

Persmap

TOUR DE FRANCE

ANNE-DOMINIQUE TOUSSAINT
PRÉSENTE

«UN COUP DE MAÎTRE»
TÉLÉRAMA

QUINZAINE
DES RÉALISATEURS
CANNES

«UN FILM QUI FAIT AIMER LA FRANCE»
LES INROCKS



DEPARDIEU SADEK
TOUR DE FRANCE
UN FILM DE RACHID DJAÏDANI

AVEC LOUISE GRINBERG
RÉVISÉ PAR LOUISE GRINBERG RACHID DJAÏDANI
MONTAGE VISUEL CLEMENT H ANNA ALONSO - DU MOULIN
SONNAGE DELLY QUETTER
MUSIQUE LUC PAÏS ACÉ
ÉCRITURE ELIE RADINA
COPRODUCTIONS JÉRÔME PROUSANT MARCO TESTEMALE
MONTAGE JULIEN PEREZ
DIRECTION DE PRODUCTION JEAN-JACQUES ALBERT
DIRECTION DE PRODUCTION CÉCILE ESTIQUAT
COPRODUCTIONS RAPHAËL BOURGHI STEPHANE CLEBER VALEPIE GARCIA
VOIX OFFRIÈRES LES FILMS DES TOURNELLES
NARRÉS PAR CÉCILE ESTIQUAT
MONTAGE VISUEL LOUISE GRINBERG
MONTAGE VISUEL LA RÉGION AQUITAINE L'ANUSSEN PONTOU-CHARENTAIS ET LE DÉPARTEMENT DE LA CHARENTE-MARITIME
Avec la participation du CENTRE DU CINÉMA ET DE L'ÉCRAN ANIMÉ de la CAVALLA - MONTAGE PAR ANNE-DOMINIQUE TOUSSAINT
RÉVISÉ PAR RACHID DJAÏDANI

COFINANÇÉ PAR
CINÉMA
CANNES
MCM
CINÉMA
MCM

TOUR DE FRANCE

Een film van Rachid Djaidani

In TOUR DE FRANCE maken we in het gezelschap van Gérard Depardieu een bizarre road trip langs de Franse havens. Bouwvakker Serge (Depardieu) treedt in het voetspoor van schilder Josphe Vernet die talloze havengezichten schilderde. Hij zoekt een chauffeur voor zijn oude truck om de reis te gaan maken en wordt opgescheept met Far'Hook (Sadek), een vriend van zijn zoon uit Parijs. Ondanks de generatiekloof en de cultuurschok, ontstaat er tijdens deze reis een onwaarschijnlijke vriendschap tussen de veelbelovende rapper en de rouwdouwer uit Noord-Frankrijk.

TOUR DE FRANCE speelt een spel met vooroordelen waarin acteur Depardieu en rapper Sadek perfect aan elkaar gewaagd zijn. Het traditionele Frankrijk van toen en het moderne Frankrijk van nu komen samen tijdens de reis. Het resultaat is een feel good film die ons een spiegel voorhoudt. De film werd geselecteerd voor de Quinzaine des Réalisateurs, Cannes 2016.



Speelduur: 95 min - Land: Frankrijk - Jaar: 2016 - Genre: Drama

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Distributie: Cinéart

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Persmap en foto's staan op: www.cinéart.nl/pers - inlog: cinéart / wachtwoord: film

Cast

Serge	GÉRARD DEPARDIEU
Far'Hook	SADEK
Maude	LOUISE GRINBERG
Bilal	NICOLAS MARÉTHEU
Sphinx	MABÔ KOUYATÉ
Piotr	ALAIN PRONNIER
Fatoumata	RAOUNAKI CHAUDRON

With the exceptional participation of YASIIN BEY as **Focé**

Crew

Written and directed by	RACHID DJAÏDANI
Produced by	ANNE-DOMINIQUE TOUSSAINT
Music	CLÉMENT « ANIMALSONS » DUMOULIN
Editing	NELLY QUETTIER
Photography	LUC PAGES (AFC)
Picture	ELIE AKOKA
Sound	JEROME POUGNANT MARGOT TESTEMALE JULIEN PEREZ
Production Manager	JEAN-JACQUES ALBERT
Jean-Jacques Albert	CEDRIC ETTOUATI
Coproducers	RAPHAËL BERDUGO STEPHANE CELERIER VALERIE GARCIA
A coproduction	LES FILMS DES TOURNELLES MARS FILMS CITE FILMS AOC FILMS USEFUL
With the support of	RÉGION AQUITAINE LIMOUSIN POITOU-CHARENTES DEPARTEMENT DE LA CHARENTE-MARITIME
With the participation of	CENTRE NATIONAL DE CINEMA ET DE L'IMAGE ANIMEE
With the participation of	CANAL +
International Sales	CITÉ FILMS

Interview with Rachid Djaïdani

After your first feature film, “Rengaine” (Hold Back), which you filmed on your own over nine years, you are back with TOUR DE FRANCE, a film produced on a much bigger budget and starring Gérard Depardieu. Does that make things very different?

You have to show the same determination, the same belief, and the same love for the job. It’s a question of respect towards oneself. But sure, it’s different, in that you have the backing of a producer, and a relationship forms which gives rise to a joint imprint on the film. I remember the first time I told the story to Anne-Dominique Toussaint, in Cannes in 2012. Until the last day of editing, she never let me forget the energy that was driving me on that day. She really kept me on the course I wanted to steer. I also had an amazing post-production team, with Margot Testemale on sound editing, Julien Perez doing the mixing, Elie Akoka for color grading, and editor Nelly Quettier, who really added a flourish, reframing, tightening things up, producing a real amazing cut.



How did you tackle writing the script for TOUR DE FRANCE?

I’m quite used to the cut and thrust of writing. It’s something I grappled with on my three previous novels. But what I like about writing a screenplay is that it’s less gut-wrenching. The enjoyment came especially from the fact that Anne-Dominique Toussaint succeeded in channeling me, allowing me to write with my voice, my own style. She is the cinema equivalent of the cornerman; her second wind pushed us to new limits. Writing a scene and developing it is less of a literary process. In two or three words and two or three images, you can create a scene. Something organic emerges through dialog. All the rewriting with Anne-Dominique beefed up the narrative. We really pummeled the script into shape, so it would be direct, coherent, and so that every scene would be imbued with emotion and authenticity. It was quite wonderful. Exhausting, but exhilarating at the same time. It took just less than a year to write, but I had been dreaming about it for a long time beforehand.

In the film we hear rap, “La Marseillaise”, and songs by French veterans Serge Reggiani and Serge Lama.

I love music, it gives off a mystical emotion. I always thought of TOUR DE FRANCE as a musical. Clément Dumoulin, aka Animalsons, wrote and produced the music. To me, he’s a cult name. For those who love rap, his artistic collaborations are classics. When Animalsons came on board, it was as if the project had been blessed from on high, given the official stamp of street spirit. It was the first time he’d done any film music. He succeeded in transcending his art. The music is a fusion of genres; variety, rap, classical, Basque, West Indian, Arabic, etc. It swings from one scene to the next, forming a real musical language. It’s the echo of a standard. For the rap lyrics that Sadek wrote, I didn’t want it to be in back-slang; each word rings out in your ear, like a tirade by Molière heckling a king.

How did Sadek join the project?

I saw a lot of rappers, I watched a lot of videos. I did a casting. It was a great idea of Clément’s for us to meet Sadek and talk to him about the role and the film. We did several tests which resulted in the character that you see today. His gentleness and shyness are touching, and the way he looks is endearing. He’s also an intelligent listener, and obviously has a certain curiosity, since he’s not on familiar ground here. He took a chance. We were together in a fraternal pact to not betray each

other, to not short-change each other, and to bring out the best in the work. It was great directing him. Sometimes I put gloves on him, and told him to forget his lines and do a series of lefts, rights, and uppercuts. He's amazing.

What about Gérard Depardieu?

When you start boxing, you never think you're going to meet Muhammad Ali! You might dream about it in secret, but you'd never voice it. And then when you've actually got Ali standing in front of you, it's totally mystical. It was the same with Tonton; he looks at you and even if you've got your guard up, you can feel the weight of a weightless man. That's mythical. There aren't enough excitable adjectives to express how much I love him. He's a rare man, he's the Muhammad Ali of cinema. Respect, Tonton!

Why do you call him Tonton? ("uncle")

Gérard Depardieu belongs to everyone. Tonton, he's mine; he's my uncle! I never say his name. That's my mark of respect. Tonton and I, we're both boxers, both sons of blue-collar workers. Life deals us blows, we strike back, and we cannot put up with mediocrity. With him, I'm no longer afraid of the darkness of cinema.

Did you want to film two bodies, two striking appearances?

For sure, they are a couple of bears. It's incredible! Sadek and Tonton are beautiful. I find their wounded bodies beautiful. Their skins are scarified, injured. It's brutal. Sadek has the street scarred into his skin. Tonton's revives the soul with each flash. When the two of them stare at each other, it floors you. They are forces of nature, two ultra-sensitive artists. You have to know how to observe them and listen to them. There's not a breath to be wasted.

There's another important character in this film, the painter Joseph Vernet. Where did that idea come from?

I'm lucky to have a neighbor, Julien Bonin, who is passionate about art and he told me about Joseph Vernet, an 18th century painter of naval scenes who was commissioned by Louis XV to paint the ports of France. That got me interested in his painting and I found right away that it spoke to me. Retracing his steps 250 years was very powerful, because on one level nothing has changed. It's unsettling to find oneself standing looking out from Vernet's viewpoints, and resuscitating him. After "Rengaine", I directed "Encré", a 73-minute documentary about the artist Yassine Mekhnache. I followed my painter friend over three years and I soaked up his every gesture, his eye, his painting style. In the method of the Actors Studio, I absorbed the mentality of being a painter. I drew on "Encré" a lot for TOUR DE FRANCE; it allowed me to use my camera to capture the gaze, the brushstroke, and the doubts.

This film is a mix of genres, between the ancient manual art of painting, and rap, which is the oral poetry of the present day.

It's an ode to masonry and building, an ode to the sound of the trowel. That sound of the trowel that you hear being cleaned in the film summons the workers in the world. I find it stunning. I tried to find a particular harmony between the past and today, which perhaps might give us some clues as to the future. Having a young guy who locates a point of view by placing his finger on a painting by Vernet; and having a builder who, with his vocabulary and his passion, finds the words to interest the kid, getting worked up when he talks about France. It's all about raw materials and urges. He's like an African storyteller.

In the film, Serge listens to the radio while he paints, and one thing we overhear is that Arabs are stealing the work of white men.

In our journey through life we pick up wounds. It's the same for the other guy. So even those who hurt us have been hurt themselves. It's the only way they've found to exist. Today, it's all about sharp

talk and dissing people. All this accumulation of words has resulted in mountains that are impassable. They are no longer ulcers, they've become mental barriers. The mediocre people are very united, whereas the poets and humanists are divided. They operate on an individual basis.

Was there an ambition to make a film rooted in the contemporary period?

This film takes the spectator on a journey, but I hope this is prolonged beyond the experience in the movie theater. I hope it prompts an opening up, so people take a different look around themselves, and understand that for a man like Serge, it is more life's wounds that have driven him towards extreme thoughts rather than any distaste for a community. When I was a bricklayer, I worked with those people who we call "fascists" or "racists". I always took the wind out of their sails, by working with my trowel on the building site and respecting them. They were so busted up by life that I never judged them. Serge is one of them; not a bad guy, just lost.

The two characters are radicals. One is a hardcore rapper, the other hates all that street culture. Did you want to illustrate these radically opposed stances?

Yes, of course. I know that kind of radicalness on both sides well, I see that around me. What binds the two characters together, Serge and Farook, is their need for love. Their radicalness allows them to mask this obvious factor that links them. Both of them only want one thing: To rush into the woods and shout "Love me!" Behind that radicalness, there's always a soft-center which is made of love. We realize that poetry can change your life. We hear "The Albatross" by Baudelaire, for example. Because I believe it myself! I'm 40, and I'm still sure about certain things which my daughter already doesn't believe in. That's why I pick up a camera.

Could one say it's a naïve film?

It's a film which punches hard, but just seems to float around. It's like Muhammad Ali when he drops his guard, there's always the sucker punch coming. The film is a gentle avalanche. You watch it, it seems nice, but it's sweeping you onto a slippery slope. This film wants to hold out a hand, but not to see it get bitten.

Interview with Gerard Depardieu

How did you tackle this bitter character that you play in TOUR DE FRANCE?

It's easy to be bitter. Especially when you're dealing with someone you don't know. Neither their culture, nor their music. I think that ignorant people – like me – can feel unhappy. His son has converted to Islam, his wife has died, and he's facing the fact that his life is a failure. He's alone in a suburb where he's had his share of problems, having been in prison. He planned to do this tour of France with his son, after promising that to his wife, and now he finds himself with some guy that he doesn't even know. Moreover, he's an Arab! People are increasingly racist because the media and society as a whole is driving them towards it. They are confusing Islam with terrorism when they haven't even read a single surah of the Qur'an. What those bastards are doing is nothing to do with Islam. They don't even know how to speak the language of the Prophet!



How does one play a racist?

You don't need to act it. You just have to look at people – the look they give Sadek or people like him. It's true that 20 or 30 years ago, there were rap groups called Nique ta Mère (“screw your mother”) and the like. But they can go screw themselves! That's not what rap is about. It maybe was at one point, when it was a social code, but that's over now. In this movie, Sadek captures everything, he has his own language. Rachid has made a film about love and openness of spirit.

But despite his bitterness, your character has a kind of poetry within...

He does. He had planned to do this trip with his son because he'd learned a little about painting while he was inside. He's also fascinated by ports and he's looking for the painter's point of view. He wants to see if that's changed. Granted, he ends up with a stranger, but gradually he realizes that he's a good guy. He realizes that his love story is over, that his son has grown up and that life is worth living! It's a great film about tolerance.

Were you as into the rap as you were the painting?

Rimbaud was a rapper. When you read his Vowels or Drunken Boat, it's rap! Plus, Sadek sings Baudelaire in the film. Now that's rap. More than the Marseillaise. And Sadek's rap, that he does for the young girl, is simply sublime. That's love. It's a film like a heartbeat.

You also sing “Je suis malade” in one of the scenes in the film.

Yes. Like the Reggiani song he sang to his child and his wife when they were a united family. It's a home. All children have a memory like that, whether they were born in the projects or in a tent. There are sounds of our childhood. Sounds that make cultures. Those things are part of childhood and nothing bad comes out of childhood. It's beautiful.

Tell us about your collaboration with Rachid Djaidani.

It's a very intuitive thing. Rachid has this eye. I didn't even need to read the script. All those combinations of color are wonderful. Thank you, Rachid. Truly.

Interview with Sadek

Was it hard to move away from Sadek to find your character, Farook?

I'm not sure about hard. But there's no resemblance in real life. Farook is a socially-aware rapper, who has a view on the world which he wants to change. Whereas me, Sadek, I'm different. Quite simply.

Perhaps that helped Sadek's take on Farook?

In any case, it's between the two. Me, as Sadek, I rap about what's around me in my life. And Farook allowed me to take a more tormented stance, but with hope in humanity.

Both lead characters carry certain wounds. Did you identify with them?

I think we all bear our scars. We use our hurt to feed our work. I've never done movies before. I used to think that acting was acting. But acting means drawing on your real emotions and being able to bring them to the surface for an instant. I really enjoyed making this film; it was a very different experience for me.



At the start of the film, there's a rap you wrote which is quite radical. At that point in the film, we still haven't seen your eyes.

At the start of this film, I reflect the vision of the director, Rachid Djaidani. I tried to base this on a very closed point of view. You think, this young guy would be incapable of changing, given his way of thinking. You realize he didn't choose which side he's on; he was assigned it. He's confronted with situations that he has to endure without any choice. If he was just given another perspective, even through a forced situation, he could open up to other aspects of his personality he didn't know were there. It's hard to stare in wonder at a jellyfish on a beach when you've never been to the beach.

So one day you open a door and you're face to face with Gérard Depardieu.

It was a surrealist encounter because, like any young guy from our generation, I see him as a figurehead of French cinema. My father has run a garage in Aubervilliers outside Paris since I was little. I felt like I'm dealing with one of his friends who I've known since I was a kid. The old Frenchy types who really like us! When I say "us", I mean the Arabs and Blacks who live in the projects, not to sanitize the picture. I felt that he had a view on this world that I could relate to. Our characters are both against the system. We have a common enemy, but the paradox is that we can't always join forces.

There's an amazing moment when Farook says to Serge: "I'm French, you know." And Serge replies: "If that's what you believe, that's a start." What does that exchange mean to you?

When he says that to me, he's taking sides with the most extreme; those who, among the French fascists, fight against the idea of racial mixing. And for those people, the character I play hasn't even gone 25% of the way. Those kind of people always want to send me back to some presumed elsewhere.

How do you feel your character evolved?

Anything can happen through an encounter and talking. What's great is there are moments in which there's an exchange of ideas, and others when no solution emerges. Talking engages things on both sides.

Is it better talking or shouting?

If you manage to generate the same intensity when you're shouting as when you're talking, then you're a genius. But if you talk without shouting, you're crazy.

Are you happy at the moment?

I'm the kind of guy who always feels fulfilled and happy. I think this world doesn't owe me a thing, and that being alive is a wonderful experience despite the hard times.

The film is nonetheless shot through with the kind of hatred that seems to infiltrate everywhere these days.

Of course. But I don't turn on my TV. I concentrate much more on my buddies than all the rest. I say what I think; if you let everything that's going on get to you, you'll spend year, or even a whole lifetime being depressed. I don't know if I want to get involved in the conflicts of the age. It's too much for me. I really urge people to have an artistic and creative approach which will surprise everyone. That's the only way to respond to the folly of our times.

After music, do you want to carve out a film career?

Personally, I like it all, the rap studio and the movie set. It's true it's a little disjointed to be a rapper and an actor at the same time, but I love that distinction. For my music, I always try to draw on reality. But I'd be happy with any invented film role, I'd even take on something from as far back as the Middle Ages. I love the escapism involved in acting. I wouldn't say it's easy for me, but it's a total pleasure.