

LES DEUX AMIS

TWO FRIENDS

a film by **Louis Garrel**

Cannes 2015 / Semaine de la Critique

PRESS REVIEW

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Cannes Film Review: 'Two Friends'



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A mysterious, irresistible woman comes between two mismatched friends in Louis Garrel's lively directorial debut.

Peter Debruge

Chief International Film Critic @AskDebruge

Some bigscreen love stories leave you wondering what the central couple saw in each other in the first place, but not "Two Friends." From the opening shot of Louis Garrel's rowdy, passion-fueled directorial debut, audiences fall for Golshifteh Farahani, who manages to find a moment of private ecstasy in the shower of the women's prison where she's serving time for an unclear crime. So, when it comes to deciphering the chemistry of this improbable love triangle, the mystery centers instead on the bond between its title characters, the two friends played by Garrel and Vincent Macaigne. How did this pair of mismatched personalities ever come to be pals? And why, after a history of betrayals, would a sentimental guy still trust the player who swooped in and shagged all his past obsessions? French cinema seems uniquely suited to such paradoxes, and its adherents should appreciate what Garrel does with that dynamic, albeit in very modest release.

In his native France, the young heartthrob — with his insouciant swirl of black hair and lazy, half-lidded eyes — is known as the son of self-scrutinizing indie auteur Philippe Garrel, and many wondered whether young Louis' debut might borrow too much from his father's extremely self-reflexive work, much of which dissects episodes from his own love life. Abroad, however, audiences still tend to associate Garrel with Bernardo Bertolucci's three-way sizzler "The Dreamers," which puts them in perhaps a better mindset to receive "Two Friends" — a movie that took as its departure point (as yet another piece Garrel played early in his career) Alfred de Musset's play "The Moods of Marianne," injecting fresh energy and much humor into the familiar French template of a lover torn between two radically different suitors.

Garrel plays Abel, who pumps gas at a service station, but fancies himself a great writer (in the making, at least), reciting extracts from his poetry to the pretty girls who stop by for a fill-up. While plenty adorable, he's also clearly a cad, running around with an underage girlfriend (Mahaut Adam), partying with hookers and, still, always willing to seduce whatever new conquest enters his crosshairs. That's one of the reasons he's so poorly suited to be friends with Vincent (Macaigne), a professional movie extra with a history of falling hard for

women outside his league — and losing them to Abel, whose most dependable quality seems to be disappointing his friend.

Vincent's latest crush, Mona (the radiant Farahani), works at a pastry counter in Paris' Gare de l'Est train station. He has known her for less than a week, but after taking her on a drunken bender the week prior, he's smitten, and now hovers around hoping for a second date. Mona politely declines, opting not to mention the real reason for her Cinderella-like curfew (that she's in prison) or the fact that she's more interested in Vincent's friend Abel (and who can blame her?). One of the great strengths of Garrel's script — which he co-wrote with frequent collaborator Christophe Honoré ("Love Songs") — is the sheer discipline it takes to appear so casual, embracing that fundamental human capacity for spontaneous, reckless and often contradictory behavior that's so often sacrificed when writing fictional characters.

Set over a window of just three days, the free-wheeling story kicks into gear as Mona is trying to take her train back to prison at the end of her shift. In an act of brute, caveman-like intervention, Abel pulls Mona from her seat and carries her off the train, shrieking all the way. Though the two men hope this wild gesture could be the start of something, Mona knows what missing her train really means: the end of her already limited freedom — and that imbues everything with the sort of tragic fatalism associated with lovers-on-the-lam pics like "Bonnie and Clyde" and "Breathless."

Meanwhile, the unique chemistry between manic, magnetic Garrel and underdog Macaigine (a talented, if somewhat limited-range actor who's quickly allowing himself to be typecast) feels like a throwback to one of France's most famous onscreen friend pairings: namely, the anarchic combination of Gerard Depardieu and Patrick Dewaere, as seen in such early Bertrand Blier movies as "Going Places" and "Get Out Your Handkerchiefs" — and though the result isn't quite as surreal, the ride can feel similarly unpredictable at times. One moment, the trio is re-creating the student uprisings of May '68 on set (something Garrel has done in both "The Dreamers" and his dad's "Regular Lovers"), the next, they're playing French farce in a low-end motel (where the night clerk mistakes the two friends for a gay couple, and flirts accordingly).

Though the various tensions — sexual and otherwise — give these three terrific actors plenty to work with, much of the film's spirit derives straight from Garrel's direction. Using direct sound and minimal added lighting to minimize the distance between audience and action, his restless camera always seems to be moving, not in the nauseous handheld way of so many recent indie dramas, but scanning the scene and pushing in on the action, as if constantly trying to get a closer, more intimate read into the characters.

Several intense musical injections from the great French composer Philippe Sarde find and amplify the film's tragic undercurrent, while a few well-chosen contemporary pop tracks (e.g. Antony and the Johnsons' "I Fell In Love With a Dead Boy") invite a whole new dimension of melancholy into the characters' already frayed emotional midst. Well aware of the minefield of clichés any love-triangle story presents, Garrel combines his actorly instincts with lessons he's learned working with other directors to hone in on a core truth, capturing in his debut outing (which benefits from practice on three previous shorts) a sense of genuine emotion many directors never accomplish in their entire careers.

Production

(France) An Ad Vitam release of a Les Films des Tournelles, Arte France Cinema production, in association with Cofinova 11, Indefilms 3, Soficinema 11, with the collaboration of Canal Plus, Arte France, le Centre National du Cinema et de l'Image Animée (CNC), with the support of Fondation Gan Pour le Cinema. (International sales: Indie Sale Co., Paris.) Produced by Anne-Dominique Toussaint.

Crew

Directed by Louis Garrel. Screenplay, Garrel, Christophe Honoré. Camera (color), Claire Mathon; editor, Joelle Hache; music, Philippe Sarde; production designer, Jean Rabasse; sound, Laurent Benim, Leo Banderet, Benjamin Jaussaud, Melissa Petit Jean; assistant director, Valerie Roucher.

With

Golshifteh Farahani, Vincent Macaigine, Louis Garrel, Mahaut Adam, Pierre Maillet.

‘Two Friends’ (‘Les Deux Amis’): Cannes Review

7:42 AM PDT 5/18/2015 by Jordan Mintzer



Actor Louis Garrel (“Saint Laurent”) makes his feature debut at the Cannes Critics’ Week

Adding a twist to the two-guys-and-a-girl scenario found in such iconic French films as *Jules and Jim* and *A Woman is a Woman*, actor-turned-director Louis Garrel offers up a charming if not entirely convincing feature debut with the three-way romantic dramedy, *Two Friends* (*Les Deux Amis*). Starring Garrel himself alongside indie stalwart Vincent Macaigne and Paris-based Iranian actress Golshifteh Farahani (*About Elly*), this well-performed urban tryst channels a very New Wave-ish vibe, though doesn’t always deliver the needed level of gravitas. A Cannes Critics’ Week premiere should help push this *très français* effort overseas.

Co-written with Christophe Honoré— in whose own Parisian three-hander, *Love Songs*, Garrel played a guy caught in a bisexual love triangle — **the scenario offers up plenty of moments for the talented trio to strut their stuff, with Farhani literally doing just that during a memorable dive bar performance piece.** But such scenes do not really build towards a powerful enough finale, in what ultimately feels like a lightweight Gallic bromance closer to Judd Apatow than to Jean-Luc Godard. An opening scene shows 30ish beauty, Mona (Farahani), showering in slow motion to the tunes of Philippe Sarde’s hardworking score — which, like the film, alternates between playfulness and passages of darkness. Only when the scene cuts do we realize that Mona is actually a convict serving time in prison, traveling to Paris a few days a week to work at a concession stand in the Gare de l’Est train station.

Mona’s complicated life is further upended by Clement (Macaigne), a professional movie extra and complete nervous wreck with whom she’s been having a platonic fling, although Clement hopes to take things a step further. He enlists his best buddy — the tall, dark and handsome aspiring writer, Abel (Garrel) — to help win her over, but the plan inevitably backfires when Mona and Abel lock eyes for the first time.

Set over the course of three tumultuous days and nights, the freewheeling narrative works best during a handful of energetic set-pieces, most notably an extended film shoot where the trio dresses up as students during the May ’68 riots — an obvious nod to Bernardo Bertolucci’s *The Dreamers* and to Philippe Garrel’s *Regular Lovers*, both of which starred the young Garrel. (Meanwhile, Garrel senior has a movie in Cannes this year about a man caught between two women. As they say in France: “tel pere, tel fils”.)

But as the story comes to a head and the three wind up at the same Parisian hotel, it becomes clear that *Two Friends* is all-too true to its title, with Mona serving mostly as an excuse for Clement and Abel to work out their dude issues — as if Seth Rogen and James Franco suddenly found themselves stranded on the rue du Chateau d’eau at 2am. What could thus have been a compelling portrait of three

desperate 30-somethings turns into a series of gags interspersed with semi-successful attempts at drama, captured in colorful shades by DP Claire Mathon (*Stranger by the Lake*).

Even though her character is a bit of a letdown, Farahani – who played a similar girl in Mia Hansen-Love’s *Eden* – does an excellent job as the unpredictable *femme fatale*, lighting up the screen during two exuberant dance sequences as Mona goes from cold to hot to cold again. Macaigne portrays his usual neurotic self, switching between comedy and tragedy in the span of a few seconds, while Garrel is typically seductive as a wannabe writer whose heart is torn asunder by the whole affair.

“Not this one,” Clement says early on with regards to the new girl in their lives, well aware of his best bud’s killer sex appeal. Like Abel, Garrel certainly lures us in with his film, but he doesn’t quite seal the deal.

Production company: Les Films des Tournelles, Arte France Cinema

Cast: Golshifteh Farahani, Vincent Macaigne, Louis Garrel

Director: Louis Garrel

Screenwriters: Louis Garrel, Christophe Honore

Producer: Anne-Dominique Toussaint

Director of photography: Claire Mathon

Production designer: Jean Rabasse

Costume designer: Justine Pearce

Editor: Joelle Hache

Composer: Philippe Sarde

International sales: Indie Sales

No rating, 102 minutes

'Two Friends': Review

19 May, 2015 | By Jonathan Romney

Dir. Louis Garrel. Fr. 2015. 100mins



The formula once described by Jerry Lewis as “a handsome man and a monkey” - describing his double act with Dean Martin - is played out in Gallic hipster style in *Two Friends* (*Les Deux Amis*). The monkey is hirsute, gently manic Vincent Macaigne and the handsome man is the film’s director and co-star Louis Garrel, here making his first feature after two shorts and 2011’s medium-length *La Règle de Trois*. Caught between them is Golshifteh Farahani in a *ménage à trois* comedy-drama that’s a little bit *Jules et Jim* and a fraction *Les Valseuses*, but never convincingly becomes its own film as it slips awkwardly between comedy, love story, bromance and wordy psychodrama. Despite Garrel’s profile as an actor, it’s hard to imagine this travelling far beyond Francophile festivals.

It has become a cliché to say that Garrel’s performances are narcissistic - but it’s the unavoidable truth here,

Farahani plays Mona, a young woman serving prison time and getting day release to work at Paris’s Gare du Nord. She’s clicked with Clément (Macaigne), an inept movie extra, but now she’s decided to give him the brush-off. Stricken, Clément turns to best friend Abel (Garrel), a would-be scribe and full-time roué.

The two men confront Mona in a rather unpleasant showdown, but for reasons the film never makes plausible, she continues hanging out with them, eventually joining them as extras on a film about Paris 1968 that looks suspiciously like *Regular Lovers*, by the director’s father Philippe Garrel (in which Louis starred). But Mona has fallen for Abel, causing Clément to attempt suicide - leading to a slapstick escape from hospital, with more hand-wringing and misunderstandings to follow.

Ostensibly based on Musset’s play *The Caprices of Marianne*, the script - by Garrel and writer-director Christophe Honoré - keeps veering between registers, rarely letting us get a firm lock on any of the characters. Mona never quite escapes being the third corner of the triangle, although the sometimes electric Farahani is the film’s most vivid presence. The usually compelling Macaigne can’t manage here to overcome the problem of Clément’s excessive neediness. As for Garrel, it has become a cliché to say that his performances are narcissistic - but it’s the unavoidable truth here, especially given the number of remarks about Abel’s good looks, and some frankly adoring close-ups.

Elegantly shot, the whole thing nevertheless seems at once thin and over-cooked: Philippe Sarde’s lush orchestral score feels excess to requirements, given the intimate, ultimately claustrophobic scale of the drama.



"Les deux amis" : Les caprices de Mona



Alain Lorfèvre , Cannes 2015

Dans l'ordre : Clément, le figurant de cinéma paumé (joué par Vincent Macaigne, le comique de service du cinéma d'auteur *frenchie*, la version) craque pour Mona (Golshifteh Farahani), qui vend des sandwiches gare du Nord avant de sauter dans le train qui la ramène entre quatre murs (dont la nature est la surprise de la toute première scène, plutôt bluffante). Face au refus de cette dernière, le meilleur ami de Clément, Abel (Garrel), tombeur de ses dames, écrivain raté, pompiste de gagne-pain qui drague les grandes blondes dans les décapotables au débotté, tente de jouer les entre-metteurs avant d'essayer de dissuader Clément de se fourvoyer dans son illusion amoureuse. On devine évidemment ce qui va arriver...

Sautet en aurait fait un drame. Lelouch des chabadabadas. Truffaut les deux en un. Garrel père une thèse avec sérieux, gravité et noir et blanc. Surprise : Junior innove, se la jouant au second degré, façon *dramedy* comme disent les anglo-saxons. **C'est drôle, enlevé, tantôt touchant, tantôt carrément drôle** - Macaigne, c'est vrai, excelle dans le registre - **et au final plutôt émouvant**. Plutôt que le triangle amoureux, il préfère le *buddy movie*, variante du divorce entre amis avec la fille comme trouble-fête. S'il y a une analogie à chercher, c'est plutôt du côté du cinéma d'Emmanuel Mouret qu'on la trouve - voire des frères Podalydès - avec un romantisme réel et jamais pris en défaut. Car ces paumés solitaires n'ont plus que l'amour auquel se raccrocher.

Garrel ne manque pas d'idées dans sa mise en scène - ni dans son montage, inventif et narratif à la fois, assuré par Joëlle Hache, collaboratrice régulière de Patrice Leconte et Mîche Blanc . Il faut aussi le créditer du cadeau fantastique qu'il offre à Golshifteh Farahani, Française d'adoption adoubée ici pour ce qu'elle est : une immense actrice en elle-même (on le savait depuis « A propos d'Elly » d'Asghar Farhadi), indépendamment de ses origines et de son exil, sublime objet du désir, subtil objet de délire. Sa danse furieuse au cœur de la nuit renvoie à leurs études laborieuses bien de ses jeunes consoeurs françaises starisées trop vite, trop conscientes d'elles-mêmes et préoccupées de leur image.

Louis Garrel, enfant du sérail, fait preuve de l'instinct du réalisateur inspiré et du directeur d'acteur assuré. S'il trébuche parfois, sa première échappée est belle et on attend la suivante avec curiosité, le sourire aux lèvres et les a priori au placard.

Réalisation : Louis Garrel. Scénario : Louis Garrel, Christophe Honoré. Avec Louis Garrel, Vincent Macaigne, Golshifteh Farahani,... 1h40



CANNES 2015 Critics' Week

***Les Deux Amis*: In the beginning was cinema**

by *Bénédicte Prot*

20/05/2015 - CANNES 2015: **With passion, tenderness and utter integrity, Louis Garrel tries his hand at directing, whisking us away on a joyful – and very touching – adventure**



Louis Garrel, Golshifteh Farahani and Vincent Macaigne in *Les Deux Amis*

Mr Garrel junior and senior have done a fine job of entertaining the crowds during the 68th Cannes Film Festival (an impressive figure): while the father, Philippe, opened the Fortnight with the delightful *In the Shadow of Women*, his son, Louis, has presented his debut feature behind (and in front of) the camera in the Critics' Week, out of competition, of course – because *Les Deux Amis*, which hits the same kind of intimate nerve, but with the added freshness and drive of his youth, hits the nail on the head just as hard, and this is indisputable judging from the laughter of the festival-goers during the screening and their broad smiles as they made their way out of the theatre. One could also make out the streak from a possible tear, full of warmth and contentment, on some people's cheeks.

There is no doubt that **Louis Garrel** was trained at a good school, but the fact remains that he is a young director who has got stuck into the profession with a great degree of integrity, solemnity, modesty and passion. His expression is undoubtedly sincere, and it is lit up just as brightly as the expression of Abel, his character in the film, as he looks upon his great friend Clément (**Vincent Macaigne**) and upon Mona (**Golshifteh Farahani**), the girl on probation whom the latter man has fallen madly in love with because he has seen her laugh, as simple as that, behind a baker's counter. Together with Mona, the two big oafs (Abel only seems to be the most "responsible" of the two because Clément, a film extra who gives the director tips and regularly slits his wrists in an attempt to emotionally blackmail people, is really an incredible numbskull, but is as endearing as he is beyond help!) will experience a type of seedy *Roman Holiday* for losers – which takes place between the Gare du Nord station, dreary bedrooms (decent ones and hospital ones) and unsavoury local bars – without the adventure turning out any less wonderful because of it.

Les Deux Amis is very handsomely filmed and, with no clumsiness in the slightest, rich in lovely film references that Louis Garrel grew up with, both as a person and as an actor – the scene involving the film shoot that reconstructs the clashes of May 1968 is above all an allusion to his own filmography, he claims. It is brimming with an infectious spontaneity that joyfully bursts forth, with refreshing candidness, from a screenplay that has been meticulously put together by Garrel and Christophe Honoré. This naturalness can be found in the symbiosis between the two friends Abel and Clément, who are determined to paint the town red like a pair of tiresome but oh-so-charming kids, even if it means ending up at the police station. Even there, their friendship is so sincere and spontaneous that they don't let each other get downhearted, blowing their obligatory phone call on ringing girls and cuddling up to each other while waiting to be released.

And then there is the ravishing and sensual Mona, who lives life a little bit off the beaten track, just like them – or even more so, although she doesn't whinge the whole time like Clément, that big, self-seeking, moaning baby. Indeed, the kidnapping that she falls victim to at the hands of the two boys transforms into a new form of escape in which her amused insolence, tenderness and sensuality come to light, which we discover – where else – but in the contemplative setting of a church... Her irresistible powers of seduction, as they warp the relationships between the movie's characters into a triangle, even lead to a real bust-up between the friends, almost in an instant, just as one can patch things up from one moment to the next with a burst of laughter after a simple wisecrack. In this ease with which Louis Garrel expresses such a thing that is of both minimal and substantial importance, one admittedly recognises his father's elegance, but he makes it his own with a humility and a generosity that are so marvellous that, while watching this film, one is utterly aware of having come across a young director bristling with potential. Because there are few things that are as moving as a film that manages to deliver all its depth and humanity with this degree of levity.

Les Deux Amis was produced by Les Films des Tournelles and co-produced by Arte France Cinéma. Its international sales are handled by Indie Sales.



**Piaceri
Che voglia
di danzare
sotto un tetto
di stelle**

Hi tech. Addio vecchio bonifico, Tendenze. Tra prede e cacciatori, il denaro viaggia con l'app la bellezza è seriale



**RED
CARPET**
Golshifteh
Farahani
al Festival
di Venezia
nel 2013

**Golshifteh
Farahani
“Ecco come
in esilio
ho trovato
la felicità”**

ANNA GINORI

«**M** i sono sempre sentita libera. Anzi, proprio perché ho dovuto sfidare tanti divieti e scappare da una cultura opprimente, ho potuto dare sfogo alla mia personalità e alle mie aspirazioni». È stato un lungo cammino verso la libertà quello di Golshifteh Farahani. L'attrice iraniana è diventata un'icona del suo paese anche se è stata costretta all'esilio. Ora vive in Francia e ha presentato al Festival di Cannes *Les Deux Amis*, primo lungometraggio di Louis Garrel con cui recita nel film. Una commedia romantica, con atmosfere noir, in cui si narra uno strano triangolo amoroso nei pressi della Gare du Nord. «È un gioco a tre, dentro al labirinto di sentimenti», racconta l'attrice, sorreggiendo un caffè sulla Croisette. A trentuno anni Farahani è una star internazionale, è appena tornata dall'Australia dov'era sul set del quinto *Pirati dei Caraibi*. Il regime di Teheran non le ha perdonato di aver girato senza velo nel film di Ridley Scott, *Nessuna Verità*, e poi di aver sfilato con abiti décolleté a Hollywood. Al suo ritorno in patria, nel 2008, le autorità le sequestrano il passaporto anche se è una delle dive più popolari dell'Iran. Farahani scappa a Parigi, grazie al marito di allora, Amin Mahdavi, che ha la nazionalità francese. È così che ha trovato la sua seconda patria. «In verità, la Francia è ormai la mia prima patria», precisa l'attrice. «Il Paese in cui sono nata è avvolto nella nebbia dei ricordi. La Francia mi ha adottato come una mamma, è una nazione talmente generosa. Non c'è posto migliore per esiliarsi».

SEGUE A PAGINA 32



**“La mia fuga
per la libertà”**
L'attrice iraniana e il successo ottenuto lontano dal suo Paese

La copertina

I numeri

Stando alle Nazioni Unite le persone che hanno abbandonato il proprio Paese sono 232 milioni, con un incremento rispetto al 2000 del 33 per cento. E circa il 3,2 per cento della popolazione mondiale. L'Europa è quella dove risiede la quota maggiore, con 71 milioni di individui, seguita dall'Asia con 71 milioni e dal Nord America con 53 milioni

3,2%

della popolazione mondiale ha abbandonato il proprio Paese

Europa, Asia e Nord America
Qui va a vivere chi lascia il proprio Paese

CONTINUA DA PAGINA 31

ANNA GIROU

«AL'UNDO non è stato facile, non parlavo francese, non conoscevo nessuno. Ma ora qui mi sento davvero a casa». Nonostante le tante proposte di trasferirsi negli Stati Uniti, dove continua a lavorare (a nel film di Ridley Scott, *Exodus*), non sembra di trasferirsi a Hollywood. «Sarebbe un incubo. Conosco perfettamente come si vive e si lavora nel cinema in America, e non lo farei».

A quattordici anni era già davanti alla cinepresa, forse perché figlia d'arte: suo padre è attore e regista teatrale. Il suo temperamento ribelle è innato. È stata una piccola pioniera perché prima ha rifiutato di continuare il conservatorio. Adolescenti, Farahani si rasai capelli a zero, per uscire senza velo e sottrarsi ai numerosi divieti contro le donne degli ayatollah. «Volevo essere come i ragazzi, senza limiti. Ero proprio un maschiaccio, persino aggressiva. Faccio anche a botte. E adesso parlo di partecipazione della mia vita, faccio a parlare».

Guardando la sua bellezza perfetta, il corpo esile e fragile si fa fatica a immaginarla in questa ruvida fucina. «La Francia mi ha dato la possibilità di riscoprire la mia femminilità. Ho capito che posso essere forte non aver limiti anche in quanto donna. È stato un grande dono. E adesso mi dico che se dovessi rinascere, sceglierei sempre di essere donna, ma non sono femminista». Farahani non vuole schematizzare tra uomini e donne. «Proferisco difendere l'umanità, credo in valori universali. E poi sono contro ogni "sesso", non mi piacciono le ideologie. Semplicemente ho un'emozione rispetto per le donne. Non sopporto quando vengono penalizzate, mirino a voglia di ucciderle».

In *Les Deux Amis* Farahani è Mona, una ragazza che lavora di giorno in un fast food della stazione di smistamento e di notte in un negozio. L'emozione è stata scritta da Louis Garrel pensando all'attrice, con la quale ha avuto una lunga relazione, e all'amico Vincent Macaigne che gli fa da spalla nel film. «Louis ha cominciato a scrivere quando dovevo andare in India, tre mesi fa. So che è stato pensato in tutto lo stile della cronaca, è davvero un film che ho visto nascere». Il debutto dietro la cinepresa di Garrel, che aveva già girato un cortometraggio con Farahani e Macaigne quattro anni fa, è stato tormentato. «Le riprese sono state difficili perché Louis è un uomo inteso, inteso». Non è stato facile girare con un attore-regista al suo primo lungometraggio. «Era molto ansioso. Avevo sofferto per lui, volevo il suo che portava nella spalla. Ho pensato che non ce l'avrebbe fatta». Il padre di Garrel, Philippe, è uno dei più raffinati registi francesi e presentava anche lui un film a Cannes. Per il figlio trattenne il timore del confronto e stato forte.

«In alcune scene — racconta Farahani — Louis non si lasciava andare alla recitazione, pensava solo al suo sguardo da regista. Allora dovevamo ricominciare. Alla fine abbiamo vinto momenti importanti e ora c'è questo piccolo e bel film».

Il ruolo di Mona, cucito su misura per Farahani, sembra una metafora del suo cammino di emancipazione. La ragazza è in prigione ma è più libera degli altri due personaggi. «È così anche nella vita. Molte persone sono in prigione ma non vedono l'imprigionamento tra guaine mentali, si pongono limiti senza accorgersene». Mona decide di scappare e vivere un sogno con due ragazzi un po' stralunati. «È una danza tra l'amore e il sesso. I due uomini hanno un rapporto amoroso, anche se non sessuale. Poi si improvvisa, come una farfalla, arriva una donna che rompe il loro idillio. Loro sono immaturi,

L'INTERVISTA

IL FILM
A destra, l'attrice è un'immagine di *Les Deux Amis*, scritto e diretto da Louis Garrel, con la Farahani e Vincent Macaigne. È stato appena presentato al Festival di Cannes nella Semaine de la Critique

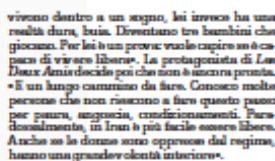
Golshifteh Farahani

“Solo in Francia ho imparato a essere forte anche come donna”





Il postino (1994), con Massimo Troisi (nella foto), racconta di un esilio e di un'amicizia profonda che si crea su un'isola remota. Yangos invece, uscito nel 1985, narra di un gruppo di esiliati argentini che a Parigi mettono in scena la vita di Carlos Gardel sulle note di Astor Piazzolla. Ma il più noto è sicuramente *Casablanca* del 1947

[illegible]

**LA
CAR
RIE
RA**

IL SUCCESSO
Cinque album di Alex
banditi in Brazil. Nel
2003 e nel 2004 è
in "Bonitapae" e
"The Year of the
Cold" con i quali
ritraccia ben sei premi
alla patria che
all'estero.



IL PREMIO
È come il film trionfante che Goldfish ottiene i maggiori riconoscimenti. Come con "About Elly" (2009) di Asghar Farhadi. Leone d'Argento al Festival di Berlino



IL RUOLO
Nel 2008 *Grey's Anatomy* Ridley Scott lo chiamava per "Newman nell'aria", al fianco di Leonardo DiCaprio e Russell Crowe. È il suo primo ruolo ad Hollywood



LUI & LEI

Se gli uomini
preferiscono
le crinoline

GIÀ SONO IN
TUVO risale a quando le bambine della mia generazione erano alle elementari, o alle medie — insomma a quando i genitori le portavano vedere Yentl. Yentl era un film con Barbara Streisand: approssimativamente, parlavo di omosessualità in un'istituzione e si battono come quando ancora non c'era la parola per dirle, lei si tirava fuori da maschietti o pare di studiare il Talmud, visto che non più portata di molti maschi ma non era previsto che le si determinasse l'organo



non cedeva alle naturali attrazioni, voleva farci credere il film: perché quell'altre era più casta e così riciclaggiata e clericale, capivamo noi (nonostante nelle canzoni — Vedi ora un musical, per quanto stupido — Beethoven si è commossa che l'altre gli piaccia perché gli preparava la cena e non le contraddiceva, e lui era pur sempre un uomo vecchio stile che voleva monologare a ruota libera).

Sette anni dopo, le bambine con l'imprinting di Yentl erano ormai grandi, ma non se avevano imparato niente. Fu chiaro quando intrinseco a processo di Yentl di Nethin comparsa 2u, con Sined O'Connor rapata a zero. Diciam che l'avevo fatto anche voi, fatevi sentire mano a mano che io mi rapo a zero. E, come il marmo di Yentl, il fidanzamento del liceo mi preferì una con lunghe chiome caroline. Quasi ingrato.

Frangere o disperarsi, chiedendomi perché Sissini in te gli piacesse tanto e io dal vivo gli sembrassi una che aveva avuto i pidocchi. Frangere o inconsolabile, come piango ora, che da Vent'anni passati più di trent'anni e ancora non ho imparato niente.



per evitare il fraintendimento, l'indicazione costante dei debitori rilevanti si suppone con "mercato di azioni concesso alla famiglia". Questo risultato indica di solito il numero di titoli emessi (non, in particolare, dei supporti finanziari), ma di solito è sufficiente, come ogni cosa è indicata per persona in termini di titoli emessi e di titoli.

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SEMAINE DE LA CRITIQUE • «Les deux amis», primo lungometraggio di Louis Garrel

Quelle «amicizie» sentimentali

Clement corteggia la misteriosa Mona che rincasa sempre prima delle nove. Chiede aiuto all'amico Abel, ma si scatena una drammatica catena di eventi

Giona A. Nazzaro

CANNES

In perfetta continuità familiare, Louis Garrel presenta il suo passaggio dietro la macchina da presa alla Semaine de la critique. *Les deux amis*, film tanto atteso quanto superficialmente trattato alla stregua di un giocattolo di un divo diventato suo malgrado il simbolo dei bourgeois-bohème, è un esordio sensuale, sincero, a tratti indeciso nella scelta del registro da adottare, attraversato da una elettricità spontanea che s'insinua nello sguardo colpendo al cuore. Mona (Golshifteh Farahani) lavora durante il giorno in uno snack-bar della Gare du Nord.

Clement (Vincent Macaigne) la corteggia ma non capisce perché debba sempre rientrare ogni sera prima delle nove. Decide quindi di chiedere consiglio e aiuto ad Abel (Louis Garrel) il quale, impedendo a Mona un pomeriggio di prendere il treno per tornare, scatena una drammatica catena di eventi. Louis Garrel, nel mettere in scena una storia che a prima vista parrebbe una rilettura trasversale del cinema paterno, adotta un approccio fisico e una prossimità quasi tattile che nel contrasto del gioco d'attore fra lui e Macaigne si apre inaspettatamente alla commedia. La nudità con la quale mette in scena il suo film e la precisione delle stoccate ironiche che Clement rivolge ad Abel (dirette evidentemente all'immagine pubblica e glamour del neoregista), sono i principali elementi testimonianti l'investimento emotivo e umano garrelliano nel progetto. Consapevole delle accuse che puntualmente i detrattori gli avrebbero rivolto, Louis Garrel sfodera non solo una delle sue interpretazioni più convincenti degli ultimi anni ma, soprattutto, manifesta un piacere schietto del fare cinema. A tratti, addirittura una necessità. Educazione sentimentale in forma di com-

bat d'amour, il film è sensuale blues urbano. Un atto di puro godimento cinematografico. Principio di piacere che diventa gesto filmico. L'apice, e senz'altro il momento più sorprendente del film, è la ricreazione su un set cinematografico degli scontri parigini del maggio '68 al grido di «Ce n'est qu'un début continuons le combat!» dove Abel e Mona scoprono di amarsi e Clement, dalla disperazione, si taglia le vene.

Con una precisione rara in un esordiente, Garrel omaggia il padre intrecciando magistralmente in un'unica parabola cinema, amore e politica. Il vagabondare notturno, nel quale Macaigne, malato d'amore, si offre come una versione giullaresca del broncio di Garrel, è segnato da momenti di nudità lancinanti, nei quali traspare il piacere, contagioso, della performance dei protagonisti. Esplorare il momento in cui Mona balla da sola in un bistrò prima di entrare con Abel in una chiesa. Louis Garrel non tenta di reinventare calligraficamente un cinema che ha conosciuto attraverso il padre. Mette in scena una pratica del cinema, cosa completamente diversa. Una pratica che rivendica con pieno diritto. Ed è nella danza fra lui e Macaigne che vanno colte le discontinuità dal modello. Macaigne, con la sua vulnerabilità logorroica, offre una versione antierica del tipico protagonista garrelliano. Pur citando alla lettera il cinema del padre (*J'entends plus la guitare*), Louis imprime al suo film un'agilità punk da B movie. Il passaggio del testimone, dunque, non si compie nel segno di un manierismo poetico, quanto nella efficacia artigianale di un cinema che sceglie immediatamente il proprio campo. Nonostante abbia trascorso «tant d'heures sous les sunlights», Louis Garrel accetta la scommessa di praticare un cinema inattuale. Resistenziale, a suo modo. In continuità con un'idea di lavoro e di mondo che, seppure espressa ancora in forme non del tutto compiute e a tratti addirittura acerbe, testimonia di una generosità mai banale.

E nel rapporto fra Philippe e Louis si può tracciare la medesima filiazione ideale che corre fra Mick Jones e i Libertines. Certo, probabilmente questa canzone l'abbiamo già sentita. L'energia, però, quella è sempre nuova. E fa venire voglia di ballare. «Brutto segno», direbbe Mona. Prima di accogliere la notte e vivere. Di nuovo.



Cannes 2015 'Hitchcock/Truffaut', l'origine del cinema

di Augusto Sainati | 20 maggio 2015

Ci sarebbe da raccontare anche di altre emozioni, quella del bellissimo e **delicato** *Les deux amis*, film piccolo ma molto intenso di Louis Garrel, altro cineasta cresciuto, come Truffaut, a pane e cinema, essendo figlio di Philippe e nipote di Maurice, cineasta di terza generazione ormai. Il film, tutto giocato su tre personaggi, i due amici del titolo e Mona, ragazza dal bel volto luminoso che vive con decisione la sua difficile condizione di carcerata in semilibertà, racconta la fragilità e l'ambiguità dell'amicizia, mai del tutto sincera, una volta che l'amore entra in gioco a scombicare gli equilibri. E la racconta intessendosi anche sul non detto, sugli sguardi, sui corpi, sulla vitalità di Mona che sembra cercare un contatto col mondo proprio con il suo corpo estroverso, anche se forse ha paura di trovarlo fino in fondo, tanto che preferisce farsi arrestare di nuovo per tornare alla sicurezza del carcere. Un film tenero, con molti dialoghi nei caffè, come piaceva alla Nouvelle Vague di un tempo.



Louis Garrel: Pardon, amo la donna del mio migliore amico



22.5.15

di Claudia Catalli Giornalista, scrittrice



Non solo Love e le sue scene ad altissimo tasso erotico. Un altro menage a trois ha attirato l'attenzione degli spettatori del Festival di Cannes, quello declinato piu' in chiave comico/sentimentale di Les Deux Amis, primo film da regista dell'attore figlio d'arte presentato alla Semaine de la Critique

Per il suo debutto dietro la macchina da presa quello che viene indicato dai rumors come il nuovo fidanzato di Laetitia Casta ha scelto la bellissima Golshifteh Farahani, attrice e cantautrice iraniana

trentunenne, cara al cinema hollywoodiano. Già vista in *Nessuna verità* ed *Exodus Dei e Re* di Ridley Scott, affiancherà Johnny Depp in *Pirati dei Caraibi 5*.

Intanto nel film di Louis Garrel si è conquistata applausi del pubblico, soprattutto maschile, per l'interpretazione di Mona, ragazza sensualissima e disinibita che scopriamo già dalla prima scena in libertà vigilata. Il film si apre con un'indiscreta macchina da presa che si insinua negli spogliatoi femminili e segue l'attrice fin dentro la doccia. Un topless degno di nota, gli occhi chiusi, l'acqua che scroscia sulle sue curve mediterranee e sulla chioma bruna.

Tolte un paio di scene, il film vuole essere una commedia romantica, ironica e abbastanza pudica che, tra una citazione ai film e alle tematiche narrative ricorrenti nel cinema di Garrel senior, alias papà Philippe, racconta la storia di due amici innamorati della stessa donna (Mona, appunto).

Uno è il goffo e melodrammatico Clément (Vincent Macaigne), pronto a gesti disperati pur di averla. L'altro è lo stesso Louis Garrel, che si autodirige nei panni del migliore amico che alla fine si invaghisce della stessa donna.

Dopo una serie di peripezie emotive e avventure rocambolesche, Mona finisce per baciarli entrambi, una notte in albergo. E pur non volendo urtare i sentimenti di nessuno, non saprà resistere all'attrazione irresistibile per Garrel. Un Jules et Jim dei giorni nostri, meno magistrale e poetico, più ironico e informale, che consacra il fascino di Golshifteh Farahani: la scena in cui balla da sola scatenata in un pub, i capelli sciolti e i piedi nudi, davanti allo sguardo ipnotizzato di Garrel, resta impressa.

"Spero restiate positivamente delusi dal mio film – scherza ma non troppo il regista e attore francese a Cannes – Ho sempre pensato all'imbarazzo dei registi che impiegano anni a realizzare un film che poi la gente vede e critica dopo solo un'ora e mezza. Ora che tocca a me sono emozionatissimo".
"Piccoli" figli d'arte crescono.

Morceau de Cannes: Les deux amis

Par Natalia Wysocka

Quelles œuvres font jaser à Cannes? Se font applaudir? Reçoivent un accueil plutôt froid? Quels sont les parcours des cinéastes qui les signent? Et des acteurs qui y jouent? Qu'en a pensé la presse? Qu'en a pensé Métro? Voici quelques réponses pour les films qu'on a vus et qu'on a aimés. Passionnément. Follement. Ou plus modérément.

Ça s'appelle comment? *Les deux amis*

C'est réalisé par qui? Louis Garrel

Qui, par le passé, a fait quoi? Il a beaucoup joué. Dans une trentaine de films en fait. Il a débuté, tout petit, devant la caméra de son père, Philippe Garrel, qui l'a notamment dirigé, bien plus tard, dans *Les amants réguliers*, drame romantique en noir et blanc qu'on a tant aimé. L'acteur trentenaire a également brillé dans plusieurs longs métrages de Christophe Honoré, plus particulièrement dans les inoubliables *Chansons d'amour*. Notons qu'il est aussi apparu, brièvement, pas trop longtemps, dans *Les amours imaginaires* de Xavier Dolan. *Les deux amis* est son premier long métrage en tant que réalisateur.

Et ça parle de quoi? De... deux amis. Qui tombent amoureux de la même fille. En fait, le premier qui en tombe amoureux, c'est Clément, un figurant de cinéma un peu gauche. Le second qui capte son regard, son copain donc, c'est Abel, un séducteur nonchalant qui se dit écrivain. On devine comment ça va tourner.

Et au générique, on retrouve qui? Le cinéaste lui-même dans le rôle de l'ami tombeur. Vincent Macaigne, excellent dans le rôle plus tragi-comique du gars qui pogne moins. Et l'actrice franco-iranienne Golshifteh Farahani – qui, par le passé, a joué dans des films aux styles très différents, allant du blockbuster américain *Exodus* de Ridley Scott au film indépendant tel *À propos d'Ellie* d'Asghar Farhadi – dans la peau de cette jeune femme pas tout à fait libre.

Des dialogues marquants?

«Comment tu la trouves?

– Elle a un très beau nez. Elle a un front très large. Mais tu sais bien, la beauté, ça complique tout.

– Abel, pas celle-là hein? Pas! Celle! Là!»

«Oh! Les cloches! C'est peut-être un mariage?

– C'est quelqu'un qui est mort.»

L'accueil des spectateurs (le jour où nous l'avons vu)? Chaleureux. Des applaudissements. Des rires.

Nos impressions? C'est drôle, spirituel, vraiment bien écrit (le réalisateur-acteur cosigne le scénario avec Christophe Honoré, d'après *Les caprices de Marianne*, d'Alfred de Musset). Avec cette histoire d'amitié et de coup de foudre, somme toute assez «commune» mais traitée ici de manière sensible, Louis Garrel confiait en début de projection vouloir offrir un moment de légèreté aux spectateurs. A-t-on besoin de dire que c'est réussi? OK : c'est réussi.

Notre score?



Cannes: Les Petites Palmes de Métro

Par Natalia Wysocka

La plus belle amitié entre hommes.

Grand prix aux magnifiques Michael Caine et Harvey Keitel, liés par une complicité que seuls l'âge et les épreuves permettent dans *Youth*. **Mention aux drôles et charmants Vincent Macaigne et Louis Garrel, le Eric Bruneau parisien, dans le bien nommé Deux amis.**

FESTIVAL DE CANNES »

El actor francés Louis Garrel presenta en Cannes su debut como director, 'Les deux amis'

Álex Vicente Cannes 22 MAY 2015



Lejos del estruendo de la sección oficial, de sus aplausos hiperbólicos y decepciones desmedidas, las secciones paralelas del Festival de Cannes siguen funcionando de escaparate para pequeñas y gratas sorpresas. Una de ellas ha sido *Les deux amis*, el primer largometraje que dirige el actor Louis Garrel (París, 1983), presentada en la Semana de la Crítica, sección consagrada a las primeras y segundas películas que ha revelado, en sus 54 años de historia, a nombres como Chris Marker, Ken Loach, Víctor Erice, Otar Iosselliani, Wong Kar-Wai o Leos Carax. Sin contar con su propio padre, ese mito viviente del cine de autor francés que responde al nombre de Philippe Garrel. “Es la sección donde me apetecía estar, porque aquí debutó Bertolucci”, afirmaba Garrel pocos días antes del estreno, encadenando cigarrillos en una terraza de Saint-Germain, meca de la intelectualidad parisina, donde conoce el nombre de pila de los camareros y varios transeúntes le saludan como si fuera de la familia. Entre ellos, el insigne director Jonas Mekas, que se detendrá unos segundos para filmar al actor con una minúscula cámara digital.

Fue Bertolucci quien lanzó la carrera de Garrel en el cine en 2003 al escogerle como uno de los tres protagonistas de *Los soñadores*, cuando era solo un estudiante de conservatorio teatral. Desde entonces, todo ha sido gloria para este joven de pelo cuidadosamente alborotado y silueta de poeta romántico, convertido en una especie de *sex symbol* de barricada revolucionaria, a la vez que en *homme fatale* susceptible de vender perfumes de lujo (es imagen de Valentino tras haberlo sido de Armani). En esta mañana primaveral, Garrel padece eso que los franceses llaman “*le trac*”, concepto casi intraducible que designa el pánico escénico que se siente antes de empezar la función. No es para menos: ha venido a Cannes por partida triple. Además de presentar su debut como director, Garrel interpreta un papel secundario en *Mon roi*, la (denostada) película de Maïwenn que concursa por la Palma de Oro y ejerce de narrador de *L'ombre des femmes*, la nueva cinta de su padre, que abrió la Quincena de los Realizadores.



El actor y director francés Louis Garrel, en Cannes. / LOIC VENANCE (AFP)

Como su título indica, *Les deux amis* habla de ese extraño vínculo al que llamamos amistad. La protagoniza el propio Garrel en el papel de Abel, un apuesto y cínico aspirante a escritor que debe conformarse con un trabajo de vigilante de aparcamiento. A su lado figura Clément, figurante sin frase en varios rodajes cinematográficos, al que le une una larga amistad. Cuando llega a sus vidas Mona, una chica que vende bocadillos en una estación de tren y esconde un insospechado secreto, la devoción que sienten el uno por el otro se transformará en algo parecido a la rivalidad. Garrel no ha dudado en describir la amistad como una variante del amor y como una institución similar al matrimonio, que también se puede romper de tanto usarlo. “La amistad es amor sin sexo. Lo único que las distingue es la falta de pulsión sexual. Por el resto, ambas cosas están marcadas por patrones parecidos, como la admiración, la seducción y la posesividad. Igual que en el amor, existen amistades nobles y nocivas. Algunas son duraderas y otras terminan en ruptura”, afirma Garrel.

A sus dos protagonistas, dobles parisienses de Laurel y Hardy –o eso dice el director, apuntando que siempre le pareció extraño que no tuvieran “vida conyugal”–, les une una relación ambigua. “La amistad masculina se suele representar mal en el cine, con hombres que solo hablan de acostarse con mujeres o, al contrario, excesivamente pudorosos, que ni se tocan. Yo he querido retratarla con más ternura, porque así son las relaciones que he vivido con otros hombres”, explica Garrel. “En el instituto escogí la opción literaria, donde hay tantos hombres como en un curso de cerámica. Solo éramos dos chicos. Si los hombres de mi película son tan femeninos, es porque aprendí qué era la amistad con las mujeres. La camaradería entre hombres es algo que, por suerte, nunca he conocido. El clásico grupo de amigos adolescentes me parece terrible, lo peor del mundo. Alguien tendría que contar la homosexualidad latente en esas bandas de hombres. Esa sí sería una película interesante”, sonríe. Su película está marcada por cierta ambigüedad al respecto. “Es algo natural para mí. He crecido entre homosexuales. Que un gay me meta mano no me parece un ataque a mi integridad física”, asegura.

Garrel ha contado con dos actores que le resultan cercanos: Vincent Macaigne, a quien conoce desde los 16 años, peculiar nueva estrella del cine de autor francés, donde sus personajes de patán desaliñado hacen furor, y Golshifteh Farahani, actriz iraní perseguida en su país por haber mostrado su espalda en una película con Leonardo Di Caprio (en esta enseña bastante más, sin que los ayatolás se hayan pronunciado todavía), que fue pareja de Garrel hasta hace pocos meses. Los tres constituyen un triángulo amoroso marcado por la geometría variable de sus relaciones, que Garrel sabe describir con ojo atinado y sensible. “Mientras los ingleses idolatran a Shakespeare, nosotros tenemos a autores como Musset, Molière o Marivaux, que se distinguieron por su descripción precisa de la naturaleza de los sentimientos. He querido inscribirme en esa tradición”, afirma el actor, que se inspiró en una obra del primero, *Los caprichos de Marianne*, trasladándola a los tiempos modernos.

Su película no renuncia a retratar la precariedad de nuestra era: sus personajes son treintañeros que se comportan como adolescentes, sin trabajos serios ni grandes proyectos vitales por delante, mostrándose únicamente obsesionados por sus afectos y pequeñas miserias. “Fue la manera que encontré para anclar la película en el presente. Cuando uno rueda una historia sentimental, corre el peligro de que le traten de frívolo o superficial. Sobre todo a mí, que solo he participado en proyectos de este tipo, encarnando siempre a hombres atormentados por el amor”, explica Garrel. ¿Ha sido así por casualidad, porque no le ofrecían nada mejor, por elección consciente? Más bien eso último: “Esas son las películas que me gustan y me interesan. Para mí, el amor es la peor tragedia. Es lo que más nos puede devastar en la vida, más que un edificio que se viene abajo”.

Existió un tiempo, ya lejano, en que Louis Garrel quiso convertirse en veterinario. No tardó en cambiar de opinión. ¿Cómo dedicarse a otro oficio cuando tu padre es un cineasta mítico (y tu madre, una gran actriz como Brigitte Sy), cuando uno estudia en el mismo colegio que François Truffaut y cuando su padrino no es otro que el alter ego de ese director, Jean-Pierre Léaud? Garrel debutó en el cine a los 5 años en una película de su padre, *Les baisers de secours*. A su progenitor, le llama “Philippe” y no “papá”. Como si fuera, precisamente, un amigo. “Existe entre nosotros una comunicación constante a nivel creativo”, afirma Garrel. Durante el rodaje, se descubrió repitiendo instrucciones técnicas que le había enseñado su padre, especialista de las relaciones sentimentales, las separaciones y posteriores recomposiciones. Pero no cree que haya sido una auténtica influencia. “No me molesta que me busquen parecidos con él, pero en esta película no creo que haya muchos. Mi película tiene una parte de artificialidad, incluso de falsedad, que las películas de Philippe no soportarían”, sostiene.

Sin embargo, no ha dudado en incluir una secuencia ambientada durante un rodaje que reconstruye el Mayo del 68, del que su padre fue una especie de figura ejemplar y al que él mismo parece vinculado por su filmografía (ha encarnado a jóvenes del 68 en dos ocasiones, con Bertolucci y también con su padre en *Les amants réguliers*). “Tal vez haya querido ir allá donde los demás no quieren que vaya”, sonríe. Pese a las apariencias, Garrel tampoco ve nada en la película de la Nouvelle Vague. “Aquel fue un cine describía una realidad más suave y más feliz, la de los sesenta. Nuestro tiempo está mucho más angustiado. No quería parecer amnésico al retratar nuestra época, por eso escogí a tres personajes precarios, marginales y desequilibrados”, responde. ¿Ni siquiera hay algo de Truffaut en la película? “Sí, es verdad, pero solo por su pudor. Yo no sabría filmar el sexo. No sé si sería capaz”, admite el actor, que ve su película como un cruce entre Jacques Doillon y Claude Pinoteau, director de cine que rodó *La boum*, mítica película adolescente que lanzó la carrera de Sophie Marceau. “He querido que fuera una película de cámara, pero a ritmo acelerado”, concluye Garrel.

A quienes le tratan de *hijo de* –o incluso de *nieto de*: su abuelo fue el gran actor teatral Maurice Garrel, Garrel les suele responder lo siguiente: “Es algo que no me molesta y que puedo entender, porque yo también he tenido ese sentimiento respecto a otros”, admite. “Esa fascinación por los clanes y las filiaciones me pone nervioso. Tal vez por eso adopté a mi hija, porque esas historias de transmisión genética me parecen deprimentes”, afirma. Habla de Céline, la niña que adoptó en 2011 junto a su ex pareja, la actriz Valeria Bruni-Tedeschi. Una relación que convirtió a este reconocido votante de la Liga Comunista Revolucionaria en con cuñado de... Nicolas Sarkozy. Pero esa ya es otra historia, y no necesariamente de amistad.



Q&A with Louis Garrel

The French heartthrob on finding the laughter, on-going collaborator Christophe Honoré, and his directorial debut *Les deux amis*.

- Text : Kee Chang
- Images: Victoria Stevens
- Posted: 20 May, 2015



I didn't want to make a buddy movie. I wanted to make a feminine movie about the friendship between two men.

Adding a twist to the two-guys-and-a-girl scenario found in such iconic French films as *Jules and Jim*, actor-turned-director Louis Garrel offers up a charming if not entirely convincing feature debut with *Les deux amis* (*Two Friends*). Starring Garrel alongside indie stalwart Vincent Macaigne and Paris-based Iranian actress Golshifteh Farahani, this well-performed urban tryst channels a New Wave-ish vibe. Co-written with Christophe Honoré—in whose *Love Songs* Garrel played a guy caught in a bisexual love triangle—the story offers plenty of moments for the trio to strut their stuff, with Farahani literally doing just that during a memorable dive bar performance.

An opening scene shows 30-ish beauty Mona (Farahani, excellent) showering in slow motion to the tunes of Philippe Sarde's hardworking score. Only when the scene cuts do we realize Mona is actually a convict serving time in prison, traveling to Paris a few days a week to work at a train station concession stand. Mona's life is further upended by Clément (Macaigne, forever goofy), a professional movie extra and nervous wreck with whom she's been having a platonic fling, although Clément hopes to take things a step further. He enlists his buddy Abel (Garrel, seductive) to help win her over, but the plan backfires when Mona and Abel lock eyes—and lips.

Following the Critics' Week special screening of *Les deux amis*, we met up with Garrel at Cannes' Canal+ pop-up lounge for a conversation.

Did you feel any pressure trying to realize your first film in the shadow of your father?

When you're directing a movie, pressure is everywhere. I've worked with him four times since I was five years old. It was like being in a circus. He taught me a lot of things. It's a pleasure to learn something from him with each new film. But we do completely different things. He's also a painter. I tried to make a comedy.

What was it like to direct your own performance for the first time?

The scene with the film inside the film was a nightmare to shoot because it took fifteen hours. In the beginning, I didn't think I could do it. You have eighty people pulling you in all different directions. It was a big mess, but the most important thing is to keep the crew enthusiastic. They feel sorry for you because they see you running around like a madman: "Are you okay? Are you okay??" Everyone is gentle with you and they're full of compassion. They will look at everything and tell you what's working and what isn't working.

Did you always want to put yourself in the film?

Yes, since the very beginning. I made some short films before, just to try it. I realized that it was a pleasure to do it. And I knew I wanted to make something with Vincent [Macaigne]. I wanted to have these two French guys, a tall one and a smaller one. I knew they would be dueling, you know? It's like a cartoon. I wanted to do something similar to the French comedies from the '80s and in a [Jim] Jarmusch style.

Did you ever see *Adam & Paul*, the Lenny Abrahamson film?

No.

***Les deux amis* reminded me of that film.**

Adam & Paul? I want to see it.

And the May '68 scene reminded me of your father.

There's also a connection to [Bernardo] Bertolucci because I was in two movies about 1968. The guy I used in the May '68 scene is the same guy from the Bertolucci movie. I don't know why I made that scene... I guess I liked the idea of having Vincent do the most individual thing—trying to kill himself—in the middle of a collective uprising. I liked the comic idea behind his loneliness when he's surrounded by a mob of people.

At the core, this is a movie about friendship.

Friendship is important, but I didn't want to make a buddy movie. I wanted to make a feminine movie about the friendship between two men. That's why I wanted them to be misfits. They're not integrated into society—they're losers. I wanted to show how attached they are to feelings. Feelings are the only way they can relate to the world. I liked that Christophe [Honoré] tried to show a break between two men, exactly the way it would happen in real life. You have that classic scene in movies where someone says, "I don't love you anymore," in the bedroom. I wanted to show that between these two clowns. [Laughs]

What was the inspiration behind this film?

The main argument for the film is based on the play *The Moods of Marianne* by Alfred de Musset. In the play, there's a guy who can't get a date with this girl so he asks his friend, who's very cynical, "Please do this for me. Please help me get a date with this girl." And the girl is married to this very bourgeoisie guy. They have to "kidnap" her from that situation. We didn't want to make Mona a married woman, so we put her in jail. Not to say that marriage is jail! [Laughs] We had to take her away from something very strong. Then Christophe [Honoré] wrote the scene with the train—completely strange, I know. When my friends saw the movie, they said, "Vincent is crazy, but your character is maybe crazier." It was very funny to shoot that scene in the Gare du Nord station. Golshifteh [Farahani] was screaming and crying, and no one knew what was going on.

How did this on-going collaboration with Christophe start?

He was looking for an actor when I was eighteen years old. It was for *Ma mère*, the Georges Bataille adaptation. The script was terrible because of the sexuality, but when I met him, I found that he was really modest and very sweet. So we did that movie—there were so many love scenes!—and he wrote *Dans Paris*, which I think is a very good film.

The dance sequence in *Les deux amis* reminded me of the interlude from *Dans Paris* where Romain Duris sings Kim Wilde.

Yeah, yeah, yeah! I didn't even think about that. I wanted a dance scene, but I didn't want it to be the typical scene you find in romantic comedies. Even my producer said to me: "Are you sure you want to keep that scene where she dances for him?" and I said, "Don't worry about it. I'm going to do it." Somebody told me about this King Krule single and the contrast was good. The whole movie is built on breaking the rhythm, you know? When you have a sad moment, you have to break that by going to a funny one. I was always working like this with Christophe. We wanted things to shift all the time. When you write a script, you have to be the guy at dinner who's breaking up the conversation with humor. This is the guy who you want to invite to dinner.

Is comedy your preferred genre?

I don't know about that, but last night when the movie was projected and I heard laughs, it was orgasmic for me. I loved that because I spent so much time alone in my room writing the scenes: "I want to hear people laughing *here*." Films cost so much money to make. It takes so much time to explain what you want to do. You shoot, you edit, you screen the movie, you hear people laughing—it's such a relief. With the laughs, you're kidnapping people from something.

Did people laugh where you didn't expect them to?

No, never. Did you laugh?

Nope.

[Laughs]

No, I'm just messing with you.

You can get a lot out of humor—good humor, not stupid humor. You can see situations with more clarity.

Does something like the Valentino campaign boost your film career?

I don't know... I don't know. [Laughs] I really don't know! I'm not so cool with commercials in general, but sometimes it's good to try things far away from you. The guy who directed the Valentino campaign was a maniac, but he got good pictures. It's a strange world. My dream as an actor is to play with specific directors. I never had this Hollywood dream because I know they don't need French actors. Sometimes they need the French guy smoking, I guess, but there's no French community in America. You represent no one, except French tourists.

Are you already thinking about your next film?

I think about it sometimes, but I think more about taking a holiday. I feel a bit empty right now. One day I was full, but now I feel empty.

You're also in Maïwenn's film, which is in competition this year. You play a married, dependable guy, which isn't the type of role you normally play. Did that excite you?

Yeah, I was super excited to work with Maïwenn. She's very intense and first degree. Sometimes you have to tell her, "Don't be so intense!" I had so much connection with Vincent Cassel, also. I had this Jiminy Cricket kind of part in the movie, like, "Hey, don't do that!" He has a clown-like side to him and it was a good character to play.

Is there anything that frustrates you about directing?

Not so much. I just want more laughs. Last night, people would laugh and then fall silent. But maybe they were just watching the film... I wanted it to be laugh, laugh, laugh, laugh, laugh.

I'd imagine it was quite liberating for you to edit your own performance. Actors often talk about how they feel helpless during post-production.

Yeah, but I had an editor working with me and we watched the monitor together. I was really paying attention to her opinions. You have a lot of different points of view, you know? This is what I learned from making short movies: At the beginning, you want to control everything. Then you learn to give people creative freedom on set. You give people responsibilities because it's a collective work. My dream is to make movies where people become so involved that they feel like it's their movie as well.

Have you shown the film to your father?

Yeah, of course.

What's the best advice he gave you about filmmaking?

Give your editor freedom—the work will be more passionate.



Louis Garrel Keeps Busy at Cannes

The actor and director talks about his new film, multitasking, and what's next.

*May 20, 2015 4:57 PM | by Gillian Sagansky
Photography by Victoria Stevens*

Les Deux Amis, Louis Garrel's first feature film as both director and star, follows the unraveling relationship of two best friends who fall in love with the same girl. "I wanted to make a dramedy about the end of a friendship. They break up, the same way a couple does," he said from a bench on the Croisette at the Cannes Film Festival after the movie's well-received premiere. "It was such a relief to hear everyone laughing at exactly the right moments. I was so proud. I spent three years of my life writing for just the right moment of laughter."

For Garrel, the most challenging part of making the film was juggling the dual roles of actor and director. "When you're an actor you can't always obey the director, so I had to find some way to see my character objectively and not as the film's director. I was my own student." His decision to cast two of his close friends helped with the creative process. "I know them both really well, so I knew if I wasn't getting the performance from them that I wanted, or if they could do better," he said, before heading back to Paris, where he'd perform Marivaux's play *Les Fausses Confidences* opposite Isabel Huppert that evening. "I'm really happy with what I'm doing creatively," said Garrel, whose next film, starring Marion Cotillard, will begin shooting in September. "I'm tired but it's worth it!"

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