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PRESS BOOK

REFLET DANS UN DIAMANT MORT

 75^e Internationale
Filmfestspiele
Berlin
Compétition

Un film de
HÉLÈNE CATTET et BRUNO FORZANI

FABIO TESTI YANNICK RENIER KOEN DE BOUW MARIA DE MEDEIROS THI-MAI NGUYEN CÉLINE CAMARA

Scénario de HÉLÈNE CATTET et BRUNO FORZANI - chef opérateur Wang DACOSSE - décors Laurie COLSON - montage image Bernard BEETS - montage son Dan BRUYLANDT - mixeur Mathieu COX - illustrations Emanuele Barison - producteur Pierre FOULON coproducteurs Gilles CHAMIAL, Simona PELLICCIOLI, François COGNARD, Bart VAN LANGENDONCK, Dominique MARZOTTO et Clément GUEDE - producteurs associés Alex VERBAERE, David CLAIRENS, Tenney DEKEYSER, Olivier PÉRE, Rami BURRAH, Philippe LOGIE, Valérie BERLEMONT - en coproduction avec SNP Paribas Fortis Film Finance, RTBF (Télévision belge), ARTE France Cinéma, VOD et Be tv, PROXIMUS, - avec l'aide du Centre du Cinéma et de l'Audiotvisuel de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles et de la Loterie Nationale, Fonds Audiovisuel de Flandre (VNF), avec le soutien du Film Fund Luxembourg, Ministero della Cultura - Direzione Generale Cinema e Audiovisivo, PR FESR de la Ligurie, Ciné+ OCS - avec la participation de la Région de Bruxelles Capitale, Wallimage (La Wallonie) et la Région des Pays de la Loire, en partenariat avec le CNC - produit avec le soutien du Tax Shelter du Gouvernement Fédéral Belge - ventes internationales : True Colours



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REFLECTION IN A DEAD DIAMOND

(REFLET DANS UN DIAMANT MORT)

A film by H  l  ne Cattet & Bruno Forzani

Belgium / Luxembourg / Italy / France - 2025 - Color - 87 min - 5.1 - French / Italian / English

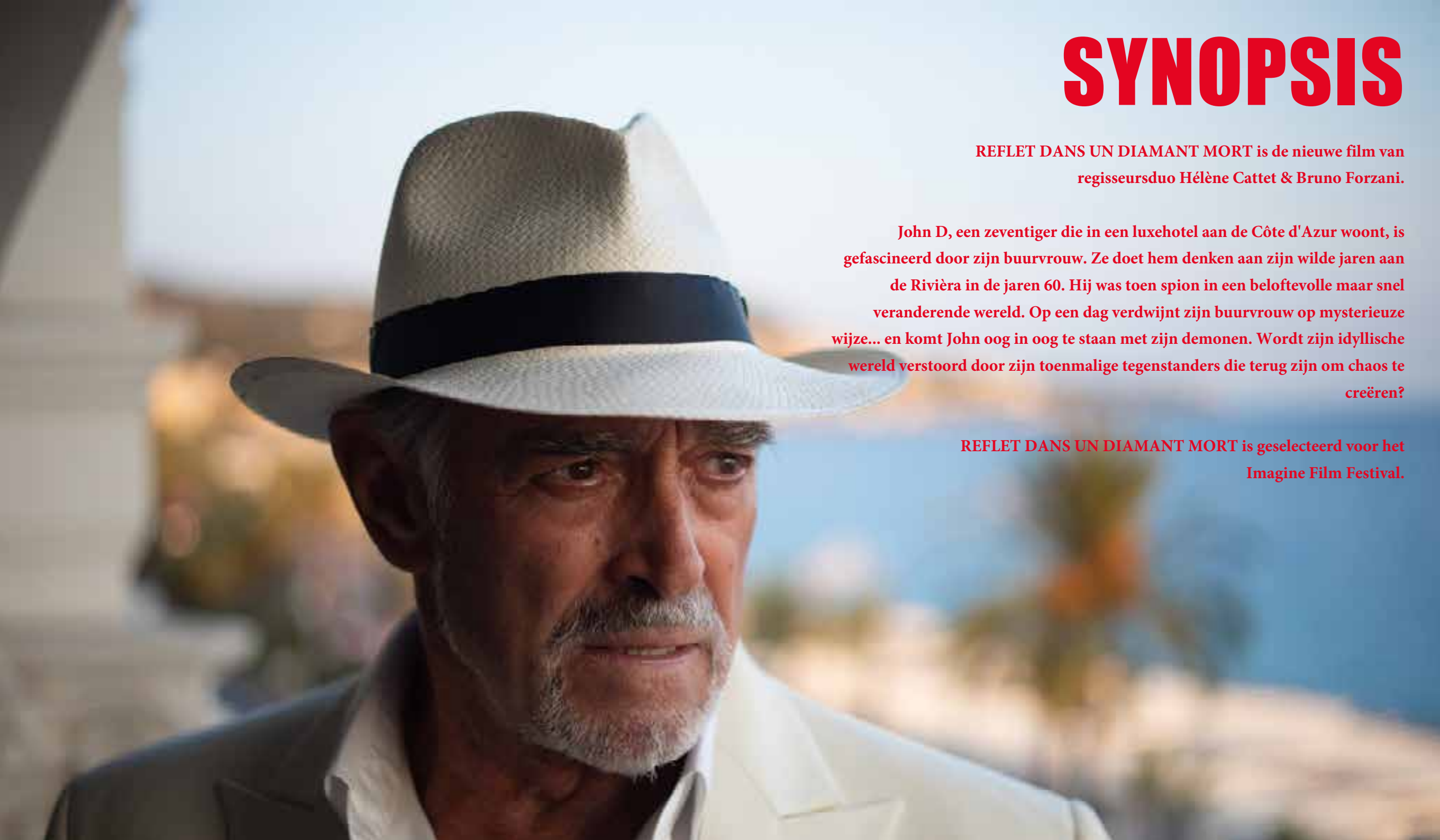


SYNOPSIS

REFLET DANS UN DIAMANT MORT is de nieuwe film van regisseursduo Hélène Cattet & Bruno Forzani.

John D, een zeventiger die in een luxehotel aan de Côte d'Azur woont, is gefascineerd door zijn buurvrouw. Ze doet hem denken aan zijn wilde jaren aan de Riviera in de jaren 60. Hij was toen spion in een beloftevolle maar snel veranderende wereld. Op een dag verdwijnt zijn buurvrouw op mysterieuze wijze... en komt John oog in oog te staan met zijn demonen. Wordt zijn idyllische wereld verstoord door zijn toenmalige tegenstanders die terug zijn om chaos te creëren?

REFLET DANS UN DIAMANT MORT is geselecteerd voor het Imagine Film Festival.







INTERVIEW

with Hélène Cattet & Bruno Forzani

What were the original inspirations for REFLECTION?

It all started when we saw Monte Hellman's *Road to Nowhere* in 2010, starring Fabio Testi. He reminded us of Sean Connery, and was wearing a white suit that reminded us of Dirk Bogarde in Visconti's *Death in Venice*. That's when we said to ourselves: "But why not create a universe mixing James Bond with *Death in Venice*, two antithetical cinemas, and see what happens?" Over the years, the exhibitions we've seen, the world we live in, the places we know, etc., have nourished this universe... Finally, Christophe Honoré's staging of the opera *La Tosca* and his unconventional approach to a great classic finally gave us the impetus to write.

For those who are not at all familiar with some of the European films or comics some of the source material is based on, can you explain what is most interesting and specific about them?

The world of superheroes and James Bond is mainly known through the American prism. But all these figures also existed in Italy in the 60s: on the one hand, with *Eurospy*, which were cheap, pop, European James Bond knock-offs; on the other, with *Fumetti neri*, adult comic strips such as *Diabolik*, where the villains are situated in a grey zone far from the "good / evil" approach... It's these thoughts that brought a certain freshness to approaching this universe today for us and allowed us to explore some thematics like nostalgia, the passage of time, the socio-cultural shifts in between, etc.

These popular pop films often borrowed details from *Op Art* (the art of optical illusion). As one of the themes of *Reflection in a Dead Diamond* is Illusion, we also found it appropriate to develop this theme visually by integrating elements from *Op Art* (just as we had done with *Art Nouveau* in *L'étrange couleur des larmes de ton corps* (*The Strange Color of Your Body's Tears*) and with *New Realism* in *Laissez bronzer les cadavres* (*Let the Corpses Tan*)).



INTERVIEW

with **Hélène Cattet & Bruno Forzani**

You have explored wildly different genres in your filmmaking career, yet have a specific language that is uniquely your own that is consistent in your work. Is there an explicit intention in not taking a “straight forward” approach?

We’ve adopted a “less straight forward” approach than a classic superhero or James Bond film, because these are archetypes known the world over, so we can afford to deviate a little and offer something different. We’re looking for that thrill of the first viewing of a “straight forward” narrative film, while at the same time offering an extra dimension where there’s a grey zone of doubt that allows the viewer to revisit the film several times and find new things with each viewing. We opted for ‘stereoscopic writing’, typical of Satoshi Kon (*Millennium Actress*, *Perfect Blue*), as it gives an illusion of narrative 3D by developing the story with different thematic strata. The principle was to write this story with different layers of themes and narratives to create an emboss effect that plays on the perception of the character and the spectator, thus allowing to organically shape the world inside the mind of the protagonist along with his loss of orientation within it. The narrative hence becomes a multifaceted “diamond” with its multiple grids of kaleidoscopic interpretations.

How did you decide to cast Fabio Testi in the lead role, as the older John D.?

Fabio inspired us to write the script after seeing Monte Hellman's film, and the fact that he had worked on both "auteur" (De Sica's *Il giardino dei Finzi-Contini*, Zulawski's *That Most Important Thing: Love...*) and exploitation films (Castellari's *Big Racket*, Dallamano's *What have you done to Solange?*) enabled us to create the alchemy of "opposite" cinemas that we were looking for.

INTERVIEW

with H  l  ne Cattet & Bruno Forzani

What about Yannick Renier, who plays the young John?

The role of the young John was the hardest to find. As much as it's a type of character in which you can imagine an Anglo-Saxon actor, it's more complicated in the French-speaking world. We met Yannick after he shot a film in which he lost weight to play a sick person. We felt that in terms of acting he matched what we were looking for, but physically he was too weak. He told us to trust him, and he put on 10 kilos of muscle in 4 months: a metamorphosis that was truly impressive!



INTERVIEW

with Hélène Cattet & Bruno Forzani

What inspired your other casting decisions, Maria de Medeiros and others, for you makes some of the cast members special?

For the role of Serpentik we were looking for someone who could both embody the character and do all the stunts. In 2002, we discovered contemporary dance with the show *Blush* by the Belgian troupe Ultima Vez. One dancer in particular fascinated us, but we had no idea who she was. During the preparation of the film, while shopping at the supermarket, we came across Wim Vandekeybus, the choreographer of Ultima Vez. We approached him and described the famous *Blush* dancer we were desperately looking for, and he showed us a photo on his phone: it was Thi-Mai Nguyen, and we'd found our Serpentik!

As for Maria de Meideros, we were looking for a striking, timeless actress who could travel between the film's two narrative eras and instill a sense of disquiet. Pierre Foulon, the film's producer, knew her, and as soon as we saw recent photos of her, we knew she was the person we were looking for.





INTERVIEW

with **Hélène Cattet & Bruno Forzani**

Your stories are often grounded in very specific settings. Why the brightness of the South of France this time around - what does it represent for you in terms of this particular genre?

The Côte d'Azur is a place of illusion and appearances, making it the ideal setting. In the 60s, Eurospy and other Italian B series used the glamour and luxury of the Côte d'Azur to make audiences dream and give prestige to their plots. Bruno is originally from there, and this film was also a way for us to revisit places we know and integrate them into our imagination. The Riviera is one of the main characters in the film, and the plot was written with it in mind.



HÉLÈNE CATTET & BRUNO FORZANI

Hélène Cattet and Bruno Forzani live in Brussels and have been working together since 2000.

After writing and directing several self-produced shorts, they moved on to feature films with AMER in 2009 and L'ETRANGE COULEUR DES LARMES DE TON CORPS (THE STRANGE COLOR OF YOUR BODY'S TEARS) in 2013, a diptych about desire.

That year they also took part in the American anthology film ABC'S OF DEATH which brought together 26 emerging Genre directors.

In 2017, they shot LAISSEZ BRONZER LES CADAVRES (LET THE CORPSES TAN), based on a 'Black Series' book from editor Gallimard, written by Jean-Patrick Manchette & Jean-Pierre Bastid.

REFLET DANS UN DIAMANT MORT (REFLECTION IN A DEAD DIAMOND) is their fourth feature film.



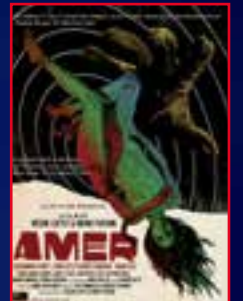
REFLECTION IN A
DEAD DIAMOND
2025
Berlinale
In Competition



LET THE CORPSES TAN
2017
Toronto Film Festival
London Film Festival
Locarno Film Festival
Rotterdam Film Festival



THE STRANGE
COLOUR OF YOUR
BODY'S TEARS
2013
Toronto Film Festival
London Film Festival
Locarno Film Festival
Sitges Film Festival



AMER
2009
Copenhagen Film Festival
(New Talent Grand Prix)
Gérardmer Film Festival
(Special Mention)
Sitges Film Festival
(New Vision Award)
SXSW Film Festival
Rotterdam Film Festival
New York Film Festival



FABIO TESTI



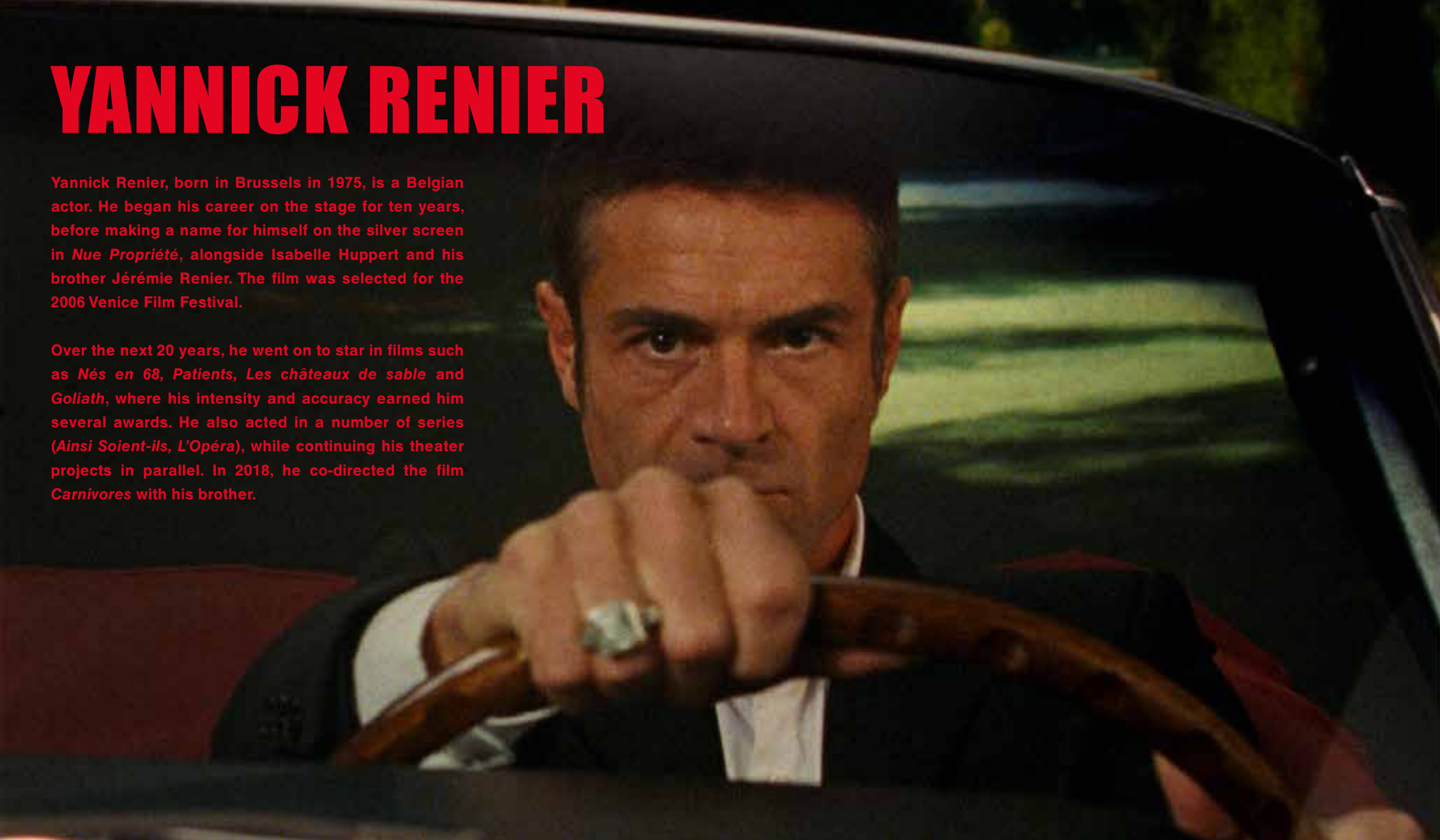
From 1955, Fabio Testi's home town Peschiera del Garda was also home to Bertolazzi Film, a motion picture studio which specialised in the production of colourful pirate movies. Lake Garda was merrily used as the ersatz Caribbean. At Bertolazzi, young Fabio began his career first as an extra, then as a stunt man and body double. As a stunt man, he appeared in the classic westerns *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (1966) and (as one of Henry Fonda's minions in *Once Upon a Time in the West* (1968). He started getting small film roles from 1967 and this helped to finance his architectural studies. After graduating, he made commercials for Coca Cola and proceeded to further studies at Verona's Academy of Fine Arts to improve his acting. For several years, he appeared in genre films, often lesser spaghetti westerns like *One Damned Day at Dawn... Django Meets Sartana!* (1970). As a bona fide action hero, his athletic prowess and imposing physique became a definite asset. Nonetheless, still dissatisfied with the roles he was getting, Testi attended diction classes in Cambridge to improve his English and went to London for acting lessons.

Upon his return to Italy, he finally made his breakthrough after being picked by Vittorio De Sica in the Oscar-winning historical drama *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* (1970). In the wake of the picture's success, Testi has alternated between performing in art films by directors like Claude Chabrol and Andrzej Zulawski, and genre films of the giallo (*What Have You Done to Solange?* (1972)) or poliziotteschi/crime variety (*Camorra* (1972), *Revolver* (1973), *I guappi* (1974)). Over the years he has acted alongside international stars like Oliver Reed, Anthony Quinn, Robert Mitchum (in *The Ambassador* (1984)), Eli Wallach and David Hemmings. By the mid-1980's, Testi was seen more often in television productions. In the 90's, he also turned his attention towards the theatre with a role in a stage adaptation of Federico Fellini's *La Strada*.

YANNICK RENIER

Yannick Renier, born in Brussels in 1975, is a Belgian actor. He began his career on the stage for ten years, before making a name for himself on the silver screen in *Nue Propriété*, alongside Isabelle Huppert and his brother Jérémie Renier. The film was selected for the 2006 Venice Film Festival.

Over the next 20 years, he went on to star in films such as *Nés en 68*, *Patients*, *Les châteaux de sable* and *Goliath*, where his intensity and accuracy earned him several awards. He also acted in a number of series (*Ainsi Soient-ils*, *L'Opéra*), while continuing his theater projects in parallel. In 2018, he co-directed the film *Carnivores* with his brother.



KOEN DE BOUW

Award-winning Koen De Bouw is one of the leading actors in Belgium. He studied theatre at the prestigious Antwerp Studio Herman Teirlinck and made his film debut in 1988. Since then he played leading parts in more than 30 Belgian and international films as well as a similar number of television series, several of them internationally awarded.

His other film credits include starring in Van Looy's 2008 international cult hit *Loft*. Koen stars opposite Matt Bomer and Kelsey Grammer in the series *The Last Tycoon*, created by Billy Ray. In Belgium he can also be seen as *Jasper Teerlinck*, the enigmatic lead of the hit #1 rated Belgian television series *Professor T.*, running for 3 seasons in Belgium, with remakes in France and Germany.

Koen's recent projects include the series *Red Light* and *Styx*, as well as the feature films *Torpedo* and *Nowhere*. In 2020, he gained acclaim for his role in the Oscar-nominated film *The Man Who Sold His Skin*. Currently, you can watch him in Tim Mielants' feature film *WIL*, *Julie Keeps Quiet*, and the series *Largo Winch*.



MARIA DE MEDEIROS



Maria de Medeiros, born in Lisbon, is an international actress and director. She began her career working with Portuguese directors such as Jo o César Monteiro and Manoel de Oliveira. At the Venice Film Festival, she was awarded the Coppa Volpi for Best Actress for Teresa Villaverde's *Two Brothers, My Sister*. Her work gained worldwide recognition thanks to her role as Anaïs Nin in Philip Kaufman's *Henry and June*, followed by her role in Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*. She has worked with Bigas Luna in Spain, Antonietta de Lillo, Marco Puccioni and Abel Ferrara in Italy, Guy Maddin in Canada, Ishtar Yacin in Mexico and Miguel Faria in Brazil, among others.

Her first feature film as director, *Capitaines d'Avril*, was selected for the Cannes Film Festival and won several international awards. She went on to direct two feature-length documentaries, *Je t'aime, moi non plus - Artistes et critiques* and *Repare bem - Les yeux de Bacuri*. This film won the Jury Prize, Critics' Prize and Don Quixote Prize at the Gramado Festival.

Entre deux inconnus, her filmed correspondence with philosopher Stéphane Zagdanski, was shown in September 2016 at Galerie Eric Dupont in Paris.

In Rio de Janeiro, she directed *nos enfants*, her 2nd feature, adapted from the play of the same name by Laura Castro, which she had performed on stage in Brazil.

While working on both sides of the camera, she has pursued her theatrical activity, most recently with Bob Wilson in *Since I've been me - Pessoa*, and made forays into music as a singer and composer.

THI MAI NGUYEN



Thi mai Nguyen is a French-Vietnamese dancer, director and actress. She has toured the world as a performer in productions by Wim Vandekeybus, James Thiérree, Vania Vaneau, Damien Jalet, among others. In 2018 she received The Maeterlinck Prize For Critics for her first show *ETNA*. This was followed by *PRÉMISSE* and *STAND BY*. Her plays are programmed in Europe, Asia and Latin America. She has appeared in the films *BLUSH*, *HERE AFTER* by Wim Vandekeybus and *MISTER NOBODY* by Jaco van Dormael. She choreographed the films *LA VÉRITÉ* by Kore-eda Hirokazu and *TOUTES POUR UNE* by Houda Benyamina. She studied at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Paris, where she graduated magna cum laude. At the age of 17, she won second prize in the Paris dance competition at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. She studied at P.A.R.T.S and the SAE institute in Brussels. Thi mai studied meisner technique with Larry Silverberg and Scott Williams.



CÉLINE CAMARA

Céline is a French actress based in Luxembourg. She was born in the Paris suburbs, where she studied piano, classical dance and modern jazz at the Créteil Conservatoire.

After studying law in France and the UK, Céline moved to Luxembourg in 2012, where she began a career as an academic lawyer. After a salutary existential crisis, she left law in 2018 to devote herself entirely to the performing arts and cinema. Since then, she has appeared in several films, including Julien Becker's *An Zéro* (2020), Cyrus Neshvad's *La Valise rouge* (2021), Sander Burger's *Totem* (2022), as well as seasons 2 of the series *Pandore* (2023) and *Capitani* (2022). On stage, she has recently appeared in plays such as *Moi je suis Rosa!* (Aude- Laurence Biver, 2021), *Songes d'une nuit...* (Myriam Muller, 2023-2024), *Alceste vs Tartuffe* and *Arnolphe vs Dom Juan* (Myriam Muller, 2024).

EMANUELE BARISON

Comic Book Illustrator



Born in Pordenone (Italy) in 1963, Emanuele Barison started working in comics in the 80's for Walt Disney where he illustrated the adventures of Mickey and Donald.

In the early 2000s he became one of the great cartoonists of the Italian fumetti, whose color drawings of Diabolik inspired us for *Reflection in a Dead Diamond*. The Italian fumetti is monthly and sells hundreds of thousands of copies at the newsstand. Emanuele Barison is one of the reference illustrators of Diabolik, but also of other heroes such as Zagor or Tex. Since 2010, his work has been exported internationally with the series *De Silence et de Sang* for Éditions Glénat and *Orféa* for Éditions Dargaud.

MUSIC



I WANT IT ALL

(Bruno Nicolai (feat. Lara Saint Paul)
(B. Nicolai; A. Stainton)
© 1969 Star Srl – West Edizioni Musicali Srl

LA WALLY

Composed by Alfredo CATALANI – Arrangement Vladimir COSMA
Performed by Willhelmenia Wiggins Fernandez
Extract from the original soundtrack “DIVA”
Published by Larchetto Music (SACEM)
1981 Larchetto Music

GIRL FROM SALINA

Music composed by Christophe
© Les Éd. Eden Roc / Universal Music Publishing
N.V. on behalf of Universal / MCA Music Publishing
1970 Barclay

MORTE SOSPETTA DI UNA MINORENNE 12
(L. Michelini)
© Creazioni Artistiche Musicali C.A.M. S.r.l.
1975 Creazioni Artistiche Musicali C.A.M. S.r.l.
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FOR B

(Marijolaine Charbin)
Performed by Radar Trio
© 2008 Marijolaine Charbin

NUCLEO ANTI RAPINA

(Bixio, Frizzi, Tempera)
from the OST “Operazione K. sparate a vista”
© et 1977 Cinevox Record srl
Original publisher : GRANDI FIRME DELLA CANZONE SRL

MEDIUM

(Bruno Nicolai)
© et 1972 Edi-Pan Srl (SIAE)
Courtesy of Beat Records Company Publishing Group

VENTIQUATTROMILA BACI

(Lucio Fulci - Piero Vivarelli / Adriano Celentano - Ezio Leoni)
© 1961 EDIZIONI MUSICALI E.A.R. S.a.s. – Milano
Courtesy of Saar Records Srl

ORGASMO - SEQ. 13

(Piero Umiliani)
© 1969 NAZIONALMUSIC EDIZIONI MUSICALI S.a.s. – Milano /
DIESIS EDIZIONI S.r.l. – Milano

LO STRANO VIZIO DELLA SIGNORA WARDH – SEQ. 25
(Nora Orlandi)
© et 1971 Edi-Pan Srl (SIAE)

CANI ARRABBIATI - TITOLI

(S. Cipriani)
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LA LUCERTOLA

(E. Morricone)
© EMI GENERAL MUSIC PUBLISHING - WEST EDIZIONI MUSICALI
1971, EMI GENERAL MUSIC PUBLISHING S.r.l. - BEAT RECORDS COMPANY

CALIBRO 35 - MILANO CALIBRO 9 (BOUCHET FUNK)

(Enriquez Luis)
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NAZIONALMUSIC EDIZIONI MUSICALI D.I.A. LE / DIESES EDIZIONI S.R.L.
TEMA DA MILANO CALIBRO 9
(Enriquez Luis)
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DIESIS EDIZIONI S.r.l. – Milano

CAST

FABIO TESTI

YANNICK RENIER

KOEN DE BOUW

MARIA DE MEDEIROS

THI MAI NGUYEN

CÉLINE CAMARA

KEZIA QUENTAL

SYLVIA CAMARDA

SOPHIE MOUSEL

HERVÉ SOGNE

MANON BLEUCHOT



CREW

Directors/Screenwriters

Hélène Cattet & Bruno Forzani

Producer

Pierre Foulon

Co-Produced by

Gilles Chanial

Simona Pelliccioli

François Cognard

Bart Van Langendonck

Dominique Marzotto

Lionel Guedj

Director of Photography

Manu Dacosse

Production Designer

Laurie Colson

Costumes

Jackye Fauconnier

SFX

Oriane De Neve

Image Editing

Bernard Beets

Sound Editing

Dan Bruylandt

Mixing

Matthieu Cox

Color Grading

Peter Bernaers

Production Company

Kozak Films

Co-Production Companies

Les Films Fauves

Dandy Projects

Tobina Film

Savage Film

To Be Continued

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ARTE France Cinéma

VOO and Be tv

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FEDERATION WALLONIE-BRUXELLES

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PR FESR de la Liguria


CINE+

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Distributie:
Cinéart Nederland
Herengracht 328-III
1016 CE Amsterdam

Contact
Julia van Berlo
M: +31 6 83785238
julia@cinéart.nl

cinéart