

ROMAIN DURIS



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
OUT OF COMPETITION
OPENING FILM
2022 OFFICIAL SELECTION

BÉRÉNICE BEJO



**FINAL
CUT**
A FILM BY
**MICHEL
HAZANAVICIUS**

SK GLOBAL ENTERTAINMENT, BLUELIGHT, GETAWAY FILMS AND LA CLASSE AMÉRICAINE PRESENT

ROMAIN DURIS

BÉRÉNICE BEJO

FINAL CUT

A FILM BY

MICHEL HAZANAVICIUS

1H51 / FRANCE / IMAGE SCOPE / 5.1

PUBLICITY CONTACT
The DDA Group
FinalCut@ddapr.com

SALES CONTACT
Wild Bunch International - Worldwide
CAA - United States

LOGLINE

Things go badly for a small film crew shooting a low budget zombie movie when they are attacked by real zombies.

SYNOPSIS

In an abandoned building, a low-budget zombie horror film is falling apart on set. The abusive director is already pushing the cast and crew to the brink with his obnoxious behavior, when he reveals his plan to inject energy and excitement into the project: unlocking a real-life ancient zombie curse. In a frenetic one-shot where body parts and fluids are flying, the actors fight the undead, and their director, for their lives before the film comes to a shocking conclusion and the credits roll... but is that the whole story?

Academy Award®-winning writer-director Michel Hazanavicius delivers one of the most innovative, joyful, and funniest love letters to film and filmmaking you'll ever see.





***Final Cut** is a high concept film with a catastrophic start that quickly takes a detour and ends in a completely unexpected manner. Initially presenting itself as a classic zombie movie, **Final Cut** gradually evolves into an entirely different genre, resembling a phony "making-of" and sitcom-like experience, bringing everything together in one explosive finale. It's a film where the audience starts asking themselves what they are watching, and ends with them saying that it is not only fun, but also clever and ultimately upbeat – at least that's the intention!*

Michel Hazanavicius

Q&A WITH MICHEL HAZANAVICIUS

What were the origins of *Final Cut*?

I've wanted to write a comedy about a film shoot for a long time. As long as I've been directing, I've had the opportunity to observe a lot of funny behaviour and have experienced a lot of shoots, sometimes amazing, sometimes ludicrous, sometimes touching. I like this basic material, a film set, which is a kind of slightly exaggerated micro-society, in which the characters often reveal themselves in a spectacular way. So, I got into it during the first lockdown, started making notes and working on a story that revolved around the idea of a long single take. Then quite by chance, I talked about it to Vincent Maraval, who was very happy to hear that I was interested in this subject, and told me that his company had just acquired the rights to *One Cut of the Dead*, a 2017 Japanese student film which is absolutely connected to what I was telling him about.

I watched the film and thought it was really good, with a brilliant structural concept. I told Vincent and Noémie Devidé – who had discovered the original at a festival – that I was

up for a remake. *Final Cut* is the remake of Shin'ichirō Ueda's film, itself an adaptation of the play "Ghost in the Box".

Are you a fan of gore, of Z movies?

Not really. I watched quite a few at one stage because I thought they were funny, but I can't really say I'm a fan. On the other hand, I like the idea that a director makes a film no matter what, with or without a budget. That what matters is doing, making. I find this approach not only brave but, above all, beautiful. In this genre, Tim Burton's *Ed Wood* is a real achievement. Aside from that, I did watch quite a lot of zombie films and series for *Final Cut* and re-watched all of George Romero's movies. Perhaps the main set recalls the shopping mall in *Dawn of the Dead* (1978). My film isn't really a zombie movie at all, it's no *Train to Busan*...

Yet in your film you never look down on the genre...

No, not at all. In fact, for me, reinterpretation only works if there is respect and tenderness for the reappropriated



work. That's what makes it even more interesting and multidimensional. Without it, you can quickly fall into mockery, even sneering. It's often a fine line, but I need a solid first degree for there to be a second degree. There's always a real story behind anything funny, and I need to be in tune with that story.

Is it a tribute, like the *OSS 117* films might have been?

Yes and no. The *OSS 117* films were pastiche, pure and simple. The characters are stereotypes and have no reality. In that sense, there's a relationship with the first part of *Final Cut*. It's true that it's fun to take well identified pieces of filmmaking and play with them, to create a dynamic between the memory we have of these films and whatever I'm suggesting. It's a fertile device. That's the principle behind *La Classe Américaine* as well as *The Artist* and *Redoubtable*.





To return to your question, yes, this is a tribute to DIY films, to no-budget movies made with more energy than money, but the film is also, and perhaps above all, a tribute to the people who make films: actors and directors, but also technicians, trainees, everyone. A tribute to cinema as it's being made, to the trade of cinema, day-to-day. This is where it differs from *OSS 117*, which certainly isn't intended as a tribute to racist, uneducated, misogynist, homophobic and slightly anti-Semitic French.

***Final Cut* is first and foremost a comedy.**

Yes, first and foremost. It's a comedy, perhaps of a special sort, but it is really a big fat comedy. I was very happy to return to comedy with *Final Cut*, as I did for *OSS 117* and *La Classe Americaine*, films exclusively designed to make people laugh. We're in that vein. There's certainly a connection with *The Artist* and *Redoubtable*, which also dealt with cinema, but in terms of tone it's nearer *OSS 117* and *La Classe Américaine*. Moreover, in *Final Cut* there

are several types of comedy, both completely absurd and more sophisticated stuff. In the structure itself, there's the pastiche of the first part, the character and situation-based comedy of the second, and a more vaudeville third part, but I also wanted to situate a lot of different things, different types of laughs, within the scenes. I tried to make a rich, generous film, in which the viewer is involved. I always try to make films that can be watched over again, and I hope *Final Cut* is one of them. In any case I think it works very well on at least a second viewing. Basically, I not only advise you to see it, but I recommend you go back and see it again. Several times if possible. And with other people.

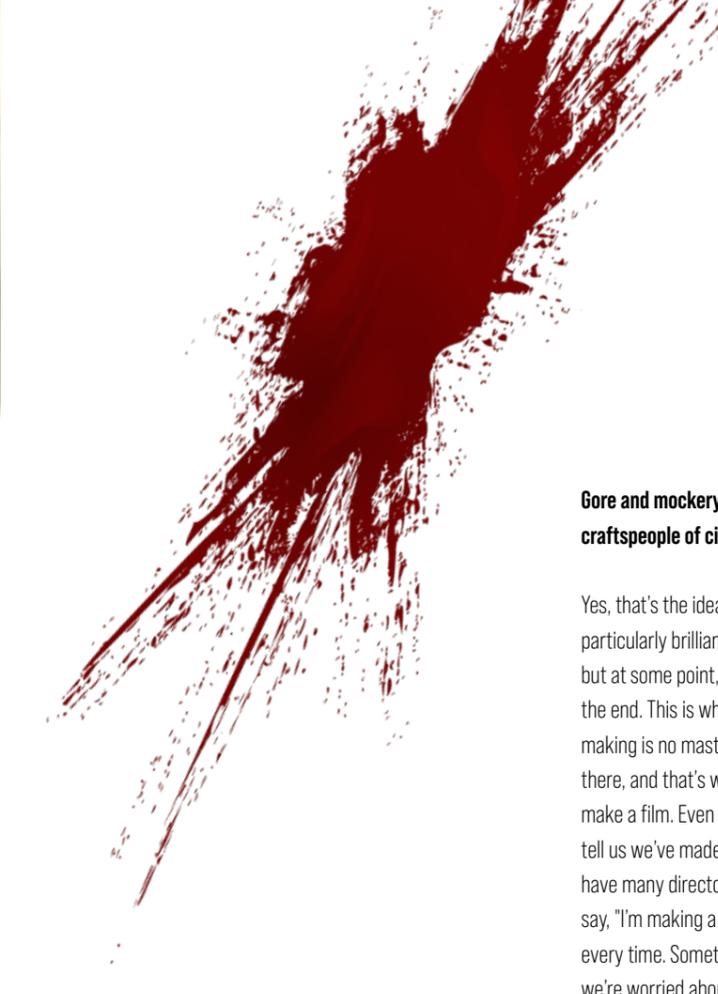
You cast the Japanese actress who played the producer in *One Cut of the Dead*. Is your film faithful to the original version?

Yes and no. I have betrayed it as much as possible in order to be as faithful as I could, because I'm convinced that when you adapt you must betray. Of course, I've kept the

structure and everything I liked, but I also tried to stay true to the energy of the original, shot in six days, with very little money. We worked on a different scale, for sure, but our film wasn't very expensive either. It was shot in six weeks, with a budget of €4 million. As for the actress, Yoshiro Takehara, she's incredible. She brings a madness that is not only joyful, but very useful narratively. You really can believe in a project like the one in the film emerging from the brain of a character like hers.

The film is punctuated by poetic lines like "Post-apocalyptic piece of shit!", "Sayonara, one-armed ghoul!" or my personal favourite, "Fucking zombies, I'll rip all your assholes open!"

Yes, indeed. My aim is that the film is smart enough on the one hand to allow itself to be totally idiotic on the other. The energy of the film lent itself to this, because it doesn't boil down to just that. It's richer. That's why it seemed balanced to also go towards this kind of nonsense.



Gore and mockery sit alongside enormous love for these craftspeople of cinema.

Yes, that's the idea. The characters struggle, they're not particularly brilliant at first, and they face their problems, but at some point, they join forces and manage to get to the end. This is where they become heroes. The film they're making is no masterpiece, but they're making it. They get there, and that's what's important. You know, it's hard to make a film. Even a bad one, it's tough. Sometimes critics tell us we've made a bad film. But that's not how it goes. I have many director friends and I've never heard one of them say, "I'm making a dud right now." We do the best we can every time. Sometimes we're not at the top of our game, or we're worried about money, or we don't have the actor we wanted, or he doesn't know his lines, or we get rain when we need sun... In short, we face a lot of problems and we don't always overcome them. We can screw up. But at the same time, it can be a beautiful human adventure. Making films is always an ultra-fusional experience where for six, eight, twelve weeks we work together, we live together, and everyone does the best they can. The collective is stronger than the sum of individuals and the human adventure is sometimes more interesting or more beautiful than the object you're making. And it isn't necessarily such a big deal. That's what this film is about.

Let's talk about your cast. First of all, Romain Duris.

Romain Duris is an actor I love, and one of those actors who gets better with age. He's handsome, very funny, and I've wanted to work with him for a long time. He is very generous. His character isn't quite the white face clown: he's more complex, but he is surrounded by social misfits and Romain has the intelligence to leave room to his partners. He plays what there is to play without worrying about the result, or the fact that he's the lead, and he doesn't try to be funny. It's a real delight for a director. He's always spot-on, even if he is ready to follow you in directions he didn't anticipate. It's a real collaboration. And what's more, he

You have a fantastic cast.

Yes, it's a film with a lot of characters who are present almost all the time and we were lucky to have a bunch of awesome actors available, and all happy to be there. The list is long, and I loved working with all of them, so here we go. Finnegan Oldfield, I'd spotted in *Selfie* and *We Need Your Vote*, and at the Césars where he had made a legendary joke the year I was there for *Redoubtable*. I offered him the role of the actor who's a bit of a pain and he accepted immediately. A great encounter: he's an actor who really works on his roles, who searches, who possesses a contagious energy, and was very happy to appear in a full-on



accepted the role in less than 24 hours – it's a real pleasure to have an eager, enthusiastic actor. For that matter the film has generated a pretty mind-blowing enthusiasm. When I called on actors, it was a 'yes' practically right away. They were all delighted to take part in a comedy where they were going to be able to let go, a comedy with zombies, but also with characters they know best – cinema people.

comedy. As an actor he has a vitality I love. Never limp. Same for Grérory Gadebois, with whom I'd already worked, and whom I really love. He too was very happy to be in a full-on comedy. He has such humanity... he's not necessarily used to comedies, but he knows how to do everything. He's hilarious in the film. Raphaël Quenard I saw in *Mandibles* by Quentin Dupieux, and in a short: he's perfect in the role of



an unpleasant character. There's a kind of madness, and at the same time a freshness about him, he's quite something. And then there's Matilda Lutz, who we saw in *Revenge* and who was perfect for the role, both very pretty, as the character required, and with an understanding of the genre that allows her to shift and be very subtle in a comic setting. There's also Sébastien Chassagne, a chameleon who also always manages to inject sincerity into comedy, even at full throttle. Jean-Pascal Zidi, an obvious comic powerhouse, manages to be funny with very little, but he is above all a marvellous actor. Very precise and very intelligent. The same with Lyes Salem, a solid actor who doesn't strive to be funny, who trusts situations and brings a real richness, a density. There's also Agnès Hurstel, Luana Bairami and Raïka Hazavanicius, in small roles, but who bring their personalities, their modernity and give colour to the film. The film really benefited from their talent. And then there's also my oldest daughter, Simone Hazanavicius, who plays the daughter of the director played by Romain Duris. It was very touching and satisfying to work with her. To rediscover my daughter as part of a shoot, to work with her sensibility, and with her as an actress - I loved the experience. She brings a very special touch to the film, which gives it an extra dimension.

And of course, Bérénice Béjo. Was it difficult to convince her?

You know, there's really nothing obvious about it. Each film is different, each character is different, there isn't a law that says Bérénice will appear in all my films, or that she'll accept everything I propose her. Besides, to be honest, for this one I said to myself at first that she wasn't the character. I told her we wouldn't be making this film together. I envisaged a tougher character, for an actress like Blanche Gardin for

example. Then I asked her to read the script. She liked it, and the way she liked it convinced me she would be excellent. In the end, she's magnificent in the film. She's an astonishing actress, with no gimmicks. She starts from scratch each time. She works a lot on her roles, not only physically, and arrives on set with enormous availability, which makes it possible to really work, explore, improve. She also brings a great humanity, she always respects the character, without looking for effects, which enriches the comedy. She's one of those very good actors who can play many different characters and whom you just have to push a little bit to tip over into comedy. It's always tricky to speak well of the person you love when promoting a film, because we are addressed as a couple, so there's something shameless, which can come across as smugness. But here I'm talking about Bérénice Béjo the actress, so it's all good. And since she started practicing krav maga, I'd rather say only good things about her.

The film tells the story of a family, but it's also a real family story. It's pretty meta.

Really meta. My wife plays the director's wife. My daughter plays her daughter. It's in line with the subject. But the film is meta on many levels. It's a constant *mise en abyme*. The shooting of a film in the film that itself tells the story of the shooting of a film, which is the remake of a Japanese film that tells the story of the remake of a Japanese film, actors playing actors, scenes viewed from multiple angles... even we got lost sometimes while shooting...

The challenge of the film is risky. There's this first part that lasts about thirty minutes, then the reverse shot coming next, which explains everything and increases the laughter tenfold.



This was one of the problems of the original where some viewers apparently switched off quite quickly. It's difficult to make a film that must be perceived as a failure while remaining entertaining. Trying to cram in too many gags would have damaged the whole thing, it had to be a bad film, but to be satisfied with making a bad film is to risk making only that: a bad film. This film has a special structure that had to be respected.

Is the first part really one unbroken take?

It is a real 32-minute sequence shot, with one small editing point, that I had to do for technical reasons. But I was able to do it precisely because it was thought, shot, and executed like a sequence shot. I've never been obsessed with the sequence shot like Gaspar Noé, or Alfonso Cuarón. It's never been my holy grail, even if it obviously often possesses a

great narrative power. I have of course done some, but for comedy, I tend to cut in order to take the best of each shot, bring out the actors, master the pace, etc... Here we had to confront this exercise, with the added requirement that it appeared to have failed. While controlling the failure, of course, since it prepares the last part. So, I storyboarded the whole thing. All in all, I see this shot as 250 shots connected by a single camera movement. We worked with the actors, we rehearsed it for five weeks out of the six of prep. The actors came on set every day, as did Jonathan Ricquebourg, the DP, who did the light and the framing. Things evolved, and I re-storyboarded, so that each movement, each camera placement, each timing was rehearsed and rehearsed again until everyone had integrated it. During the final week of prep, we worked with the grips, special effects, stunt people, make-up, wardrobe... We had fake blood, decapitations, characters turning into zombies with a few

seconds for make-up changes, prosthetics, lenses, etc... We choreographed everything, so the movement and timing would be as precise as possible.

In the end we shot it in four days, each time with the pleasure of accomplishing a performance. But the right take came on the afternoon of the fourth day. I must say that the whole crew was admirably united, and what we experienced was in a way not so far from what is related in the film. From Jonathan Ricquebourg, the talented young DP, to Julien Decoin the first assistant, through production designer Joan Le Boru, Vesna Peborde, the make-up artist, and hairdresser, Margo Blache, I was lucky to have a crew as solid as it was talented.

The director played by Romain Duris runs all the time. Is this what directors do?

Not necessarily, literally speaking, although on a shoot it's certainly better to wear good shoes. There's always the idea of urgency, because on a set, there's a lot of people at work, and that means a lot of money. Time is expensive. And you need it to work - time. So metaphorically, yes, you're constantly running. Behind the film you're hoping to make, and which is constantly escaping from you.

In *Final Cut* you've got your work cut out when it comes to problems: the sequence shot, the film within the film, interwoven stories, the meta aspect...

Yes, but they're not necessarily problems, they're more like playgrounds. That's also what excites me about this job because I try never to make the same film twice. I like the idea of discovery, making a new film each time, trying to learn the rules of the game, and its particular way of functioning.



Jean-Christophe Spadaccini, the great SFX maestro took care of all the special effects and gore.

Yes, I'd worked with him before, and he's incredibly good. The challenge for him was the performance aspect, but also keeping to the *Final Cut* spirit and finding dirt cheap solutions that were nonetheless appropriate, with the right values in terms of narrative. For the sequence shot, it was like shooting live, there was no room for error. He was on set with his crew. They threw blood by the gallon, they managed decapitations, effects, it was hilarious. There's nothing digital in the film, everything was done on set, trying to find the cheapest solutions – old school!

You called on Alexandre Desplat for the music.

He's a great composer, he understands quickly, his analysis of the dramaturgy brings a lot to the film, a real sensitivity.

And he's very modest. When you tell him something isn't working, he composes something else, with disconcerting ease. It's almost irritating how everything seems so easy for him. From muzak to a real film score – including, of course, zombie movie music – everything is simple with him, he can do anything. I loved working with him.

During the end credits, you pay tribute to Bertrand Tavernier and Jean-Paul Belmondo, as well as thanking Quentin Dupieux.

Quentin has a small non-speaking part as the director of a film that doesn't seem so great. I'd done some walk-ons in his films, so I asked him to do one for me. Tavernier and Belmondo, that's something else. We owe them so much. Both meant a lot to me, in my life, the very fact that I'm making films, and probably the way I make them. Both left us during the making of this film and I wanted to give them a

little sign. I loved them both very much.

Finally, are you happy with the film?

Extremely! There's a lot in it and, paradoxically, even if it's a remake, I see it as a very personal film. I'm very happy that Noémie Devide, Brahim Chioua and Vincent Maraval have made it possible.





REMI, THE DIRECTOR ROMAIN DURIS

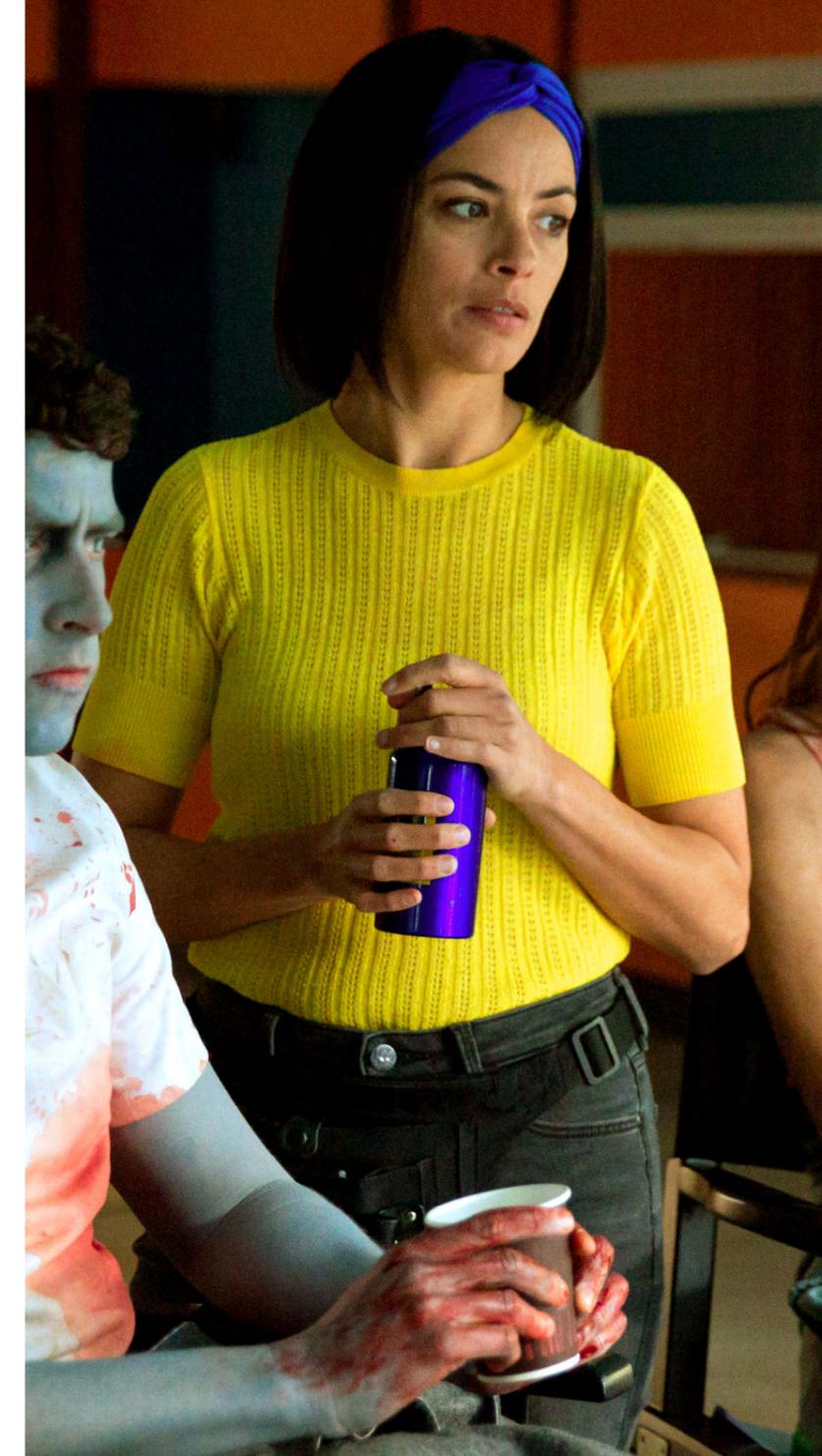
Romain Duris is best known for his role as French exchange student Xavier Rousseau in Cédric Klapisch's popular trilogy *The Spanish Apartment*, *Russian Dolls* and *Chinese Puzzle*. Having first been discovered in the early 1990s by a casting director in Paris, Duris has since starred in a variety of standout films including Jacques Audiard's *The Beat That My Heart Skipped*, Pascal Chaumeil's *Heartbreaker*, Michel Gondry's *Mood Indigo*, Jean Pierre Salomé's *Adventures of Arsène Lupin*, Eric Lartigau's *The Big Picture*, François Ozon's *The New Girlfriend*, Régis Roinsard's *Populaire* and *Waiting for Bojangles*, Erick Zonca's *Black Tide*, Guillaume Senez's *Our Struggles*, Daniel Roby's *A Breath Away* and Martin Bourboulon's *Eiffel*.

On the small screen, Duris recently starred alongside Céline Sallette and Laurent Lucas in the Canal+ series "Vernon Subutex". In addition to Michel Hazanavicius' *Final Cut*, Duris' upcoming film roles include Aramis in Martin Bourboulon's *The Three Musketeers: D'Artagnan* and *The Three Musketeers: Milady* alongside Eva Green, Vicky Krieps and Vincent Cassel, as well as a lead role in Thomas Cailley's *Le règne animal*.

NADIA, THE MAKEUP ARTIST BÉRÉNICE BEJO

Bérénice Bejo is one of the leading French actresses working today. She had her international breakthrough in 2011 as the lead in the Academy Award® winner *The Artist*, directed by Michel Hazanavicius. For this role she was awarded the César for Best Actress, and received recognition and prizes worldwide, including a Best Actress BAFTA nomination as well as nominations for both a Golden Globe and an Oscar for Best Actress in a Supporting Role. She also acted in Michel Hazanavicius' follow up, *The Search*, which premiered in Official Competition at Cannes 2014, and *Redoubtable*, which premiered in Official Competition, Cannes 2017. Bérénice Bejo first acted for the director in 2006 in *OSS 117: Cairo, Nest of Spies*. Another big triumph in her acting career was Asghar Farhadi's Cannes-smash *The Past*, for which she won the Palme for Best Actress.

Born in Argentina, Bejo came to France at the age of three. Her father, the director Miguel Bejo, and her mother, a lawyer, introduced her to the movies, and she started her career in 1998 with *Les soeurs Hamlet* by Abdelkrim Bahloul. In 2000 Gérard Jugnot offered Bejo her first lead in *Most Promising Young Actress*, after which she acted in the US production *A Knight's Tale* alongside Heath Ledger. Upon her return to France, Bejo worked with directors like Laurent Bouhnik and Marie-France Pisier. Further recent roles encompass films like Eric Barbier's *The Last Diamond*, Brady Corbet's *The Childhood of a Leader*, Joachim Lafosse's *After Love*, Tran-Anh Hung's *Eternity*, Marco Bellocchio's *Sweet Dreams*, Ken Scott's *The Extraordinary Journey of the Fakir*, Pablo Trapero's *La Quietud*, Fred Cavayé's *The Game*, Tom Shoval's *Shake Your Cares Away* and Sergio Castellitto's *A Bookshop in Paris*. She will next be seen in Francesca Archibugi's *Il colibri* and Lone Scherfig's *The Movie Teller*.



CAST

Romain Duris	Remi, the director
Bérénice Bejo	Nadia, the makeup artist
Grégory Gadebois	Philippe, the cameraman
Finnegan Oldfield	Raphaël, the actor
Matilda Lutz	Ava, the actress
Sébastien Chassagne	Armel, the assistant
Raphaël Quenard	Jonathan, the sound engineer
Lyes Salem	Mounir
Simone Hazanavicius	Romy
Agnès Hurstel	Laura
Charlie Dupont	Fredo
Jean-Pascal Zadi	Fatih
Luàna Bajrami	Johanna
Raika Hazanavicius	Manon
Yoshiko Takehara	Mme Matsuda

DIRECTOR

MICHEL HAZANAVICIUS

Academy Award®-winning director, screenwriter and producer Michael Hazanavicius is best known for his 2011 black-and-white, comedy-drama film *The Artist*, which won five Academy Awards® in 2012, including Best Picture and Best Director. Starring Jean Dujardin and Michel's wife, Bérénice Bejo, the film is almost entirely silent, and received widespread critical acclaim following its world premiere in competition at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival.

Hazanavicius' previous directing credits also include: *The Lost Prince*, starring Omar Sy and Bérénice Bejo; *Redoubtable*, starring Louis Garrel, Stacy Martin and Bérénice Bejo; *The Search* for Warner Bros. Pictures, also starring Bérénice Bejo and Annette Bening, as well as the French spy parody box office hit *DSS 177: Cairo, Nest of Spies* and its sequel *DSS 117: Lost in Rio*. His first theatrical feature was *Mes Amis* in 1999 starring Yvan Attal, Serge Hazanavicius and Karim Viard.

His most recent projects include the 2022 Cannes Film Festival opening night film *Final Cut*, as well as the World War II drama, *La plus précieuse des marchandises* adapted from the original novel by Jean-Claude Grumberg.

CREW

Director

Michel Hazanavicius

Screenplay

Michel Hazanavicius

based on One Cut of the Dead! by Shin'ichirō

Ueda and inspired by "Ghost in the Box" by Ryoichi Wada

Original Music Alexandre Desplat
DP Jonathan Ricquebourg
Production Designer Joan Le Boru
Editors Mickaël Dumontier
Michel Hazanavicius
Costume Designer Virginie Montel
Make-up Artist Vesna Peborde
Hair Stylist Margo Blache
Sound Department Jean Minondo
Selim Azzazi
Ken Yasumoto
Jean-Paul Hurier
Head of Production Olivier Thery Lapiney
Post-Production Supervisor Frank Mettre
Unit Production Manager Julien Gayot

Produced by

Noémie Devide
Brahim Chioua
Michel Hazanavicius
Vincent Maraval
Alain de la Mata
John Penotti

Executive Producers

Sidney Kimmel
Robert Friedland
Charlie Corwin
Kilian Kerwin
Michael Hogan
Ted Johnson
Yuji Nakano
Koji Ichihashi
Rioichi Wada
Tom Yoda
Florence Gastaud
Olivier Thery Lapiney
Laurence Clerc

Co-production

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La Classe Américaine
Sk Global Entertainment
France 2 Cinéma
Gaga Corporation
Co-production

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