

SUPERSONICGLIDE PRESENTS

Love & Crashes

A FILM BY LUCILE CHAUFOUR



WITH STEVE DEHOUX & VIVIANE GROETEMBRIL, DAMIEN PERILLEUX & NANCY DETOURNAY, PIERRE BALFROID & CHRISTINE BALFROID, ÉRIC BONA & AXEL BONA | CINÉMATOGRAPHERS ELIN KIRSCHFINK, HELENE LOUVART
SOUND MIXERS ANDRÉ RIGAUT, NICOLAS WASCHKOWSKI, NICOLAS PATURLE, BERNHARD BRAUNSTEIN | EDITING LUCILE CHAUFOUR | RE-RECORDING MIXER ALEXANDRE WIDMER | GRAPHIC DESIGNER YANNI PANAJOTOPOULOS
PRODUCER SUPERSONICGLIDE | IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CHAYA FILMS AND QUAD | WITH SUPPORT FROM PAUL ROUSSEAU AND THIRD STUDIO | THIS FILM RECEIVED A GRANT BROUILLON D'UN RÊVE FROM THE SCAM

Scam*

WHEN LOVE IS STRONGER THAN FEAR!



Amorous Transport SYNOPSIS

A racing sidecar is a contraption that cannot follow curves on the road without the alliance of two bodies simultaneously piloting the outfit. The relationship which the two people must develop is one that does not tolerate any sort of domination or constraint. One calls this modern-day love, this efficient and sensual philosophy of action, "symbiosis".



The Practice of the Philosophy

THE CIRCUIT OF EXPERIENCE

We are on the circuit of Chimay, in Belgium. Every summer, sidecar racers come from all over Europe to take part in races of vintage sidecars on this legendary circuit going through villages and forests. However, this is not a film about sidecars but about the teams, this particular alliance in which two racers share the same objective. The sidecar is a strange contraption that goes on three wheels and cannot turn in bends without a passenger who is in fact as much of a pilot as the one who rides the motorcycle. In this way teams are formed, who must truly share the adventure together, because it is together that they race, travel, win or lose a race. These teams are sometimes married couples, sometimes lovers or friends, often two people from the same family. When they tell us about racing, they are in fact telling us about what makes a team. They talk about pleasure and confidence, conflicts and crashes. But at the heart, there is always this motivating desire to share, and this incompleteness which is experienced as a boon: each one needs the other for all this to work.

TIMED PRACTICE

The film begins on a Saturday morning, with timed practice. We follow our protagonists through registration, briefing, and technical control. We find out that they all know each other and their discussions let us see the different ways by which each team functions. After the timed practice, we see them doing various activities – reassembling an engine, shining a fairing, taking off a wheel. There is a certain fascinating aesthetic

about all these operations carried out in the middle of an array of tents and trucks.

MEAL WITH FRIENDS

In the evening, when the commotion of the race circuit has died down, everyone sits at large tables that bring together drivers, passengers, mechanics, and even children. People switch freely between French and Flemish, sometimes translating a few sentences into Dutch or English. As night falls, a few mechanics are still busy with an engine, seeming as anxious as if they were performing open-heart surgery.

THE RACE

Sunday is racing day. We find the teams on the starting grid, placed according to their time in the timed practice. Mechanics and families are gathered at the edge of the track. The start is an intense moment. When the national flag goes down, the teams take off like mad on their “rigs”, which sometimes look like a junky piece of sheet metal with an engine strapped on it. On the circuit, the drivers crouch on the motorcycles, head down, while the passengers – the “monkeys” as they are called in the racing world – swing from right to left to balance the rig when cornering. One moment the passengers are so low their body can touch the ground and the next moment, the curve reverses and they throw their weight onto the back of the drivers, who hold to the trajectory at all costs, pushing the engines to their limits.

THE CRASH

But this immense pleasure that brings them back year after year to the racing track is not free of risk. Sometimes a rig fails a curve and hits the safety rail at high speed. This is the crash, and it is followed by the waving of a red flag, pausing the race. The rigs return one by one to the pit lane like a funeral procession and wait for the damaged rig to be removed from the track. The pilots take off their helmets and we see from the serious expressions on their faces that everyone is wondering who it is that went off track. They count one another, exchanging names, wondering and waiting for information. Two friends are down and no one knows who, no names are given. In the control room, Anne-Marie, who is responsible for safety, gives the green light to the track marshals: it is the custom that the race starts again, no matter what. Soon the helmets are back on, the engines start up, and the race resumes with the same vigor as before.

MOMENT OF GRACE

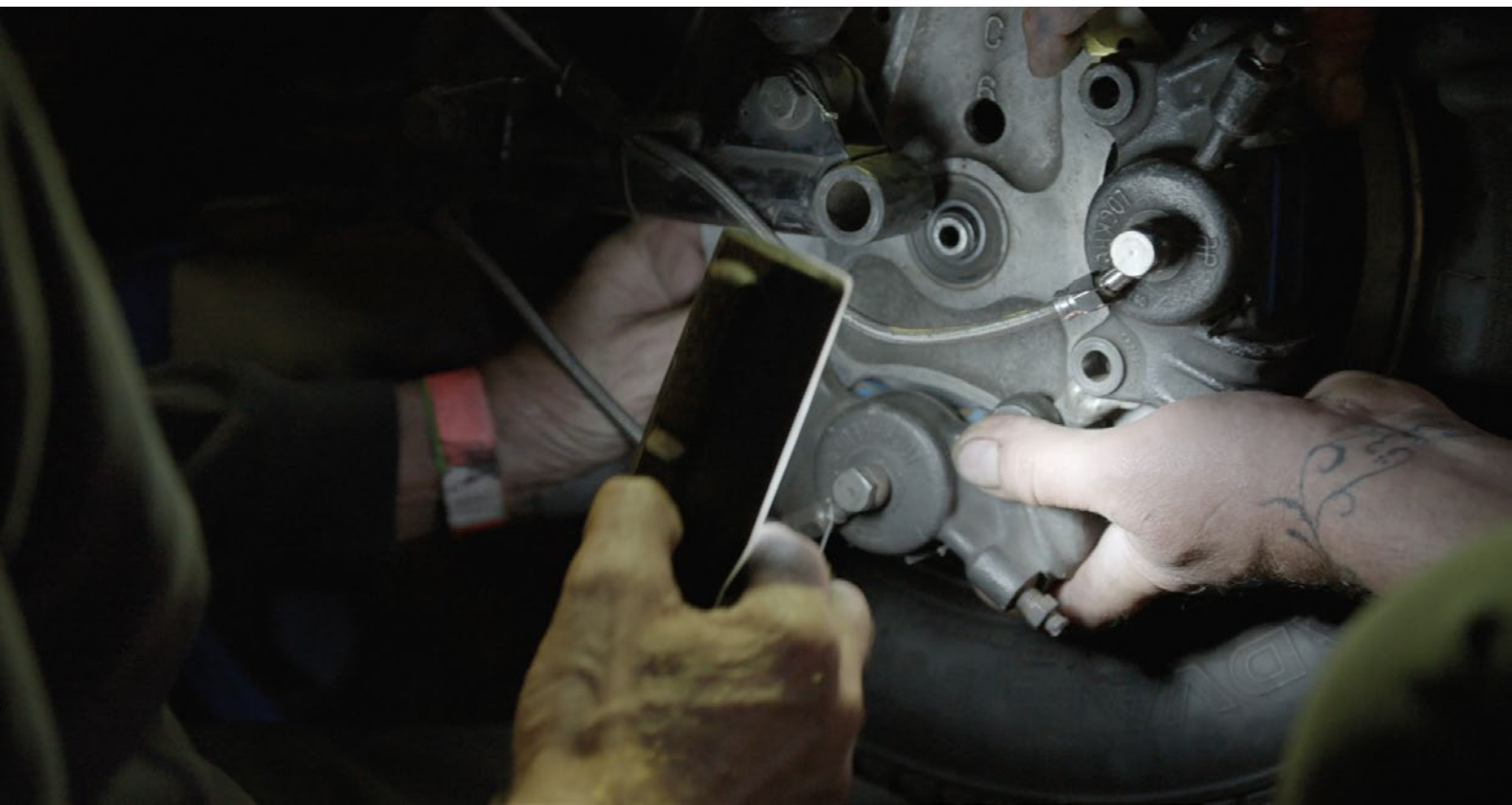
Spectators have gathered at the turns. The ambulance paramedics watch the sidecars rigs intently as they whiz by before them. Sitting in the tiny sentry box which serves as a studio, Jean-Pierre and Roland are having a ball taking turns giving lively commentaries on the race, passing from French to Flemish to English. Looking intently at the results displayed on the screen, a small fan blowing air in their faces, they manage to spot the competitors vying for the lead in the colorful blurs flashing along the track.

PODIUMS

We find the racers near the outdoor podiums, with children jostling to be in front, and happy women, reddened by the July sun, greeting each other. The announcer reads out the categories, and each winner receives a small trophy. It is all about that: victory is not about exorbitant monetary prizes, but simply about shared humanity. They all comment on their race and congratulate one another. It is a moment full of emotion shared by children on the shoulders of their parents, even though they don't really understand what it is that makes the adults laugh, applaud, and sometimes cry.

GOODBYES

It is the end of the day, the French-fry stand is closed, but our friends meet again to share a bottle of champagne. This is when they talk about past crashes and injuries, which are often just described as "a few broken ribs", which for them is no big deal. But behind the humor and the laughing off, we see all the friends who are gone now, and who are respected even in the most extreme choices they made. We feel poignantly that the human condition – the meaning of life and death – is, for them, something experienced, something dense, deep, composed of sadness and solemnity. They speak of their fear of losing one another, but also of their immense love, carried and magnified by the crazy desire to share the magnetic pull of a race together, regardless of its danger.



The Philosophy of the Practice

THE CIRCUIT OF ANALYSIS

The first time I watched a sidecar race, I was filled with the wonder of a child: the balletic performance, the unbelievably loud noise from the exhaust pipes, the way bodies ride on each other thrilled me and left me spellbound. And even now, seeing these unstable and noisy bolides gives me joy: seeing these adults defying the laws of balance on an improbable rig, what a marvel! But what is this bond made of, which is stronger than fear, stronger than crashes?

WHAT THEMES?

Rethinking Partnership

Listening to the racers tell their story, seeing how they move, how they touch each other, how they look at each other – each time, what comes through is the quality of the bond between them, what makes the relationship. Here, the relationship is not a tomb that seals up enthusiasm, that insists that being an adult means renouncing desire, and that demands a weighty sense of responsibility. Seeing how they live forces on us the question, what makes it work so well? How is such trust in each other possible? What is this sensual and practical love made of, that it resists the test of reality?

Learning from the Women in this Community

Whether they are “monkey” (passenger) or pilot (driver), all the women have a relationship to their bodies and ages that is unusual and wonderful. Here they are prized not because their shape meets advertising standards, but because they drive fast

and make it to the podium. This is how I explain the beauty of these women, whose way of walking, whose postures and whose faces are animated by a conviction that seem not to care about appearance or how others look at them.

Transmitting Popular Culture

Finally, when we walk through the paddock, we are struck by the power of this form of popular culture – no marketing model has created this enthusiasm. This culture seems to pass down from grandparents to grandchildren without needing any reinforcement from the media. There is something profoundly genuine in the passion exhibited by these sidecar lovers. Their shared identity escaping from the norms of the marketplace is expressed through the hours the mechanics spend together, the meals eaten together under the camper trailer awnings, the injured comrades they go visit, the stories of trophies won and races lost that they tell as though they are reciting epics.

WHAT FORMS OF MODERNITY?

Symbiosis as a Line of Inquiry

It may be healthy to consider otherness not in terms of dominating or being dominated, not as some sort of ideal of fusion, but as a possible form of symbiosis. It is something in which the other person is recognized as radically different, without any need to use him or her, a relationship during which the other is not systematically emptied of his or her substance. While the essential thing in exploiting someone

else (and its corollary, dominating someone else) is getting work done using the body of the other, without involving one's own (and therefore wearing out the body that one exploits without putting oneself in danger), the relationship that these sidecar racers develop are based on not allowing any constraint in the decision-making. Here, "no one is the boss". The immediacy, the simultaneity, the risks incurred bring about a kind of agreement which promotes a relationship that is non-authoritarian, fluid and efficient.

A Radical Empiricism

In order for this to work on the track, the sidecar racers have to develop a different kind of relationship one to the other. The sidecar is an object that operates on the drivers. Sidecar racing obliges them to transform their relationship. This is not a romantic dream but rather a commitment to the present moment, where the penalty for error can be brutal. One has to learn this symbiosis in the heart of danger, not by theorizing abstractly on the metaphysics of relationships. Harmony here is the experience of being out of balance, it is the constant reactualization of a coming together, it is the reinvention of actions that are alive and adapted to the context.

Practical Sensuality

But the strength of their love is also felt when they crash, in the way they talk of their emotions at the time, the way they analyze the reasons for the crash, the way each one takes care of their own wounds without acting as though the other person is irredeemably guilty. This is the state of mind which allows them to return to the scene of the crash and replay the situation. There is no necessity of forgetting, no contrite asking forgiveness, no blackmail prolonging a moribund relationship. Regaining each other's trust is what matters most. For while the



crash is a serious setback that cannot be ignored, the quality of the bond is judged by its effectiveness on the track. No one wishes to die when starting a race. If death prowled around the starting line, the racers wouldn't launch out on the track. Of course, risk creates special intimate conditions and brings out the exceptional at the point where breakage is near, but there is no attraction to death among the racers. The possibility of a crash is a risk, not a secret dark desire.

WHAT PRACTICES?

A Hybrid Film

There are films that are neither entirely fiction nor entirely documentary. The production of such films borrows from both techniques. The question of the purity of fiction and its pre-eminence are part of an old debate. Can we still claim today that the only great art is that where someone invents the whole of it? Or that the use of real experience bastardizes the creative work? The search for human intensity, for complex narratives, or for the truth of the moment is not constrained by these limitations. I chose to rejoice that acted scenes are received as moments of documentary immersion even if it means renouncing being recognized for the artfulness of one's directing. When the hard work of filming succeeds, the result is attractive and elusive. But isn't that what we are hoping for?

The Form Carries a Message

It was important for me to find a visual grammar involving gently floating along, accompanying the bodies – a sort of sensorial expression which delivers the strength, the touch, the

feel. I wanted to show the acrobatic movements of the racers, which one only perceives during the race as distant shifts of the bodies in the curves. The staged shots on a still sidecar allow one to fully appreciate this airy and sensual ballet. Free bodies, dancing bodies, unstable balance, at the peak of desire, at the moment of contact – the repetition of going around curves, bends and chicanes becomes a sort of choreography, an instantaneous composition. The charm of this moment is so complete that some believe they are seeing a common practice when in fact this is a poetic effort of staging.

Whisper in Love

We are saturated with the pressure to overshare, with intimate relations revealed, with sexualized images, yet notice how a brushing of the bodies arouses an emotion and how a simple phrase brings a sensual whiff. I wanted to talk about the intimate, to stand as close as possible, yet to respect this loving mystery that only a voice-over furtively reveals. We don't need to know everything to understand. I chose to stick to the unity of place, time, and action, without seeking to know more about their work, their track records or their intimate relationship.

I like the fact that *Love & Crashes* is a film about love in an unexpected place and takes us, beyond the crashes and the drama, into a joyful and visionary *élan*.



Heros & Heroines THE CIRCUIT OF LOVE



VIVIANNE & STEVE

Married and in love, last in the race, their pleasure is first of all in the fluidity with which they move and communicate on the rig. Crashes have never damaged their confidence.



NANCY & DAMIEN

Young champions in search of excellence, former lovers for whom the desire to race together has never let up. They have overcome the toughest of trials and come together every year for this time full of strong feelings, that nothing seems able to replace.



ÉRIC & AXEL

Éric is a former professional race driver, and his son Axel grew up in the paddock during the racing seasons. Axel often says, with an air of bravado, that he likes to take risks. His father listens to him, worried, but also aware that it was he who initiated his son into this dangerous hobby.



PIERRE & CHRISTINE

Pierre is huge and reserved, Christine, small and warm. Married, their gestures full of great sensuality show how much fun they are having riding together. Victory is for them a moment of fulfillment, as witnessed by the trophies lined up in their caravan.

The Film Team
THE CIRCUIT OF PRODUCTION

With

STEVE DEHOUX | VIVIANE GROETEMBRIL
DAMIEN PÉRILLEUX | NANCY DETOURNAY
PIERRE BALFROID | CHRISTINE BALFROID
ÉRIC BONA | AXEL BONA

Scriptwriter and Director

LUCILE CHAUFOUR

Cinematographers

HÉLÈNE LOUVART (AFC) | ELIN KIRSCHFINK

Sound Mixers

ANDRÉ RIGAUT | NICOLAS WASCHKOWSKI
BERNHARD BRAUNSTEIN | NICOLAS PATURLE

Editor

LUCILE CHAUFOUR

Colorist

RICHARD DEUSY

Re-recording Mixer

ALEXANDRE WIDMER

Graphic Designer

YANNI PANAJOTOPOULOS

Original Music

"LOVE & CRASHES" | LUCILE CHAUFOUR
© 2020 LUCILE CHAUFOUR
© 2020 SUPERSONICGLIDE

Sample

"TAKES 2019" | NICOLAS LAUREAU
©© 2019 NICOLAS LAUREAU

Theme Music

"HOW DEEP IS THE OCEAN" | IRVING BERLIN
© UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING

On Behalf of

BERLIN IRVING MUSIC

With Permission of

UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING FILM & TV

Theme Interpretation

LUCILE CHAUFOUR | NICOLAS LAUREAU
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Producer

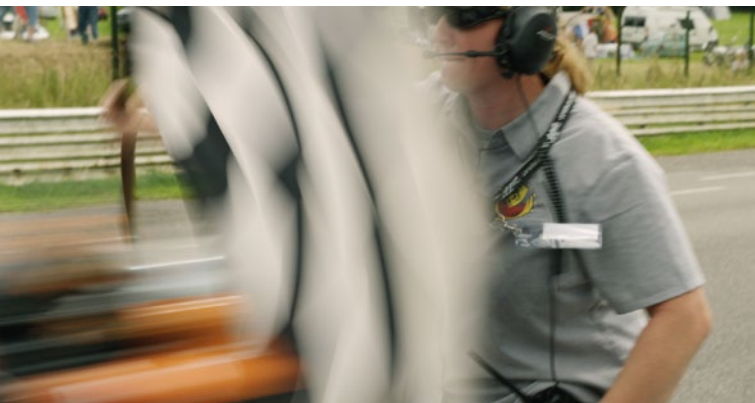
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In Partnership with

CHAYA FILMS, QUAD, PAUL ROUSSEAU AND THIRD STUDIO

With Support from

BROUILLON D'UN RÊVE FROM THE SCAM



BIOGRAPHY

After studying at the Arts décoratifs (Paris) and in several music schools, Lucile Chaufour produced a compilation of music videos on the French alternative scene under the label *Le Cri du Tamarin*. She became involved in the distribution of punk-rock music from Eastern Europe. She then worked as a scriptwriter for the Casterman publishing with the cartoonist Frédéric Rébéna. At the same time, she played in many rock, jive and swing bands, including *Primitiv Combo*, *Duck & Cover*, *Trottell*, *Sayag Jazz Machine* (...). She recorded some sound tracks with the musicians Serge Merlaud, Andréa Agostini, Martin Siewert, Nicolas Laureau, Christophe Van Huffel [...]. In 2008, her first short film *The Bitter Taste of Chocolate* (*L'Amertume du chocolat*) was presented at the Cannes Film Festival (ACID selection). The following year, her first feature film *Violent Days* received the award "Grand Prix" at the EntreVues Film Festival and was selected at the Berlinale Forum. In 2012, her first documentary *East Punk Memories* received the award "Prix des Jeunes" at the Cinéma du Réel Film Festival. In 2014, her second short film, *Léone, Mother & Son* (*Léone, mère & fils*), received the award "Grand Prix VyG Competition" at BAFICI. In 2015, she co-directed with Bernhard Braunstein the experimental films *Blues* and *Sleeping Image* presented as an installation at FIDMarseille Festival. In 2017, her film *115dB* was selected at the Cinéma du Réel Film Festival. Lucile Chaufour admires Anita O'Day, François Bayle, Prokofiev, Franui and Vernon Reid (...). She loves vintage motorbikes and rode a 1970s Honda CB350 for a long time before adopting a Kawasaki 500 ER5.

FILMOGRAPHY

2023 *LOVE & CRASHES*, hybrid, video, color, 80 min

Synopsis A love story on a racing circuit. A relationship at the peak of desire, sensual and philosophic.

2017 *115DB*, documentary, video, color, 40 min

Synopsis A day of motorcycle racing on one of the most beautiful circuits in the world: a raw and loud experience, visual and communal, funny yet strange, which changes how one sees and sharpens how one listens.

Festivals Cinéma du réel 2017; IndieLisboa 2017; Côté court 2017 [...]

2015 *BLUES*, transmedia, video, color, fragments from 1 to 4 min

Synopsis A landscape of malaise and incredible epiphany, the Blues is an intimate mismatch which must be resolved, a call to be true to oneself.

Festivals FIDMarseille 2015; NexT 2015; MuMaBox 2016 [...]

2014 *LÉONE, MOTHER & SON* (Léone, mère & fils), documentary, video, black & white, 40 min

Synopsis Léone, the owner of a bar-restaurant in the suburbs of Paris, is a wise-cracking ogress in a man's world where her word is law. Patrick, her son, only has eyes for her.

Festivals FIDMarseille 2014; Festival dei Popoli 2014; Festival international de films de femmes de Créteil 2015; Festival Millenium Bruxelles; Grand Prix BAFICI 2015; Côté court 2015; Viennale 2015 [...]

2013 *SLEEPING IMAGE*, experimental, video & Polaroid, color, 27 min

Synopsis How to go through a hostile and fascinating world where violence meets the marvelous?

Festivals Côté court 2013; IndieLisboa 2014; Beirut Art Center 2014; FIDMarseille 2015 [...]

2012 *EAST PUNK MEMORIES*, documentary, video & Super 8, color, 80 min

Synopsis After twenty years, the film-maker revisits a group of young punks who challenged the communist regime during the early 1980s.

Festivals Prix des Jeunes au Cinéma du réel 2012; IndieLisboa 2012; This Human World Film Festival Wien 2012; Festival international de films de femmes de Créteil 2013 [...]

2008 *THE BITTER TASTE OF CHOCOLATE* (L'Amertume du chocolat), fiction, 16 mm, black & white, 13 min

Synopsis A depressed young mother, a son who strives to rise above despair, a daughter who watches it all.

Festivals ACID Cannes 2008; Côté court 2008; Festival du film de Vendôme 2008; Festival international de films de femmes de Créteil 2009; IndieLisboa 2009; ISFF São Paulo 2009; Cologne 2009 [...]

2004 *VIOLENT DAYS*, hybrid, Super 16, black & white, 104 min

Synopsis In France, between Paris and Le Havre, rockers still dream of a land that doesn't exist: America.

Festivals Grand Prix du festival du film Entrevues de Belfort 2004; Internationales Forum des Jungen Films, Berlin 2005; Heterodoxia, Mar del Plata, 2005; Fórum nezávislých, Karlovy Vary, 2005; Revelation, Perth IFF, 2005; French Revolution, The Times BFI, Londres, 2005; Festival of New French Cinema, Chicago 2005; Festival international de films de femmes de Créteil 2006; Crossing Europe, Linz, 2006 [...]



& Love Crashes

A FILM BY LUCILE CHAUFOUR

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