

SYLVAIN MAUGENS

present

ARAM ARAKELYAN

THE WANDERINGS OF IVAN

**a film by
Claude Chamis**

SCÉNARIO : SYLVAIN MAUGENS & CLAUDE CHAMIS - IMAGE : THIBAUT DE CHEMELLIER - SON : JULES VALEUR - MONTAGE SON, MIXAGE & MUSIQUE ORIGINALE : MATTHIEU FORTIN
MONTAGE : SAMUEL ZLATOFF - ÉTALONNAGE : HUGO ROSSELLO - CASTING : MARION TOUITOU - DIRECTION ARTISTIQUE ET DIRECTION DE PRODUCTION : SYLVAIN MAUGENS
ADMINISTRATION & COMPTABILITÉ : KAREN PERALDI - COSTUME & HABILLAGE : PAULINE DE KERIMEL - COIFFURE & MAQUILLAGE : JENNIFER MULERTT - REPÉRAGE EXTERIEUR : COLINE MADRAL
DÉCOR : JULIA OLIVERA - ACCESSOIRISTE : GADI TSEKMANI - RÉGIE : RACHID BOUCHERI-MEZIANE - SCRIPT : LOUISE VAN DRITTS - DIRECTEUR DE POST-PRODUCTION : BARNABÉ DAVIOU
RÉALISATION : CLAUDE CHAMIS — 74 MINUTES — FORMAT 1.85:1 — STÉRÉO — DCP 2 K — RED DRAGON — VISA D'EXPLOITATION DU CNC : 144 146

Cobalt
F I L M S

Summary

The Wanderings of Ivan depicts the misadventures of a young Russian immigrant. Ivan wanders in a hostile Paris and is rejected from everywhere. He finds shelter on the outskirts of Paris in Bois de Vincennes. However this new haven of peace rapidly turns into a nightmare when Ivan tries to resist the somber traffics of an underworld fauna until the inevitable occurs.

Synopsis

In the middle of summer, a young Russian named Ivan arrives in Paris and lives in extreme poverty. He has no money, nothing at all, he is on his own and is the victim of general indifference, even rejected by his own orthodox community. He rapidly leaves the big city to find shelter in the woods nearby, in search of nature and solitude. He settles in a small space, but soon discovers the clandestine life where male prostitution has become the law. Ivan is a pure soul. He is very religious and becomes extremely troubled when he realizes that all human relationships in these idyllic surroundings have a price. He comes across ambiguous young men and women on whom he has no hold. Eventually his encounter with Pierre, a young father, will seal his fate. With him, he commits the irreparable...

Note of the film director, Claude Chamis

The Wanderings of Ivan depicts the atypical, poetic journey of a young Russian tramp in Paris these days who has to face contempt, indifference and social violence. My wish was to give another image, another dimension to the *stranger*, the *ostracized*, the *homeless*, the *migrant*. I had to forget all kind of social realism and all the clichés linked to such a character. We built this journey, these strange wanderings through the mechanism of tale. Ivan is a pure, very religious young man. He lives on instinct, is a lonesome wanderer, a heavenly tramp in the style of Kerouac or Thoreau, an innocent as in Dostoevski, a young *Saint* who is intrinsically *Good* and at whom *Evil* will go unrelentingly. Although the sociological background is extremely present in the beginning of the film, I wanted to get away from it to create in the midst of nature a small, cruel, poetic, *fantastic* theatre where several atypical characters would cross Ivan's way. In my production I tried to give another idea of duration with singular cuts in the flow of the film and in time, so as to create a pulsatile, ultra-sensible approach. What was most important to me in this film was my obstinate care, my focus on filming meticulously the athletic, sexy body of my Slavic actor, as the whole story reads itself and reveals its secrets through the body of this actor.

Note of the producer and the co-writer, Sylvain Maugens

The starting point was a *bad encounter* I had one night in Bois de Vincennes when I was young. This incident has haunted and unsettled me throughout my youth (and still does). I suggested to Claude Chamis we write an allegory about the *encounter* that destroyed my carelessness. Thus we started writing a story in the shape of a tale of initiation, a cruel journey with bucolic aspects. We agreed on the Kerouac-style character of the pure, innocent tramp, the ideal prey to all kinds of covetousness and malevolence. We imagined a young wanderer from Russia who arrives in Paris in the heat of the summer and keeps being rejected. He finds shelter outside the city in Bois de Vincennes where an underground, asocial life has developed with its own codes and traffics. Ivan arrives in town totally innocent and pure, he will leave the woods deeply soiled with his life broken forever.

We wanted his only moments of evading to be the memories of his childhood when he and his mother faced the harsh winters in Moscow. Ivan's voice-over reveals the dichotomy between the images of lush vegetation in the heat of the Parisian summer and the mental images of white, snowy, dirty Moscow winters. The story is also strongly connected to literature as the mise en abyme of the filmed narrative is interspersed with extracts from a book which recall and emphasize the hectic route of Ivan. We conceived the scenario as a small theatre with the woods for scenery where different characters appear «*Deus ex machina*» to cross Ivan's road. We wrote the scenario in the autumn, then shot the film in 22 days the following spring and summer. For the part of Ivan we were looking for someone with an angelic face, an innocent look and a sculpted, firmed and imposing body. The actor Aram Arakelyan appealed to us at once with his slight accent and his life, an unsettling reflection of Ivan's wandering character. Indeed Aram Arakelyan was born in Armenia and spent his childhood in Russia. He speaks the language perfectly. He is now an actor in Paris. To us Aram Arakelyan was the obvious character for the leading part.

As soon as we were sure of our choice, I gathered with Cobalt Films several private fundings to carry out this project. We were eager to film and couldn't wait for hypothetical help from endless committees. I am well acquainted with Claude Chamis as I produced his previous short and medium-length films. We went head-first for a long feature. However we kept the *short-length spirit* with a limited crew to be more reactive to the weather conditions of an outdoor shooting. Claude Chamis is close to his Director of Photography Thibaut de Chemellier with whom he directed all his previous films. Thus with this limited crew we could follow the actor Aram Arakelyan more easily with an over the shoulder camera so as to be closer to his body, his intimate intercourse, his moves and his frantic flights. We could follow the misadventures of this anti-hero in the woodland maze. All this contrasted with the contemplative aspect of the landscape filmed in wide shots. We wanted to insist on how Ivan's body was stubbornly present in each shot. His impressive figure contrasts with his being a vulnerable prey. It was important to show on the screen the reality of the body and of the language, apart from the scenario and the script. Ivan is intuitive, he doesn't speak much or well, he lets himself be guided by his feelings and his emotions rather than by his thinking. Thanks to this technique of filming we were able to let life's ups and downs be part of our fiction (such as the sequence with the dog at the end of the film that we kept in the final edit). During the shooting and the post-production I shared the choices, the doubts, the questions of the director, like all the members of the team who helped us hold the project in sometimes difficult conditions.

The Wanderings of Ivan is a kind of modern, cruel tale in which the wishes and the expectations of a young man are turned into merchandise with a price. The aim of the film is to show through his wanderings and his encounters the increasing power of money. *Money* (Bresson's eponymous film title) that contaminates and spoils everything is one of the main themes of this story made of swerves, digressions, submersions. The general tone of the film is dark and bittersweet, lit up with moments of evanescent grace. We were eager to have these suspended moments be part of a rather grim, pessimistic narrative. The sensual and carefree scenes, far from obliterating the nightmare Ivan goes through, worsen it.

CLAUDE CHAMIS
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director & scriptwriter

2005 **UN PORTRAIT D'ESTHER**
fiction 10' expérimental - Super 16mm . autoproduction

2009 **SAINT-OUEN/SAN FRANCISCO**
fiction 28' Super 16mm .
with Satya Dusaughey, Jason Ciarapica, Noémie Goetsch
N° visa : 125 606
Production Sylvain Maugens & Karen Peraldi for Cobalt Films
Diffusé sur Ciné+ (CANALSAT) de janvier à février 2012

2010 **LA MORT BLANCHE**
fiction 19' HD & super 8mm.
with Arthur Molinier
N° visa : 127 163
Production Sylvain Maugens & Karen Peraldi for Cobalt Films

2011 **LES AMERTUMES**
fiction 11' HD (Red MX) 4K.
with Arthur Molinier, Jason Ciarapica
N° visa : 125 611
Production Sylvain Maugens & Karen Peraldi for Cobalt Films
Prix de la Meilleure Réalisation au Festival Honfleur Tout Court 2012

2014 **LE CIEL JUSTE AU DESSUS DU FLEUVE**
fiction 19' HD (RED Epic) 2K.
with Farid Deghiche, Alicja Jablonska
N° Visa : 138 186
Production Vic Demayo et Tarek Nini for Eva Production

2017 **LA BALADE D'IVAN**
fiction 74' HD (RED Dragon) 5K.
with Aram Arakelyan, Benjamin Baclet, Camille Freychet, Franck Zerbib, Pablo Alarson
Corine Wattrin, Yves Balmès-Morgan, Maylis De Poncins, Lisbeth Wagner
N° Visa : 144 146
Production Sylvain Maugens for Cobalt Films

2017-2018 **PORTE DE VINCENNES** (filming in progress)
fiction HD (RED Dragon) 5K.
with Arthur Molinier, Laura Ketels, Pablo Alarson, Franck Zerbib
N° Visa : en cours
Production Sylvain Maugens for Cobalt Films



CAST

Ivan : Aram Arakelyan
Ben : Benjamin Baclet
Pierre : Franck Zerbib
The girl with red hair : Camille Freychet
The woman in the pagode : Corine Watrin
Paco : Pablo Alarson
The old client in the wood : Yves Balmès-Morgan
The waiter : Paul Bettinger
The young bourgeoisie : Maylis de Poncins
The russian woman : Lisbeth Wagner
The jogger : Noé Alarson
The candy seller : Judith Journo
Young prostitute : Stanislas Aourousseau
Client of the bar : Christos Grosdanis
Others prostitutes : Tarek Nini
Martin Thiaw
Bar's customers : Marine Briallon
Elisabeth Dumont
Lucas Leuba
Jeanne Vicerial
Vanessa Tousignant
Mehdi Vilquin

CREW

Director : Claude Chamis
Co-writers : Claude Chamis & Sylvain Maugens
Cinematographer : Thibaut de Chemellier
Sound Engineer : Jules Valeur
Music supervisor : Matthieu Fortin
Camera operator : Thibaut de Chemellier
Editor : Samuel Zlatoff
Sound mixer & sound editor : Matthieu Fortin
Color correction : Hugo Rossello
Special effects : Matthieu Fortin
First assistant director : Simon Appelfeld
First Camera assistant : Kevin Rosé
Boom operator : Jules Valeur
Script Supervisor : Louise van Driets
Production designer : Julia Oliveri
Props : Gadi Tsekmann
Costume designer : Pauline de Kerimel
Hairstyle & make-up : Jennifer Mulertt
Scout Locator : Coline Madral
Runner : Rachid Bouchri-Meziane
Additional runner : Marc Ravard
Assistant additional runner : Abdel Fourek
Key Grip : Martin Gomez
Gaffer : Laurent Marquès
Second assistant director : Pierre Libulle
Best boy : Florent Sybile
Car grip : Justin Bordier
Security : Samba Issoko

PRODUCTION

Executive producer : Sylvain Maugens
Chief production : Sylvain Maugens
Post-production : Barnabé Daviou
Administration : Karen Peraldi
Art director : Sylvain Maugens
Casting director : Marion Touitou
Photographer : Jennifer Mulertt
Credits & subtitles : Matthieu Fortin
English translation : Sylvie Dujoncoquoy
Graphic designer : Théo Pierrette

74 minutes - Format 1.85:1 - Stereo - DCP 2K - Red Dragon - Color - Visa : 144 146
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