

# Persmap

ARTÉMIS PRODUCTIONS, SAMSA FILM, LIAISON  
CINÉMATOGRAPHIQUE & MILLE ET UNE FILMS  
presenteren

RACHAEL BLAKE  
LUCIE DEBAY



# Melody

een film van  
BERNARD BELLEFROID

ARTÉMIS PRODUCTIONS, SAMSA FILM, LIAISON CINÉMATOGRAPHIQUE & MILLE ET UNE FILMS PRESENTEN — RACHAEL BLAKE, LUCIE DEBAY EN DE ROLES — MELODY — UN FILM DE BERNARD BELLEFROID — SCÉNARIO DE BERNARD BELLEFROID ET CHARLÉNE JAMARQUE — AVEC LA COLLABORATION D'ANDRÉ-JACQUES THOMAS ET MARCEL GARDNER — MUSIQUE WOLFGANG SCHLÖGLER L'ORFÈVRE DU FILM SUÉDOIS — MONTAGE JONAS-LUC CHOUAN — SONNAGE JEAN-BENOÎT PELLISSIER AVEC THOMAS CHARLES-ARNOUD, PHILIPPE CHIFFOLEAU — ALÉXANDRE BRUNELLE, FÉLIXE FROUPELLE — BÉNÉDICTE ALONSO, CÉCILE BOUQUET — BUREAU DE PRODUCTION WARRIOR, WARRIOR — PRODUCTION MÉTRO FILM SYSTEM, BUREAU DE RECHERCHES SUISSES — UN FILM PRODUIT PAR PIERRE-LAURENT CHOUAN, MARCEL GARDNER, STÉPHANE ZIMMER — CO-PRODUCTIONS WOLFGANG SCHLÖGLER, MILLE ET UNE FILMS — EN COPRODUCTION AVEC LE FÉDÉRATION BELGE DU FILM ET DU PRODUIT — AVEC LE SOUTIEN FINANCIER DU MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE ET DE LA COMMUNICATION DE LA RÉGION WALLONNE — AVEC LE SOUTIEN FINANCIER DE LA RÉGION BRUXELLOISE — AVEC LE SOUTIEN FINANCIER DE LA RÉGION FLEMANDE — EN ASSOCIATION AVEC LA SOCIÉTÉ GÉNÉRALISTE, CINAUT, CINAUT MEDIA, CINAUT PICTURES, CINAUT PICTURES MEDIA, VALSÉRIA, EMPREINTE DE BELGIQUE, CINAUT 19 — AVEC LE SOUTIEN DU BUREAU DU QUATRIÈME FÉDÉRAL DE BELGIQUE, DU PROGRAMME MEDIA DE LA COMMUNAUTÉ EUROPÉENNE — VOUS EN TROUVÉREZ PLUS SUR CINÉART

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# MELODY

Een film van Bernard Bellefroid

*De jonge Melody besluit draagmoeder moeder te worden voor een rijke Engelse dame (Emily) in ruil voor een grote som geld. Emily dwingt de wat onstabiele Melody bij haar in te trekken. Op het eerste gezicht lijken de werelden van de twee vrouwen ver van elkaar verwijderd, maar tot hun verbazing groeien ze steeds meer naar elkaar toe. Totdat het noodlot toeslaat en de geschiedenis zich dreigt te herhalen.*



Speelduur: 94 - Land: België - Jaar: 2015 - Genre: Drama

Release datum bioscoop: 14 mei 2015

Distributie: Cinéart

Meer informatie over de film:

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*Persmap en foto's staan op: [www.cinéart.nl](http://www.cinéart.nl)*

*Persrubriek - inlog: cinéart / wachtwoord: film*

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## Cast

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EMILY	Rachael Blake
MELODY	Lucie Debay
GARY	Don Gallagher

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## Crew

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Director	Bernard Bellefroid
Scriptwriters	Bernard Bellefroid en Carine Zimmerlin, in samenwerking met Anne-Louise Trividic en Marcel Beaulieu
DoP	David Williamson
Sound engineer	Carine Zimmerlin
Art Director	Régine Constant
Costumes	Catherine Marchand
Editing	Jean-Luc Simon
Sound Editing	Nicolas Tran Trong - Charles Autrand
Re Recording Mixer	Philippe Charbonnel
Music	Frédéric Vercheval
Genre	Drama
Shooting Dates	January - March 2014
Shooting Dates	France, Luxembourg, UK
First DCP	May 2014
Theatrical Release Date	January 2015
Distribution Belgium	Cinéart/Artébis Entertainment
Distribution France	A déterminer
International Sales	Doc & Film

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## Interview met regisseur Bernard Bellefroid

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**Your first feature film, *The Boat Race*, talks about intra-family violence, portraying a teenager who is mistreated by his father. With your second feature film, *Melody*, are you continuing to explore the bond between parent and child?**

Whether you consider *The Boat Race* or my documentaries – *Rwanda*, *The Hills Talk* and *Why Can't We See Each Other Outside When the Weather Is Nice* – they always explore the bond between parent and child and reflect a certain tension between this bond and other types of connections, those we create independently. In a way, my work is about adoption in the broader sense. In addition, I have always found it striking how a child can be viewed as an object – a sort of thing. This is the particular context in which I wanted to continue exploring the parent-child bond.



**“Your children are not your children (...) They come through you but not from you (...) they do not belong to you.” Does this poem reflect what *Melody* is about?**

I prefer to talk about Emmanuel Lévinas, a philosopher whose thoughts on the concept of responsibility towards Another inspire me a great deal. We are clearly responsible... but not necessarily for a child. We are faced with a strange paradox in reality because our child is both born from our flesh and blood, like an extension of ourselves, yet is also in fact Another who belongs to no one. With that in mind, am I responsible for him? I am responsible for helping him grow, enabling him to grow himself, but in no way do I “own” him. The film tackles this issue by asking further questions rather than providing definitive answers.

**Surrogacy has not been particularly present in films until now. It is a topic which gives rise to a great deal of moral and ethical questions and, therefore, to many controversies. Where do you stand in relation to these debates?**

I’ve been working on this subject for three years now and, the further I go, the less I understand! When a murder takes place and we don’t understand what happened, we question the murderer and the presumed witnesses, examine the alleged weapon and reconstruct the events leading up to the crime. I make films in a similar way: when I don’t understand something, I write a story, create characters and set up a kind of life-size reconstruction... I believe the sticking point is whether surrogacy is tantamount to abandonment or can in fact be ethical. I’m not sure whether *Melody* is about surrogate mothers. At face value, you might think so, but when you dig deeper, like *The Boat Race*, *Melody* is actually about the parent-child bond, adoption and two lone individuals who progressively discover a mother and a daughter within each other. That is the film’s real subject.

**Another controversial subject in France and elsewhere: the practice of giving birth anonymously. In the film, we discover that *Melody* was in fact born in such circumstances and has never known her mother. Do you believe that *Melody*’s personal journey in relation to the child she carries would have been the same without this past experience?**

A story is always an exception. It just so happens that, in this case, the character was born not knowing her mother’s identity and goes on to carry a child. I thought it would be interesting to put

these issues face to face: surrogacy and giving birth anonymously. The latter is a dreadful act of violence, in my opinion. Have we the right to amputate a child's past? How can a human being who knows nothing of where he comes from (re)build himself? But, at the same time, how can we ignore the injustices visited upon those women who are forced to give birth anonymously?

Children who are abandoned as a result of this procedure are always given to families. This once again gives rise to the question of whether the parent-child bond is genetic or emotional. Essentially, the question is whether it is essential for an individual to know where he originates in order to evolve, or whether it is the emotional and social ties he forms that are key to his wellbeing.

**You are Belgian and French-speaking. Why have you chosen to set your story in England?**

I wanted to put two empires face to face: England, where surrogacy is authorized under strict conditions, and France, where women may give birth anonymously. As the film is primarily set in England, I wanted to tell the story in two languages to make it more realistic. Melody speaks mainly French while Emily speaks mainly English. More than anything, the story is about the tensions between these two women. Whenever the tension mounts, one character addresses the other in her own language and conversely whenever there is tenderness it feels more touching if things are said in the other person's native language. The actors' work changes greatly whether they speak French or English – emotions are conveyed very differently. Exploring these nuances was fascinating to me.

**Both Melody and Emily seem very strong in their relationships with others yet also very fragile as a result of their respective pasts. Cold and distant at first, the sponsor-surrogate partnership will evolve little by little and quite unexpectedly into a very tender bond...**

Both these women wear great big armours. Melody wants to get her head above water and decides to carry another person's child in order to finance her hair salon – “it's better than being poor”, she says. She embodies a character from 2014, at the start of the 21st century, a young European woman in mid-crisis Europe. As for Emily, she wants a child at all costs, irrespective of the consequences. She has done everything she could to have one but can no longer get pregnant. So, together, they opt for surrogacy, a drastic solution that I decline to judge but which casts doubt upon the politics of austerity, the way in which Europe is evolving and young people's place in society. Initially, the film is simply about a deal between two consenting adults. Emily will then realize, through contact with Melody, that carrying a baby then giving it away to someone else is no easy task, and each will end up finding in the other what she never had. The director of photography, the production designer and I agreed that Melody would be a character who lived only outside and during the daytime, whereas Emily would always be inside, in her house, like some sort of prison, cut off from the outside world, until the last part of the film when, symbolically, the outdoors and indoors finally meet.

**If The Boat Race is “a men's film” – a son, his father and his rowing coach – here, you are clearly focusing on women and maternity. As a man, how did you approach this very feminine and intimate issue of wanting a child and, especially, wanting to be pregnant with regards to both writing and acting?**

Youssef Chahine says that you should make films for women because they are the ones who choose what people see at the movies. I decided to follow his advice after making The Boat Race! On a more serious note, I never bore a child, true, but must you be African to talk about Africa? Filmmakers and storytellers must also explore subjects that are far removed from their lives. And I wasn't the only one writing. In addition to Marcel Beaulieu's contribution, I worked with a co-writer, Carine Zimmerlin, a consultant, Anne-Louise Trividic, and both my actresses. All these women influenced my

story in their own way.

**Lucie Debay, who plays Melody, is new to the screen and a true revelation. How did you meet her and work with her before filming?**

She is new to feature films but is a renowned theatre actress in Belgium. I was fortunate enough to meet her and it quickly clicked. She owned the role through her strength, resilience and generosity. Her face can leave you feeling helpless in an instant, with minimal acting. A face without trickery.

**Why did you choose Rachael Blake (Australian actress who featured in the highly controversial *Sleeping Beauty*) for the role of Emily, the mother and sponsor?**

We worked with Kahleen Crawford who is, notably, Ken Loach's casting director. She made various suggestions, including Rachael Blake, to whom we sent the script. Two days later, she responded in a modest and touching manner. I believe that she plays Emily with true finesse, on a knifeedge, and that her radiance contrasts beautifully with the harshness of what she is going through.

**Director of photography David Williamson was tasked with filming. What instructions did you give him?**

I gave effect to my wishes and even intensified them. Namely, that characters' gaze remain close to the axis, sometimes giving the impression that they are looking at the viewer, as if calling on his kindness. I also placed a great deal of importance on maintaining the right size and distance respectively. Not too close, or I lost the pregnancy. Not too far, or I lost the characters.

**We lit the film from above, from the ceiling, so as to free up the frame and the actors' space and facilitate my work as director – I always had 360°.**

I certainly did not want harsh lighting, the story already being quite intense. For me, the human face is like a sanctuary, I don't like a stark contrast on faces – I need to see every feature. I therefore wanted soft, serene lighting that is beautiful yet realistic, and contradicts what the characters are going through.

**Would you describe your film as a tragedy? Despite the harshness of the subject, one senses a genuine desire on your part to be hopeful and move towards the light...**

Though the themes I choose tend to be tough, I cannot stop myself from instilling a little glimmer of hope in my films, however slight. I am not a desperate filmmaker.

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# Biografie Bernard Bellefroid

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## LONG METRAGE CINEMA

### **2014 MELODY**

Festival du Film Francophone d'Angoulême

Festival des Films du Monde de Montréal

### **2009 LA RÉGATE**

Scénario lauréat de la fondation Beaumarchais

Prix du Public et Jury Junior FIFF Namur 2009

Prix du Public Festival «Premiers Plans» Angers 2010

Sélection en compétition Festival de Rome 2009

## COURT MÉTRAGE CINEMA

### **2002 QUAND ON EST MORT ON NE RESPIRE PLUS**

- Sélections :

- Festival Premiers Plans Angers

- Festival International Febiofest

- Festival International des Écoles de cinéma de Mexico

### **2001 FIONA**

## DOCUMENTAIRE CINÉ

### **2007 POURQUOI ON NE PEUT PAS SE VOIR DEHORS QUAND IL FAIT BEAU**

### **2006 RWANDA, LES COLLINES PARLENT**

- Grand prix du Festival Vues d'Afrique 2006

- Bayard d'or du Festival International du Film Francophone de Namur 2006

- Grand Prix du Documentaire du Festival International Docville de Leuven

- Grand Prix du Festival International du Film indépendant de Osnabrück 2006

- Prix du Conseil Général, Festival du Film Européen de Vannes

- Grand prix Documentaire Festival International Cinéfleuve

### **2000 NOUS SOMMES AU MONDE**

## RADIO

### **1998 : SECHE TES LARMES, C'EST QUE LA GUERRE (21 minutes)**

-Prix du Public du Festival de Création Sonore et Radiophonique (Belgique)

## PUBLICATION

### **2003 : IBUKA MUZUNGU ( nouvelle)**

- Grand Prix de la Communauté Française de Belgique du Concours de nouvelle « La fureur de lire»

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# Rachel Blake

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## FILMS

2013	My Mistress (post-production)
2011	Sleeping Beauty
2010	Cherry Tree Lane
2009	Pinprick
2008	Summer
2005	Dérapage
2004	Tom White
2003	Perfect Strangers
2002	Whispering in the Dark (CM)
2001	The Letter
2001	Lantana
2000	Blindman's Bluff (CM)
1997	Paws



## TV

2013	Serangoon Road (post-production)
2012	The Straits (série TV)
2010	Hawke
2009	Le Prisonnier (série TV)
2009	Nightfall: agent double
2008	Inspecteur Lewis (série TV)
2006-2007	Les flingueuses (série TV)
2007	Clapham Junction
2006	Bon Voyage (série TV)
2004	Auf Wiedersehen, Pet (série TV)
2003	Dying to Leave
2003	Grass Roots (série TV)
2000	The Three Stooges
2000	Atterissage impossible
1997-1999	Wildside (série TV)
1995-1997	Summer Bay (série TV)
1997	Brigade des mers (série TV)
1997	Heartbreak High (série TV)
1996	Fire (série TV)



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# Lucie Debay

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## Parcours

2005-2009: MASTER DE L'INSTITUT NATIONAL  
SUPERIEUR DES ARTS DU SPECTACLE-INSAS

## Long métrage

2014 UN FRANÇAIS - DIASTEME  
Rôle principal féminin

2013 MELODY - Bernard BELLEFROID  
Rôle principal féminin

2012 AVANT L'HIVER - Philippe CLAUDEL

2008 SOMEWERE BETWEEN HERE AND NOW -  
Olivier BOONJING - Premier rôle.

Sélections officielles aux Festivals de Bruxelles  
(Prix du Public) et Los Angeles (Prix Mavrick,  
Meilleure Interpretation Féminine).

## Court métrage cinéma

2013 JUNG FOREVER - Jean-Sébastien LOPEZ

2013 TERRITOIRE - Vincent PARONNAUD

2013 L'HOMME QUI SAIT - Jean-Manuel FERNANDEZ

2013 AFFAIRES COURANTES - Ian MENOYOT

2012 LE SECRET DU SERPENT - Mathieu VOLPE

2012 ROADSIDE GIRLS - Denis MAUGUIT

2011 A NEW OLD STORY - Antoine CUYERS

2011 TOUT COMME LES PRINCES - Claude SCHMITZ

2011 CONQUÊTE SPATIALE - Baptiste GRANDIN

2010 TRANSFERT - Pauline CAILLET

2009 UN DUEL - Pascale BRISCHOUX

2007 ESSAI VIDÉO - Azilys ROMANE

2005 TINTAMARRE - Thibaut GODARD

2003 INSOMNIE - Patrick ORTEG A

## Artiste interprète Théâtre

2013 J'AI ÉCRIT «PAR CONTUMACE»  
Astrid MIGNON-DEMAN

2013 L'ARCHÉOLOGUE ET L'ÉCRAN PLAT/L'ÉCOLIER  
KEVIN - Jean-Baptiste CALAME

2013 KING DOM - Manah DEPAUW  
Bit Teatergarsjen (Norvège)

2013 LA PEUR - Armel ROUSSE  
Théâtre National de Bruxelles

2012 HEROES - Vincent HENNEBICQ  
Théâtre National de Bruxelles

2012 SALON DES REFUSÉS - Claude SCMITZ

2012 PARASITES Vincent HENNEBICQ  
Théâtre National de Bruxelles

2011 PLAY LOUD - Falk RICHTER  
Théâtre de Bruxelles

2010 IVANOV - Armel ROUSSEL

2010 L'INSURRECTION QUI VIENT - Coline STRUYF

2010 ENFANT ZÉRO - Céline OHREL

2009 SI DEMAIN VOUS DÉPLAIT - Armel ROUSSEL

2008 BODYSASTER - Collectif Corps Catastrophe

2006 TRAGEDIA ENDOGONIDIA  
Roméo CASTELLUCCI  
Théâtre du Maillon, Strasbourg

#### Téléfilm

2009 EN VOUS REMERCIANT - Julien SERI  
Docu-fiction

2009 FRAGONARD - Jacques DONJEAN  
Court métrage télévision

