



ATELIER DE PRODUCTION
PRESENT

INCREDIBLE BUT TRUE

A FILM BY QUENTIN DUPIEUX



INTERNATIONAL SALES

Wild Bunch International

Flavien ERIPRET
feripret@wbinter.eu

WTFilms

Gregory Chambet
greg@wtfilms.fr
Dimitri Stepahnides
dimitri@wtfilms.fr
Maxime Duchateau
festivals@wtfilms.fr

INTERNATIONAL PR

Gloria Zerbinati

gloria.zerbinati@gmail.com

Synopsis

Alain and Marie move to a quiet suburb. A mysterious tunnel in the cellar of their new home will turn their lives upside down.

NO SPOILER DISCLAIMER

Please, for the pleasure of the audience,
do not reveal the comedic plot

Interviews

***Incredible But True* opens on a scene where Alain (Alain Chabat) and Marie (Léa Drucker) are facing the camera, saying that they can't explain what is happening to them, worried everyone will think they're crazy. Is this what happens when you're in a Quentin Dupieux movie?**

Alain Chabat: I've always been surprised by the reputation of Quentin's films. I think the exact opposite. I understand someone finding them bizarre, but they're not opaque, or radical. Even less so with this film, which does indeed start with a strange argument, but is crystal clear later.

Anaïs Demoustier: Each time I've worked with Quentin and have tried talking to friends or family about the film we were making, I saw that they were puzzled. Although when I just summarize it, the reaction is often the same, something between astonishment and laughter. This only happens with Quentin's films, as a confirmation of his uniqueness and his ability to find funny stories that are nonetheless never superficial.

You had both of already worked with Quentin, but this is a first for Léa and Benoît...

Benoît Magimel: It could have happened much sooner. He contacted me about twelve years ago after seeing Chabrol's *A Girl Cut In Two*. He told me not only how good he thought the film was, but also that my character and my performance gave him the impression that I was ready to try something a little more off track. That made me very happy, even if he didn't offer me anything at that time.

Beyond being a newcomer in his cinema, it really was a new score for me, thanks to this ability to be in a strange environment – even if here we haven't gone as far as the giant fly in *Mandibles* or the serial killer tyre of *Rubber* – but with characters who are ultimately easy to understand.

Léa Drucker: To enter his world is to come face-to-face with a vast but meaningful imagination. The problems faced by the characters seem to me quite concrete and very human. It's the context that is crazy, out of the ordinary. Not the issues, which concern anyone.

This is undoubtedly the real surprise of *Incredible But True* which unfolds, like his previous films, in a strange environment, but which is in the end reveals his particularly rational vision of two couples.

Alain Chabat: It's without a doubt his most linear film, it doesn't go through narrative twists, like breaking the fourth wall. I love the fact that he hangs on to his story, never faking, without giving up his pleasure, but rather going for others. *Mandibles* was linked, through its duo of morons, to comedies like *Dumb and Dumber*, *Deerskin* touched on something darker... But I don't think he asks himself these questions: during a technical screening of *Incredible But True* I saw him really getting into the movie as if he was a regular viewer.

Anaïs Demoustier: It's clearly my favourite of Quentin's films, precisely because it touches on deep questions, from the passing of time to the decline of a couple, without deviating

from a certain strangeness or craziness which is completely integrated into the subject. It reinforces this mixture of sweet madness and very contemporary issues, from the place of men and women in society to their sorts of competition in seduction... There was already some of this in *Deerskin*, about loneliness, but *Incredible But True* possesses another dimension by being both sweet and melancholy.

Benoît Magimel: The first time I saw it, I realised how *Incredible But True* was his most obvious film. Above all it's a film about love. Whether it's the difficulty of loving, or the fear of no longer being loved, with the bonus of subtle variations according to the characters. Mine or Léa's lie in various forms of dissatisfaction, frustrations. Those of Anaïs or Alain lie more in the area of acceptance.

Léa Drucker: On the subject of relationships, *Incredible But True* touches on universal concepts, like the idea of accepting aging or not, dissociations, the imbalances that this can create in a long-term couple, people who are no longer twenty years old, who are at a point in their lives when they are neither old nor young...

Would you say that *Incredible But True* marks a shift towards more personal concerns for Quentin Dupieux? That the surrealistic side of his previous films would be a form of reticence?

Léa Drucker: I understand this approach: through cinema, Quentin's world has become a kind of identity. If you look at his films carefully, the approach is very sensory but always in order to talk about very intimate things. Even if he uses cinematic tricks, his films remain particularly *embodied*, if only because he's so attentive to everything, from light to costumes to framing. He doesn't need to tackle his subjects head on, his sensitivity remains very present. To the point of bringing real depth, even in the comedy scenes.

Anaïs Demoustier: The most surprising thing is that, at least with me, he doesn't go into depth about his films as he's making them. He doesn't give the impression of theorising about things during filming. I don't know if it is a form of modesty and besides, it wouldn't occur to me to ask him if *Incredible But True* is related to his own experience with relationships, or to his own possible fears, but I do have the feeling that from film to film, he reveals himself a little more.

Alain Chabat: I think he's aware of it but ends up sitting on it so that it doesn't become too inhibiting when writing or directing... that he doesn't have to worry about overemphasizing himself or the subject. I'd perhaps talk about humility rather than modesty or reticence...

Benoît Magimel: There's a real elegance, a sensitivity in approaching such intimate subjects, but without dwelling on them. In any case, filmmakers only talk about themselves though their films. So, there's probably something personal about this approach. I believe Quentin puts himself much more forward in *Incredible But True*. For me, the very last scene says a lot about him. Moreover, I'm convinced that the character played by Alain owes a lot to him. For all that, it is a film dealing with questions that ultimately concern everyone.

This involves a certain naturalism, especially in the dinner scene, which turns into an utterly banal conversation about subjects that are not...

Anaïs Demoustier: It is indeed surprisingly believable, but even when the conversation during this dinner seems to be a banal discussion between neighbours, there are always moments, little things in the dialogue, that take us back to this slippage. It becomes almost invisible onscreen, but when I'm learning my lines, this frontier with the natural jumps out at me. We don't talk enough about the precision and the demands of Quentin's writing. For the dinner scene, absolutely everything was written.

Alain Chabat: Even the hesitations, the "well...", the micro silences, were in the script. There's no need for actor's crutches. It's this ordinary side, the overlapping dialogues, this conversation that takes its time to get going, that makes the scene hilarious while delivering plenty of details about the relationship of these two couples.

Benoît Magimel: I believe there's a misunderstanding when the word surrealism is used to describe Quentin's films. It has much more to do with the absurd: his commentary on the world or the era can sometimes be disconcerting.

Léa Drucker: I absolutely love this way of handling the absurd, as real life does, or that any ordinary conversation can turn into something incredible. There's something childlike about it.

Anaïs Demoustier: That's also why I love working with him, I discover the same freedom I enjoyed as a kid playing at making movies, dressing up with my friends. He's one of the few directors who transforms me physically, with wigs and even by asking me to work on voices other than my own. Not only do I have a lot of fun on his films, but there's the quality of the scripts, the luxury of not having to take charge of their strangeness or madness in my work as an actor.

Benoît Magimel: His precision is particularly nice for an actor. It reminds me of Chabrol, the quiet, pragmatic side that his certainties allow him. It protects us from sinking into the potential caricatures that could exist in his quirky world. This doesn't mean that he's not open to suggestions. At times I was tempted to push Gérard into caricature or burlesque, since he carries the comic dimension of the film more than the others, before realising that he was borne along by the unstoppable mechanics of the writing. Everything is already there. And in addition, on set, Quentin accompanies us, without forcing things, just sometimes to lighten the stroke.

This lightening is combined with a more limited use of visual special effects...

Léa Drucker: We are in an impressionistic fantasy, one which relies heavily on the design: this house is strange... and does, by the way, really exist, it's not a creation...

Anaïs Demoustier: All the same, I have the feeling that Quentin is suspicious of a cinema that would be too naturalistic: he remains in formal research. Besides, beyond the good fortune of working with a director with such a unique world, I find the aesthetics of *Incredible But True*, particularly beautiful. He cares immensely about artistic direction, down to the painstaking choice of accessories and costumes.

This helps to bring these four characters back into an ordinary dimension...

Anaïs Demoustier: The absence of irony also amplifies it. The first degree of *Incredible But True* touches these four characters who are very deep into what they are experiencing. They are all the more touching in their very human flaws. For me, the couple Benoît and I play is symptomatic of a slightly artificial appearance. With very little, we understand that they don't enjoy a real complicity, and are probably only still connected through sexuality. To me this seems to reflect a certain routine in the contemporary world.

Léa Drucker: *Incredible But True* is certainly a comedy but one that also touches on melancholy, for example in Marie's desire to stop time. But this is also what makes these characters beautiful, their grey areas revealed. They are touching in their quests while also demonstrating a certain selfishness.

Benoît Magimel: This balance is very important. We had to be careful not to cross certain lines, not to portray Gérard, whatever his shortcomings, as misogynistic or racist, never to make him unsympathetic, so that we could address today's consumer society, his factitious need to always want more, the difficulty of finding happiness with what we have. I find Gérard very touching in his need to be looked at, to be admired. And I think Quentin agrees. In any case, the tenderness he feels for him, as for all the characters, was palpable just from reading the script. Clearly, he didn't want us to make assholes out of them.

Alain Chabat: The synergy between the characters prevented us from doing that: the way they react to each other prevents them from being morons - even if they sometimes get close - and allowed us to show the fragilities, the vulnerabilities.

Elements of the film echo literary classics such as *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*...

Léa Drucker: These references were obvious to me but when I mentioned it to Quentin he was surprised, as if he'd just realised it. It's one of his character traits: this coexistence of a sort of unconscious, his spontaneity, and total control - especially technical - over his world. While leaving freedom to his actors: for him there were clearly no intentional nods to *Dorian Gray* or *Alice in Wonderland*, but - perhaps because they are my references - I integrated them.

Anaïs Demoustier: Curiously, if one had to find a literary link, I feel *Incredible But True* is tonally close to the spirit of Michel Houellebecq's novels, especially *Whatever*, in its poetry that combines humour and lucid observation - sometimes implacable, like the last part of *Incredible But True* - of the human condition.

Alain Chabat: With the difference that none of the characters in *Incredible But True* is judged. Even if they have different motivations, viewers can feel close to each of them. I understand and recognise myself as much in Léa's character as in those played by Anaïs, Benoît or me.

Would you say that *Incredible But True* is a moral tale?

Alain Chabat: Yes, but paradoxically it's very concrete. In this regard, the dinner scene we were talking about is not insignificant. No other dialogue writer would have made it last

so long. Quentin casually allows his characters' worries to break through but turns it into a pure comic show.

Léa Drucker: A tale, no doubt. Moral? Not necessarily. Though Alain's character, who puts things in perspective more than the others, brings reason to this story. Of them all, he's the one with his feet most firmly on the ground. This doesn't stop you identifying with each character. *Incredible But True* isn't intended to convey a message but rather to address concerns that are actually very widespread.

Benoît Magimel: I see it as a philosophical tale, but one that refocuses on the human element and its realities, in both its tragic and its comic aspects, rather than as a parable, because there's no intention of giving lessons. This is what makes *Incredible But True* particularly endearing.

Alain Chabat: My fear was precisely that the sweetest part would take over what had made me die of laughter when I read the script. Not only is this not the case, but *Incredible But True* manages to be both moving and funny. I want to tell people that even if this film will make them question things, they're still going to have a great time. And I promise to reimburse them if they're bored! (laughs).



Director's biography



Quentin Dupieux was born in Paris on April 14th, 1974. At 18, he discovered filmmaking and bought his first synthesizer. As Mr Oizo, he released the classic track Flat Beat and albums including Analog Worms Attack, Moustache (Half a Scissor) and Lambs Anger. In 2007, Dupieux directed, shot, edited and scored his feature debut, Steak. Next came the absurdist horror Rubber (2010), and the comedy Wrong. Further director credits include Wrong Cops (2012), Reality (2014), Keep an Eye Out (2018) starring Benoît Poelvoorde and Grégoire Ludig, Deerskin (2019) starring Jean Dujardin and Adèle Haenel, and Mandibles (2020), starring Grégoire Ludig and David Marsais.

Director's Filmography

Feature Films

2018 DEERSKIN Cannes Film Festival – Director's Fortnight, Toronto Film Fest

2018 KEEP AN EYE OUT Sitges Film Festival – Best Screenplay

2014 REALITY Venice Film Festival

2013 WRONG COPS Sundance Film Festival

2012 WRONG Sundance Film Festival

2010 RUBBER Cannes Film Festival – Critic's Week

2007 STEAK

Short Films

2010 WHERE IS THE MONEY GEORGE?

2001 NONFILM

TV

2014 WRONG COPS

Cast's Filmography

Léa DRUCKER

Trained at Véra Gregh and Ensatt, she began her theatrical career playing under the direction of Benno Besson, Roger Hanin, then Zabou Breitman, Macial Di Fonzo Bo, Edouard Baer, Bernard Murat, Claudia Stavisky, Hans Peter Cloos, Jean-Marie Besset, Didier Long, Michel Fau ... She is named at the Molières for several plays: Danny et la Grande Bleue by John Patrick Shanley, directed by John Pepper, 84 Charing Cross Road by Hélène Hanff, directed by Serge Hazanavicius and Un amour qui ne finit pas by André Roussin, directed by Michel Fau. In 2017 she was a mother more or less fulfilled in the two rooms of Agnès Joaui and Jean-Pierre Bacri Cuisine et dépendances and Un air de famille. She was back on stage in fall 2019 in La dame de chez Maxim, directed by Zabou Breitman

She appears on the big screen, in the feature film by Philippe Galland La Thune. It is later found in films by Cédric Klapisch, Antoine de Caunes, Julien Rambaldi, Mathieu Amalric, Agnes Jaoui, Edouard Baer, Nadav Lapid, Filippo Meneghetti, Jerome Bonnell, Quentin Dupieux and last summer Lukas Dhont... In 2007, she won the Crystal Globe for best actress for her role in L'homme de sa vie of Zabou Breitman. In 2019, she received the César Award for Best Actress for her performance in Jusqu'à la garde of Xavier Legrand, a film selected at the Venice Film Festival and whose short film he was awarded the César Award for best short film in 2014 and was selected to the Oscar that same year.

In television, she played, among other things, the mother of the heroine in La consolation of Magaly Richard-Serrano and just finished the shooting of the third season a British series The War of the Worlds, directed by Richard Clark and Gilles Coulier, where she plays the lead role alongside Gabriel Byrne.

2022 INCREDIBLE BUT TRUE

Quentin DUPIEUX

2021 PETITE SOLANGE

Axelle ROPERT

2021 THE LOVE LETTER

Jérôme BONNELL

2020 LABOR DAY

Julien RAMBALDI

2019 THE HOLY FAMILY

Louis-Do de LENCQUESAING

2019 TWO OF US

Filippo MENEGHETTI

2019 LOST AND FOUND

Ronan LE PAGE

2018 ROXANE

Mélanie AUFFRET

2018 SYNONYMS

Nadav LAPID – Golden Bear – Berlinale 2019

2017 PLACE PUBLIQUE

Agnès JAOUÏ

2017 CUSTODY

Xavier LEGRAND – Silver Lion Venice Film Festival –
Best Actress César 2019

2016 THE TEACHER

Olivier AYACHE-VIDAL

Alain CHABAT

2022 INCREDIBLE BUT TRUE

Quentin DUPIEUX

2020 KAAMELOTT

Alexandre ASTIER

2019 #IAMHERE

Eric LARTIGAU

2018 PLAY

Anthony MARCIANO

2017 CHRISTMAS & CO.

Alain CHABAT

2017 KEEP AN EYE OUT

Quentin DUPIEUX

2016 VALERIAN AND THE CITY OF A THOUSAND PLANETS

Luc BESSON

2015 REALITY

Quentin DUPIEUX

Anaïs DEMOUSTIER

2022 INCREDIBLE BUT TRUE

Quentin DUPIEUX

2021 THE LOVE LETTER

Jérôme BONNELL

2021 ANAÏS IN LOVE

Charline BOURGEOIS-TACQUET –
Critic's Week at Cannes Festival 2021

2021 THE UNSOPHISTICATED LADY

Antonin PERETJATKO

2019 THE GIRL WITH A BRACELET

Stéphane DEMOUSTIER

2019 GLORIA MUNDI

Robert GUÉDIGUIAN

2019 ALICE AND THE MAYOR

Nicolas PARISER – Director's Fortnight at Cannes Film Festival 2019
Best Actress César 2020

2018 FATHER AND SONS

Félix MOATI

2017 THROUGH THE FIRE

Frédéric TELLIER

2017 KEEP AN EYE OUT

Quentin DUPIEUX

2017 JEALOUS

Stéphane et David FOENKINOS

2016 THE HOUSE BY THE SEA

Robert GUÉDIGUIAN

2016 TOMORROW AND THEREAFTER

Noémie LVOVSKY

2016 CORNELIUS, THE HOWLING MILLER

Yann LE QUELLEC

2015 SOPHIE'S MISFORTUNES

Christophe HONORE

Benoît MAGIMEL

Benoit Magimel began his film career in 1986 at the age of 12 by answering a casting announcement for the comedy "La vie est un long fleuve tranquille" by Etienne Chatiliez, which is today a classic of French cinema.

His career really began in 1996 when André Téchiné offered him a role as a thug opposite Daniel Auteuil and Catherine Deneuve in "Les voleurs". He then became one of the most sought-after young stars of French cinema. With a well-filled filmography, "Nid de Guêpes", "Les rivières pourpres 2", "Les chevaliers du Ciel", "La French", "Les petits mouchoirs", "Carbone". He won in 2001 at only 25 years old, the prize for male interpretation at the Cannes Film Festival for "La pianiste" by Michael Haneke.

He is also the headliner of the first French Netflix series "Marseille" with Gérard Depardieu. Then the César for best supporting actor in "La tête haute" by Emmanuelle Bercot in 2016.

Soon we will be able to see him in the next feature film by Quentin Dupieux with Alain Chabat. As well as "Amants" by Nicole Garcia and he will find Emmanuelle Bercot for the third time in "De son vivant" a film in which he also finds Catherine Deneuve.

2022 INCREDIBLE BUT TRUE

Quentin DUPIEUX

2021 LOVERS

Nicole GARCIA – Venice Film Festival 2020

2021 PEACEFUL

Emmanuelle BERCOT

2018 LOLA

Laurent MICHELI

2018 AN EASY GIRL

Rebecca ZLOTOWSKI – Critic's Week at Cannes Film Festival 2019

2018 LITTLE WHIT LIES 2

Guillaume CANET

2017 CARBON

Olivier MARCHAL

2017 MEMOIR OF WAR

Emmanuel FINIKIEL

2017 FAST CONVOY

Frédéric SCHOENDOERFFER

2017 MONEY'S MONEY

Gela BABLUANI

2015 150 MILLIGRAMS

Emmanuelle BERCOT

Cast And Crew

Alain Chabat

Alain

Léa Drucker

Marie

Benoît Magimel

Gérard

Anaïs Demoustier

Jeanne

Written and Directed by

Quentin DUPIEUX

Produced by

Mathieu VERHAEGHE

Thomas VERHAEGE

Cinematographer

Quentin DUPIEUX

Editor

Quentin DUPIEUX

Production Designer

Joan LE BORU

Casting

Marine ALBERT

Costume Designer

Isabelle PANNETIER

Make-up

Sophie BENAICHE

Hair

Romain MARIETTI

First Assistant Director

Frédéric GERARD

Production Manager

Arnaud TOURNAIRE

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