



**L'AMOUR  
OUF**

*cinéart*

# PERSMAP



Drama, actie - 2024 - FR - 165 minuten  
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## **Distributie**

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## Synopsis

De Franse bioscoopshit L'AMOUR OUF is een epische cocktail van nostalgie, liefde en geweld. Regisseur Gilles Lellouche (LE GRAND BAIN) brengt een Franse sterrencast bij elkaar voor een rauw, romantisch sprookje tijdens de jaren 80 en 90. Lellouche vond inspiratie bij Martin Scorsese, Quentin Tarantino en WEST SIDE STORY en geeft een moderne draai aan het Romeo en Julia-verhaal.

In L'AMOUR OUF zien we de tienerliefde opbloeien tussen het buitenbeentje Jackie en de rebelse Clotaire. Hun relatie wordt flink op de proef gesteld als Clotaire kiest voor het slechte pad. Als hij door bendegeweld in de gevangenis belandt, verliezen ze elkaar uit het oog. Jaren later probeert Clotaire zijn leven weer op de rit te krijgen en gaat hij op zoek naar Jackie. Kan de liefde alles overwinnen?

L'AMOUR OUF draaide in de competitie op het Filmfestival van Cannes en ontving maar liefst 13 nominaties bij de César Awards. Jonge talenten Mallory Wanecque en Malik Frikah maken indruk als de verdoemde tieners. De volwassen versies van Clotaire en Jackie worden gespeeld door François Civil (RETOUR EN BOURGOGNE) en Adèle Exarchopoulos (LA VIE D'ADÈLE).



A black and white close-up portrait of actor Gilles Lellouche. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera with a serious expression. He has short, dark hair and a light beard. The background is dark and out of focus.

## Director: Gilles Lellouche

### Biography

A graduate of Cours Florent, Gilles Lellouche began his career in multiple supporting roles: *THE HAMLET SISTERS* (Abdelkrim Bahloul, 1998), *WHAT I DID FOR LOVE* (Jérôme Cornuau, 1998) and *MY WIFE IS AN ACTRESS* (Yvan Attal, 2001). Guillaume Canet directed him in *WHATEVER YOU SAY* (2002) and *TELL NO ONE* (2006). Gilles Lellouche did the same, giving Canet the leading role of his first feature film *NARCO* (2004). Since 2005, the actor-filmmaker has been a regular fixture in romantic comedies, playing the loser in *LOVE IS IN THE AIR* (Rémi Bezançon, 2005), a role for which he received the 2006 César for Most Promising Actor. He has also played less likeable characters as in *MY PLACE IN THE SUN* (Eric de Montalier, 2007), *ROOM OF DEATH* (Alfred Lot, 2007) and *PARIS* (Cédric Klapisch, 2008).

In 2010, he played the lead role in the thriller *TRADER GAME* (Fabrice Genestal), portraying an unscrupulous trader alongside Michael Madsen, Charles Berling and Vahina Giocante. Following this performance, Lellouche became one of the most sought-after actors in French cinema. The actor appeared both in front of and behind the camera alongside five other filmmakers (including Jean Dujardin and Fred Cavayé) in *THE PLAYERS*. He then embodied a double agent in the thriller *THE INFORMANT* (Julien Leclercq) and a mob boss in *THE CONNECTION* (Cédric Jimenez, 2014).

More recently, he has starred in comedies such as *THE JEWS* (Yvan Attal, 2016), *ROCK'N*

ROLL (Guillaume Canet, 2017), SOUS LE MEME TOIT (Dominique Farrugia, 2017) and in C'EST LA VIE (Olivier Nakache, Eric Toledano, 2017), a role for which he received a César nomination for Best Supporting Actor in 2018. He previously received a nomination in this same category for his performance in LITTLE WHITE LIES (Guillaume Canet, 2010). He also appeared in darker films, such as the historical thriller THE MAN WITH THE IRON HEART (Cédric Jimenez, 2017).

In 2018, he directed his first solo film, SINK OR SWIM, in which five men in their forties regain a taste for life by taking up synchronized swimming.

In 2019, Lellouche appeared in the films IN SAFE HANDS (Jeanne Herry), LITTLE WHITE LIES 2 (Guillaume Canet) and PARIS PIGALLE (Cédric Anger).

In 2020, Lellouche played a police officer in Cédric Jimenez's THE STRONGHOLD and in Fred Cavayé's FAREWELL MR HAFFMAN. In 2022, Lellouche starred as Patrick, a tenacious lawyer specializing in environmental law in Frédéric Tellier's thriller GOLIATH alongside Pierre Niney, Emmanuelle Bercot and Jacques Perrin.

In 2023, he continued his success with the films ASTERIX & OBELIX: THE MIDDLE KINGDOM, ALL YOUR FACES by Jeanne Herry and SUDDENLY by Thomas Bidegain, where he portrayed Ben, a man who finds himself trapped on an island with his girlfriend.

In 2024, the actor starred in DAAAAAALI! with Anaïs Demoustier, Pierre Niney, Alain Chabat, Pio Marmaï, Jonathan Cohen and Édouard Baer. In the same year, he directed BEATING HEARTS, a love story starring François Civil, Adèle Exarchopoulos, Alain Chabat, Benoît Poelvoorde, Vincent Lacoste, Élodie Bouchez and Raphaël Quenard, which was selected in Official Competition at the 77th Cannes Film Festival.

## **INTERVIEW WITH Gilles Lellouche**

**“What really got me hooked was this love story set against a backdrop of a class struggle.”**

**YOUR FILM IS THE ADAPTATION OF A BOOK YOU FIRST READ 17 YEARS AGO. AT THE TIME, WHAT DREW YOU TO WANTING TO ADAPT IT?**

What really got me hooked was this love story set against a backdrop of a class struggle. And then there was this reminder of periods I went through and a link to my teenage years.

**WHY DID YOU WAIT 17 YEARS BEFORE MAKING THE FILM?**

I wasn't ready. I needed to go through certain stages before tackling this very ambitious project. And what takes the most time is the writing stage. I'm very slow in that respect. Once I have a scenario in hand, I can be very quick. My writing process is quite specific

because I really need to get into the flow when I write. I have to believe in what I'm writing and the next day when I read through my work, I still need to believe in it. The sequences have to be tenacious. They have to grip me the way mussels grip their rocks and survive through every ordeal. To succeed, I tend to go back, revise, and rewrite. And when a scene takes shape and sounds like a beating heart, like the chewing gum in this film, that's when I know I'm on the right path.

### **WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO DIRECT THIS LOVE STORY?**

This love story reminded me of periods in my teenage years and when I was a young adult. I was always attracted to thwarted romances, to the class struggle aspect that comes from the love you feel for someone who, on the surface, isn't meant for you.

This narrative direction seemed in harmony with my literary and cinematographic tastes. In a way, it's an indirect tribute to Martin Eden, a novel I love.

It also echoes certain films I loved, in particular Coppola's films from the 80s such as RUMBLE FISH or THE OUTSIDERS. It's a sort of sweet mixture of violence and exacerbated feelings, somewhere between hot and cold, or sweet and sour.

### **YOUR FILM SINK OR SWIM EXPLORED BEING FIFTY AND THE MID-LIFE CRISIS THAT CAN COME WITH THAT. BEATING HEARTS DEALS WITH THE TRANSITION FROM ADOLESCENCE TO ADULTHOOD. FOR YOU, ARE THOSE KEY MOMENTS IN YOUR LIFE AS A MAN, A FILMMAKER, AND AN ACTOR?**

Yes, because our teenage years are the birthplace of our desires, our yearnings, and our fantasies. Then, a decade later, there comes a time when you sort of take stock of where you're at with your dreams. Have they become accessible or inaccessible? Is there continuity or a rift?

So those were crucial years for me because it was during my teenage years that my desire to make films was born. Making that desire a reality is something that happened decades later, after my studies at Cours Florent and, more recently, after I directed my first films.

### **DID HAVING THIS FILM ON YOUR MIND FOR SO LONG, 17 YEARS, NEVER WEAR DOWN YOUR DESIRE? ARE YOU SO DETERMINED THAT YOU KNEW IT WOULD COME TO FRUIT-TION ONE DAY?**

No, I wasn't conscious of that. Or at least, I wasn't absolutely sure the film would see the light of day. But what was rather interesting was that there was one part of the book I found less captivating. And that was the part about marriage. With time, I was able to invent scenes and situations that weren't in the book. In fact, I created a parallel story to the one that was written.

I remember that my father's favorite film was OCEAN'S 11 (1960) which inspired OCEAN'S ELEVEN (2001). Years after having seen it more than once with my father, I realized that I had imagined scenes that didn't exist.

In the same way, for BEATING HEARTS, a third part came to life inside me, absolutely

subconsciously, with new scenes that developed all on their own. That was quite beneficial. That long period allowed the subject to mature. I'd put the topic aside and then go back to it, which gave me a global, deeper, and more precise vision of what I wanted to achieve. Honing down the subject that way gave me a solid foundation to work with when Audrey Diwan, Ahmed Hamidi, and I started writing.

**HOW CAN THIS STORY BE CLASSIFIED? IS IT A GREAT LOVE STORY SHOWN THROUGH THE PRISM OF A CRIME FICTION? IS IT A CRIME FICTION WHERE TWO PEOPLE ARE IN LOVE? IS IT A PORTRAIT OF THE INCEPTION OF ADUL-THOOD? IS IT A MUSICAL? OR IS IT THE REFLECTION OF A DESIRE TO MAKE A FILM THAT IS SO IMMENSE THAT IT ENCOMPASSES ALL THOSE ELEMENTS?**

It's all of that at once. Rather than reducing this film to one single genre and summarizing it with specific adjectives, it reflects a desire to resist certain clichés. Perhaps rather naively, my first intention was to talk about love in all its forms: the love of a family, of a child for its parents, sentimental love, of course, being in love but also love between friends.

I also wanted to offset those gangster films that often don't touch on these nuances. A gangster film remains a gangster film, and a romantic comedy remains a romantic comedy. Merging those two genres is quite improbable but mixtures of genre have always attracted me and that's something I found very stimulating in this project. I absolutely wanted to portray that hot and cold dynamic. And if I had to try to define it, I would say that it's a love story that is both musical and violent. But I wouldn't use the terms comedy or drama... I prefer simply using the word story.

**OBSESSION, EXCESS, BETRAYAL, PHYSICAL LOVE, TREA-CHERY BETWEEN FRIENDS. IS THAT THE ESSENCE OF WHAT YOU WANTED TO EXPRESS WITH THIS GREAT LOVE STORY?**

Yes, it's exactly that.

**WAS THE WRITING PROCESS AND THE LENGTHY SHOOT WHAT TRUFFAUT CALLED «JOY AND SUFFERING»?**

No, I wouldn't call that suffering. It was a little dizzying as we had so many days planned for the shoot. The idea of starting the film on May 9th and having to keep going until September 9th was quite awe-inspiring. I worked with producers who gave me the means that were necessary to bring this project to fruition and I cherish that rare opportunity. Despite that, I still felt quite giddy.

I wondered if I would have the necessary resources; if I'd have enough breath, not only to tell this story but also to enthuse my actors and my team. Imparting enough desire so that each team member can come every day with the same motivation and the same enthusiasm is hugely important for a project's success.

But everything was much more fluid than I had imagined. I was motivated by the desire to create and share. The shoot was extremely pleasant, and I was driven by that elation.

For quite long periods, I followed the principle according to which, «it's by remaining

faithful to your choice that you save your choice». But I did sometimes question that faithfulness to my decisions.

In the middle of the shoot, I spent sleepless nights questioning myself about the pertinence of my artistic choices, the grammar used, the style adopted, and how I was directing the film.

But that anxiety is pointless.

As I'd already shot for two months according to that approach, I just had to remain faithful to that vision and see it through to the end. There are a thousand ways of making a film, a thousand ways of telling a story. I could have shot everything with a shoulder-held camera, insisted more on the aesthetics, been more abstract or more concrete... Those thoughts sometimes cast me into troubled waters. But, on a day-to-day basis, I had the strong support of a close-knit, determined, and joyful team.

**WHAT WERE YOUR CHOICES AS TO THE MISE EN SCÈNE? DID YOU WANT TO SHOW BOTH THE CHARACTERS' LOVE STORY AND YOUR OWN LOVE STORY AS A CINEPHILE?**

Yes, I would say, that's kind of it. Although I didn't really seek to be too demonstrative or to make any direct references. This film was a project I'd had inside me for so long that I already had very precise images in mind. For example, when Mallory Wanecque and Malik Frikah kiss each other in the rapeseed field, I so wanted to recover the atmosphere of the rapeseed fields I'd gone through by train at different times in my life. I had very persistent images etched on my heart and in my mind, like the one of Adèle in the phone booth, lit up by headlights.

The rest of the process was rather like train carriages that are hooked onto the locomotive, but I had a pretty clear vision and very specific visual foundations to guide the film's path.

**LOTS OF ACTORS WHO YOU'VE ALREADY WORKED WITH ARE IN YOUR CAST: ADÈLE EXARCHOPOULOS, FRANÇOIS CIVIL, KARIM LEKLOU, BENOÎT POELVOORDE... HOW DID THE SHOOT GO? DID YOU HAVE TO BE «PALS» TO WORK TOGETHER FOR MONTHS ON END?**

No, as a matter of fact, François Civil, Karim Leklou, and Adèle Exarchopoulos are people with whom I took great pleasure in shooting THE STRONGHOLD but we're not from the same generation. We shared some time together, but they aren't my friends like Guillaume Canet, Jean Dujardin, and other actors of my generation. As for Benoît Poelvoorde, it was obvious to me that he'd be a part of my film. I really want him to be in each one of my films because I owe him so much and because, on top of that, he's the one who introduced me to the book.

In regard to Alain Chabat, he was an actor I'd wanted to work with for a long time. I'd already offered him a role in SINK OR SWIM and I thought that he would be perfect for that character.

I also wanted to shoot the film with actors who were younger than me, in particular for the teenagers' roles. That was also a major financial gamble because almost half of the film is played by teenage actors, most of whom are unknown. To balance that out, I needed to include more well-known actors. And it turns out that the more famous actors I chose are people I already knew. But my aim wasn't necessarily to have a line-up of my «pals». I didn't know Raphaël Quenard or Anthony Bajon personally and in regard to Elodie Bouchez, whom I'd already acted alongside, we are not friends as such either. These are people whose talent I really admire. On top of that, I think that, at a certain stage, being a «group of pals» becomes restrictive. You have to know how to distance yourself from that. I pretty much feel that I selected the best possible cast for this film.

### **SO YOU CHOSE SOME WELL-KNOWN ACTORS AND SOME NEWCOMERS SUCH AS MALLORY WANECQUE AND MALIK FRIKAH. HOW DID YOU MAKE THAT CHOICE?**

That choice was made by means of a traditional casting process. I auditioned a lot of teenage boys and girls, and those two young actors stood out because of their talent. Mallory's resemblance to Adèle struck me as well as her intense and magnetic acting style. I hadn't yet seen *THE WORST ONES*, which I discovered after casting her and I wasn't disappointed.

As for Malik, his performance during the audition corresponded perfectly with what I was looking for in Clotaire's character. A stage direction was given corresponding to an image I had in mind, which was that Clotaire was waiting as the students came out of the bus in front of the high school. He was smoking a cigarette and sitting on a car bonnet, joyfully insulting all the teenagers who passed by. During the auditions, he was the only one who reproduced that scene whilst sitting on a table, whereas all the others were standing. The way he brought himself into the role really caught my eye and sparked my interest.

Physically, it turned out that he already had Clotaire's demeanour. Irrespective of their advantageous appearances, they are both amazingly talented, and I knew that they were the perfect actors for the roles.

### **LET'S TALK ABOUT THE DANCE SCENES AND THE DANCE ROUTINES WITH THE HUGE CROWD. WERE THOSE ALSO IMAGES YOU HAD IN MIND AND THAT KEPT COMING BACK TO YOU?**

In reality, those were part of the images that I'd sort of invented over time, in particular, whilst thinking back to my teenage years. I remember that music held a prominent place in my life. It was with me in every moment of enthusiasm but also during a lot of the times when I was sad, when I got hurt in love, which at the time happened in a number of different ways. Music was also present in my dreams, my desires, and when I got carried away.

### **BUT YOU DIDN'T DANCE?**

I didn't dance physically but I danced in my mind. At that time, I listened to loads of music. As a teenager, I listened to my Walkman in bed and it was like travelling, flying away, or having my own 35 mm cinema in my bedroom. It was a way for me to escape

reality. And I realised that falling in love was probably the most beautiful way of escaping reality. So, in the film, I wanted to add an extra touch with that idea of choreography, where suddenly the high school seems empty. The only people left are Mallory Wanecque and Malik Frikah, just the two of them and the music, a nod to «The Cure», and a moment that belongs only to them and that we are lucky to share with them. Although there were one or two other scenes originally planned in the initial script, I felt that two were enough to communicate the emotion that I wanted to convey.

**ISN'T THAT ALSO A VIEWER'S FANTASY? IS THERE SOMETHING LESS REAL THAN MUSICALS AND THOSE MOMENTS IN WHICH PEOPLE START DANCING IN THE STREET?**

In the same way there's nothing less real than setting a violent bank robbery to music. Cinema isn't real, after all. It isn't realistic. As soon as a camera comes into play, you're no longer in reality.

You can try to seek out or mimic reality but it's never the same thing. That is why I love cinema so much, precisely, when it says goodbye to reality.

**IS IT GILLES LELLOUCHE THE DIRECTOR RATHER THAN THE ACTOR WHO WILL SIGN OFF ON YOUR NEXT FILM?**

It's true that I really love directing but that depends on the opportunities that arise. What really drives me, above and beyond everything else in directing, is the constant questioning, the feeling of starting with a blank page. That's what's exciting. Taking risks and the fear that triggers. I really enjoy being an actor when it makes me feel that fear. So no, I'm trying to fight both of those battles at once and reconcile both of those facets of my career as much as possible.



## INTERVIEW WITH PRODUCERS

### *Alain Attal & Hugo Sélignac*

#### **GILLES LELLOUCHE AND BEATING HEARTS ARE FINALLY AT CANNES AFTER ALL THESE YEARS. HOW DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?**

ALAIN ATTAL - I feel a mixture of humility and honor. Being in competition at the Cannes Film Festival wasn't our ultimate goal, but participating in this emblematic event is both exalting and a testament to the extraordinary path this film has taken. In a way, even before the public has its say, Cannes is telling us in its elegant and radiant way: «You were right». Of course, the public gives the final verdict. But before all that, there were all those years of reflection on Gilles Lellouche's work as a filmmaker, the support we gave him to make that a success just as his acting career was taking off and he was juggling multitude of commitments whilst keeping this film in mind. All of that contributed to making this project what it is. Before he started working on directing his second film, SINK OR SWIM, Gilles effectively reflected on the possibility of making BEATING HEARTS his next project.

Events took another turn, even though five years ago we'd already thought of this possibility because we'd had the adaptation rights for 17 years. This film was a project that had been very important for him ever since the beginning of his career as a film director.

HUGO SÉLIGNAC - This festival is a first for Gilles Lellouche and for me. Alain Attal has participated several times in the official competition. Personally, I've only had the opportunity to be present outside of the competition. I'm ecstatic and feel incredibly proud that the film has been selected for the official competition even if I felt a little apprehensive. Gilles' film is really extraordinary and uncommonly generous. It's a film that really touches your heart. It brings you tears, music and laughter. Its stage direction is a reflection of Gilles himself: it is generous and genuine.

Of course, I'm extremely proud of Gilles, and I think this recognition is amply merited. I'm also extremely proud of our adventure, which started many years ago with the acquisition of the rights in 2006. We started developing this project back then. At the time, I was Alain's assistant. We were wondering how we were going to make this film a reality.

To remain faithful to the essence of the book, we had to deal with both life as a teenager and life as a young adult. We could already feel that the film's budget would be very significant. There were fewer stars under the age of 28 at the time. That would have forced us to review the narrative in order to use older actors. We considered accelerating the teenage years and devoting more time to adult life. Gilles didn't have the same vision. Alain and I wondered if it might be better for him to direct another film before BEATING HEARTS. At the time, Gilles wanted to explore the topic of depression.

When I showed him the Swedish documentary on synchronised swimming, he decided that the topic of his next film would be depressed fifty-somethings searching for meaning in their lives.

We reached 4.5 million cinema admissions with SINK OR SWIM, which was presented out of competition at Cannes. When we came up with a project that was even more ambitious than that one, with actors like Adèle Exarchopoulos and François Civil who are stars despite their young age, we already had SINK OR SWIM under our belts. So, everything was a question of timing. And the time for BEATING HEARTS had finally arrived, even if we had to wait 18 years for it.

### **THIS FILM ALSO BEARS WITNESS TO PROFOUND LOYALTY BETWEEN PRODUCERS AND A DIRECTOR...**

AA - That loyalty is also very much linked to how Gilles is as a filmmaker. Our wonderful friendship grew during his first film when he was starting out with short films. It continued with NARCO, his first feature film that he co-directed with Tristan Aurouet in 2004.

Gilles's perspective as a filmmaker and his desire to direct caught our attention. Curiously, our DNA as producers was significantly influenced by Gilles's cinematic universe, even though he had only co-directed one film. That was enough of a basis for us to exchange on, to mingle our different universes, and daydream together - first, just the two of us and then the three of us with Hugo - about the potential of making films together.

And that connection never ceased. Even when Hugo became an independent producer and produced his own films, we maintained that unwavering bond and our shared desire to make films, the three of us, together.

HS - With Alain and Gilles, loyalty is something that has always been a part of our relationship. As for me, I started working with Alain at the age of 19. Gilles and I started together, even if he'd already made headway on the film with Alain before I joined them. At the time, the Productions du Trésor's offices were only 70m<sup>2</sup>, which created proximity between us. I soon bonded with Gilles who was in his thirties at the time and working on NARCO. I was blown away by that film because it was so insightful. Its theme, that of people aspiring to a greater destiny but finally making do with what they have and being happy with that, reflects Gilles' personality. That's also present in SINK OR SWIM, where, at the end, the team members don't talk about their success but just go home to be with their families.

Our desire to work together existed even before I founded my own company, in 2012-2013, because I showed Gilles the Swedish documentary on synchronised swimming in 2011. Alain had already produced NARCO and had acquired the rights to Neville Thompson's book.

So, loyalty and the desire to work together were there from the very beginning. Together, we form a great trio. We represent three different generations and really enjoy working

together on ambitious projects. Gilles is very gifted at creating a lively, friendly atmosphere, which is what I love most about him. Whether it's during writing, casting, the shoot, or editing, we have such a great time together.

I'm so proud of our friendship, our loyalty and the result of that. When I saw the film for the first time, the sound mixing and editing wasn't fully finished but I could immediately see what a great film it was. This generational work can appeal to a wide audience, whether regular cinemagoers or not. Its casting and its modernity can deeply touch people from 15 to 25 years old. The younger people who have attended screenings have loved it and consider it a great film. They were really touched by it and even if they hadn't yet experienced similar love stories, they were profoundly moved.

**WERE YOU DISCOURAGED AT ANY TIME? WERE YOU CERTAIN THAT, ONE DAY, YOU'D FINALLY MANAGE TO PRODUCE THIS FILM AND ACCOMPANY GILLES ON THIS ADVENTURE?**

AA - We were always convinced that we would accompany Gilles as a director ever since NARCO. Then, once the BEATING HEARTS project came about, this recurring project continued haunting us and coming up regularly. The title itself, which is the same as the book title (L'AMOUR OUF), has maintained its pertinence over time. We were sure that nobody else would accompany Gilles in his desire to direct this film. We had deeply understood and appreciated his universe, his ingenuity, and what I call his «per-spective».

Then, the tremendous film SINK OR SWIM took the place of this persistent ongoing project. That wasn't planned but because we felt the film was more accessible for a director who had only co-directed one film so far. SINK OR SWIM allowed Gilles to assert his identity as a filmmaker. After the memorable screening of the film out of competition at Cannes and its phenomenal success, which we were de-lighted with, for us, BEATING HEARTS became something we absolutely had to do and from then on, it was on our minds.

At that point, as producers, we felt that we were legitimate in dreaming of such an audacious project. As for Gilles, he'd confirmed his standing as a filmmaker by persevering in wanting to bring this project to fruition, at all costs. This film embodies the vision of a director who has total liberty. And we were able to draw on the success of SINK OR SWIM to offer him that freedom.

**FACED WITH THE PROJECT'S AMBITION, ITS LITERARY DIMENSIONS, THE FILM'S LENGTH, AND ITS COST, DID YOU GO THROUGH PERIODS OF UNCERTAINTY WHERE YOUR ENTHUSIASM WAS TESTED? PUTTING TOGETHER A FILM WITH A BUDGET OF ALMOST 35 MILLION EUROS IS QUITE A COMPLEX CHALLENGE...**

AA - Effectively, we went through some moments of doubt. As Gilles' partners, at times, we had to face our own subjectivity. We constantly had to question ourselves in order to be sure that our enthusiasm wasn't affecting our judgment.

At each step in the writing of the treatment, in the different versions of the script, and the choice of participants, we were anxious about the possibility of making mistakes.

We had the script read by different partners to see whether they shared our enthusiasm. We had this constant fear of making a mistake in terms of the project's amplitude or legitimacy, and above all, re-garding the strength of the treatment. That concern accompanied every decision, whether on casting, the version of the treatment, the settings, the locations, or the duration of the film: did we make the right choice? Then, as time went by, we realised that we weren't alone. Whereas there were just three of us on the project to start with, we had mobilised many people around us to work on the film, which helped us to get over our doubts and concerns.

HS - The longest part of the project was the writing phase but once we'd sent that through to the financiers, with whom we'd already worked on SINK OR SWIM, everything accelerated. It's important to re-member that few directors have reached 4.5 million box-office admissions.

Everyone recognised the ambition of the BEATING HEARTS project as well as its narrative and emotional quality. The final details were a little more complex, in particular the last three million euros we needed for production, where every euro counts. But to tell you the truth, we're not complaining.

When all is said and done, I am really delighted and enthusiastic to have given Gilles the means of directing the film he wanted, with an 18-week shoot. That's what motivates and spurs me on. I'm speaking in my name, but I know that Alain shares the same energy as me.

### **WAS WORKING AS A PRODUCER ON THIS FILM SPECIFIC? HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE IT?**

AA - Working as a producer on this film required maintaining a certain subjectivity. As a filmmaker, Gilles is highly inventive, which means that we have to be open to his proposals. For example, when we saw the first cut that was 3 hours and 40 minutes long, we had to exercise good judgment. That was quite special in this case because our involvement in the film is greater because of its amplitude and the consensus it generated among our partners. It can be tempting to let a filmmaker do what he wants but it is essential to focus on our expertise, which consists in being the first spectators of a film.

At every step, whether during the shoot, production, post-production, or editing, we had to maintain a certain distance. It admittedly wasn't easy to give our director-friend an objective opinion without being blinded by our feeling of success or our friendship with him.

HS - Working as a producer on this film was specific even before talking about development, financing, or casting. Our first challenge was to maintain our energy. We had to ensure that we kept our constant enthusiasm. When we started on SINK OR SWIM, Gilles had some doubts because another English film was dealing with the same topic. So, we came back to BEATING HEARTS, and then came back to SINK OR SWIM, and once more to BEATING HEARTS, before finally settling on SINK OR SWIM. Like all directors and artists, producers can also have doubts.

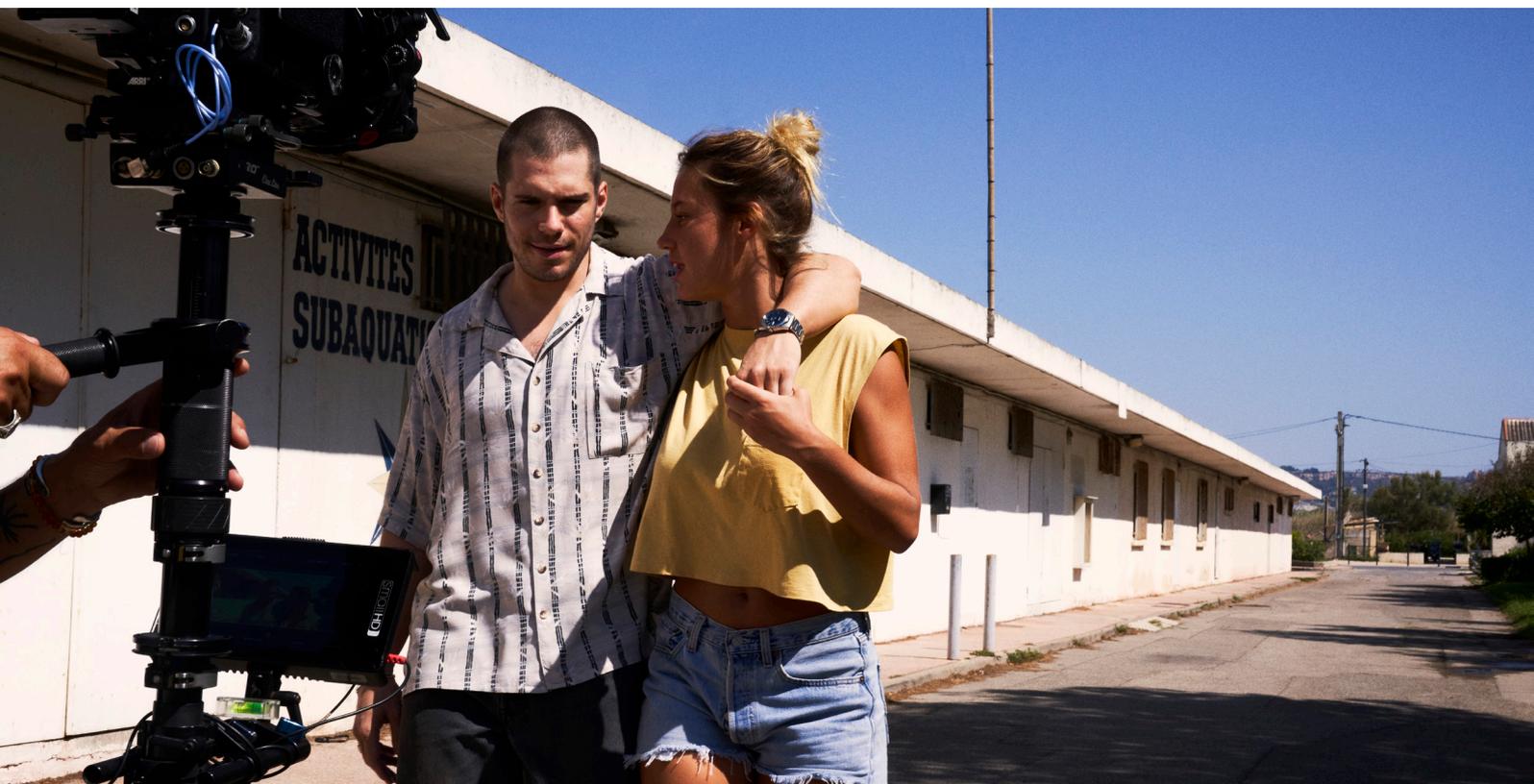
In regard to this project, we never had any doubt that we would see it through.

From the very first time that Gilles spoke to us about it, when Benoit Poelvoorde gave him the book and we read it, every step of the way, we were certain that we would see this project through and our excitement and our belief that this would be Gilles' big film has never waned. When we produced *SINK OR SWIM*, we knew that if we succeeded, it would allow us to make *BEATING HEARTS*. It was a long-term, major project and our energy was the key to its success. Sometimes, a director can talk to me about a project for years and then move on to something else because he has doubts or because he hasn't found the right approach. For *BEATING HEARTS*, I regularly felt the pressing need to see it through.

Gilles isn't the sort of person to write fifty different versions. After our feedback on the first version, the second version was sent to the financiers. We also made creative choices throughout the process, like talking more about love in the first part of the film and connecting better with younger viewers.

Shooting was a crucial moment during which I often had lunch with the actors, viewed the rushes with Gilles, and passed on my energy to help him combat fatigue.

For me, working on a film requires active involvement in development, writing, casting, and the choice of managers. But the shoot is the director's moment. I don't consider myself a co-director, maybe that's partly because my father and stepfather are directors. The projects where I've had to be present on a day-to-day basis are the ones where I felt less fulfilled, artistically speaking, because I'm not the director. My role consists of understanding what the director wants and pushing back any boundaries so that he or she can get an even better perspective. On the other hand, I'm not there to direct. The moment when I am the most involved, and maybe even intrusive, is during editing. Gilles and Simon Jaquet can attest to that!



## Cast

JACKIE (25 ANS)	ADÈLE EXARCHOPOULOS
CLOTAIRE (28 ANS)	FRANÇOIS CIVIL
JACKIE (15 ANS)	MALLORY WANECQUE
CLOTAIRE (17 ANS)	MALIK FRIKAH
JACKIE'S DAD	ALAIN CHABAT
LA BROSSE	BENOÎT POELVOORDE
JEFFREY	VINCENT LACOSTE
LIONEL (28 ANS)	JEAN-PASCAL ZADI
CLOTAIRE'S MOM	ELODIE BOUCHEZ
CLOTAIRE'S DAD	KARIM LEKLOU
KIKI (20 ANS)	RAPHAËL QUENARD
TONY	ANTHONY BAJON

## Crew

A FILM BY	GILLES LELLOUCHE
PRODUCED BY	ALAIN ATTAL ET HUGO SÉLIGNAC
SCREENPLAY BY	GILLES LELLOUCHE, AUDREY DIWAN AND AHMED HAMIDI
BASED ON THE NOVEL	NEVILLE THOMPSON
BY ORIGINAL SCORE	JON BRION
.CINEMATOGRAPHER	LAURENT TANGY (A.F.C)
EDITING	SIMON JACQUET
PRODUCTION DESIGNER	JEAN-PHILIPPE MOREAUX
SOUND	CÉDRIC DELOCHE, GWÉNOLÉ LE BORGNE, JOHN GOC, MARC DOISNE
COSTUMES	ISABELLE PANNETIER
MAKE UP	MYRIAM HOTTOIS
HAIR STYLIST	ROMAIN MARIETTI
1ST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	FABIEN VERGEZ
SCRIPT SUPERVISOR	JULIE DARFEUIL
PRODUCTION MANAGER	VINCENT PIANT
LOCATION MANAGER	BENJAMIN JOURNET
POSTPRODUCTION DIRECTOR	NICOLAS MOUCHET
MUSIC SUPERVISOR	SEVERINE CAVA
CHOREOGRAPHIC DIRECTION	EMMANUEL FERRIER
CASTING	(LA) HORDE
A CO-PRODUCTION	MICHAEL LAGUENS, MARIE-FRANCE MICHEL, ELSA PHARAON CHI-FOU-MI PRODUCTIONS, TRÉSOR FILMS STUDIOCANAL, FRANCE 2 CINÉMA, COOL INDUSTRIE, ARTÉMIS PRODUCTIONS, VOO ET BETV AND PROXIMUS

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