optimistic than I am and he's a believer – that plays a role in the rapport with death, and that comes over in his film. Then he has the good fortune, or strength, to not try and please. He doesn't care, and that makes him free. There are some bullfighting scenes, for example, and that is no doubt that's not exactly going to please everyone. On the other hand, we both have the same reflexes for anything that is too plodding, and avoid it. We both think that in life, happiness and tragedy are intimately linked; that life is a mix of both. That's the heart of the novel, because it deals with a birth and a death that coincide. The film stayed very faithful to this idea – that things are never completely sad nor completely joyful.

### **Had you previously written for the big screen?**

Never. But we went at it with enthusiasm and we were surprised that it took us six long months. Patrick works at a hell of a pace. I was exhausted after two hours' work. Certain scenes were more delicate to write than others. The scenes of sickness, for example, when Patrick was talking to me about Alice, I was seeing my mother, and the reality of that was too much. In fact, I let him write the most painful scenes on his own. After the novel came out, I had a feeling of calm – it was as if a wound had healed. And here, I had to open things up again, strip things right back to the bone, and replace all the words with images. Except that for me, the first images that came to mind weren't just images, they were memories. I had the feeling I was waking a dead woman. It really wasn't easy. Right till the end, I didn't know exactly how Patrick saw things, what the result was going to be, and if I was going to be happy with it. In fact, I was doubly afraid: afraid of being disappointed by the film, and of being disappointed by Patrick.

**Had you already thought of casting Carole Bouquet when you were writing?**

Yes. I tried to substitute Carole Bouquet's face for my mother's face, and at times it worked. When I met her, I really liked her. She is so different to her public persona. And so close, contrary to expectations, to the character of Alice. Like her, she's a rebel, a dissenter with contempt for social conventions. Carole Bouquet in that role rings true, beyond her dazzling beauty. Alice and she each have their way of approaching the world which is not so different. What's more, Carole must have felt it, because she didn't ask me any questions. I wanted her to do whatever she wanted with this character, for her never to be tempted to ape someone else. She came up with something spot on, surprisingly so. I don't know how much it is down to coincidence or intuition, but she chose gestures, a way of speaking with a high, almost sharp voice, and a manner of clowning around which were neither in the script nor the book, and I was stunned.

**You didn't know Izia Higelin when you wrote the part of Louise.**

Initially, we thought of Charlotte Gainsbourg for the role of Louise. She was like my double fantasy: brunette with long hair like me, something a little shaky, a bit self-conscious, but with a real gaiety. But Patrick wanted a debutant, which is not exactly the case for Charlotte Gainsbourg.

We first saw Izia one night on TV and we were struck by that mix of determination, gutsiness and vulnerability. Patrick wanted us to spend some time together so I could explain the character to her. But beyond the fact that we both found it quite awkward, I thought that between the script, the costumes, the long hair and Patrick, she would be in very safe hands, and that it would be good to see what she came up with.

**On the other hand, Arthur Dupont drew inspiration from Patrick to portray Pablo?**

Yes, I think so. In the film, I find he's infused with something of Patrick, it's almost disturbing. He stole his gestures, his mimicry, he got right in there; he's very discreet, very generous.

**What did you think of the choice of Bob Geldof to play Louise's father?**

What unbelievable casting! He, on the contrary, wanted to know everything, for us to describe his character. So we told him. A man and a woman; a great love story for two very young people; their daughter between them, like a bridge. His way of always being present, even from the other side of the world – for his daughter of course, but also for his daughter's mother. And he was fantastic.

**Did you intervene during filming?**

No. Once the production phase was underway, Patrick made it very clear: "On a film, there's only one captain, and that captain is me." I did however help to build the boat. And I ended up getting a taste for adventure. So I wanted to do a bit of backseat driving. I didn't understand why no one, all of a sudden, needed me around anymore. I still came on the set once or twice. But I never knew where to stand, it was like a hive where everyone had a clear job, whereas I just kept knocking things over. No doubt seeing one's own story being made wasn't very comfortable either. Especially the flashback scenes, when Louise as a child replays her life. That turned me totally inside out. But Patrick was amazing. He knew where he wanted to go and what he wanted to do. Sometimes I got a bit excited, but without having any effect, thankfully. It's his film. And then I went back to my quiet life.

**When you watch the film, do you discover things about him?**

Yes, he revealed a lot about himself in this film. He put all his favorite things in there: bullfighting, festivals, partying, buddies, his favorite books. He made the story his own. A first work is always very autobiographical and this one says a lot about him. And from his position as conductor of a team, he knew exactly what he wanted. He was totally in control of the film and where he wanted to take it. While it was going on, nothing else counted for him.

**What do you think of the film?**

Inevitably, whenever you say adaptation it means betrayal. But you're never better betrayed than by the person you love, right? I'm delighted with the result. This story is the story of a battle. It's about life fighting back against the onrush of death. In the novel, I had the impression that death wins, whereas in the film, life emerges triumphant. So the film is akin to Patrick, and I find that very moving. I see Patrick's vitality diluted in his film.

**Justine Lévy**

*Biography*

After studying philosophy, Justine Lévy became a reader for Calmann-Lévy, then for Editions Pauvert. She is now an editor with Stock.

Her first novel, "Le Rendez-vous", was published in 1995 and already dealt with her relationship with her mother in a story told through flashbacks. In 2004, with her follow-up, "Nothing Serious", Justine Lévy tells the story of a separation. This semi-autobiographical fiction was a major hit.

Published in 2009, "Bad Girl" was selected for the Goncourt Prize.

## **Interview with Patrick Mille**

### *Director*

#### **When did you decide you wanted to make the switch from actor to director?**

I always thought that I'd direct my first film at 40. But above all, in the beginning I wanted to be an actor. I've had a taste for cinema since childhood, and it never left me. I discovered "The Outsiders" by Coppola aged 11 at the Rialto, my local movie theater, and it was a revelation for me. It's the kind of cinema that made me want to be an actor. And the fact that I was fairly at home in the shows we put on at school gave me the balls to try. Very soon, once I started to really work as an actor and have a bit more choice, I tended chose films according to the director, rather than for how big the role was. For example, recently I accepted a role with five days' filming because I wanted to see how Lou Ye worked.

On set, I don't go back to the dressing room. I'm always around, even when I'm not in a scene. I observe, doing my apprenticeship, taking it all in. I've had that approach since my first film, "Walking a Tightrope", directed by Nikos Papatakis starring Michel Piccoli. I played a character of few words, but who was often present in scenes. I made the most of it to watch and learn some techniques, but also how to manage a set, a film crew, and a group of actors. Later on, I had the opportunity to work with directors such as Alain Corneau and Benoît Jacquot, and they taught me a huge amount.

#### **Have you wanted to adapt one of Justine Lévy's novels for long?**

It took me a while to admit it, but I was very irritated at the idea that anyone else would adapt one of her books. So I trashed all the candidates, whenever one came along. "Bad Girl" is, to me, the most cinematographic of Justine's novels. Louise is a heroine with a real trajectory, facing a dilemma between joy and sadness, life and death. Justine and I discussed it, and we decided to write the script together without telling anyone. Compared to the book, the film is more fictional, and the fiction elements were what I provided. Since I witnessed very little of what the book recounts, I went in search of an Alice and a Louise that I'd never known. I needed to make this journey with Justine. The writing stage was very uplifting for both of us, though sometimes painful for her. We really shared the writing together. Then for the filming, she gave me a free hand. She didn't intervene in what I did to her work.

#### **What was the biggest challenge for you during filming?**

I think it was keeping control of the set. I've seen directors who lose control of it all, let themselves go, or else install a reign of terror, and I had these pitfalls in mind. In any case, the secret for a successful shoot is long and thorough preparation. I spent three months on it. I chose each member of the crew, I prepared the shooting script, discussed the sets, the colors, everything. As someone who is terribly nervous as an actor, surprisingly I felt quite ready, calm and concentrated. I felt in very good hands, with Jérôme Almeras behind the camera, and Benoît Barouh as set designer. We knew where we wanted to go, and we got there together.

As far as the actors were concerned, I didn't want them to think of me as a colleague, nor did I want to automatically go along with their views and accommodate them. I had to look to them to come up with the emotions I needed, and to avoid them considering me as one of them, but instead as the director. On the first day of the shoot, we filmed the scene when Louise discovers that her mother is sick. So you start your first film with an intense scene and you have to direct a debutant, Izia, and Carole Bouquet. It could have been very destabilizing, but in the end it was fine to start like that. Inevitably, at one point Carole said to me: "You, as an actor yourself, you know very well that..." I answered straight off: "I'm not an actor now; I'm making a film."

### **What did you like especially about Izia?**

I was dreaming of a Sandrine Bonnaire, or an Emilie Dequenne, of discovering a newcomer like in "Rosetta". When an unknown actor carries a film, you believe in it all the more because they don't carry all the baggage from their previous roles. I wanted an unknown actress, so that she and I would experience our first time together – she as an actress, me as director. And then one evening, I was with Justine and some friends in the country, the TV was on, we were watching the French music awards, and suddenly this unbelievable girl comes on playing powerful rock, and then the next moment, she was so touchingly fragile when she gave her thank-you speech. Justine and I looked at each other and we both thought the same thing. We got her to do some tests, in which she was immediately outstanding and convinced everyone. She didn't try to meet Justine to talk about Louise's character. She just read the script and threw herself in to it.

### **Why was Carole Bouquet the right choice?**

Carole has led a full and rich life; she's been through a lot, she's known a lot of people. Her past immediately makes her credible in the role of a star model from the 1980s. Carole is a free spirit, upbeat and enthusiastic. And what a face! Without doing anything, just by changing film stock, we go from the 1980s to today, and it's totally credible. She never spoke to Justine about her mother. She came up with everything herself. One day, she asked me to see some photos. I left her with a few albums. She gave them back to me a couple of hours later, without a word. She'd grasped it.

### **Where did you get the idea of casting Bob Geldof?**

Right from when we were writing, I'd thought about making the father a rock star. I wanted to invent a father who was at once ultra-responsible, really involved, and yet completely anchored in the real world – a dream father, in other words. But at the same time absent, on tour, living in fancy hotels, someone iconic. The problem was finding the rock star to play the role. And a rock star who is a good actor. In France, I could only think of Jacques Dutronc, but he doesn't seem to want to make movies anymore. Then one day Richard Rousseau, the casting director, mentioned Bob Geldof. And as soon as we heard the name, we said: "Of course!" He's got it all: great charisma, a global reputation beyond the world of music, and political commitment. On set, he was delightfully receptive. He was always probing, always listening, he was very engaged in the process. It's not so easy to act going from one language to another. The "franglais" in the script was very carefully written, but it's complicated to act. He did a few readings with Izia and I realized something I hadn't thought about before – that Bob's appearance is actually quite close to Jacques Higelin. This father-daughter pairing really worked. And what's more, they're both rockers.

**You thought about playing Pablo, before giving the role to Arthur Dupont.**

I was going to play the role when we were writing the script, but I definitely didn't want to act in my first film as director. So we looked around and did some tests. It was when I watched "Bus Palladium" that I thought of Arthur. He has a sweetness, a real goodness. He really looks at others, connects, and he has a discreet yet intense presence. He's very passionate. He's also a very hard-working actor. He watched me closely. We hung out together. I gave him some of my clothes, he met my friends, and so on.

**Are the friends of Louise and Pablo in the film your friends in real life?**

Yes, it was the best way to make sure those scenes had real charm, for them to be lively and natural. The dinner in the film is very like the dinners we do regularly. The same goes for the festival. Those are our close friends, those with whom we go for dinner or out to the country. It was great to have them with me for the duration of a scene or two. In the film, they are drinking real drinks. I gave them a few key points in the text, and from there, they improvised. Sometimes, I wanted to swap sides and go join in the fun with them.

**How do you direct a seasoned actress, a debutante and a young beginner?**

Without doing any psychology! I was lucky: they are all actors who ask very few questions beyond practical problems they encountered within a scene or a shot. Carole and Izia are first-take actresses. Arthur lets himself go with each successive take. Izia gives everything right away. She likes to scare herself, and it was incredible to watch. Sometimes she delivered something really strong, immediately. I never asked what she was drawing on inside to find all that. And she never told me either.

**How did you decide on the film's look, the sets, and the overall tone?**

Things came together around the music. I had nearly all the songs that feature in the film in mind from the writing stage. And then I always had a notebook with me with color codes and photos. Each period, each atmosphere was detailed. We leaned towards Basquiat for the 1980s, towards the photos of Nan Goldin for the hospital scenes. What's more, it's a nice touch that Joana Preiss, Nan Goldin's muse, has a small role in the film.

**How did the editing go?**

I was very fortunate in that Yann Dedet agreed to edit the film. His filmography is intimidating, but on the job he's attentive, responsive and full of ideas. Yann kept a freshness and curiosity to the film. I can see why some of the great directors use him loyally. He's not afraid of anything. With him, you can say anything and try anything. He challenges your views – not to show you're wrong, but on the contrary, to force you to fully accept your choices. It was a fascinating task, because after the chaos of filming with its daily battles, the editing, mixing and post-production in general felt gentle, almost soothing. And yet it is there that everything takes shape, because Yann and I deconstructed and reinvented the film. But we were on calm waters and it was good.

**Patrick Mille***Biography*

Patrick Mille was born in Lisbon in 1970.

An actor since 1991, he started out with some small roles alongside Michel Piccoli and Gérard Depardieu, and has since appeared in numerous French comedies (“People”, “L’Incruste”, “The Valet”, etc.) and has worked with directors such as Jan Kounen, Alain Corneau and Benoît Jacquot.

Patrick Mille also played “Chico”, a colorful character from “Centre de Visionnage” by Edouard Baer, the closing sequence of the nightly Canal + entertainment show “Nulle Part Ailleurs” from 1997 to 1999.

“Bad Girl” is his first feature film as director.

**Izia Higelin***Louise*

Singer and musician, Izia Higelin made her debut on stage at the Printemps de Bourges in 2006. Aged just 16, she then opened for Iggy Pop in concert in Paris.

After a long tour in France, she recorded her first eponymous album “as live” in 2009. This earned her a Victoire de la Musique award in the category “Pop/Rock Album of the Year” in 2010. She also won a Victoire award for “Stage Revelation of the Year”.

At the end of 2011, Izia released “So Much Trouble”, which was nominated for the Victoires de la Musique in the category “Pop/Rock Album of the Year”, which she again scooped at the 27<sup>th</sup> Victoires ceremony in March 2012.

The Petit Bateau brand chose Izia as the face of one of its recent ad campaigns, in which she performs her song “Let Me Alone”.

**Arthur Dupont***Pablo*

Arthur Dupont had his big-screen breakthrough in 2007 in “The Romance of Astrea and Celadon” by Eric Rohmer. He then appeared in two comedies by Frédéric Berthe, “Nos 18 Ans” and “RTT”, before playing one of the leads in “Bus Palladium” by Christopher Thompson, a role for which he was nominated for the César award for Best Male Newcomer in 2011.

His forthcoming screen roles include “Les Saveurs du Palais” by Christian Vincent, alongside Claude Rich and Catherine Frot. He also appears in the new film by Agnès Jaoui, “Under the Rainbow”.



## **Carole Bouquet**

*Alice*

Trained at the Conservatory, she was spotted by Luis Buñuel who cast her as the heroine in “That Obscure Object of Desire”. After making “Buffet Froid” directed by Bertrand Blier, she became a Bond girl alongside Roger Moore in “For Your Eyes Only” in 1981.

She was nominated for a César for Best Supporting Actress in “Rive Droite, Rive Gauche” by Philippe Labro in 1985. In 1989, she won the César award for Best Actress for her performance in “Too Beautiful For You” by Bertrand Blier, her third film with Gérard Depardieu.

For more than two decades, from “Tango” by Patrice Leconte to “Housewarming” by Brigitte Roüan, and from “Lucie Aubrac” by Claude Berri to “Unforgivable” by André Téchiné, the former face of Chanel has juggled acerbic and zany comedies with auteur films, moving freely from one universe to another.

Carole Bouquet also appeared on stage in “Phèdre” directed by Jacques Weber at the Théâtre Dejazet, and in “Bérénice”, directed by Lambert Wilson at the Bouffes du Nord. More recently, she played in “L’Eloignement” written by Loleh Bellon, directed by Bernard Murat at the Théâtre Édouard VII, and she read the “Letters to Genica” by Antonin Artaud at the Théâtre de l’Atelier.

## **Bob Geldof**

*Georges*

Robert Frederick Zenon Geldof, better known as Sir Bob Geldof, was born in 1951 in County Dublin. Inspired by the punk movement in the UK, he founded the Boomtown Rats, who released their first album in 1977.

In 1984, Bob Geldof returned to center stage as singer-activist in a bid to bring an end to the famine ravaging Ethiopia. He co-wrote the song “Do They Know It’s Christmas?” with Ultravox singer Midge Ure, and to perform it, they put together Band Aid. The charity group brought together some of the biggest names in rock, including Bono, David Bowie, Paul McCartney, Sting, Phil Collins and George Michael. In the UK, the single sold a record one million copies in the space of a week.

The fund-raising effort continued with the staging of two concerts, one in London, one in Philadelphia, which were broadcast in more than 100 countries to encourage donations. Performers at the event included U2, Sting, Elton John, David Bowie, Queen, The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin and Tina Turner, attracting a global television audience of some 1.5 billion. It is estimated that the event raised \$245.4 million.

This commitment led to Bob Geldof being given an honorary knighthood by the Queen of England in 1986. Since then, he has been tipped several times for a Nobel Peace Prize. He reprised the idea of the charity concert with Live 8 in July 2005. A series of concerts were staged simultaneously in the various countries participating in the G8 conference, in order to put pressure on their leaders to cancel African debt.

Today, he is still involved with eradicating famine in Africa. He takes part in numerous conferences and events around the world. Since 2002, he has also been involved in “Cinema for Peace”, which each year honors a personality from the world of cinema working for peace at the Berlin Film Festival.

In France, Bob Geldof is best known for his role as Pink, the hero of the film “Pink Floyd The Wall” by Alan Parker.

## Cast

Louise.....Izia Higelin  
Pablo ..... Arthur Dupont  
Alice..... Carole Bouquet  
Georges ..... Bob Geldof  
Brigitte ..... Joana Preiss  
Professor Lecoq ..... Jacques Weber  
Louise Child..... Ingil Valenti

## Crew

Directed by..... Patrick Mille  
Script, adaptation ..... Patrick Mille & Justine Lévy  
Based on the novel by ..... Justine Lévy  
Published by ..... Éditions Stock, 2009  
Produced by ..... Dimitri Rassam  
..... Michèle & Laurent Pétin  
Coproduced by ..... Serge de Pouques  
..... Sylvain Goldberg  
..... Adrian Politowski  
..... Gilles Waterkeyn  
Cinematography ..... Jérôme Almeras, A.F.C.  
Editor..... Yann Dedet, F.D.B.  
Sound ..... François Waledisch  
..... Jean Gargonne  
..... Thomas Gauder  
Original music ..... Jonathan Morali  
Set design ..... Benoît Barouh  
Costumes ..... Marie-Laure Lasson  
A coproduction by..... Chapter 2  
..... ARP  
..... Nexus Factory  
..... France 3 Cinéma  
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