

**ANTHONY
BAJON**

**KARIM
LEKLOU**

**LEÏLA
BEKHTI**

**THE
THIRD WAR**

A FILM BY GIOVANNI ALOI

THE THIRD WAR

Original Title : La Troisième Guerre

Directed by **Giovanni Aloi**

Starring
Anthony Bajon, Karim Leklou, Leïla Bekhti

2020 - France - 92 min - 1.85 - 5.1 - color

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SYNOPSIS

Fresh out of basic training, Leo lands his first assignment: a surveillance operation that sees him roaming the streets of Paris with nothing to do but remain alert for potential threats. Given the task of securing the borders of a massive anti-government demonstration, Leo finds himself plunged into the heart of a raging crowd. All the pressure and impotent fury that has built up over weeks is about to explode...



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Some years ago, France “went to war” against terrorism. Following the declaration of a state of emergency in the country, we grew used to encountering soldiers on patrol, machine guns in hand, on our city streets, much as one would actually see in a country at war. To say that we “grew used to it” is actually something of a lie. Encountering three soldiers in fatigues with assault rifles slung across their chests isn't something you get used to. I'm not used to it.

The Third War is the war we may already be fighting unbeknownst to us. A new kind of war, no longer a war of positions, but of power. That is to say a war of images. A war that may not be quite a war as we think of it, but a fantasy of war. The tension that drives the film comes from this realization: no one knows exactly what a war looks like. We have all seen images of war. We have seen films about war. We have seen war on the news, but what is the “right” image of war?

This is precisely the point the film drives at. It seems to me that an art is never as powerful as when it confronts its limits and one of the specific limits of cinema is that it is content to mechanically record the appearance of things. That appearance is what our film questions. Our characters have been dressed up as soldiers, they have been taught to act like soldiers, to handle weapons, to respond in war-like situations. Now that we have the soldiers, the question is this: can Paris resemble a theater of war?

By mirroring the growing mistrust of the main character, it is Paris itself that gradually morphs. This is an opportunity to film the city as never before: places filmed a thousand times, everyday spaces that suddenly, by virtue of the gaze we level at them, take on a whole new appearance. Everything is a matter of appearances, and as seen by a soldier (who moreover grew up outside the capital), Paris turns into a foreign city, hostile and dangerous.

Gradually, in the eyes of our character, every street corner comes to harbor a potential terror threat; every car is potentially booby-trapped; every window may hide a sniper. So when our character finds himself in the midst of a violent demonstration, it all comes together: in the end, war manifests itself as we have been taught to see it. Explosions, multiple enemies, projectiles, buildings engulfed in smoke... Suddenly, Paris resembles what our character imagines a theater of war to be. The images that emerge are perfectly superimposable on the images we've seen of the wars that have fuelled the collective imagination, from Vietnam to Syria.

When everything looks like war, isn't Leo entitled to behave like a soldier?

The Third War is evocative of a long tradition of characters who lose ground, from

Taxi Driver (Martin Scorsese, 1976) to *The Conversation* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1974) and *Dillinger is Dead* (Marco Ferreri, 1970). The challenge here is to stick with our protagonist rather than observe his drift. Ultimately, watching someone who is crazy is not very interesting. What is truly fascinating is to accept, without realizing it, to experience craziness yourself. Madness is all around us, in the city, on television. Just waiting to explode. Our character simply reveals what is going on in society. To embrace his drift, we need only awaken the paranoia that lies dormant within us. Like Leo, we end up afraid of a young man playing with an old cell phone, while the police handle a suspicious package. Like Leo, we are wary of a minivan.

To ensure accuracy in my direction, (especially as an Italian, even if I have lived for a long time in Paris), I met former sentry duty soldiers and took time to listen to them, both what they had to tell me about what is really going on in the patrols, and also to understand the relationships they weave with each other, what they talk about amongst themselves, and perhaps especially how they talk. This also allowed me to understand the deep discomfort in which they live day to day.

Giovanni Aloï

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Giovanni Aloï studied Art History in Bologna and Plastic Arts at Paris VIII before directing a number of short films, including *A Passo D'uomo* and *E.T.E.R.N.I.T.*, selected at the Venice Film Festival in 2015. *The Third War* is his first feature film.

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

Feature

2020 – *The Third War*

Short Films

2015 - *E.T.E.R.N.I.T.*

Venice Short Film nomination for the European Film Awards – Venice FF 2015

2014 - *A Passo D'uomo*

2013 - *Pan Play Decadence*

2010 - *Lives*

2009 - *La Promesse*



ANTHONY BAJON

Anthony Bajon began his acting career in the theatre. In 2015 he made his cinematic debut opposite Adèle Haenel in *Ogres*, directed by Léa Fehrer. Over the next two years he appeared in no less than six films, including Guillaume Galiénne's *Maryline*, *Golden Years* by André Téchiné, and *Rodin* by Jacques Doillon.

Cédric Kahn cast him as the lead in *The Prayer*, a role that marked a significant turning point in his career, and for which he was awarded the Silver Bear for Best Actor in Berlin in 2018 - the youngest actor ever to receive this award. Bajon was also nominated for the Most Promising Actor César.

In 2019, he starred in the Arte series *Ad Vitam* by Thomas Cailley and *The Inside Game* by Jean-Xavier de Lestrade, as well as appearing in two critically-acclaimed films, *You Deserve a Lover* by Hafsia Herzi, and *In the Name of the Land* by Edouard Bergeon, for which he received the Valois for Best Actor at the Angoulême Festival as well as a second Most Promising Actor César nomination.

2020 will see Bajon appearing in *Teddy* by Ludovic and Zoran Boukherma (Official Selection, Cannes Film Festival), and co-starring alongside Leila Bekhti and Karim Leklou in *The Third War* by Giovanni Aloi. He will also be seen in Mouloud Achour's feature debut *Les Méchants*, and Stéphane Brizé's *Another World*.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2020 - *Another World* by Stéphane Brizé
- 2020 - *The Third War* by Giovanni Aloi
- 2020 - *Les Méchants* by Mouloud Achour
- 2020 - *Teddy* by Ludovic and Zoran Boukherma
- 2020 - *Wonders in the Suburbs* by Jeanne Balibar
- 2019 - *You Deserve a Lover* by Hafsia Herzi
- 2019 - *In the Name of the Land* by Edouard Bergeon
César nominee - Most Promising Actor
- 2018 - *The Prayer* by Cédric Kahn
Silver Berlin Bear winner - Best Actor
César nominee - Most Promising Actor
- 2017 - *Golden Years* by André Téchiné
- 2017 - *You Choose* by Eric Lavaine
- 2017 - *Maryline* by Guillaume Gallienne
- 2017 - *Rodin* by Jacques Doillon
- 2016 - *Les Enfants de la chance* by Malik Chibane
- 2016 - *Irreplaceable* by Thomas Lilti
- 2016 - *Ogres* by Léa Fehne



KARIM LEKLOU

Karim Leklou made his screen debut in Jacques Audiard's *A Prophet* in 2009. Between 2011 and 2014 he established his presence in auteur cinema with striking appearances in Bouli Lanners' *The Giants*, *The Source* by Radu Mihaileanu, and *Grand Central* by Rebecca Zlotowski.

In 2012, Leklou won Best Actor awards for his performance in Marie Monge's *Marseille By Night* at the Festival Premiers Plans d'Angers and the Festival Côté Court in Pantin.

The lead role in *Heat Wave* (2015) by Raphaël Jacoulot marked a major turning point in Leklou's career. He rejoined Tahar Rahim (with whom he had worked in *A Prophet*) in *Les Anarchistes* by Elie Wajeman, *Heal the Living* by Katell Quillévéré and *Treat Me Like Fire* by Marie Monge.

In 2018, Karim Leklou's position was cemented when his role *The World is Yours*, Roman Gavras' explosive and critically acclaimed comedy, led to widespread public recognition and his winning the Golden Swann for Best New Actor at the Cabourg Festival, as well as a Best New Actor César nomination. The same year he appeared as one of the protagonists in Thomas Lilti's series *Hippocrate*, alongside Louise Bourgoin and Alice Belaïdi.

Credits in 2020 include Cédric Jimenez's crime movie *Bac Nord*, with François Civil and Gilles Lellouche, and *Hippocrate - Season 2*, as well as a co-starring role alongside Leïla Bekhti and Anthony Bajon as one of a trio of soldiers in Giovanni Aloi's feature debut, *The Third War*.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

2020 - *The Third War* by Giovanni Aloi

2020 - *Bac Nord* by Cédric Jimenez

2020 - *La Naissance des arbres* by Laura Wandel

2018 - *The World is Yours* by Romain Gavras

César nominee - Most Promising Actor

Swann D'Or winner - Most Promising Actor

2018 - *Treat Me Like Fire* by Marie Monge

2017 - *If You Saw His Heart* by Joan Chemla

2016 - *Toril* by Laurent Teyssier

2016 - *Orphan* by Arnaud des Pallières

2016 - *The Stopover* by Delphine et Muriel Coulin

2015 - *Heat Wave* by Raphaël Jacoulot

2015 - *The Anarchists* by Elie Wajeman

2014 - *Young Tiger* by Cyprien Vial

2014 - *Sous X* by Jean-Michel Correia

2013 - *Suzanne* by Katell Quillévéré

2013 - *11.6* by Philippe Godeau

2013 - *Grand Central* by Rebecca Zlotowski

2011 - *The Source* by Radu Mihaileanu

2011 - *The Giants* by Bouli Lanners

2010 - *Special Treatment* by Jeanne Labrune

2009 - *A Prophet* by Jacques Audiard



LEÏLA BEKHTI

In just ten years, Leïla Bekhti has established herself firmly as a true star of French cinema. She made her debut alongside Vincent Cassel in 2006 in Kim Chapiron's *Sheitan*. In 2008, she starred in *A Prophet* by Jacques Audiard, winner of the Cannes Grand Prix, and 9 César awards.

The public and critical acclaim that greeted *All That Glitters* by Géraldine Nakache (2010) marked a new stage in her career, and the same year she won the César for Best New Actress, and a Golden Swann at Cabourg.

In 2012, she worked with Radu Mihaileanu in *The Source* (for which she received a Best Actress César nomination), Cédric Kahn in *A Better Life* alongside Guillaume Canet, and Géraldine Nakache in *Nous York*.

In 2015, Brigitte Sy cast her in the powerful lead role in *L'Astragale*, alongside Reda Kateb; the same year she starred in Khieron's popular and critically lauded debut *All Three of Us*. The following year she took the lead role in the Canal+ series *Midnight Sun*, directed by Måns Mårilind and Björn Stein, which was broadcast worldwide.

In 2018, she starred in one of the year's big hits, Gilles Lellouche's *Sink or Swim*, as well as opposite Zita Hanrot in Jérémie Renier's psychological thriller *Carnivores*, and alongside Fabrice Luchini in Hervé Mimran's comedy *Un Homme Pressé*.

2019 credits included *La Lutte des Classes* by Michel Leclerc, with Edouard Bauer, and Géraldine Nakache's *J'irai où tu iras*.

In 2020, Leila Bekhti can be seen in *The Eddy*, the much-awaited Netflix series directed by Damien Chazelle, and partnering Jonathan Cohen in his Canal+ series *La Flamme*, as well as starring in *How I became a Superhero* by Douglas Attal and alongside Karim Leklou and Anthony Bajon in Giovanni Aloi's feature debut, *The Third War*.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2020 - *The Third War* by Giovanni Aloi
- 2020 - *How I Became a Super Hero* by Douglas Attal
- 2019 - *Chanson douce* by Lucie Borleteau
- 2019 - *La lutte des classes* by Michel Leclerc
- 2018 - *Sink or Swim* by Gilles Lelouche
- 2018 - *Un homme pressé* by Hervé Mimran
- 2018 - *The Negotiator* by Brad Anderson
- 2018 - *Carnivores* by Jérémie Renier & Yannick Renier
- 2015 - *L'Astragale* by Brigitte Sy
- 2015 - *All Three of Us* by Kheiron
- 2014 - *Now or Never* by Serge Frydman
- 2013 - *Before the Winter Chill* by Philippe Claudel
- 2012 - *Armed Hands* by Pierre Jolivet
- 2012 - *Nous York* by Géraldine Nakache & Hervé Mimran
- 2012 - *A Better Life* by Cédric Kahn
- 2011 - *The Source* by Radu Mihaileanu

César nominee - Best Actress

- 2011 - *Itinéraire bis* by Jean-Luc Perreard
- 2010 - *Bacon on the Side* by Anne De Petrini
- 2010 - *All That Glitters* by Géraldine Nakache

César winner - Best Actress

- 2009 - *A Prophet* by Jacques Audiard
- 2008 - *Mesrine Part 1: Killer Instinct* by Jean-François Richet
- 2008 - *Dolls and Angels* by Nora Hamdi
- 2006 - *Bad Faith* by Roschdy Zem
- 2005 - *Paris, je t'aime* by Gurinder Chadha
- 2005 - *Sheitan* by Kim Chapiron

CAST

Léo	Anthony Bajon
Hicham	Karim Leklou
Coline	Leïla Bekhti
Michel	Arthur Verret
Firmin	Jonas Dinal
Dimo	Raphaël Quenard
Teddy	Esdras Registe
Bambi	Igor Kovalsky
Totoro	Maxime Cailliau
Menard	Jules Dousset

CREW

directed by	Giovanni Aloi
written by	Dominique Baumard Giovanni Aloi
director of photography	Martin Rit
sound	Rémi Chanaud
costume designer	Clara René
make-up	Sarah Pariset
production designer	Lisa Rodriguez
editor	Rémi Langlade
sound designer	Claire Cahu
mix	Aymeric Dupas
production manager	Sophie Lixon
producer	Thierry Lounas
production	Capricci
coproduction	Bien ou Bien Productions
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