

Les Films du Fleuve and Archipel 35 present



OFFICIAL SELECTION
COMPETITION
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

Marion Cotillard Fabrizio Rongione

two
days,
one
night

Written and Directed by
Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne

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SYNOPSIS

Sandra has only one weekend to visit her colleagues and - with the help of her husband - convince them to sacrifice their bonuses so she can keep her job.

CAST

Sandra	Marion Cotillard
Manu	Fabrizio Rongione
Estelle	Pili Groyne
Maxime	Simon Caudry

Solwal staff (in order of appearance):

Juliette	Catherine Salée
Mr. Dumont	Baptiste Sornin
Willy	Alain Eloy
Mireille	Myriem Akheddiou
Nadine	Fabienne Sciascia
Timur	Timur Magomedgadzhiev
Hicham	Hicham Slaoui
Yvon	Philippe Jeusette
Jérôme	Yoann Zimmer
Anne	Christelle Cornil
Julien	Laurent Caron
Dominique	Franck Laisné
Alphonse	Serge Koto
Charly	Morgan Marinne
Robert	Gianni La Rocca
Kader	Ben Hamidou
Miguel	Carl Jadot
Jean-Marc	Olivier Gourmet
Secretary	Sabine Raskin

And:

Solwal receptionist	Damien Trapletti
Willy's wife	Lara Persain
Timur's daughter	Rania Mellouli
Barmaid	Christelle Delbrouck
Hicham's wife	Hassiba Halabi
Julien's wife	Marion Lory
Anne's husband	Donovan Deroulez
Alphonse's sister	Maidy Ankaye
Alphonse's mother	Alao Kasongo

A CONVERSATION WITH JEAN-PIERRE AND LUC DARDENNE

Please tell us about the circumstances that lead to *Two Days, One Night*?

Luc Dardenne: For years we've been considering a film about someone who is made redundant following the vote of her colleagues who - like their boss - think she isn't performing efficiently, and hold her responsible for the loss of their bonuses. *Two Days, One Night* was really born once we came up with Sandra and Manu, a couple united in the face of adversity.

Jean-Pierre Dardenne: What was important for us was to show someone excluded because she is considered weak, because she doesn't perform well enough. The film praises this "non-performing" character who finds strength and courage through the fight she conducts with her husband.

Sandra's colleagues voted for a staff reduction and her redundancy in exchange for a bonus. Have you come across similar real-life stories?

Jean-Pierre: Yes, more than once, even if not exactly the same. You see the general context of the film - the obsession with performance and violent competition between workers - everywhere in the workplace, in Belgium and elsewhere.

Manu encourages Sandra to meet with her colleagues over the course of a weekend, to ask them to re-consider their vote so she can get her job back. His role is crucial.

Jean-Pierre: Manu is a bit like a union leader, Sandra's coach. He manages to convince her that there's a possibility, that she's capable of convincing her colleagues to change their minds.

Luc: Sandra shouldn't appear like a victim condemning her colleagues who have voted against her. This isn't the fight of some poor girl against a bunch of bastards!

You don't judge any of your characters.

Luc: The workers in *Two Days, One Night* are placed in a position of relentless competition and rivalry. There are no good guys versus bad guys here. In any case, we're not interested in looking at the world like that.

Jean-Pierre: A film isn't a tribunal. All of Sandra's colleagues have good reasons for saying yes or no to her. One thing is for sure: this bonus isn't a luxury for any of them. They all need the money to pay their rent, their bills... Sandra understands only too well, as she is struggling with financial difficulties herself.

Sandra, her husband and their children are a close-knit family: this hasn't always been the case in your films.

Luc: Sandra draws her courage from her relationship with her husband. Manu loves his wife deeply, he fights against her depression and helps her to stop being afraid. At the beginning of the film he believes in Sandra more than she does herself.

Jean-Pierre: Even their children get involved. They help their parents to find out where her co-workers live.

These colleagues never envisage going on strike or fighting against the deal their boss is proposing.

Jean-Pierre: We chose a small firm with too few workers to form a union. If the film were the story of a struggle against a defined enemy it would have been completely different... All the same, the absence of collective reaction, of any struggle against the principle behind that vote, reveals a very contemporary lack of solidarity.

How long did it take you to complete the screenplay?

Jean-Pierre: We've been talking about this subject for about ten years - we've had plenty of time to prepare ourselves.

Luc: The script itself didn't take long. We started writing in October 2012 and finished in March 2013. We wanted the narrative to unfold over a very short period of time, as the title indicates.

Jean-Pierre: The urgency dictated by this time frame had to be reflected in the rhythm of the film.

After Cécile de France in *The Kid With a Bike*, you cast Marion Cotillard in *Two Days, One Night*.

Luc: We met Marion when we were working as co-producers on *Rust and Bone* by Jacques Audiard, which was partly shot in Belgium. We met her by chance, coming out of an elevator holding her baby, and were won over immediately. Driving back to Liège, we didn't stop talking about her: her face, her look...

Jean-Pierre: Hiring such a famous actress was an additional challenge for us. Marion was able to find a new body and a new face for this film.

Luc: She never wanted to show her work as an actor. Nothing that she accomplishes here falls under the heading of a performance or display. We worked together in an atmosphere of reciprocal trust that allowed us to try anything.

For Manu, you returned to Fabrizio Rongione, who has appeared in a number of your films.

Jean-Pierre: Yes: *Rosetta*, *The Child*, *The Silence of Lorna* and *The Kid With a Bike*. We thought about him for the part of Manu right from the start. It was great to work with him again.

Luc: In this film, his role is crucial as this is also Manu's story. Fabrizio succeeded in giving this man the life force and the enthusiasm necessary to support Sandra.

You have also cast your perennial favourite, Olivier Gourmet.

Luc: We hear a lot about his character throughout the film without ever seeing him, and then, at one point, like the wild boar of the Ardennes, there he is!

How did you work with the actors?

Jean-Pierre: We filmed rehearsals for a month. And before that, for two months, Luc and I prepared for the shoot on location, filming with our video camera.

Luc: The rehearsal phase is necessary before shooting, to find the right rhythms and create a climate of total trust with the actors in order to be able to risk the simplest things.

Jean-Pierre: We shot chronologically, which is as important for us as for the actors. Sandra's journey is as much a physical as a mental one, and it was essential for Marion, Fabrizio and also for the other actors to film it chronologically.



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A CONVERSATION WITH MARION COTILLARD

How did you meet the Dardenne brothers?

We met briefly in Belgium, on the set of Jacques Audiard's *Rust and Bone*; a very short meeting, between two elevators. I was slightly in awe, as I have always admired them so much... A few months after *Rust and Bone* was released my agent called me and said that Luc and Jean-Pierre wanted to offer me a part. I couldn't believe it. I thought working with them was beyond of my reach.

Why?

I know that working in the US would open doors to certain filmmakers for me. But the Dardennes? I couldn't even imagine it... they don't usually work with actors like me. Cécile de France worked with them on *The Kid With a Bike*, but she's Belgian and her appearing in their universe was less astonishing than me doing the same. So it was a real surprise they contacted me, and an absolute joy.

How would you define their cinema?

Each of their films closely observes the realities of society while taking new cinematic risks. They make real auteur films - you can't get much more auteur than Luc and Jean-Pierre - but manage to defy any categorization! Their cinema is absolutely universal.

What was your first reaction when they offered you the role of Sandra?

During our first meeting I was bubbling with ideas, just like a kid! I tried really hard to hold it all in but it had to come out. I said: "I'm so happy to be working with you, I could turn somersaults!" I had to tell them how I felt before moving on to more serious business!

How did they present *Two Days, One Night* to you?

They spoke a little about the film's subject, but I really discovered Sandra's story when I read the screenplay. I realized what a beautiful real-life hero she was and what a challenge it would be for me to play this part: a woman who meets each of her colleagues and tries to convince them to reconsider their vote. The aspect of repetition meant I would have to work hard on nuances and variations.

How would you define Sandra?

She is an ordinary woman, a worker who knows what things cost, because she has to. She understands why some (of her colleagues) have chosen to pocket the thousand Euro bonus rather than voting for her to keep her job. No one knows what she would have done in their place and the film doesn't judge anyone. That's what makes it so powerful.

She suffers from depression...

In one scene she even says: "I am nothing". This feeling of uselessness lives deep inside her, as it does for a lot of people who don't know how to deal with their work or the lack of it. Several months before we shot the film, I had been deeply shocked to read articles and reports about work-related suicides, people who'd rather end it all than endure this feeling of being useless. The film echoes with some of these events that had struck me so.

How do the Dardenne brothers work?

We rehearsed for over a month - a crucial phase. It was all about working on the locations, the energy of the characters, and the rhythm of the scenes. This work is as complex as it is essential work, all the more so since the brothers shoot in long takes. I had to lose my French accent, which I was dreading the most, without falling into a faked Belgian accent, which would have been a real mistake. These rehearsals allowed me to be more comfortable with the whole Belgian aspect...

The film carefully avoids any self-indulgent dwelling on the sordid side of life.

With the Dardennes, the intent must always stay in the shadows, and this suits me. Even when my parts lend themselves to a 'performance' I always try to conceal my acting, so the audience can be with the character and her emotions. When you like working this way, you can't ask for anything more than working with the Dardenne brothers.

How do they direct actors on set?

Thanks to all the work achieved during rehearsals, Luc and Jean-Pierre can concentrate above all on the actors' work during the shoot. They are demanding like no one else... Each and every detail matters so much that they will do things again and again. That's the price for the intensity and truth in their films. Had they asked me to shoot 250 takes for one scene, I would have done it. I never grew sick of it... I've never been directed like this before.

You and Fabrizio Rongione make a very believable couple.

Rehearsals had a lot to do with it. On a film like this you have to meet before the shooting starts. Rehearsals allowed us to get used to each other. Fabrizio is a Dardenne brothers old hand: he has appeared in most of their films. He fits very well in their world because he shares the same authenticity. I was very lucky to work with him under their direction.

The part of Sandra is very different to the roles you have played in the US recently.

I have always dreamed of this kind of diversity, going from one to the other. I feel extremely lucky to be able to switch worlds like this. I have realized the dream I had as a young actress: to explore different genres and territories, with real filmmakers.

Will *Two Days, One Night* remain a special film in your career?

Yes, for sure. I have had some fabulous experiences but this one was the deepest and the most idyllic of all. I have never felt so taken care of by a director - sorry, two directors! Luc, Jean-Pierre and I were "accomplices" from the first to the last day of shooting. When the time came for the last shot I felt so very sad to know it was over.

Would you like to work with the brothers again?

Whenever they want! They don't even need to show me a script, I'll accept right away. I'd love to be their new Jérémie Renier or Olivier Gourmet.

Once again you find yourself in competition at Cannes, a year after James Gray's *The Immigrant*.

And two years after Jacques Audiard's *Rust and Bone*. To climb the red carpet with Luc and Jean-Pierre, who have made their cinema live at Cannes, it's magic, nothing less. They took me on such a cinematic and human adventure that nothing could make me happier than to be beside them at the Festival.



CREW

Written and Directed by **Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne**
 1st Assistant Director **Caroline Tambour**
 D.P. **Alain Marcoen (S.B.C)**
 Camera Operator **Benoit Dervaux**
 First Assistant Camera **Amaury Duquenne**
 Editor **Marie-Hélène Dozo**
 Sound Engineer **Jean-Pierre Duret**
 Sound Editor **Benoit De Clerck**
 Sound Mixer **Thomas Gauder**
 Production Designer **Igor Gabriel**
 Costume Designer **Maira Ramedhan-Levi**
 Make-up **Natali Tabareau-Vieuille**
 Location Manager **Philippe Toussaint**
 Production Manager **Philippe Groff**
 Stills Photographer **Christine Plenus**
 Producers **Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne**
 **Denis Freyd**
 Executive Producer **Delphine Tomson**
 Coproducers **Valerio De Paolis**
 **Peter Bouckaert**
 Associate Producer **Arlette Zylberberg**

A Les Films du Fleuve, Archipel 35, Bim Distribuzione, Eyeworks, France 2 Cinéma, RTBF (Belgian Television), Belgacom coproduction

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International Sales: **Wild Bunch..**

MARION COTILLARD

Selected filmography

- 2015 **Macbeth** - Justin Kurzel
- 2014 **Two Days, One Night** - Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne
- 2013 **Anchorman 2: the Legend Continues** - Adam McKay
- 2013 **Blood Ties** - Guillaume Canet
- 2013 **The Immigrant** - James Gray
- 2012 **The Dark Knight Rises** - Christopher Nolan
- 2012 **Rust and Bone** - Jacques Audiard
- 2011 **Contagion** - Steven Soderbergh
- 2011 **Midnight in Paris** - Woody Allen
- 2010 **Inception** - Christopher Nolan
- 2010 **Little White Lies** - Guillaume Canet
- 2009 **Nine** - Rob Marshall
- 2009 **Public Enemies** - Michael Mann
- 2007 **La Vie en Rose** - Olivier Dahan
- 2006 **A Good Year** - Ridley Scott
- 2006 **You and Me** - Julie Lopes Curval
- 2005 **Mary** - Abel Ferrara
- 2005 **Love is in the Air** - Rémi Bezancon
- 2005 **Burnt Out** - Fabienne Godet
- 2004 **A Very Long Engagement** - Jean-Pierre Jeunet
- 2003 **Big Fish** - Tim Burton
- 2003 **Love Me If You Dare** - Yann Samuell
- 2003 **Taxi III** - Gérard Krawczyk
- 2000 **Taxi II** - Gérard Krawczyk
- 1998 **Taxi I** - Gérard Pires
- 1996 **La belle verte** - Coline Serreau
- 1996 **My Sex Life... or How I Got Into an Argument**
Arnaud Desplechin

FABRIZIO RONGIONE

Selected filmography

- 2014 **La Sapience** - Eugène Green
- 2014 **Two Days, One Night** - Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne
- 2012 **A Song For Mama** - Joël Franka
- 2012 **Diaz** - Danile Vicari
- 2011 **The Kid With a Bike** - Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne
- 2011 **The Stargazer** - Stan Neumann
- 2009 **La prima linea** - Renato De Maria
- 2008 **Lorna's Silence** - Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne
- 2007 **Le dernier gang** - Ariel Zeitoun
- 2006 **Ça rend heureux** - Joachim Lafosse
- 2006 **Nema Problema** - Giancarlo Bocchi
- 2005 **The Child** - Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne
- 2004 **Don't Do That!** - Luc Bondy
- 2002 **The Third Eye** - Christophe Fraipont
- 2001 **Zeno, Le Parole De Mio Padre** - Francesca Comencini
- 1999 **Rosetta** - Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne

JEAN-PIERRE ET LUC DARDENNE

Jean-Pierre Dardenne was born in Engis (Belgium) in April 1951. Luc Dardenne was born in Awirs (Belgium) in March 1954.

They have directed numerous documentaries. In 1975, Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne founded the production company *Dérives*, which has to date produced more than 80 documentaries, including their own.

In 1994, they established the production company *Les Films du Fleuve*.

Selected filmography

- 1987 Falsch**
with Bruno Cremer
- 1992 I think About You**
with Fabienne Babe, Robin Renucci
- 1996 The Promise**
with Jérémie Renier, Olivier Gourmet, Assita Ouédraogo
- 1999 Rosetta**
with Émilie Dequenne, Fabrizio Rongione,
Anne Yernaux, Olivier Gourmet
Palme d'Or
Best Actress for Emilie Dequenne
Cannes Film Festival 1999
- 2002 The Son**
with Olivier Gourmet, Morgan Marinnie, Isabella Soupart
Best Actor for Olivier Gourmet
Cannes Film Festival 2002
- 2005 The Child**
with Jérémie Renier, Déborah François, Jérémie Segard
Palme d'Or – Cannes Film Festival 2005
- 2008 Lorna's Silence**
with Artta Dobroshi, Jérémie Renier, Fabrizio Rongione
Best Screenplay – Cannes Film Festival 2008
Lux Prize – European Parliament 2008
- 2011 The Kid with a Bike**
with Cécile de France, Thomas Doret, Jérémie Renier
Grand Prize – Cannes Film Festival 2011



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