

RECTANGLE PRODUCTIONS PRESENT



OFFICIAL SELECTION
FESTIVAL DE SAN SEBASTIÁN
2016

NOCTURAMA

OFFICIAL SELECTION

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TORONTO INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL 2016



UN FILM DE
BERTRAND BONELLO

FRANÇOIS OLDFIELD VINCENT ROTTIERS KANIEL MEZIANI RABAL ISSA MARTIN GUYOT JAVIER MC CRAVEN DARRA NAIT OUFELLA LAURE VALENTINELLI ELODIE LE DORÉ ROBIN GOLDBRONN JACQ REGO HENRI KARAGHEUZ

SCÉNARIO ET MISE EN SCÈNE: BERTRAND BONELLO. PRODUIT PAR: EDUARD WEIL, ALICE GIRARD. CO-PRODUIT PAR: CHRISTOPH FRIEDEL, CLAUDIA STEFFEN, GENEVIEVE LEMAL, BERTRAND BONELLO. MONTÉ PAR: LÉO HINSHIN. MONTAGE: FABRICE ROUAUD. SON: NICOLAS CANTIN, NICOLAS MOREAU, ANDREAS HILDEBRANDT, JEAN-PIERRE LAFORCE. MUSIQUE: BERTRAND BONELLO. ASSISTANT: KATIA WYSZKOP. COSTUMES: SONIA PHILOUZE. MONTAGE: LAURE TALAZAC. RÉDACTION DE PRODUCTION: SERGE CATOIRE. RÉDACTION DE POST-PRODUCTION: CHRISTINA CRASSARIS. RÉDACTION: MARINE PETITE. RÉDACTION: ELISABETH GALLI, FRANKLIN GRANTISSIAN. CO-PRODUIT PAR: ELIODI VAN DERBERG, LAUREN CHRISTEL, DARAS. CO-PRODUCTIONS: RECTANGLE PRODUCTIONS, WILD BUNCH, PARADIA FILM PRODUCTION, ANTE FRANCE CINEMA, ANTE DEUTSCHLAND / WDR, SCOPE PICTURES, MY NEW PICTURE, ANTELLA PRODUCTIONS, CANAL +, CINE +, ARTE FRANCE, ARTE DEUTSCHLAND / WDR, ARTE 3, ARTE 4, ARTE 5, ARTE 6, ARTE 7, ARTE 8, ARTE 9, ARTE 10, ARTE 11, ARTE 12, ARTE 13, ARTE 14, ARTE 15, ARTE 16, ARTE 17, ARTE 18, ARTE 19, ARTE 20, ARTE 21, ARTE 22, ARTE 23, ARTE 24, ARTE 25, ARTE 26, ARTE 27, ARTE 28, ARTE 29, ARTE 30, ARTE 31, ARTE 32, ARTE 33, ARTE 34, ARTE 35, ARTE 36, ARTE 37, ARTE 38, ARTE 39, ARTE 40, ARTE 41, ARTE 42, ARTE 43, ARTE 44, ARTE 45, ARTE 46, ARTE 47, ARTE 48, ARTE 49, ARTE 50, ARTE 51, ARTE 52, ARTE 53, ARTE 54, ARTE 55, ARTE 56, ARTE 57, ARTE 58, ARTE 59, ARTE 60, ARTE 61, ARTE 62, ARTE 63, ARTE 64, ARTE 65, ARTE 66, ARTE 67, ARTE 68, ARTE 69, ARTE 70, ARTE 71, ARTE 72, ARTE 73, ARTE 74, ARTE 75, ARTE 76, ARTE 77, ARTE 78, ARTE 79, ARTE 80, ARTE 81, ARTE 82, ARTE 83, ARTE 84, ARTE 85, ARTE 86, ARTE 87, ARTE 88, ARTE 89, ARTE 90, ARTE 91, ARTE 92, ARTE 93, ARTE 94, ARTE 95, ARTE 96, ARTE 97, ARTE 98, ARTE 99, ARTE 100.

Rectangle Productions presents

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TORONTO INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL 2016



OFFICIAL SELECTION
FESTIVAL DE SAN SEBASTIÁN
2016

Opening Night - Platform

NOCTURAMA

A film by **Bertrand Bonello**

with

Finnegan Oldfield, Vincent Rottiers, Hamza Meziani, Manal Issa,
Martin Guyot, Jamil McCraven, Rabah Nait Oufella, Laure Valentinelli,
Ilias Le Doré, Robin Goldbronn, Luis Rego, Hermine Karagheuz
and the participation of Adèle Haenel

France - Duration : 2H10 - Image : Scope - Son : 5.1

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SYNOPSIS

One morning in Paris. A fistful of adolescents, from different backgrounds. Individually, they begin a strange dance through the labyrinth of the metro and the streets of the capital. They seem to be following a plan. Their gestures are precise, almost dangerous. They come together in the same place, a department store, at closing time.

The night begins...

STATEMENT BY BERTRAND BONELLO

NOCTURAMA

The film emerged from both a feeling about the world in which we live, and formal cinematographic ambitions. I wrote the very first draft five years ago, while I was working on *House of Tolerance* – a fictional, opiated period film – and I wanted, in contrast, to make next an ultra-contemporary film, conceived in a very different way, very direct, more like a kind of gesture.

I therefore wrote a draft very quickly, which addressed a climate I've felt for a long time now... one I'd describe as the "pressure cooker effect". That is to say, something simmering, about which I ask myself: "Why doesn't it explode?" Of course, the very essence of human behaviour is to adapt, to integrate and to admit things that are in fact unacceptable. Then, from time to time in history, there is an insurrection, a revolution. A time when people say "stop". A refusal.

I started with this premise and quickly inclined towards genre cinema, in the sense that I wanted to address the *how* rather than the *why*. *Why* is dealt with in the scene where Adèle Haenel says: "It had to happen." You just have to walk in the street to feel this very palpable tension, or look through a newspaper to realise that it could happen. That's why the film begins without any introduction.

How do you take action, how does it happen? In the film actions are for me more important than words. Action versus discourse... *how* versus *why*. Mystery also plays an important part in cinema and I didn't want to try and rationalise things that are not always explicable or justifiable.

From the beginning the script was entitled *Paris est une fête*¹. This antiphrasis was absolutely in keeping with the film that I wanted to make. I put it on hold to make *Saint Laurent*, and then returned to it, with shooting scheduled for summer 2015.

During post-production, *Paris est une fête* took on an entirely new meaning, and it clearly had to be changed. Naturally I turned to music. *Nocturama* is the title of an album by Nick Cave. I liked this idea of a Latin/Greek hybrid that would mean night vision. I asked Nick if I could use it and he said yes. He explained that the word in fact referred to the area in a zoo created specifically for nocturnal animals. That suited me very well. *Nocturama* also evokes something nightmarish.

From reality to fiction

As a filmmaker, I'm not a substitute for a journalist, a sociologist or an historian. My aim isn't to decipher current events or to comment on them. In any case, current events are too quick for film, which will always be overtaken if it attempts to stick to them. The strength of fiction lies elsewhere – in the recreation of a world with its own rules, logic and key elements. Observation rather than analysis.

¹ Literally « Paris is a Feast » - the French title of Ernest Hemingway's memoir, *A Moveable Feast*, which became a slogan of hope after the 13 November 2015 attacks in Paris.

For me, the fact that one is sensitive to or inspired by reality is a given, but the next stage is to free yourself from it and make it your own. To feel free. Reality can be found elsewhere anyway: in the choice of an actor or a location.

From exterior to interior

The structure came first. That was the basis. A first section with isolated characters, outside, in motion, supported only by journeys and actions, characters who only appear together for a brief instant, in two impressionistic flashbacks. Then a section in which they are together, no longer in action, but waiting. The transition from exterior to interior world also allows for a transition from reality to abstraction, from a real world to a fantasy world.

As soon as the characters enter the department store, there is no longer an outside world; no more windows, no mobile phones, there is nothing left and they reinvent something. Fiction and mind take precedence over the exterior.

Then, at a certain point, a character steps outside again. He almost tries to escape before realising that, in the final reckoning, he no longer belongs in the outside world. He no longer has anything to do there. So he returns.

Off-camera

From the beginning I chose to remain only with my group of characters. Everything is from their point of view. Like them, we don't know exactly what's happening on the outside, except in certain instances via TV screens. I didn't want cross-cutting.

First, it helped me focus on the idea of time passing by. Second, they are what interests me: this micro society that they form together, compelled to start over in order to survive. The off-camera brings us closer to them.

Paris

I wanted to film Paris realistically, including its tougher aspects. It's a very difficult city to film, very beautiful, but damaged by its internal life, road signs, advertisements, construction work and so on. But I decided to put all this together. The characters' journeys are part of this realism.

For the metro scenes for example, we filmed in an almost documentary style. We didn't 'privatise' any locations. We were in the middle of everyone else. I wanted to show the richness of the metro, all these different atmospheres, via this opening ballet.

As for the choice of "targets", it addresses this need, which runs throughout the film, to go from the feeling of something real to one of derealisation. I don't have anything against HSBC or the Ministry of the Interior. But they are there: part of our society, our environment, our daily life. It's an idea of repression, of capitalism, of suffocation. The collision between a kid from the suburbs and Joan of Arc was one of the first images that came to mind when I started writing the script. For me, it's a certain idea of France. I didn't want blind, lethal attacks. I'd rather work with symbols.

At first I worried that the young actors might not relate to the story, but after talking to them, I understood that it really resonated with them and that I wasn't far off target. In a political and critical speech, they spontaneously refer to financial institutions, the Ministry of Justice, the media, economic oppression and everything that seems to have seized power over their thoughts and freedom.

The department store

Department stores like this one are fascinating, truly fictitious places, in the sense that they are the recreation of a world inside a world. Everything is there. All of "life", from bathtubs to food, from beds to televisions... It is also a symbol for the consumerism of our time, including virtual consumerism.

After having violently attacked the exterior world, the characters find themselves locked up in this interior world. They are caught. It's inevitable. Each finds him or herself in a different area of the store. Because that's what they would like to be, it lets them dream, it's easy, they need it or it's simply who they are... There are two scenes for example, where a character finds himself face to face with a mannequin dressed exactly like him. In the former, we are confronted with consumerism, in the second, with death. The disappearance of the self.

Whereas things are so difficult to obtain in life, here everything is simple. It becomes a place of freedom, even if it's artificial. So they allow themselves anything: taking a bath, go-karting, even a show. Among all the ideas I had, I kept the most absurd as they are for me the most beautiful. I preferred dreams to the trivial or materialistic.

The choice of the actors

Among the actors, only half already had film experience, the others had none. I was keen on this mix and balance. These novice actors bring wonderful things: their faces, their way of moving, the musicality of their language. I love actors, but here I took great pleasure in filming other faces, new bodies, their body language – sometimes clumsy but always fresh. I knew when I was writing that I'd be directing only 50% of the characters. The actors would bring the rest themselves, with their personalities, their way of being, who they are. I often told myself that the *mise en scène* should tend towards fiction, and the directing of actors towards the documentary.

Casting lasted almost nine months. I met all sorts of young people. When I was writing, I was in a fiction, in fantasy. But when I met them, I was surprised that what I told them of the story didn't seem at all extraordinary to them. They told me: "That seems normal, that seems logical to me, we just lack a little bit of courage, a little bit of organisation... I'm not violent, but I could do that"...

Our Children / Lost Youth

Having watched the finished film, I see something I didn't realise when I was writing it. A part of them remains anchored in childhood, and I find that troubling. The film also addresses this: this is what we have done to our children. The most fictional point of view of the film is its very first premise: its desire to bring together young people, from different geographical and social backgrounds, whom society does

everything to divide. To bring them together with one shared ideal. In a way, it's the "punk" aspect of the creation of the film, the sense of an almost adolescent utopia, a desire for refusal, even perhaps for destruction. What interested me was that they all shared this urge to say: "Stop!" In parallel, we have seen these past few weeks, on the streets, the rise of youth movements that also expose, in their own way, a refusal².

When I was preparing the film, I re-read La Boétie's "Discourse on Voluntary Servitude": a very short yet extremely powerful book, and a call to insurrection. I had forgotten that it was written by a 20-year-old kid in the sixteenth century. La Boétie explains how there is a time when man accepts things that an animal wouldn't. *Nocturama* is first and foremost a film about refusal. The only way to express this was to form a heterogeneous group and to try and find a logic, something obvious, in the way in which they can be together. This "being together" as we would say of "living together", was fundamental. At the beginning of the film for example, they function alone or in pairs, or threes but are rarely all together, apart from in the flashback during which there is a dance scene. Almost a trance. I really wanted something to unite them, without relying on speech or dialogue. I recorded music that was both rhythmic and ambient and immersed them in it. I let them appropriate it for themselves. Each of them eventually found his or her place in the room and in the sound.

Mise en scène

I was obsessed by the mix of ultra-realism and abstraction: realism in their journeys, the details, all very documented, HSBC, Manuel Valls... and abstraction in the interior, the disconnection.

So I worked a lot on movement and gesture. A sort of action unlike an American action film, but which must nevertheless bring tension. And within this tension, I knew I had to pace things, sometimes almost in real time, taking time with the characters so as not to "puppet" them, so as to be absolutely with them from start to finish. The film is meticulously arranged. Every movement, every angle, every change in angle. It's constructed like a musical score.

The trickiest thing was to find a tension in the waiting, when they are in the store. From the moment we don't know what's happening on the outside, we have to organize time passing with (what happens) off-screen.

In the same way, I worked a lot on the placement of the moving shots and static shots. For example, when the character played by Finnegan Oldfield leaves the store, I wanted very simple setups: static shots in a deserted Paris, with a single actor passing through the frame. The scene conveys a sense of calm, playing not on the hysteria of the outside world, but – on the contrary – on its emptiness. Even if this sense of calm is just as terrifying. Then came the idea of temporality, which, like the film, would go from the real to the unreal. After a while in the store, I wanted time to diffract. We go backwards, change the point of view, play with the idea of a

² In France the Nuit Debout movement began on March 31st 2016 as a reaction against proposed labour reforms known as the Loi Travail. Street protest united thousands of young people, in the style of Occupy Wall Street in the US, or the anti-austerity Indignados in Spain.

“broken record”. The further we go into the film, the more time explodes. This instils a sense of derailment. Then there are the scenes with the GIGN [National Gendarmerie Intervention Group] I arranged these with a former member of the GIGN. I didn’t want the violent assault known as “the shield”, but rather an infiltration, slow and relentless, that they call “the anvil and the hammer”. Here too time is drawn out. In the story, it’s justified by the fact that the GIGN don’t know how many “enemies of the state” there may be, (for them, the term is fitting considering the chosen targets), if they are armed or unarmed. This allows a sense of calm that I find even more powerful.

Then there’s the question of the image, the lighting. This is the first time that I’ve shot in digital. I think it’s very appropriate for this film to have a somewhat harder image, colder, more defined, and not to seek the aesthetic of 35mm.

We structured the light in the department store in five parts: Very bright, then totally dark then once again fully lit, then half lit, before the GIGN turns off the power once again. This creates movements within the film.

Regarding the anamorphic ‘Scope, it gives a fictional edge while HD brings a sense of reality. As always, it’s a question of finding that delicate balance.

Music

I knew early on that I wanted both parts of the film to have their own musical identity, even if one overlaps the other at times. A score on one side, a sort of jukebox on the other. They’re in the department store; they play records.

For the score, I wanted something electronic, but not electro; something that reflected a state of mind, an urge; something that works through sub-bass and close attention to frequencies. As I’m lucky enough to write my own music, I started working on this as I was writing, to obtain the musical textures at the same time as the screenplay. When it came to choosing the albums they play in the store, the songs came naturally as I was writing and didn’t change. Because the film’s title was *Paris est une fête*, it seemed consistent to have at some point the notion of show, a final show. I thought: “department store, staircase, walking down the stairs...” and thus *My Way*. It is the most unreal scene of the film. It really emphasizes the break with the outside world and tips the film into something very dreamlike, very artificial, theatrical. But above all, for me, something tragic. Here I see the end: death. In the same way, the music of *The Persuaders* was an obvious choice. I love its melancholic feel. But the idea, at this point, as the assault is about to begin and death is close by, was also to bring back the idea of childhood. Theirs and mine.

BERTRAND BONELLO - BIOGRAPHY

Bertrand Bonello was born in 1968 and studied music before becoming a filmmaker. He directed his first feature, *ORGANIC* ("Quelque chose d'organique"), in 1998, for which he also wrote the screenplay and the music. The film was selected in the "Panorama" section of the Berlin Film Festival.

In 2001, Bonello's second film, *THE PORNOGRAPHER* ("Le Pornographe") - the portrait of a retired porno filmmaker played by Jean-Pierre Léaud - screened in Critics' Week at the Cannes Film Festival and won the International Film Critics' Fipresci Prize.

In 2003, Bertrand Bonello directed *TIRESIA*, which screened In Competition at the Cannes Film Festival.

He returned to Cannes in 2005 with the short film *CINDY THE DOLL IS MINE*, a homage to artist photographer Cindy Sherman, starring Asia Argento,

In 2007, Bonello directed and produced *MY NEW PICTURE*, which was presented at the Locarno Film Festival.

The following year, *ON WAR* ("De la Guerre") starring Mathieu Amalric, screened in Director's Fortnight at Cannes. In 2010, his short *WHERE THE BOYS ARE* was selected at the Locarno Film Festival.

THE HOUSE OF TOLERANCE ("L'apollonide, souvenirs de la maison close"), Bonello's fifth feature, screened In Competition at the Cannes Film Festival, and received 8 César nominations.

In 2012, Bonello's concert film *INGRID CAVEN, MUSIQUE ET VOIX*, screened at the Locarno Film Festival.

In 2014, *SAINT LAURENT* was selected in Official Competition at the Cannes Film Festival, represented France at the Academy Awards® and received 10 César nominations. The same year, Bonello was the subject of an exhibition and a retrospective at Beaubourg.

In 2016, Bonello directed *NOCTURAMA* and a short film for the Opera de Paris, *SARAH WINCHESTER*.

BERTRAND BONELLO – FILMOGRAPHY

2016 Nocturama
2014 Saint Laurent
2012 Ingrid Caven: Music and Voice
2011 House of Tolerance
2008 On War
2005 Cindy: The Doll is Mine
2003 Tiresia
2001 The Pornographer
1998 Something Organic

Cast

Finnegan OLDFIELD	David
Vincent ROTTIERS	Greg
Hamza MEZIANI	Yacine
Manal ISSA	Sabrina
Martin GUYOT	André
Jamil McCRAVEN	Mika
Rabah NAIT OUFELLA	Omar
Laure VALENTINELLI	Sarah
Ilias LE DORÉ	Samir
Robin GOLDBRONN	Fred
Luis REGO	Jean-Claude
Hermine KARAGHEUZ	Patricia
Adèle HAENEL	Young Girl on Bike

Crew

Written and Directed by	Bertrand BONELLO
DP	Léo HINSTIN
Sound	Nicolas CANTIN
Production Designer	Katia WYSZKOP
Costume Designer	Sonia PHILOUZE
Casting Director	Christel BARAS
1 st Assistant Director	Franklin OHANNESSIAN
Script Supervisor	Élodie VAN BEUREN
Editing	Fabrice ROUAUD
Sound Editors	Nicolas MOREAU, Andreas HILDEBRANDT
Sound Re-recording Mixer	Jean-Pierre LAFORCE
Original Music	Bertrand BONELLO
Production Manager	Serge CATOIRE
Post-Production Manager	Christina CRASSARIS
Producers	Edouard WEIL, Alice GIRARD
French Distributor	WILD BUNCH DISTRIBUTION
International Sales	WILD BUNCH INTERNATIONAL

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