

Haut et Court presents

THE NIGHT



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
CANNES PREMIERE
2022 OFFICIAL SELECTION

A FILM BY
DOMINIK MOLL

OF THE 12TH

THEO CYRILLO, JOHANN GONWET, THIBAUD CARVAD, JULIEN FROSON / LA CROISSE PRODUCTIONS / PAUL HEANSON, MIRIAM SCHALEK, PAULINE SEREYS / UN FILM DE DOMINIK MOLL / SCÉNARIO GILLES MARCIANO ET DOMINIK MOLL / MUSIQUE PATRICK CHURINOWSKI / MONTAGE GILBERT MARGUERITE / COSTUME FRANCIS MAUREL / OLIVIER ANTOINETTE, LUC THOMAS / COIFFEUR MICHEL BARTHÉLEMY / SECOURS DIOPHÉE CHABAUD / RÉALISÉ ACCORDÉ AVEC LE SOUTIEN THÉATRAL VERBIER / MONTAGE LAURENT BOLLAN / SCÉNARIO AGATHÉ HASSENBOERGER ET PABLO DE BORGES / MONTAGE ET COIFFURE KARLA VAN DOMME / PRODUIT PAR CAROLINE BÉNAUD, JORDANA LETELLIER, CAROL SCOTTA ET SIMON ARON / EN COLLABORATION AVEC JACQUES HENRI BRONCKART ET CARMENELLE LEBERT / EN COOPÉRATION AVEC HAUT ET COURT / EN COPRODUCTION AVEC VEUSCUS PRODUCTION, AUVERGNE RHÔNE ALPES / CINÉMA FÉTIC (TELEVISION BELGE), VOD ET BETV / PROGRAMME AVEC LA PARTICIPATION DE CANAL + / CINE+ / HAUT ET COURT DISTRIBUTION ET MOMENTO INTERNATIONAL / AVEC LE SOUTIEN DU CENTRE NATIONAL DU CINÉMA ET DE L'IMAGE ANIMÉE, LA RÉGION AUVERGNE RHÔNE ALPES ET LE COMITÉ CENTRAL DU CINÉMA ET DE L'AUDIOVISUEL DE LA FÉDÉRATION WALLONNE BRUXELLES, WALLONNE (LA WALLONIE) / TAX SHELTER DU GOUVERNEMENT FÉDÉRAL BELGE / INVERT TAX SHELTER / EN ASSOCIATION AVEC CINÉVENTURE 7 / CINÉCAP 5 ET CINÉMAGE 16 / DISTRIBUTION FRANCE HAUT ET COURT / DISTRIBUTION MONDIALE MOMENTO INTERNATIONAL

BASTIEN BOUILLON

BOULI LANNERS

**THE NIGHT
OF THE 12TH**



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A FILM BY DOMINIK MOLL

ADAPTED FROM *18.3 - UNE ANNÉE À LA PJ* BY PAULINE GUÉNA

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SYNOPSIS

Sooner or later, every police investigator comes across a case that remains unsolved and that haunts him. For Yohan, Clara's murder proves to be that case. What starts as a thorough investigation into the victim's life soon turns into a nagging obsession. One interrogation follows another, there is no shortage of suspects, and Yohan has more and more doubts. Only one thing is sure, the crime occurred on the night of the 12th.

DIRECTOR'S INTERVIEW

WITH **DOMINIK MOLL**

The film is adapted from Pauline Guéna's book "18.3 - une année à la PJ" (18.3 - A Year With the Crime Squad).

Yes, it's a rather unusual adaptation since the film is based on around thirty pages in a book of more than five hundred. Pauline Guéna spent a year immersed in the Versailles Criminal Investigation Department. She relates an everyday reality between routine and

harrowing situations. Like David Simon in Homicide, her view is both documentary and incredibly fictional. The reader is plunged into a huge reservoir of powerful human stories that also relate the world in which we live.

You have focused on one specific case, the murder of a young woman who was set on fire on her way home...

Yes. Pauline briefly describes this case and focuses on one of the investigators, Yohan. It was his rapport with the case that touched me. I admit that the sordid nature of the crime made me hesitate for I am often unsettled by the way certain films are fascinated with violence. But after reading those few pages, they began to haunt me in the same way that the death of that young woman haunted Yohan. The book says that every investigator encounters a crime that hurts more than the others, that lodges within him like a splinter for some mysterious reason, and that the wound never stops festering. I felt that it wasn't just a matter of finding the murderer's name, but that the film could tell the story of the obsession and growing confusion of a meticulous investigator faced with an unsolved crime.





Indeed, the film opens with a title-card stating that a large percentage of criminal investigations remain unsolved, and that the film recounts one of them...

From the start of writing with Gilles Marchand, we felt that there was something unique and compelling about an unsolved case. Gilles had just directed the documentary series for Netflix on the Gregory murder and was aware that not knowing the truth can help us to ask questions that are perhaps more profound... more challenging. Often, when a film is about a criminal case, you start by telling the audience, "*Here's a murder,*" and you end with, "*Here's the killer,*" and that's it, no more questions asked. That was not what I wanted to do. What haunted me about this story was its mystery. And the very fact that the closer you look, the more the plot thickens. When we don't know the culprit's name, we end up seeing more, we feel closer to the investigators who question and grope around in the dark, we sense their doubts and perceive their growing anxiety. The mystery reveals the institutional and human workings much more than the resolution of the case could.

The film follows this police investigation in a very concrete manner, but it raises questions, an almost existential anxiety, especially concerning men's violence towards women.

The relationship between men and women is central to the film, forming its main thread. The book does not particularly focus on this issue, but the fact that Pauline Guéna is a woman, and her specific view, from a safe distance, of the men of the criminal police, is undoubtedly a major factor in the approach that imposed itself on us. A great many news items are directly related to cases of violence perpetrated by men against women. It's completely crazy when you think about it and don't just view it as a fatality. The officers who have to fight this violence are almost exclusively male. Even if, in a commendable way, some films and series show female investigators at work, in reality it is still a "*man's world*". What do these men think about when they investigate crimes committed against women who could be their daughters, their partners, their friends, their sisters? How do they view the suspects? And the victims? What feelings does all this provoke in them? We wanted the film to lead the audience to ask such questions, and why not sense this "*existential anxiety*" as you call it.





The female characters are very striking, almost all of them in scenes that are both moving and crucial.

The film follows this all-male group of investigators, and the various suspects they question are also men. But yes, the women play a central role. There is of course Clara, the victim, who overshadows the whole story. And then Nanie, her best friend, played by Pauline Serieys, who breaks down and takes the film into another dimension.

That scene in a company canteen is a key one.

Yes, Nanie opens both our eyes and Yohan's. She does not spare him. Why is it so important for him to know who Clara slept with? What difference does it make? Yohan is visibly shaken

by this confrontation, which is the real turning point of the story. When we finished editing, we realized that it was placed right in the middle of the film, which is no coincidence.

Yohan's awakening continues through two other female characters, the judge and a young investigator, Nadia.

These two characters appear in the final part of the film, after an interval of almost three years. A new judge asks Yohan to resume the investigation he had to give up. Anouk Grinberg brings her experience and irreducible strangeness to this character. Their exchange on "*what is amiss between men and women*" has a decisive place in the film's development. And Nadia, the new recruit, gives renewed life and hope to Yohan. Mouna Soualem is a perfect Nadia when she asks Yohan about the men who commit crimes and the men who





fight them. I love the way she says “*A man’s world...*” to conclude this exchange. An amused, benevolent, but implacable observation.

Opposite them, Bastien Bouillon plays Yohan.

I had worked with Bastien on “*Seules Les Bêtes*” (*Only the Animals*). He played a naive and cheerful gendarme. I had really enjoyed working with him, but I wasn’t thinking about him in particular while writing *The Night of the 12th*. Besides, with Gilles, we try not to think too much of specific actors when writing. I like the characters to exist in their own right. But once the screenplay was completed, when we were casting, looking for actors to play Yohan, the idea of Bastien came up. It intrigued me, attracted me, and he convinced us

during the screentests. His presence, his blend of gentleness and melancholic gravity, his sensitivity, his gaze, his intonations... Everything seemed obvious. The role is unusual as Yohan doesn’t speak much: he is the receptacle for this story and for all those around him, but you can feel all the emotions that run through him and appear on his face.

With Bouli Lanners, he forms a contrasting and engaging team of investigators.

Bouli Lanners is full of generosity and humanity, which is exactly what Marceau required. “*You’re the sentimental type*”, says one of his colleagues. It’s true. Marceau believes in love and in the power of the French language. He feels that his job is filling him with hate and he suffers because of it.





How did you choose your actors for the group of investigators?

I wanted new faces. The two casting directors, Agathe Hassenforder and Fanny de Donceel, auditioned almost two hundred actors for the investigators and the suspects. Most of them were excellent, by the way. But we needed a group, and we brought back the actors we were most interested in for tests, three or four together at a time. I wanted the dynamic to work and different personalities to emerge. When I spent a week with the Grenoble police, I saw that the group spirit was crucial. It's a second family. We needed that energy. And it worked very well. Sometimes even a little too well as, on the set, they occasionally behaved like a bunch of brats with a sense of humour worthy of a real police unit!

Why was your time with the Grenoble police so important?

Pauline Guéna's book is already extremely well-documented, but it was important for me to see a group of investigators at work with my own eyes. My immersion in that world was of course very short, but it allowed me to observe it at close range: the cumbersome nature of procedure and reports, the relationships within a group, the contrast between the tension of the interrogations and the triviality of the moments of relaxation that allow them to let off steam. Spending time with them helped me to be precise and more accurate in the film's tone, to avoid faking the spectacular in search of artificial thrills. On the contrary, it allowed me to get closer to the human side, to the discomfort and passion that drive the investigators.





Why choose Grenoble and the Maurienne valley?

I wanted to feel the mountains. Their presence is both oppressive and majestic. Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne is a fairly industrialized town: there is an aluminium factory, Trimet, which employs 700 people, there are very varied habitats, apartment blocks, more affluent residential areas, the ski resorts just above. I like this mixture of atmospheres; it's a miniature world, both singular and universal. And there was also the idea of Yohan cycling, first on a track, in a velodrome, where, as Marceau says, he goes around in circles like a hamster, and, at the end, in the natural world when he finds fresh impetus and discovers the pleasure of climbing Alpine passes, in this case the Croix de Fer Pass.

Where did the idea of the velodrome come from?

In Pauline Guéna's book, one of the investigators, who is not connected to the Clara case, rides a track bicycle. That was a detail that immediately intrigued me and that I wanted to use. The velodrome is an outlet for Yohan, he releases his tensions there, but it is also a place where he goes around in circles. The track in Eybens near Grenoble, where we filmed, is particularly graphic, especially at night. Cycling on a track is not as easy as on a road, Bastien Bouillon did specific training to master the very steep turns. And he proved to be excellent at it. Shooting the long sequences where he rides laps over and over was very physical!

This graphic aspect is characteristic of your direction. There is something very clear, very visual about it.

The storm is in the minds of the characters, whether they are the investigators, the suspects or the victim's relatives. I wanted these inner storms to contrast with a clear style of direction, a controlled shot breakdown. Few shots, very precisely framed. The characters are numerous and some - notably the suspects - only appear once for questioning. I wanted to place each of them in their environment and make a mark. Following the location scouting and the preparatory work on the set with the production designer Michel Barthélémy and

his team, we decided, with the cinematographer Patrick Ghiringhelli, to use short focal lengths, which allowed us to have relatively wide frames even in cramped locations. And the exterior shots are also often quite wide, accentuating the presence of the landscape. Close-ups are rare and are reserved for very specific moments, such as the murder. That makes them all the more effective.

The world of the film is quite dark, but at the end there is an optimism that may seem paradoxical since the killer is not found.

The film is dark and tense because the investigation concerns a horrific crime and each lead seems to go nowhere. But if Yohan occasionally verges on discouragement, neither he nor the film become bitter or even pessimistic. We even get the feeling that something deep is playing out within him. The judge and Nadia, by bringing in fresh energy and a new perspective, allow Yohan to keep going. A change is taking place for him, a form of wisdom perhaps, in any case the beginning of a transfer, a handover that gives him confidence in the future. Continuing to believe and pursuing his task tirelessly is the only way to solve the case one day. Nadia and the judge will definitely help him. And as Marceau suggested, escaping from the velodrome to climb the mountain passes opens up more serene horizons for Yohan.

Olivier Marguerit's music also works in this direction with its luminous aspect.

Absolutely. I wanted to work with Olivier after seeing Arthur Harari's two films, Diamant Noir and Onoda, for which he had written the scores. I really like his sense of melody, this luminosity tinged with melancholy, it's exactly what I was looking for. Olivier composed the first tracks after reading the screenplay, before the beginning of the shoot, and many of his initial compositions are in the film today. He had the intuition to use voices, inspired by the idea of ghosts haunting us, and also by Yohan's breathlessness on the velodrome track. And in the tone of the main theme that opens and closes the film, there is almost a feeling of elation, of wanting to go forward, to see higher.■



CAST

Yohan	BASTIEN BOUILLON
Marceau	BOULI LANNERS
Willy	THÉO CHOLBI
Fred	JOHANN DIONNET
Loïc	THIBAUT EVRARD
Boris	JULIEN FRISON
	<small>OF THE COMÉDIE FRANÇAISE</small>
Jérôme	PAUL JEANSON
Nadia	MOUNA SOUALEM
Nanie	PAULINE SERIEYS
Clara	LULA COTTON FRAPIER
Clara's mother	CHARLINE PAUL
Clara's father	MATTHIEU ROZÉ
Wesley	BAPTISTE PERAIS
Jules Leroy	JULES PORIER
Gabi Lacazette	NATHANAËL BEAUSIVOIR
Denis Douet	BENJAMIN BLANCHY
Vincent Caron	PIERRE LOTTIN
Nathalie Bardot	CAMILLE RUTHERFORD
Mats	DAVID MURGIA
With	
ANOUK GRINBERG	
as the judge	

CREW

Directed by	DOMINIK MOLL
After a novel by	PAULINE GUÉNA <i>18.3 – UNE ANNÉE À LA PJ (DENOËL EDITIONS)</i>
Screenplay & dialogues	GILLES MARCHAND DOMINIK MOLL
Music	OLIVIER MARGUERIT
Photography	PATRICK GHIRINGHELLI
Production design	MICHEL BARTHÉLÉMY
Casting	AGATHE HASSENFORDER FANNY DE DONCEEL
1 st assistant director	THIERRY VERRIER
Sound	FRANCOIS MAUREL
Costumes	DOROTHÉE GUIRAUD
Makeup and hair	KAATJE VAN DAMME
Editing	LAURENT ROUAN
Sound Editing	OLIVIER MORTIER
Sound mixing	LUC THOMAS
Produced by	CAROLINE BENJO BARBARA LETELLIER CAROLE SCOTTA SIMON ARNAL
Coproduced by	JACQUES-HENRI BRONCKART GWENNAËLLE LIBER



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