



SILENZIO © PHOTOS: LÉONIE PRÉBOIS / MARCEL HARTMANN

MY WORST NIGHTMARE

A FILM BY ANNE FONTAINE

FRANCIS BOESPFLUG, PHILIPPE CARCASSONNE, BRUNO PESERY AND JÉRÔME SEYDOUX PRESENT

ISABELLE
HUPPERT

BENOÎT
POELVOORDE

ANDRÉ
DUSSOLIER

VIRGINIE
EFIRA

MY
WORST
NIGHTMARE

A FILM BY ANNE FONTAINE

(MON PIRE CAUCHEMAR)

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SYNOPSIS

She lives with her son and her husband in a well-to-do apartment opposite the chic Luxembourg gardens... He lives alone with his son in the back of a van.

She is the director of a prestigious contemporary art foundation... He lives off odd jobs and social security benefits.

She graduated after 7 years at university... He almost spent 7 years behind bars.

She is on familiar terms with the Ministry of Culture and Arts... He is on familiar terms with each and every alcoholic beverage that happens to cross his path.

She enjoys intellectual debates... He enjoys casual sex with large bosomed bedfellows.

They are poles apart... and can't stand the sight of one another. Besides, they should never have met, but their children are inseparable...

In the end, they'll eventually come to understand why...



INTERVIEW WITH ANNE FONTAINE

How did **MY WORST NIGHTMARE** come into being?

For several years now, I have wanted to make a film about a mismatched couple. I have a long-standing relationship with Benoît Poelvoorde, with whom I made *IN HIS HANDS* and *COCO BEFORE CHANEL*, and I also wanted to work with Isabelle Huppert. With their respective personalities and the public image they project, they seemed the perfect actors to play Patrick and Agathe, two opposing characters who gradually reveal themselves to each other.

The choice of the actors was, therefore, a key element.

But more than that, I wanted these two actors and no one else. With them, I was certain that a feeling of authenticity would come through, despite the fact that there is nothing “ordinary” about the relationship between the two characters in any conventional sense. And there was another key element, which is linked to a personal experience.

What was that?

A few years ago, my son brought home a friend who really seemed like he was from another planet. My son had decided he was

his best friend. I wondered, how come this kid seems so alone? Everything about him seemed mysterious. And then I met his father. An extravagant figure, who lived in very precarious circumstances, but who didn't view this from a victim's perspective. And I started to wonder how a relationship might evolve between two families that were completely different but which had been brought together by their children, more or less by chance. The childhood world alters the codes, it makes us question our perception — and sometimes our prejudices — about social status. Although I have to say, in this particular case, I didn't explore the relationship very far.

But you used it as the basis for a film?

That which I did not explore in real life, I have imagined in fiction, with the idea of social relations, attitudes to culture, to guilt. In other words, a good subject for a comedy. I've previously only partially touched on this genre with *THE GIRL FROM MONACO*, in which the final 15 minutes took the film into the realm of psychological drama, as if I was resisting full-blown comedy. This time, I really wanted to go all the way with it and to maintain an amusing vision right to the end. That's what I tried to achieve with Nicolas Mercier, my co-screenwriter, with whom I was working for the first time.



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This comedy tells a love story against the backdrop of class struggle.

An unlikely love story in real life, but comedy allows one to trade in utopias! Ever since DRY CLEANING, my subjects have often referred back to class struggle, although my characters are never entirely determined and set by their origins. MY WORST NIGHTMARE is a gentle kind of clash between snobbism, culture and self-control (which in itself reflects a certain emotional frigidity) and apparent crudity, poor manners, and a whole very direct, coarse way of life. Without realizing, these two characters are hiding behind protection mechanisms and are moving towards the edge of the abyss. They have organized their existence — one in chaos, the other as a control freak — in such a way that nothing can interfere with their lives. Their encounter shows them who they really are and they end up transcending their former selves, which is one definition of love. Agathe even goes as far as telling Patrick: “I need you.”

Children play an important role in MY WORST NIGHTMARE.

Given that the film is constantly playing with notions of what is acquired and what is innate, it was difficult not to evoke the rapport

with learning. I thought it was amusing to imagine that Patrick’s son (who’s practically illiterate and who no doubt left school aged 11) is an extremely gifted child, and conversely, that the son of these middle-class trendies imbued with a classical education shows a total indifference towards high culture, and his sole passion is video games.

How did you come up with this whole gallery of bourgeois hipsters around Patrick and Agathe?

It’s a blend of my observations in life and the meetings I had to write the screenplay. I know the publishing world quite well, which is what I drew on for the character of François, Agathe’s husband played by André Dussollier. I thought it was amusing that the star author at his publishing house is a fairly mediocre writer. That’s the kind of thing that really happens. I also spent a lot of time in modern art galleries, and of course at the fabulous Fondation Cartier (where the management were kind enough to allow us to use the premises with no objections). As for the black-and-white photo, which plays a key role in the relationship between the two main characters, I insisted on that being a “real” work of art, not just a movie accessory. So it was by the real-life photographer, Hiroshi Sugimoto, who plays



© PHOTO MARCEL BARONIAN



himself in MY WORST NIGHTMARE. He had really photographed Isabelle watching the pianist, the photo that is seen many times throughout the film. This very distinctive image, this solitary spectator, this “white screen which is not really white”, is like a metaphor for the amorous relationship between Agathe and Patrick, of their initial distancing, and the ground they had to cover to connect with each other. I contacted Sugimoto thinking, if he’s got a sense of humor, he might agree to a role. He even insisted on “vandalizing” the photo with his own hand, drawing on the final graffiti. But I didn’t want to make a satire about contemporary art and the universe of the Parisian cultural elite. I wanted a backdrop that would be as far as possible from the “aesthetic” — if that’s what you can call it — of the character played by Benoît.

Let’s talk about the actors. How did you get on with Benoît Poelvoorde?

I know his fantasy world and his sensibilities. And I put a fair bit of our personal relationship into the film. Before writing the script, we did some working sessions. I asked him to get involved very early on so that the overall tone of MY WORST NIGHTMARE was similar to what

sometimes happens between us. At the start of the film, I wanted the opacity of his character to spring paradoxically from his apparent absence of mystery — his impression of “what you see is what you get”, with nothing hiding in the shadows, nothing held back. The idea was that one would react to him the same way Agathe does: by being on the verge of running away, and secretly hoping it would stop. Except that it’s Benoît who’s playing Patrick, and that changes everything! With the same part in the hands of another actor, one wouldn’t necessarily feel that the character has a deep wound, which is gradually revealed and which makes him touching. We’d be in the straightforward mechanics of the gag which doesn’t interest me. I like human comedy, that in which the actor’s veracity puts the spotlight on the character’s ambiguity. Without Benoît, I wouldn’t have written the film. And the same applies to Isabelle Huppert. She’s not afraid to appear at the outset as unbelievably unpleasant.

Have you wanted to work with Isabelle Huppert for a long time?

She liked IN HIS HANDS and wanted us to work together. I knew that if I was to direct her, it wouldn’t be for a dramatic project because I didn’t think I had much to bring her in this respect. She hasn’t made



many comedies, so I thought it would be interesting to take her into this territory. She is a reference, a huge actress who sometimes gives the impression of living in an ivory tower. But having seen her on several occasions laughing like a little girl, I thought it would be fun to play with her image. She put herself totally at the service of the character. It's fantastic to meet someone who loves acting that much.

What about André Dussollier? And Virginie Efira, whose character seduces all the men?

André had never shot a film with Isabelle before, which is incredible when you think about their respective careers. So I decided to make them a married couple. I wrote the part for him, again using that velvety charm, that natural class which he projects and which sometimes might hide a refusal to confront and a certain indecisiveness. He laughed and said to me: "OK, but really go for it, push that aspect." André has considerable comic potential. And the contrast with Benoît seemed ideal. Even their approach to language contributes to the notion of opposites: Patrick uses words for aggression, François as protection.

For the character of Julie, I needed a very natural girl, one who's sexy and bursting with health. It had to be believable. Virginie is an actress who's at the same time sensual and very precise. With her freshness, her popular appeal, and a sort of relaxed tolerance, she naturally inspires confidence. In a few scenes, she steered Julie perfectly from the ideal fiancée to a fearsome crazy lady.

The film is very physical. Patrick crashes through walls, both figuratively and literally. He starts by trashing Agathe's apartment.

Benoît plays physical scenes very credibly. I wanted audiences to get into the film in a very simple, direct, tangible way, doing away with psychological explanations. The husband, with his lefty do-gooder side, of course welcomes with perfect manners the worker who has come to a job on his house. In his own way, Patrick breathes some life into this glacial apartment which looks like a museum.

The dialogue is very crude.

Some of the lines Benoît came up with, but most of it came from Nicolas Mercier and me. Sometimes, we wondered if we were going too far. When Patrick says to Agathe: "How do you get on in bed with





such a frozen ass?" I wondered how Isabelle was going to react. When she first read the script, she had a bit of a shock. But on re-reading it, she found it funny. I warned her: her character is a mix of her and me. That reassured her. And then, Agathe gains in humanity as the film progresses. Isabelle ends up as a lost woman, a prisoner of her own narcissistic construction. Agathe, like Patrick, sacrificed her emotions for a self-image, and, like him, couldn't heal herself of that.

Agathe and Patrick use the more formal "vous" form of address with each other for most of the film.

That was something they had to do. Using "vous" is much more sexy and erotic.

The film moves forward at a frenetic pace.

Patrick, just like Benoît in fact, can't keep still. He's a whirlwind, and the staging had to accommodate that permanent movement which buffets people's sensibilities. Patrick is invasive: he's predatory, he causes all the other characters to change position, even the husband who, with Julie, is perhaps going to discover another nightmare! As soon as Patrick appears, the pace of the film picks up.

This predator has a complicated self-image. "I'm toxic for everyone" he says, and: "I don't let anyone look down on me, except myself."

Patrick masks his despair with excess. He drinks, he's a party animal, but he's all too familiar with the blues of the day after. This somewhat painful dimension was unavoidable. In comedy, the more situations are excessive, the more a dose of the truth is necessary. Benoît and Isabelle, each in their own way, are what ensures this balance.



FILMOGRAPHY

2009 COCO BEFORE CHANEL
2008 THE GIRL FROM MONACO
2006 NOUVELLE CHANCE
2005 IN HIS HANDS
2003 NATHALIE
2000 HOW I KILLED MY FATHER
1998 AUGUSTIN, KING OF KUNG-FU
1997 DRY CLEANING
1995 AUGUSTIN
1992 LOVE AFFAIRS USUALLY END BADLY





INTERVIEW WITH ISABELLE HUPPERT

How would you define your character, Agathe?

Agathe is, on the face of it, firmly established in her social set. She works in the contemporary art sector and she seems sure of herself in all contexts. She is very organized and hyperactive. She is raising her son at a distance and makes do with a marriage in which neither she nor her partner have much to say to each other. There's a kind of logic in everything she does, yet Agathe remains mysterious. Her extremely well-ordered existence seems, at first glance, devoid of real feelings.

But only at first glance, because, gradually, Agathe reveals herself.

In fact, it is a facade that is just waiting to crack. When Agathe meets Patrick, she rejects him because it's as if he comes from another world and she is not used to looking at what goes on around her. But very soon, Agathe is attracted by the escapism and the frivolity of this intruder. Their encounters act as a catalyst that shows her the barrenness of her existence. At the start, of course, Patrick and Agathe live in totally separate worlds. His language, his very crude way of talking about sex seem like violence to her. The clash

of opposites is one of the basic situations of comedy. But Anne Fontaine uses this structure to carry her film into other areas.

MY WORST NIGHTMARE takes pleasure in playing with clichés. Is that what you liked about it?

Initially, one might think that the situations and the characters can be reduced to their appearances, but one quickly realizes that things are more complex. Even clichés, spoken and assumed like those at the start of the film, begin to crumble. In fact, nothing is fixed in MY WORST NIGHTMARE.

In the opening scenes, your character is thoroughly dislikeable.

Yes, that's the least you can say. But everything changes as the action progresses. You move towards greater depth, more subtlety, more truth. In MY WORST NIGHTMARE, the effectiveness of the comedy is not just for its own sake: it serves to break down commonplaces and barriers. In one way, the film brings together the world of the intellect and that of the senses, without ever targeting the oppositions head-on which, in their own way, are formidable clichés.



Between Patrick and Agathe, the contemporary art photograph at the core of the film works as a transitional object. On the face of it, art embodies everything that separates them culturally, socially and financially. Yet, it's thanks to art that they get together. Art is no longer the signifier of a rupture or a class struggle, but that of an emotional rapprochement. Destroying elitism is a utopian aim for a comedy.

Have you wanted to work with Anne Fontaine for a long time?

We had wanted to work together for quite a while. I like her way of floating freely through movie genres, she has something of an American or British approach. I first came across her work with DRY CLEANING, a disturbing and impenetrable film. Then there was IN HIS HANDS, in which Benoît Poelvoorde revealed some other facets of his talents as an actor. Anne Fontaine also enjoys taking on some lighter material, but never in a predictable manner. Within each genre, she plays with the codes. There's always a strangeness in her universe.

Agathe is an embodiment of the "bourgeois bohemian" attitude. Were you inspired by any specific situations or people?

No, not especially. You just have to get inside any circle or specific world to quickly see that behind postures and attitudes, there are human beings, with their weaknesses, their doubts and their individuality. The start of the film deals with the cliché of a given world, a pure basis for comedy, but the established schemas soon break down. That's how everything works in MY WORST NIGHTMARE, right up to the happy end which Anne, through her staging and the choice of her set, has succeeded in making odd and unfathomable.

In MY WORST NIGHTMARE, you are clearly throwing yourself gleefully into the role. And yet comedy is not the genre most associated with your career.

That's what people say to me every time I make a comedy, which is not that rare. In any case, comparing comedy to drama is meaningless. People think, wrongly, that there is more variety and more nuance in drama than in comedy, when in fact that's not





true. MY WORST NIGHTMARE is neither burlesque, nor pure comedy. In American jargon, it's what they'd call a romantic comedy, with all that implies in terms of emotion and the fragility of the characters. There are some degrees, some variants in comedy. Look at some of those in which I have acted: what is there in common between SAC DE NOEUDS by Josiane Balasko, LA FEMME DE MON POTE by Bertrand Blier, LES SŒURS FÂCHÉES by Alexandra Leclère, COPACABANA by Marc Fitoussi and MY WORST NIGHTMARE by Anne Fontaine? Nothing.

You were acting for the first time alongside Benoît Poelvoorde.

And it was an infinitely pleasurable experience. One often hesitates to say so when talking about a film, but in this case, I say it without hesitation: we had a lot of fun on the shoot. And, among his many qualities, Benoît has one major asset in my eyes: his laughter is generous and never excludes the other person. I really enjoyed working and laughing with him and I hope he thought the same thing. Personally, I'd like to do it all over again right now!

You've never worked with André Dussollier before either.

That's true, despite the fact that we've known each other since forever. Our relationship is almost like family, in any case one of genuine closeness. Bizarrely, we've never been brought together on screen. But now that has been accomplished, and what's more, as a married couple. There's something subtle, something soft about André and at the same time a slightly troubled side which feeds into his whole style of acting. It was very nice to finally have the chance to work with him.





INTERVIEW WITH BENOÎT POELVOORDE

How would you define your character, Patrick?

He's an instinctive type, a character who lives life with urgency. With him, it's all about "right away" and "now". He takes gratification there where it is to be found, whenever he can, which explains his problematic relationship with alcohol. He doesn't seem to think about the consequences of his acts. Obviously, as the film progresses, you see that Patrick is much more complicated, nuanced, and this way of living permanently in the moment masks some darker areas, which is in fact always the case with impulsive types.

Do you identify with this character?

Not at all, and especially not regarding his rapport with women! I'm instinctive when I'm acting, but absolutely not in real life. In that sense, Patrick is more like my brother. I talked with Anne about that and something of it can be seen in the screenplay.

You're working with Anne Fontaine for the third time, after *IN HIS HANDS* and *COCO BEFORE CHANEL*. Why do you think you get along so well?

I think she knows me extremely well. She has an indulgence, a benevolence towards me both as a man and as an actor. That allows

her to lead me to places that I wouldn't go to with just anyone. Our relationship is strange. It is simultaneously about maternal and fraternal bonds, friendship and passion. Anne brings out the best in me, as she does with many actors, which explains why they like working with her so much. It's not really surprising, actors operate solely according to desire. I know she is particularly pleased about our collaboration on *MY WORST NIGHTMARE* because, in this film, she put some of herself and some of me. Part of the comic structure is more from my world, and at the same time, the delicacy and the treatment of the characters shows that we're in an Anne Fontaine film and nowhere else.

You seem to put a lot of trust in each other.

She's the only person who could ask me to retake a scene 40 times if she wanted to. I know that she won't let me slip up, she won't abandon me, she won't let me be so-so. I don't call her "my Leni Riefenstahl" for nothing. She can see through me, she knows how to lift me out of my usual register, as she demonstrated in *IN HIS HANDS* and *COCO BEFORE CHANEL*. In *MY WORST NIGHTMARE*, I was on the face of it in familiar territory, but it wasn't necessarily any simpler. Anne and I are totally different, but we have a deep affection for each



other, which means we work well together. What's more, we're going to make a fourth film together. And probably more after that. I'd never turn down one of Anne's films. I'd settle for holding a candle in the background of a scene. We're true friends. That is rare enough for it to be worth mentioning.

Did you rehearse a lot before the shoot?

We did a great many script readings to get a better grasp of my character. I suggested modifications for some of the dialogue, because as it happens, I have a certain amount of experience of both partying and Belgium (laughs). I've always worked that way with Anne. I've found that helps me a lot when it comes to filming. Some films require greater efforts than others, and Anne Fontaine's are in the first category. MY WORST NIGHTMARE is not built on an accumulation of gags and on the actors' free-wheeling performances. It's all a question of dosing, of getting the balance right. And then I knew I was going to be filming with Isabelle Huppert and André Dussollier, both great actors. So there was no question of messing up. Thanks to the rehearsals, I was less tense, less stressed on set.

Was it daunting to have to share most of your scenes with Isabelle Huppert?

Right at the beginning, when Anne told me that she really wanted to make a film with Isabelle and me, I didn't believe it. It was absolutely terrifying, so I chose to think it was never going to happen. Anne told me about the project in the very early stages, a month before the release of COCO BEFORE CHANEL. I thought she'd move on to something else, but not at all. And then at some point I found myself with a synopsis, then a step outline in my hands, so it started to take shape. I met with Isabelle for the first time at a dinner organized by my agent. A month earlier, I'd seen THE PIANIST, a film in which she is magisterial, stunning — for me, that is really the apotheosis of acting. During this dinner we were sitting side by side. We were not talking. She is very shy and I don't hold back. And then things progressed, dates for the shoot were set. A week before we started, there was no longer any doubt, we were going to have to go for it! I admit, I was paralyzed with fear. But in fact, it all went with incredible simplicity. And there's a reason for that: Isabelle loves acting. She can start a scene over again 20 or 30 times and she'll always be excellent. As a result, she makes you act better. Once you've realized





that she is a total professional and the pleasure she gets from acting is so intense, all you have to do is dive right in and find her pitch.

Isabelle Huppert says she'd be delighted to make another film with you.

Me too, then! Isabelle is a Stradivarius. If the filmmaker knows how to play the violin, there will be no false notes. It's a privilege to work with her.



INTERVIEW WITH ANDRÉ DUSSOLLIER

How would you define your character François?

François is a publisher, with a certain sense of humor and a certain distance towards everyday life. His marriage to Agathe, who, like him, lives in the world of culture, is built on a cerebral, intellectual complicity, but with little physical intimacy. Although they don't talk about it, both of them are quite well aware of their situation. All the conditions are in place for a revolution in terms of desire. Both of them are going to have encounters which will reveal other facets of themselves.

How did Anne Fontaine ask you to portray this rather low-key man who, in the first part of the film, seems to live in his wife's shadow?

I've known Anne a long time, and for both of us, things just flowed naturally. She is used to seeing me handling irony and distance quite naturally. She even asked me to go down this route to portray François. And our understanding facilitated the job. Up till now, we'd never had the opportunity to work together, so I'm delighted we've now done it.

What do you especially like in her work?

The questioning that runs through her films, the psychological depth and the ambiguity of all her characters. In her films, the characters always have two or three sides to them, and this is equally true for MY WORST NIGHTMARE. Uneasiness and the unsaid are fundamental elements in her scripts and I'm drawn to these zones. What's more, MY WORST NIGHTMARE is a comedy, a genre that I haven't had much opportunity to play in lately, having acted a series of "serious" roles. So I was delighted to come back to it, in a story with genuine complexity in the characters.

François ends up leaving the prison of his relationship with Agathe, only to find another with Julie.

My character indeed thinks he has freed himself when he starts a relationship with Julie, but in fact he finds himself shut inside other confines. The codes have changed along with the partner, but the problems of being in a couple remain the same.

You had never acted with Isabelle Huppert before.

And yet, I have known her for a long time. When I arrived in Paris and I joined the Conservatoire, I even met her whole family. Isabelle was

very young at the time and just starting out as an actress. Strangely, despite our shared interests and our love for a certain style of cinema, we'd never had the opportunity to work together. I was of course very happy that we found ourselves on the same set. I'm very admiring of the way she portrayed the character of Agathe, without worrying about comic effects, and remaining totally authentic. With her, in both drama and comedy, nothing is ever hammered home, but always subtly embodied. The truth of each situation is what is most important to her.

What about working with Benoît Poelvoorde? You both seemed to be having a lot of fun playing these two men who are totally unlike.

I was very moved by our interaction. Benoît has a very exceptional personality, which feeds into his work. I discovered the man that I'd imagined behind his manner of being infinitely sophisticated, intelligent and funny. He has a lot of fun before and whilst filming scenes, but he is constantly listening out for what his partners say and feel. We hit it off right from the word go, like two children who were happy to play together.

It sounds like MY WORST NIGHTMARE was a very happy time for you.

On set, things just happened quite naturally. When you know someone in real life, which is the case with me and Anne Fontaine, you think we'll maybe discover another side of ourselves in a professional setting and not have the same understanding that we enjoy in everyday circumstances. But here, not at all. On set everything was absolute simplicity. We were all in the perfect mood for inventing and acting.





INTERVIEW WITH VIRGINIE EFIRA

How would you define your character Julie?

Her sole guiding principle is the pursuit of gratification. Julie is one of those people who feel obliged to be joyful, which can be terribly distressing. When you first see her, you think she's so young, so full of smiles and so outgoing. Then gradually, another reality appears, as it does with all the other characters in MY WORST NIGHTMARE. Her fascination for nature, her passion for world music and all kinds of herbal tea, in fact reveal a kind of underlying hysteria. Julie has a genuine political and social conscience, but she is extremely self-centered. As a result, when François starts an affair with her, he finds himself in some way in a different prison to the one he escaped from with Agathe. The net closes in again. For him, it's a reproduction of the same thing, but the other extreme.

What did Anne Fontaine ask of you to play Julie?

First off, to think about her way of being physically, and her wardrobe. Julie works in the social sector so it was a matter of staying coherent, not being too much of a blonde bimbo! Julie had to inspire confidence, to reflect the opposite image to that of Agathe. It wasn't all that hard: I'm not likely to be confused with Isabelle

Huppert in real life. Once Anne and I had found a look and an attitude which combined the relaxed hippy side, the ethnic fervor (the little bracelets brought back from India) and the surface sweetness, we had the starting point. Then, everything depended on the balance and the development. Each time we see Julie, her hysteria is a bit less contained, her anxieties less under control, especially when we enter the sphere of intimacy.

What did you like about the screenplay of MY WORST NIGHTMARE?

It's quite a rare thing, a truly funny comedy, in which everything works and nothing is gratuitous. I like it when important subjects are treated with humor and lightness. What does it mean to be a parent and pass things on? What image do we project to others? What are our failings, and is it worth trying to make up for them? MY WORST NIGHTMARE touches on some powerful themes with a certain humor, an elegance and a modesty that gives the film its charm. And then, I knew the actors who Anne Fontaine had chosen. Knowing that Isabelle Huppert, Benoît Poelvoorde and André Dussollier had agreed to play around with their images seemed to promise a unique experience. I wasn't disappointed.



How did you meet Anne Fontaine?

Anne came to see me at the theatre when I was appearing in "Nathalie", the play by Philippe Blasband which she had previously adapted as a movie with Emmanuelle Béart and Fanny Ardant. Later on, she asked to meet me for this film, since she was looking for an actress who was right for the character of Julie.

We first met informally and I remember an interview in which I was totally rigid! I didn't yet know Anne's sense of humor and her complete tolerance about where you come from, so I was trying to justify my rather convoluted career path with a kind of gravity that was absolutely out of tune with the situation. But Anne was understanding, because we then did some tests — first of all alone, then with André Dussollier. I felt more at ease being in a tangible work context. And in those moments, Anne assisted me with precision and gentleness. Those tests were in the same mold as the shoot itself; extremely friendly.

In what way?

Although I only had a small role, the film remains for me a reference for what I'd like every shoot to be like. The elegance, the humor and

gentleness of both Anne and Philippe Carcassonne, the producer, proved to be contagious for everyone on set. My partners each have their own careers and different worlds, and yet the idea of being really doing something together was always perceptible.

Weren't you intimidated filming with such famous and talented actors?

That could have been the case. But those great actors never once gave the impression of any hierarchy. I already knew Benoît a little and because we come from the same origins we had a certain complicity in our work. Isabelle Huppert is permanently curious about others, and as for André Dussollier, my lover in the film, his questioning attitude and his concerns could only reassure me. When such a great actor allows himself to doubt it is both a delight and liberating.

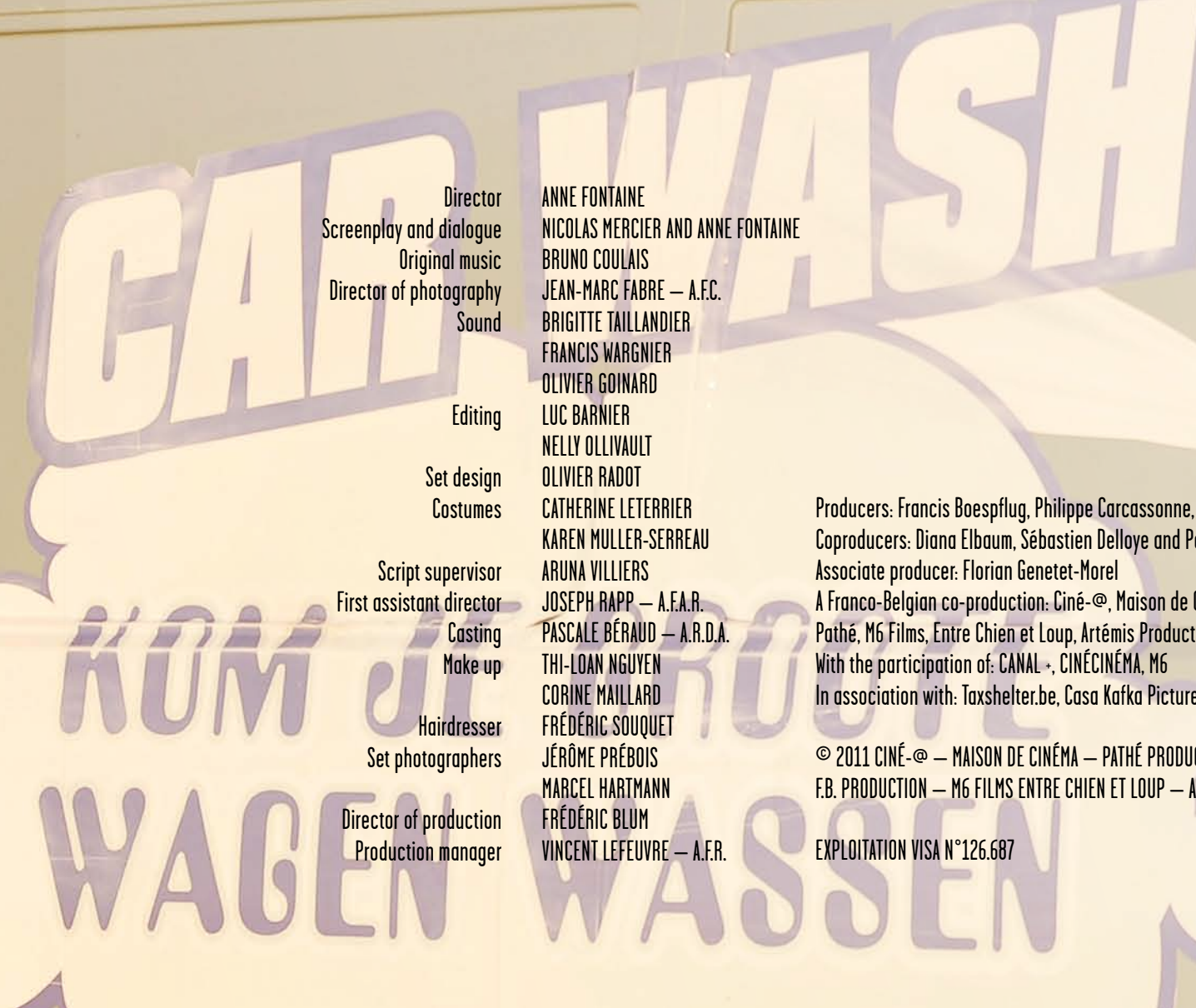


CAST

Agathe ISABELLE HUPPERT
Patrick BENOÎT POELVOORDE
François ANDRÉ DUSSOLLIER
Julie VIRGINIE EFIRA
Tony CORENTIN DEVROEY
Adrien DONATIEN SUNER
Thierry AURÉLIEN RECOING, DE LA COMÉDIE-FRANÇAISE
Sébastien ÉRIC BERGER
The Principal PHILIPPE MAGNAN
Marc-Henri BRUNO PODALYDÈS
Social services inspector SAMIR GUESMI
Psychologist FRANÇOISE MIQUELIS
Milou JEAN-LUC COUCHARD
Sylvie ÉMILIE GAVOIS KAHN

Set designer SERGE ONTENIENTE
Sugimoto HIROSHI SUGIMOTO
Translator YUMI FUJIMORI
Evelyne VALÉRIE MOREAU
Deputy Mayor ANTOINE BLANQUEFORT
Dancers at carwash ARIELLE D'YDEWALLE
ÉMELINE SCATLIFFE
JESSICA LEFÈVRE
Painter at Foundation RÉGIS ROMELE
Students' mothers LÉA GABRIELE
LAURENCE COLUSSI
MARIE BOISSARD
Student's father GILLES CARBALLO
Customer in bar ROSE COOL





CREW

Director ANNE FONTAINE
 Screenplay and dialogue NICOLAS MERCIER AND ANNE FONTAINE
 Original music BRUNO COULAIS
 Director of photography JEAN-MARC FABRE — A.F.C.
 Sound BRIGITTE TAILLANDIER
 FRANCIS WAGNIER
 OLIVIER GOINARD
 Editing LUC BARNIER
 NELLY OLLIVAUT
 Set design OLIVIER RADOT
 Costumes CATHERINE LETERRIER
 KAREN MULLER-SERREAU
 Script supervisor ARUNA VILLIERS
 First assistant director JOSEPH RAPP — A.F.A.R.
 Casting PASCALE BÉRAUD — A.R.D.A.
 Make up THI-LOAN NGUYEN
 CORINE MAILLARD
 Hairdresser FRÉDÉRIC SOUQUET
 Set photographers JÉRÔME PRÉBOIS
 MARCEL HARTMANN
 FRÉDÉRIC BLUM
 Director of production VINCENT LEFEUVRE — A.F.R.

Producers: Francis Boespflug, Philippe Carcassonne, Bruno Pesery and Jérôme Seydoux
 Coproducers: Diana Elbaum, Sébastien Delloye and Patrick Quinet
 Associate producer: Florian Genetet-Morel
 A Franco-Belgian co-production: Ciné-@, Maison de Cinéma, F.B. Productions, Pathé, M6 Films, Entre Chien et Loup, Artémis Productions, RTBF (Belgian TV)
 With the participation of: CANAL +, CINÉCINÉMA, M6
 In association with: Taxshelter.be, Casa Kafka Pictures — Dexia, Belgacom

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 F.B. PRODUCTION — M6 FILMS ENTRE CHIEN ET LOUP — ARTÉMIS PRODUCTIONS
 EXPLOITATION VISA N°126.687

