the house by the sea

DIRECTED BY
ROBERT GUÉDIGUIAN
By a little bay near Marseille lies a picturesque villa owned by an old man. His three children have gathered by his side for his last days: Angela, an actress living in Paris, Joseph, who has just fallen in love with a girl half his age and Armand, the only one who stayed behind in Marseille to run the family’s small restaurant. It’s time for them to weigh up what they have inherited of their father’s ideals and the community spirit he created in this magical place. The arrival, at a nearby cove, of a group of boat people will throw these moments of reflection into turmoil.
DIRECTOR’S NOTE

The initial idea was to shoot the film entirely in the Méejan calanque (creek), near Marseille, which has always made me think of a theatre. The colourful little houses built into the hills seem to be no more than façades... A viaduct overlooks them and its trains look like child’s toys; the openness towards the sea transforms the horizon into a backdrop... like painted canvases... especially with the winter light, when everyone has gone. It becomes an abandoned set – melancholy and beautiful.

In this open-air ‘bubble’, a few brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, friends and lovers exchange tons of past love and love yet to come...

All of these men and all of these women share the same feeling. They are at a time of life when they have an acute awareness of time passing, of the world changing...
The paths that they’d opened up are gradually being sealed off. They must constantly be maintained... or new ones must be opened up. They know that their world will disappear with them... They also know that the world will go on without them...
Will it be better, worse?
Thanks to them, because of them?
What will be left of them when they go?

In this situation, suddenly, something happens that may radically overturn all of these thoughts, a kind of Copernican revolution: child survivors from a wrecked boat are hiding in the hills. They are two brothers and a sister, like an echo of Joseph, Armand, and Angèle, and that brings a sense of fraternity back into play, since they decide to keep these children with them.

I believe in this encounter. There is something about “globalisation” that naturally relates to the future.

Though I exaggerate, I’d say that I couldn’t make a film today without talking about refugees: we are living in a country where people are drowning at sea on a daily basis. I deliberately choose the word “refugees”. I don’t care whether it’s due to climate change, for reasons, or because of a war – they are coming in search of a shelter, a hearth.

With these three little ones arriving, perhaps the calanque will be revived? Angèle, Joseph, and Armand will stay there with these three children to raise, and they’re going to try to make the restaurant, the hillside community, and their worldview survive...

And keep up the connections between a few people... and in that way, maintain peace.

ROBERT GUÉDIGUIAN
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SELECTIVE FILMOGRAPHY

2017 THE HOUSE BY THE SEA - Venice, in Competition
2015 DON’T TELL ME THE BOY WAS MAD - Cannes, Official Selection
2014 ARIANE’S THREAD
2011 THE SNOWS OF KILIMANJARO - Cannes, Un Certain Regard
2009 ARMY OF CRIME - Cannes, Official Selection
2008 LADY JANE - Berlin, in Competition
2006 ARMENIA - Toronto, Official Selection
2005 THE LAST MITTERRAND - Berlin, in Competition
2004 MY FATHER IS AN ENGINEER - San Sebastian, in Competition
2002 MARIE-JO AND HER TWO LOVERS - Cannes, in Competition
2000 THE TOWN IS QUIET - Venice, in Competition - Toronto, Official Selection
1998 WHERE THE HEART IS - Toronto, Official Selection - San Sebastian, Special Prize of the Jury, Best Screenplay, OCIC Award
1997 MARIUS AND JEANNETTE - César Awards, 7 nominations, Best Actress César Award (Ariane Ascaride)
1995 TILL DEATH DO US PART - Toronto, Official Selection
1993 MONEY BUYS HAPPINESS
1990 GOD THROWS UP THE LUKEWARM
1985 KI LO SA
1984 RED MIDI - Cannes, Directors’ Fortnight
1981 LAST SUMMER - Cannes, Directors’ Fortnight

CAST
Angèle Ariane ASCARIDE
Joseph Jean-Pierre DARROUSSIN
Armand Gérard MEYLAN
Martin Jacques BOUDET
Bérangère Anaïs DEMOUSTIER
Benjamin Robinson STÉVENIN
Yvan Yann TREGOUËT
Suzanne Geneviève MNICH
Maurice Fred ULYSSE
The officer Diouc KOMA

CREW
A film by Robert GUÉDIGUIAN
Written by Robert GUÉDIGUIAN and Serge VALLETTI
Photography Pierre MILON
Editor Bernard SASIA
Sound Laurent LAFRAN
Production design Michel VANDESTIEN
Line producer Malek HAMZAOUI
Assistant director Ferdinand VERHAEGHE
Location manager Bruno GHARIANI
Costume designer Anne-Marie GIACALONE
Makeup Hermia HAMZAOUI
Sound mixing Armelle MAHÉ

Produced by Robert GUÉDIGUIAN and Marc BORDURE
Production in coproduction with AGAT Films & Cie
In association with France 3 Cinéma
In partnership with Canal +, France Télévisions Ciné +, Cinéventure 2, Indéfilms 5, La Région Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, CNC
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INTERNATIONAL SALES
55 rue Traversière - 75012 Paris

JULIETTE SCHRAECK
Managing Director of mk2 films
juliette.schrameck@mk2.com

FIONNUALA JAMISON
Head of International Sales & Acquisitions
fionnuala.jamison@mk2.com

OLA BYSZUK
International Sales Executive
ola.byszuk@mk2.com

INTERNATIONAL PRESS

MAGALI MONTET
+33 671 633 616
magali@magalimontet.com

GLORIA ZERBINATI
+33 7 86 80 02 82
gloria@magalimontet.com