



— THE OTHER LAURENS

QUINZAINÉ
DIRECTORS' FORTNIGHT
CANNES 2023

A film by Claude Schmitz
Produced by Wrong Men & Chevaldeuxtrois

PRESSKIT



117 MIN

BELGIUM, FRANCE

2023

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FRENCH, ENGLISH, SPANISH

SCREENINGS IN CANNES

THU. 18th, 9:00 AM @ PALAIS I (Market)

SAT. 20th, 4:00 PM @ OLYMPIA 6 (Market)

MON. 22nd, 8:30 AM @ THEATRE CROISSETTE
(Official)

MON. 22nd, 9:30 PM @ THEATRE CROISSETTE
(World Premiere)

TUE. 23rd, 9:30 AM @ LERINS 3 (Market)

TUE. 23rd, 11:30 AM @ ARCADES 1
(Official Rerun)

— THE OTHER LAURENS

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SYNOPSIS

Gabriel Laurens is a private detective. When his niece, Jade, asks him to investigate her father's death, the detective must confront the ghosts of his past. Gabriel finds himself caught up in a strange investigation mixing pretense, fantasy, and drug trafficking.



A CONVERSATION WITH CLAUDE SCHMITZ



***L'Autre Laurens* navigates between different genres, thriller, comedy and B-movie at the same time. Where did you get the urge to build a story with such dramatic and romanesque ambition?**

For some time, I have wanted to confront myself with a larger art form and create a complex dramaturgical project. I have been exploring these types of constructions for twenty years in my creations for the stage. When I started making films, more or less ten years ago, in parallel to my work for the theater, I wanted to approach this new medium through subjects that permitted simple structures. This resulted in hooky stories that often started from encounters or chance events. I needed to take things back to the roots. My first films are literally and figuratively “essays” investing a more romanesque dramaturgy is a step I had to take.

This new film seems to be less influenced by the question of the permeability between fiction and reality, which was at work in your previous films (*Braquer Poitiers*, *Lucie Perd son cheval*) than by the question of the collision of genres.

This blend between fiction and reality fascinates me, but it only partially defines my concerns. What interested me here, within the framework of a financed film project, and not made with pirate means, as I have done until now, was to really invest the tools of traditional cinema by thwarting certain archetypal dramaturgies that are linked to it. It is another attempt at piracy. Let's say that this one operates from inside.

From the *femme fatale*, to the private detective, to the bikers or the corrupt cop duo, the film is full of these characters that refer to the imagination of American cinema. Why this choice ?

As a child, I lived in a boarding school where a Josephite Father made us discover, every Wednesday evening on a big screen, arthouse films in 35 mm print. I was 12 years old and I discovered obscure stories that fascinated me and that I didn't understand at all... That's how, very early on, I saw films by Kurosawa, Bergman, Loach... These films were my first real aesthetic shocks. After that, I went to another boarding school where it was almost the opposite. There, we were shown all the American B movies of the time, movies with Chuck Norris, Steven Seagal, Stallone, etc. A whole corpus of Reagan films that conveyed simplistic and caricatured narrative schemes and these films also became part of my imagination. These two type of cinematography never ceased to cohabit in me and I wanted to make a film that evokes this tension, this schizophrenic heritage.

Like the twin brothers and enemies of the film?

Exactly. As I said, in *L'Autre Laurens*, I put into tension certain narrative and aesthetic models that structured part of my adolescent imagination, torn, at the time, between European auteur films and American B movies. With this film, I wanted to take stock of this cultural and cinematographic heritage. It is a film that speaks of identity. Moreover, the film cultivates its own formal schizophrenia, torn between thriller, comedy and B-movie action. It is in these collusions, at first sight unnatural, and in this “in-between” that the baroque identity of the film is. One can still call *L'Autre Laurens* a film noir, but the film is really about the dissolution of these very narrative structures and outdated figures that inhabit it - the detective, the femme fatale, the corrupt policeman, the crook... Most of the time, the socio-cultural construction

of male and female roles represented in the genre film, responded to a patriarchal vision of society. One could therefore say that, in essence, the genre film is gendered. *L'Autre Laurens* takes these relationships and figures and twists and eliminates them in the course of its development, in order to propose something that is “transgender”, that is to say, a form that, I hope, will ultimately prove to be hybrid and contemporary. It is a film about the end and collapse of a certain relationship to the world, about the last fires of a tired myth that is disintegrating and in which a young teenage girl will find a way out. It is an allegorical film, a modern tale.

The live broadcast of the collapse of the Twin Towers, which crystallizes the images of this old world that is breaking down, intervenes at several points in the film. At what point did these fragments become part of the making of the film?

September 11 is one of the founding motifs of the film. It is an event that particularly marked me. I was 20 years old and I must have still been quite naive because it is from this event that I felt, then understood, that all this American imaginary that had been delivered to me through the films I mentioned, was full of contradictions and lies. I'm not talking about a plot, but simply about a relationship to the world that turned out to be false and that I hadn't managed to put into perspective or to criticize until then. And then we must remember the symbolic power of the event, the collapse of these two towers, showed, beyond the tragedy, a kind of double emasculation, like the literal revelation of a powerlessness. I must add, of course, that I later discovered another America. This America had invented a fascinating and complex cinema, going from Kenneth Anger to New Hollywood, passing by Jonas Mekas, etc.

Was it this deconstruction of the images you received from the American myth that launched the impulse for the film?

Yes, from a certain relationship that I had with a certain American cinema. It's a film about the fathers' lie, which can be defined here in a broad sense as the lie of patriarchy and the narratives it conveys. The film features a father who lies to his daughter and is replaced by another father who becomes a copy of the first one. To prevent the pattern from continuing, this dynamic must be broken. At the end of the film, Jade realizes this deception and moves on. In the end, I consider this to be a fairly intimate film. To paraphrase Flaubert, I would say that Jade is me. Through this character, I tell my story, that of an individual who opens his eyes to the lie of patriarchy. Moreover, in the film, the character of Jade is surrounded by several father figures. All of them are aging and harmful, and each of them will disappear.

Your film is set near Perpignan on the border with Spain. How did you choose the topography of your film, which itself plays with its resemblance to the nature shown in American cinema?

The “set” of The White House is located in Dordogne. It is the Château de Rastignac, which is a replica of the White House in Washington. Some historians claim that this house was used as a model for the American building. In any case, this building serves above all as a support for dreams. It is both a symbolic and mysterious building. This set is the cornerstone of our history. It is placed on a composite territory, both real and fictional, where French people from the South-West, Americans and Spaniards confront each other. This territory is located near Perpignan, not far from the Spanish border... in the film it is represented as a local Mexican border... Moreover, the film ends in the desert in Spain. A desert where many spaghetti westerns were shot and bear a resemblance to

the Grand Canyon. The whole film plays on a fantasmatic aspect and each location offers a pretence... because it is always a question of “the other”. The tension between European and American territory is present everywhere... and as it is a film about identity, a nightclub is named after Hamlet's castle.

The film is constantly infused with irony, without it ever distancing itself or adopting a dominant posture. It was important for you to maintain a breath of fresh air and a great romanesque generosity that also embrace the enjoyably regressive side of this cinema ?

Yes, because the challenge was to be halfway between homage and irony. I tried to put these two things in tension while remaining sincere, because I fear cynicism. I didn't want to position myself in a place where I would feel smarter. If you want to divert certain codes or archetypes, you have to be able to tell them, show them and invest them. Once again, I would say that, for me, the sabotage comes from within.

Just like the unrestrained aspect of the film, which dares to take the narrative paths with a lot of audacity, did you also want to show that independent auteur cinema can also be nurtured with great romanesque ambition?

To me, true freedom lies in the fact of freeing oneself from the boundaries that are specific to genres. I seek to make a transgender cinema. I think that everything that is “trans” is the future. On all these questions, cinema remains - or has become - very conservative. Let's get out of the categories, the genres, the registers... let's propose free and baroque forms like Shakespeare did in his time with his theater. Tragedy rubbed shoulders with comedy, the sublime with the trivial, fiction with reality, the plays proposed digressions, breaks, setbacks, accelerations, etc. The future of our stories is in Shakespeare. His work is deeply hybrid and transgressive. And for good reason, even today, no one knows the true identity of Shakespeare...



— BIOGRAPHY CLAUDE SCHMITZ

Claude Schmitz (born 1979) lives and works in Brussels. He graduated from the National Superior Institute of Performing Arts (INSAS) in the directing section. He is an associate artist at the Liège theater and his shows have been presented several times at the KunstenFESTIVALdesArts as well as at the National Theater, the Palais des Beaux-Arts, the Halles de Schaerbeek, the Théâtre la Balsamine, the Filature Liège, the Salzburger Festspiele, HumainTROPHumain, the CDN of Limoges, the Théâtre de l'Onde, the Art Center, etc.

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Currently, he has made three medium-length films and one Hybrid TV Film. NOTHING BUT SUMMER/RIEN SAUF L'ETE won the European Grand Prize at Brive Festival and CARWASH / BRAQUER POITIERS (2018), won the 2019 Jean Vigo Prize and was selected or prized at the IFFR Rotterdam, FID Marseille, Indielisboa, Valdivia FIC, MOMI New-york, La Plata Film Festival, Champs-Élysées Film Festival, Festival de Clermont-Ferrand, etc. his most recent Hybrid TV film LUCIE LOST HER HORSE won the 2022 BRIFF Grand Prize and was show in competition at IFFR Rotterdam.

THE OTHER LAURENS is his first feature.

— FILMOGRAPHY CLAUDE SCHMITZ

2021	Lucie Loses Her Horse – film TV
2018	Carwash – medium length feature – Jean Vigo Award
2017	Nothing but Summer – short
2016	(Mali (In Africa) – short

CAST & CREW

Gabriel / François	Olivier Rabourdin
Jade	Louise Leroy
Shelby	Kate Moran
Valery	Marc Barbé
Jige	Tibo Vandendorre
Scott	Edwin Gaffney
Patrice	Patrice Pays
Padre	Nico Pouzen
David	David Vankovenberghe
Erica	Sara Miquel
Director	Claude Schmitz
Producer	Jérémy Forni, Benoit Roland
Screenplay	Claude Schmitz & Kostia Testut
Director of photography	Florian Berutti
Production Design	Matthieu Buffler
Costume Design	Alexis Beck
Makeup Design	Clémentine Pellissier
Editing	Marine Beaune
Sound	Thomas Berliner
Sound Edit	Aida Merghoub, François Aubinet
Sound Mix	Franco Piscopo
Original Music	Thomas Turine
Color Grading	Florian Berutti
Post-Production	Thomas Meys
Production	Wrong Men North, Chevaldeuxtrois
Countries	Belgium, France
French Distributor	Arizona Distribution
International Sales	Best Friend Forever





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