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Je ne suis pas mort

A film directed by Mehdi Ben Attia

Compléments d'information

SARL AU CAPITAL DE 45 000 €
RCS PARIS 448 418 285 – SIRET 448 418 285 00020 – TVA FR 85 448 418 285

Short synopsis

Yacine is a brilliant student at Normale Sup in Paris. He comes from a modest background. Richard, the teacher he admires the most, offers to help him get a training course at the prime minister's office. One night, Yacine wakes up in panic. He runs to Richard's apartment. But Richard is dead. Yacine tells the family in shock : « Don't worry, nobody's dead. I am Richard.»

Yacine, Richard.

The ambitious student, his professor.

Angry with his absent father, Yacine shares a small flat with his brother Jamel. He runs all day long... From one obligation to the next, from one identity to another, trying to balance his schedule as a bright student from "l'Ecole Normale Supérieure", his job as a messenger, his girlfriend Elodie who doesn't see him much, and his militant activities. Though he is convinced that his ethnic background is curbing his rise, Yacine is determined to succeed.

Richard lives with Eleonore, a beautiful actress. Tonight he will receive the legion of honor. It seems that he has reached the stage where all his life's goals have been accomplished. What else does he need to achieve? To desire? Despite his loving wife, Richard is afraid that he will soon fade away if he does not renew himself.

That day, Yacine must deliver a package to Richard and the professor invites his student to come with him to the Elysée Palace to attend his medal ceremony. Richard asks his friend who is a presidential advisor, to offer Yacine an internship. It is a unique opportunity and could be a defining moment in the young man's career.

The following morning, Richard dies of an aneurysm. Yacine, who is in an odd state, rushes to his professor's apartment and claims in front of an astonished family in mourning: "No one is dead! I am Richard!" He is sure of it. He remembers everything. "Ask me anything!"...

But no one believes him and no one ever will.

Thus, Richard has no choice: he must pretend to be Yacine, give up his old life and learn to live in his new skin.

Adapting to his new self is not easy: he doesn't know anything or anyone. Neither his father nor his brother... Neither his address nor his credit card number... With Jamel's help and a good dose of astuteness, Richard will try to solve the puzzle of his new identity inside Yacine's body.

By pretending to be Yacine, Richard becomes Yacine little by little. He gets used to his new life, to having problems with money and, most important, to the people around him. Yacine now feels very close to his brother Jamel.

He still misses Eleonore but was heartless enough to insist that he was Richard when she had just seen him die! Intrigued, she eventually comes to him. Yacine then steps into the breach that Eleonore opens with her visit. He goes to applaud her at the theatre and the beautiful woman is seduced by the attractive, mysterious, touching, young man.

And what if everything was possible? To be both Yacine and Richard? To love Eleonore and take care of Jamel? To give Yacine the chance to become successful and renew contact with Richard's life?

And what if the most important thing was not our social identity but to be at peace with oneself?

Cast- Leading roles

Yacine	Mehdi Dehbi
Éléonore	Maria de Medeiros
Richard	Emmanuel Salinger
Jamel	Driss Ramdi
Élodie	Judith Davis
Eugène	Laurent Bateau
Michel	Albert Delpy
Brahim	Slimane Dazi
Antoine Deloÿs	Nicolas Maury
Abdallah	Salim Kechiouche
Carise	Alain Azerot
Azor	Dimitri Storoge

Technical crew

Producer	Florence Laneurie / Mercredi films
Coproducer	Orly Dahan / Motek films
Script / Direction	Mehdi Ben Attia
Cinematography	Grégoire de Calignon
Film Editing	Emmanuelle Castro
Casting	Marion Touitou
Continuity	Aurélie David
Sound	Alan Savary
Art departement	Gilles Graziano
Costume design	Marlène Gérard
Make up / Hair	Tsabika Korkida
Grip	Yohan Faure
Electricity	Emmanuel Ouin-Martin
Original score	Karol Beffa

Director's biography

Scriptwriter and director Mehdi Ben Attia was born in Tunis, August 7th 1968.

After studies of economy and political sciences, he co-directed with Zina Modiano the French-Tunisian short film *En face* (1999, 26 minutes), awarded in Lama, Aubagne, Metz, Namur and Carthage films festivals.

Mehdi Ben Attia collaborated in the writing of different scripts: *Loin* (André Téchiné, 2001), *La vie privée* (Zina Modiano, 2005), *Sweet Home* (documentary directed by Fatma Sherif, 2007), *Impardonnables* (André Téchiné, 2011) as well as in television series: *H* (Canal Plus), *Sami* (M6), *Group Flag* (France 2)....

His first movie, *Le Fil*, with Claudia Cardinale, Antonin Stahly and Salim Kechiouche, was released in France in May 2010 and won, among others, prize of the public in San Francisco LGBT festival.

Je ne suis pas mort is his second movie as a director.

Director's statement

The main challenge in the writing and direction of *I'm Not Dead* was the double meaning. The story constantly involves two degrees of understanding. It can be told both as an adventure and as a metaphor, as a fantasy film and as a political one, as a movie about metamorphosis or as a movie about madness, as the story of a young man who hates his own identity and also as the story of a mature man thrown into a new youth...

In the direction of this complex film, my approach has been very simple: total empathy with Yacine and total respect of his point of view. Indeed, I am not that interested in fantasy as a *genre*, nor in making statements about the political question of "identity". My intention was to get as close as possible to the characters' deeper feelings, to their inner lives. All the work with the actors, as well as the *mise en scène* and editing, consisted in trying to get closer to the characters' interiority, hence to the invisible.

Technical elements

Running time:	100 minutes
Screen ratio:	1.1,85
Final Format:	DCP
Sound:	Dolby 5.1
Color film	

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