

Photo © Karine Aiot



CAST

Sylvia: **Chiara CASELLI** • Grégoire: **Louis-Do de LENCQUESAING** • Clémence: **Alice de LENCQUESAING** • Valentine: **Alice GAUTIER** • Billie: **Manelle DRISS** • Serge: **Eric ELMOSNINO** Valérie: **Sandrine DUMAS** • Bérénice: **Dominique FROT**

CREW

Written and directed by **Mia HANSEN-LØVE** • Producers **Philippe MARTIN, David THION (LES FILMS PELLÉAS), Oliver DAMIAN (27 FILMS PRODUCTION)** • Production Manager **Hélène BASTIDE** • Director of photography **Pascal AUFRAY** • Sound **Vincent VATOUX, Olivier GOINARD** • Set Designer **Mathieu MENUT** • Editor **Marion MONNIER** • Costums **Bethsabée DREYFUS** • With the participation of **MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE ET DE LA COMMUNICATION (CNC), CANAL +, CINÉCINÉMA, FILMFÖRDERUNGSANSTALT** • With the support of **CENTRE IMAGES – RÉGION CENTRE** • In association with **CINÉMAGE 3, COFIMAGE 20** • With the support of **PROGRAMME MEDIA DE L'UNION EUROPÉENNE** • International sales **LES FILMS DU LOSANGE**



Photo © Camille Bernaud

MIA HANSEN-LØVE

Mia Hansen-Løve was born in 1981. She was cast by Olivier Assayas in **Late August, Early September** (1998) and **Les destinées sentimentales** (2000) before she began formal training at the Paris Conservatoire d'Art Dramatique in 2001. From 2003-2005, Mia wrote for the *Cahiers du Cinéma* and directed several short films. **Father of my children (Le père de mes enfants)** is her second feature after her 2006 debut **All is forgiven (Tout est pardonné)**.

Grégoire Canvel has everything a man could want. A wife he loves, three delightful children and a stimulating job. He's a film producer. Discovering talented filmmakers and developing films that fit his conception of the cinema-free and true to life-is precisely his reason for living. His vocation. It fulfills him and Grégoire devotes almost all his time and energy to his work. He's hyperactive, he never stops. Except on weekends, which he spends in the country with his family-gentle interludes, as precious as they are fragile. With his bearing and exceptional charisma, Grégoire commands admiration. He seems invincible. Yet his prestigious production company, Moon Films, is on its last legs. Too many productions, too many risks, too many debts. Storm clouds are gathering. But Grégoire plows on at all costs. Where will his blind obstinacy lead him? One day, he is obliged to face the facts. In one word: failure. He is overwhelmed by fatigue. Which soon, secretly, turns into despair.

2009 / FRANCE / 35MM / COLOR / 1.85 / DOLBY SRD / 1H50

INTERNATIONAL SALES / LES FILMS DU LOSANGE
AGATHE VALENTIN / LISE ZIPCI

a.valentin@filmsdulosange.fr / Cell: +33 6 89 85 96 95
l.zipci@filmsdulosange.fr / Cell: +33 6 75 13 05 75
www.filmsdulosange.fr

LES FILMS PELLÉAS present

FATHER OF MY CHILDREN

A FILM BY MIA HANSEN-LØVE



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
OFFICIAL SELECTION
UN CERTAIN REGARD



CHIARA CASELLI

ALICE DE LENCQUESAING - ALICE GAUTIER - MANELLE DRISS - ERIC ELMOSNINO - SANDRINE DUMAS - DOMINIQUE FROT

SCREENPLAY: MIA HANSEN-LØVE DOP: PASCAL AUFRAY SCRIPT: CLÉMENTINE SCHAEFFER EDITOR: MARION MONNIER SOUND: VINCENT VATOUX, OLIVIER GOINARD CAST: ELSA PHARAON DIRECTOR'S ASSISTANT: JULIETTE MAILLARD SET: MATHIEU MENUT MAKE UP: HARDRESSER: RAPHAËLE THERCELIN COSTUMS: BETHSABÉE DREYFUS PRODUCTION MANAGER: HÉLÈNE BASTIDE COPRODUCTION: OLIVER DAMIAN PRODUCTION: PHILIPPE MARTIN & DAVID THION A PRODUCTION BY LES FILMS PELLÉAS IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH 27 FILMS PRODUCTION, ARTE FRANCE CINÉMA WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE ET DE LA COMMUNICATION (CENTRE NATIONAL DE LA CINÉMATOGRAPHIE), CANAL +, CINÉCINÉMA AND FILMFÖRDERUNGSANSTALT WITH THE SUPPORT OF CENTRE IMAGES - RÉGION CENTRE IN ASSOCIATION WITH CINÉMAGE 3 AND COFIMAGE 20 WITH THE SUPPORT OF PROGRAMME MEDIA DE L'UNION EUROPÉENNE FRANCE DISTRIBUTION AND INTERNATIONAL SALES: LES FILMS DU LOSANGE



www.lesfilmsdulosange.fr





Photo © Carole Bethuel

INTERVIEW WITH MIA HANSEN-LØVE

► How did you get the idea for the movie? Where did the inspiration come from?

The film stems from my encounter with Humbert Balsan. I first met him in early 2004. He committed suicide in February 2005. He wanted to produce my first film. His enthusiasm and trust were decisive for me in *All is forgiven*. I didn't write this movie out of gratitude, however, but because of Humbert Balsan's personality. He had an exceptional warmth, elegance and aura. His energy, passion for films and sensitivity, which I took to be an invincible inner beauty, are what made me write the movie. Of course, there is also his suicide. The feelings of failure and despair that it reveals are overwhelming, but that doesn't replace the rest. It doesn't become the only truth. I wanted the film to express the paradox of contradictory movements within the same person, the conflict that can occur between light and darkness, strength and vulnerability, the desire to live and the urge to die.



Photo © Karine Aïda

■ **At the same time, you have made a film about the cinema or the world of cinema. You emphasize the collective and very tangible aspects of the process, the preparation of a shoot, financial difficulties, with the focus on a pivotal character, the producer.**

A few years ago, no theme would have struck me as less stimulating for a movie than independent cinema. Probably by being too close to home, too mundane... But that encounter with Humbert Balsan and his death changed all that and gave me a completely different perspective on the cinema. And it occurred to me that a film about a producer could be a film about work, commitment, love and life. Most often, when I see a producer on screen, I don't see the cinema as I understand it and experience it as part of my daily life. It's more a far-removed fantasy. So, it was even more gratifying to depict the cinema through my perspective and experience because it offered an empty canvas and fascinating raw material for human relationships. Money is such an important issue in the movie, I think, because it's the reality. Whichever way you look at it, the producer's job is synonymous with financial concerns. Filmmakers share this preoccupation but not in the same way, nor to the same extent, because the dangers to which it exposes them are different. A filmmaker has a relatively fundamental and healthy relationship to money: being constantly confronted with financial realities is the price to pay for practicing your art. For a producer, chasing after funding can become alienating and lead to a dilemma (I'm referring here to producers who aim to produce the work of artists). On the one hand, there's a noble, ambitious vision of their trade; and on the other, huge loneliness, and economic and moral suffocation due to the constant pressure that comes from taking risks in a context that is relatively unfavorable economically and culturally.

■ **Your film shows a man of charisma at his peak. The character has an aura, lots of charm. But difficulties add up and you show him subsiding, being crushed.**

I'd say that his doubts and despondency are there at the start, under the surface and occasionally visible in Louis-Do de Lencquesaing's expressions and silences. But generally they're soaked up in the pleasure he gets from his job and the company of his wife and daughters. Even so, anxiety and lassitude creep forward until, just before his suicide, Grégoire Canvel is overwhelmed by despair, which is even more powerful because it has been powerfully repressed. The film tries to show how this life force-his extraordinary capacity to repress things -eventually becomes a terribly self-destructive force.



Photo © Carole Bethuel



Photo © Carole Bethuel

■ **The death occurs about halfway through the film. It's an impressive choice to film bereavement and the way each person gets on with their life...**

More than bereavement, I'd say the film talks about starting over. That's why the death occurs in the middle, not at the end or beginning. This symmetrical structure is putting into practice, reflecting the sense of starting over. The producer's death isn't the end of the story, it's a central moment in a story that goes beyond his death. The film can also be seen as the last days of Moon Films, a production company and a life's work that is both personal and collective.

■ **The children play a very important role in the film. They must each find a way to overcome their loss. For the oldest child, Clémence (Alice de Lencquesaing), that means breaking into the movies...**

Coming off *All is forgiven*, I couldn't imagine not working with children again. I wanted to keep that momentum going, take it further. On set, the children's presence and subsequent disorder, their happiness and fragility are extremely precious. They're an amazing breath of fresh air in what can be a stifling atmosphere. Their role in the film is close to what they represent for me! Each child grieves differently, and these differences became clearer on set depending on their age and personality. At the end of the movie, Clémence becomes more prominent, almost the lead character. It reflects the emancipation that is taking shape. Emancipation but also the assumption of a spiritual legacy, as suggested by the bond that develops with Arthur, the young filmmaker. In that respect, this film mirrors my first feature.

■ **Like in *All is forgiven*, the prevailing feeling in your second film is one of clarity. People and things take on an amazing light, even in spiritual terms.**

In any case, clarity is what I consciously set out to achieve. The word became essential for me when I started writing about films. I seem to remember reading a text by Eric Rohmer in which he quotes Stendhal as referring to the "slightly abrupt clarity" that might define French art. I look for clarity because it's what moves me, what gives me the sense of accessing a vital something, the infinite part of each being and each thing, without style getting in the way. Although I don't believe in God, for me, the cinema can't be anything other than a quest for light, which is a quest for the invisible. ■



Photo © Carole Bethuel