
 International Film Circuit, inc.

Pressbook

Flanders

a film by Bruno Dumont



3B productions (associate producer)

Co-produced by ARTE FRANCE CINEMA, CRRV NORD PAS DE CALAIS, LE
FRESNOY Studio National des Arts Contemporains

With the support of CNC Digital technologies & special effects with the support CNC

With the participation of CINECINEMAS CONTACT FILMS (Netherlands)

In association with COFINOVA 2 – SOFICINEMA

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Flanders

Short Synopsis

André Demester shares his time between his farm and walks with Barbe, his childhood friend. He loves her secretly and painfully, accepting from her the little that she can give him. Along with others his age, Demester leaves to be a soldier in a war in a far off land. Barbarity, camaraderie and fear turn Demester into a warrior. As the seasons go by, Barbe, alone and wasting away, waits for the soldiers to return. Will Demester's boundless love for Barbe save him?

CAST

Adelaïde LEROUX	Barbe
Samuel BOIDIN.....	Demester
Henri CRETEL.....	Blondel
Jean-Marie BRUVEART.....	Briche
David POULAIN.....	Leclercq
Patrice VENANT.....	Mordac
David LEGAY.....	Lieutenant
Inge DECAESTEKER.....	France

Download images at www.internationalfilmcircuit.com/flanders

Flanders

Director	Bruno DUMONT
Screenplay	Bruno DUMONT
Producers	Jean BREHAT and Rachid BOUCHAREB
Executive Producer	Muriel MERLIN
Line Producer	Michèle GRIMAUD
Line Producer Tunisia	Abdellaziz Ben MLOUKA for CTV
Cinematography	Yves CAPE afc
Sound engineer	Philippe LECOEUR
Editor	Guy LECORNE
Mixer	Emmanuel CROZET
Sound editor	Pierre CHOUKROUN
Casting	Claude DEBONNET
Make-up	Nathalie RIGAUT
Costumes	Cédric GRENAPIN, Alexandra CHARLES
Digital special effects	EXCALIBUR

Production France	3B PRODUCTIONS
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Coproduction	ARTE FRANCE CINÉMA CRRV NORD PAS DE CALAIS LE FRESNOY Studio National des Arts Contemporains
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With the support of	CNC (Digital technologies & special effects with the support of CNC)
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Flanders

Interview with Bruno Dumont

SUBJECT

Explaining the process that sets a film in motion remains a mystery. For *Twentynine Palms* it was a sensation. The very furtive character of the police inspector in *Life of Jesus* made me want to do *Humanity*. If I'm asked: Why? How? I cannot answer. What is important for me is describing a story with images and sounds. The director's job is like a painter's. Matisse wrote that what matters in a painting is not the subject, but the way things are placed around the subject, their proportion. Flanders, for example, is a mystery to me. I was born there. My relation to it is visceral, sensitive, in other words, not guided by reason. The camera becomes a microscope or a lens held over the subject... I need the land to film human beings. In being filmed, Flanders renders an aspect of human existence. I need a story because stories are the natural movement of our lives, in which we connect with others. Making a film is like weaving. The war in *Flanders* is the expression of the struggle of our desires.

LANDSCAPES

When one films a landscape, it represents the character's interior climate. I do not film Flanders, I film what the character has inside. When you have a subjective shot of Demester looking at the landscape in front of his farm, we are inside Demester. I do not film landscapes like a documentary maker. I do not make social films. Everything is mental and internal. When I made *Life of Jesus*, I emptied the streets and the town of Bailleul. I took out the people and the cars to attain a sort of abstraction. I need to eliminate. I spend my time taking away but I don't add anything.

CHARACTERS

My characters never contemplate what they are doing. They do and they act. They never think about who they are. When I film a face, I want the viewer to feel what the character is experiencing. Nothing is expressed in words. The face is expression. The camera becomes a probe. On the screen, there is a sort of alchemy between the viewer and the hero. The viewer is directly connected to his brain and his raw emotions. When my characters speak, they only say what is necessary. At the risk of exaggerating, when an actor says, "Okay, good-bye. I'm leaving," it serves a purpose. If he left without saying goodbye, it wouldn't be polite.

NON-PROFESSIONAL ACTORS

Non-professional actors are actors, not performers. They give what they are in the heat of the action. Initially, I choose them because they correspond to the characters as they are written. Then my job is to reach the inner truth specific to each person. They do not read the screenplay. They act in retaining part of themselves, the truth that belongs to them and that I want access to. They are unpredictable. I adjust to them. They adjust to me. Together, we give up or keep going. For the role of Barbe, Adélaïde's photogenic nature asserts itself immediately. I got rid of the Barbe of the screenplay and I "initiated" myself into Adélaïde's sensibility to make it fit the action. But Adélaïde is not Barbe. The actors are at the heart of the film. I carry them and complete the story depending on what they give.

SEX

I'm criticized for the crudeness of the sex scenes. But sex in itself does not interest me. I am very modest, not at all perverse. If I film sexuality, it is because I see it as an expression. When I see bodies like that, exposed, I find it tragic. It is the blend of a sort of infinite love and the impossibility of two people becoming one. They are powerless to penetrate the other. Love is uniting but we cannot unite. There is something tragic in sex that reveals our immense solitude.

TECHNIQUE

I'm more interested in a meaningful relationship between shots than in whether I put the camera here or there. What counts is the continuity because the continuity is the rhythm. With the images one can create rhythm. And the camera position is secondary to rhythm. I often discover possibilities when editing. When I prepare my film, I am not aware of the different stages. Everything comes together during editing. When I'm shooting and editing, I work at getting back the sentiment, at breaking down the screenplay, which remains purely theoretical.

REALITY AND THE VIEWER

I do not want to build. I destroy and deform. In this deformation, expression occurs. If I did not deform, the viewer would see reality as it is, but this reality wouldn't teach him anything. The filmmaker has to twist reality to deform it; when you twist it, the viewer is squeezed and challenged. I try to keep what could be called an element of reality, an appearance: the naturalism of the sets, the sounds and the actors, but everything else is fake, which gives a sense of something incongruous.

DOUBTS

When I make a film, something happens that is completely beyond my control. I make it and that's all. Maybe that's why I am curious about viewers' reactions. Some tell me about things they saw that I hadn't seen. I love that. People say to me, you film people from above. Filming from above is telling people things, imposing a vision or a story or an end on the viewer and giving him archetypes. I do my job as a filmmaker. The viewer does his job as a viewer. It is a balance. We are equal.

Flanders

Bruno Dumont Filmography

Flanders

France, 2006

- Grand Prix, Cannes Film Festival, 2006

Twentynine Palms

France/USA, 2003

- Official Competition, Venice Film Festival, 2003

L'Humanité

France, 1999

- Grand Jury Prize, Cannes Film Festival, 1999
- Best Actor, Cannes Film festival, 1999
- Best Actress, Cannes Film Festival, 1999

Life of Jesus

France, 1996

- Gan Foundation Prize, 1996
- Jean Vigo Prize, 1997
- Special Mention Camera D'Or, Cannes Film Festival, 1997
- César nomination for best first work of fiction, 1998
- European Discovery of the Year, Fassbinder Prize, European Film Awards, 1997
- Critics' Prize FIPRESCI, Chicago Film Festival, 1997
- Best male actor for D. Douche, Taormina Festival 1997
- Michel Simon Prize for M. Cottreel, " Acteurs à l'Ecran " Festival, 1998