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**ANTONIO
DE LA TORRE**

**MARINE
VACTH**

**OLIVIER
GOURMET**

ON THE EDGE

A FILM BY
GIORDANO GEDERLINI

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INTERNATIONAL SALES

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Belgium - France - Spain - 100 min - Scope - 5.1

SYNOPSIS

Brussels. Leo, a Spanish metro driver, while conducting his train and arriving at a station, sees a young man in distress ON THE EDGE of the platform. He recognizes his son Hugo right before he falls onto the rails and then dies at the hospital. Leo, who had not seen his son for years, will discover that he was involved in a bloody heist. While on the trail of his son's murderers, Leo will be closely watched by the police, also investigating. They will soon discover that Leo's skills in tracking and apprehending violent criminals are not those of a mere metro driver.



INTERVIEW WITH GIORDANO GEDERLINI

Did you come up with the story of *ON THE EDGE* in your imagination or does it include any real-life experiences or observations?

It's an original story, made up of elements that were running through my head. I live now in Brussels, but I was born in Chile, I've lived in Barcelona, and also in France. I've always been a foreigner in the big cities I've lived in. I wanted to talk about those kinds of people who are a little on the outside, in a place that's not quite their own.

Is, then, the main character, Leo Castaneda, partially autobiographical?

He is a mirror of my own situation: He's in exile, which is something I experienced with my parents. Leo Castaneda is definitely connected to my father, who was harmed by the coup d'état in Chile and who then came to Europe to rebuild his life. In a film noir, you need characters who are fully embodied. Here, they are kind of silent. A charismatic actor wouldn't have done. He needed to carry a story; something to recount. I talked a lot with Antonio De La Torre and Marine Vacht about what their characters comprise. A thriller is more interesting when the characters aren't just stereotypes of cops and gangsters. I tried to ensure they weren't reduced to a function and that they have something to defend.

The father-son relationship gradually emerges as the central point of the film. Castaneda tries to repair the relationship but it's too late. Were you influenced by classical tragedy?

When I presented this film to the producers and financiers, I described it as a film with a certain darkness. Of course, it deals with tragedy. And that's why I like Jean-Pierre Melville's movies, with their somber characters who can't even save themselves. There is an existential drama in this story. Castaneda wonders if he's been a good man. If he was a good father. He didn't have time to explain himself to his son, to show him compassion and affection, and that haunts him. A film noir allows you to explore this kind of pain and the codes of tragedy can definitely be found in the genre.

Filial conflict is also explored in the relationship between the two police inspectors played by Marine Vacht and Olivier Gourmet, who are father and daughter.

That's right. And Leo understands their relationship as soon as he sees them together. He has an empathy with them, especially as we find out that Leo himself is a former cop. When he sees them, he sees another child that hasn't found their place alongside their father. When Leo discovers a body and learns that it's a cop, his gestures are respectful, and he places

a hand on the dead person's chest. Then he places him on a boat to send him away. You can sense his desire to repair something in his movements. For him, the policeman's body also represents that of his son, which he has already zipped into a black body-bag and to which he can never return.

The film's title is very pertinent because Leo Castaneda is alive, but he seems dead inside.

That's right. It's the idea of the ghost. This film was mainly produced in Belgium, and I feel that Belgium is more receptive to the notion of film noir, with its harshness and relationship to death.

***ON THE EDGE* stylizes Brussels, a city that hasn't been much explored in movies.**

I love Brussels. I think it's the first time anyone's ever filmed the Atomium, a monument that the Belgians don't dare film because they think it's ugly. It looks like it's come out of nowhere, just standing there surrounded by parking lots. Brussels is very cinematographic and full of that energy movies bring. It's also a very "Anglo" city with brick buildings, abandoned neighborhoods, and others that have been renovated. It's a mess. There are building sites all over the place and that gives it a unique urban

esthetic that is somehow reminiscent of Berlin, with its industrial wildernesses and areas of no-man's land. It's very graphic. I wanted the photography to be very stylized to constantly remind you that you are watching a movie and that it's a thriller. We chose vintage lenses that capture the light and convey it as a film as seen through a camera and not through the human eye. There are nods to John Carpenter and to the 1980s, when cinema was uncomplicated. My DP Christophe Nuyens and I worked long and hard on the cutting, trying really hard to make sure it wasn't lazy. I wrote the scene with the exploding grenade that way on purpose – I knew exactly how I wanted to direct it. I was also lucky that it rained a lot during the shoot which brought that film noir esthetic I was looking for.

The film is quite masculine but not macho. The men in it are worn. This isn't a film about superheroes. My characters are fragile men. They aren't braggarts, they don't pull out their guns easily, and they don't posture before the camera. In David Goodis's books, the characters cannot survive in the conditions described by the writer. And I like that kind of universe where the characters have headaches or are trying to catch their breath. That's what I'm trying to convey in those scenes where Leo is suffering, for example.

You're not afraid to include contemplative or even silent scenes that don't have any immediate dramatic effect, like when Leo goes home by bicycle.

Yes, because I hate those establishing shots that last three seconds, just to set the scene in, say, Brussels. You see shots like that in TV series where they show short shot after short shot, like postcard punctuations. I prefer to move from an interior shot to another interior shot to show the journey. When Leo crosses the city on his bike, that reveals something more intimate and retrospective.

In sequences like those, Laurent Garnier's music also plays a part.

Yes, it brings a kind of hypnotic layering. It's very psychological music. We took the approach that the music is the soul of a film and it's part of how you tell the story.

Did he compose it from the script or from images from the film? Laurent didn't want to create the sound beforehand. He didn't feel it. It was only when he was immersed in scenes from the film that we were able to share something.

The film naturally owes a lot to the actors, starting with Antonio De La Torre who portrays Leo as both strong and fragile, and broken inside. Did you have him in mind when you were writing the film?

When I lived in Spain, I immersed myself in contemporary Spanish crime writing and Antonio was one of those actors who has an extremely powerful presence. But when I start on a project, I try not to limit myself with any too clear ideas for certain characters, with ideas that might haunt me too much. And then I met Antonio in San Sebastian and it seemed only too obvious to offer him a role. We talked a lot, and then I went to his home near Seville, and we really connected. He doesn't actually speak French and he learned all his dialog by heart. He also lost nine kilos for the role, did all the action scenes himself, and learned to drive a bus. He's a really hard worker, he's very exacting and very rigorous. We were the only crew members who spoke Spanish and it brought us very close. He brought a great deal to the film, like the opening scene for example.

Olivier Gourmet seems like an obvious choice for the disillusioned cop.

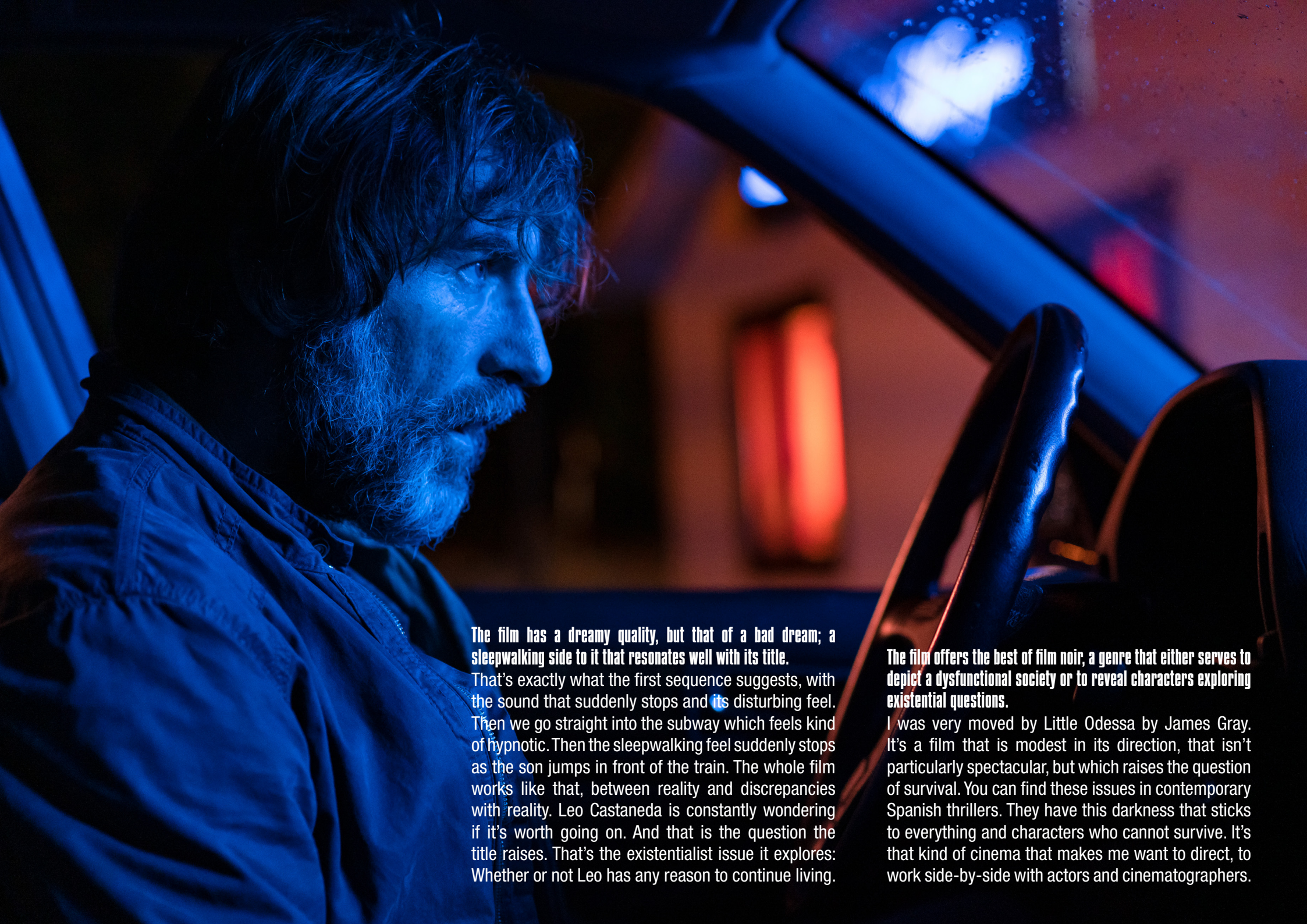
Olivier has a very rugged and strong side, and he clicked immediately with Marine. Olivier was very present, both physically and in his gaze. He brings weight to a relationship. And Marine found a very moving fragility in his presence.

Marine Vaeth was not an obvious choice for police inspector, but she comes across very well.

In this film, she's both tough and moving. And she has a voice for theater, a very present voice that carries. And I really liked that. I think she wanted to explore something other than the style for which she is known. She loves the films of Rodrigo Sorogoyen (Que Dios Nos Perdona, El Reino, etc.), and she knew Antonio's work. She brings a permanent tension to the film and she's all about disillusionment, violence, and guilt. In the scene where she finally smiles, you realize that she can be much more charming and complex than her tough image might suggest.

Nicolas Desmason was the film's editor. One feels like it was a choice between pacy action scenes and more complex interior moments.

I'd noticed his work on Sheherazade, and yes, ON THE EDGE is not an over-edited film. Even in action scenes I prefer long shots where you can feel the movements of the characters. I find that over-cutting into multiple two-second shots is indigestible and does not work. Nicolas is an intelligent and calm editor. For example, the opening sequence was originally planned for the end of the film. But it was so powerful that I decided I should start the film with it. Nicolas and I played around with it and soon agreed. The film was already fairly well-constructed at the time of shooting, which allowed us to take a little distance in the editing process and experiment a little, playing around with off-camera spaces and not overusing the music.



The film has a dreamy quality, but that of a bad dream; a sleepwalking side to it that resonates well with its title.

That's exactly what the first sequence suggests, with the sound that suddenly stops and its disturbing feel. Then we go straight into the subway which feels kind of hypnotic. Then the sleepwalking feel suddenly stops as the son jumps in front of the train. The whole film works like that, between reality and discrepancies with reality. Leo Castaneda is constantly wondering if it's worth going on. And that is the question the title raises. That's the existentialist issue it explores: Whether or not Leo has any reason to continue living.

The film offers the best of film noir, a genre that either serves to depict a dysfunctional society or to reveal characters exploring existential questions.

I was very moved by *Little Odessa* by James Gray. It's a film that is modest in its direction, that isn't particularly spectacular, but which raises the question of survival. You can find these issues in contemporary Spanish thrillers. They have this darkness that sticks to everything and characters who cannot survive. It's that kind of cinema that makes me want to direct, to work side-by-side with actors and cinematographers.

GIORDANO GEDERLINI

DIRECTOR

BIOGRAPHY

Giordano Gederlini was born in Chile and currently lives in Brussels.

He wrote and directed ON THE EDGE in 2021, an urban thriller starring Antonio de la Torre, Marine Vacth and Olivier Gourmet.

As a screenwriter, Giordano co-wrote LES MISÉRABLES by Ladj Ly (Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival, Best Screenplay at the Prix Lumière 2020, César for Best Film 2020 and nominated at the 2020 Oscars as Best International Feature Film), MOTHER'S INSTINCT by Olivier Masset-Depasse (Best Screenplay and Best Film at the Magritte 2020 among others) and ABOVE THE LAW by François Troukens and Jean-François Hensgens.



FILMOGRAPHY

DIRECTOR

- 2022** ON THE EDGE
- 2009** LA GUERRE DES SAINTES (Tv movie)
- 2001** SAMOURAÏS

SCREENWRITER

- 2022** ON THE EDGE
- 2019** LES MISÉRABLES by Ladj Ly
MOTHER'S INSTINCT by Olivier Masset-Depasse
- 2017** ABOVE THE LAW by François Troukens and Jean-François Hensgens
- 2006** L'ŒIL A VIF
- 2001** SAMOURAÏS

ACTORS

ANTONIO DE LA TORRE

SELECTIVE FILMOGRAPHY

- 2022 ON THE EDGE by Giordano GEDERLINI
- 2020 THE ENDLESS TRENCH by Jon GARAÑO, Aitor ARREGI, José Mari GOENAGA
- 2019 THE REALM by Rodrigo SOROGOYEN
A TWELVE-YEAR NIGHT by Alvaro BRECHNER
- 2018 ABRACADABRA by Pablo BERGER
- 2017 THE MOTIVE by Manuel MARTÍN CUENCA
MAY GOD SAVE US by Rodrigo SOROGOYEN
THE FURY OF A PATIENT MAN by Raúl ARÉVALO
- 2015 FELICES 140 by Gracia QUEREJETA
MARSHLAND by Alberto RODRIGUEZ (III)
- 2014 UNITED PASSIONS by Frédéric AUBURTIN
CANNIBAL by Manuel MARTÍN CUENCA
- 2013 FAMILY UNITED by Daniel SÁNCHEZ ARÉVALO
I'M SO EXCITED by Pedro ALMODÓVAR
INVASOR by Daniel CALPARSORO
UNIT 7 by Alberto RODRIGUEZ (III)
- 2011 COUSINHOOD by Daniel SÁNCHEZ ARÉVALO
AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT by Álex DE LA IGLESIA
THE LAST CIRCUS by Álex DE LA IGLESIA
- 2010 HALF OF OSCAR by Manuel MARTÍN CUENCA
- 2008 MATAHARIS by Icíar BOLLAÍN
- 2007 AZUR by Daniel SÁNCHEZ ARÉVALO
- 2006 VOLVER by Pedro ALMODÓVAR
- 2005 HEART OF THE WARRIOR by Daniel MONZÓN
- 2004 NO DIGAS NADA by Icíar BOLLAÍN
- 2000 BETWEEN YOUR LEGS by Manuel GÓMEZ PEREIRA
- 1997 THE DAY OF THE BEAST by Álex DE LA IGLESIA



MARINE VACTH

SELECTIVE FILMOGRAPHY

- 2022 NOVEMBRE by Cédric JIMENEZ
MASCARADE by Nicolas BEDOS
ON THE EDGE by Giordano GEDERLINI
- 2020 DNA by MAÏWENN
- 2019 PINOCCHIO by Matteo GARRONE
- 2017 THE DOUBLE LOVER by François OZON
THE CONFESSION by Nicolas BOUKHRIEF
IF YOU SAW HIS HEARTH by Joan CHEMLA
- 2014 FAMILIES by Jean-Paul RAPPENEAU
- 2013 YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL by François OZON
- 2011 WHAT THE DAY OWES THE NIGHT by Alexandre ARCADY
- 2010 MY PIECE OF THE PIE by Cédric KLAPISCH



A close-up portrait of actor Olivier Gourmet, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. He is wearing a dark suit, a light blue striped shirt, and a dark patterned tie. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with some artwork on the wall.

OLIVIER GOURMET

SELECTIVE FILMOGRAPHY

- 2022 L'ETABLI by Mathias GOKALP
THE COLORS OF FIRE by Clovis CORNILLAC
ON THE EDGE by Giordano GEDERLINI
- 2021 RED SOIL by Farid BENTOUMI
BEASTS by Naël MARANDIN
- 2020 DE GAULLE by Gabriel LE BOMIN
- 2019 CONVICTION by Antoine RAIMBAULT
EDMOND by Alexis MICHALIK
- 2018 ONE NATION, ONE KING by Pierre SCHOELLER
- 2017 BACK IN BUSINESS by Gérard PAUTONNIER
THE ROYAL EXCHANGE by Marc DUGAIN
THE MIDWIFE by Martin PROVOST
- 2014 40-LOVE by Stéphane DEMOUSTIER
- 2013 GRAND CENTRAL by Rebecca ZLOTOWSKI
- 2011 THE MINISTER by Pierre SCHOELLER
- 2008 HOME by Ursula MEIER
- 2007 HAVE MERCY ON US ALL by Régis WARGNIER
- 2004 WHEN THE SEA RISES by Yolande MOREAU and Gilles PORTE
- 2002 SAFE CONDUCT by Bertrand TAVERNIER
THE SON by Jean-Pierre and Luc DARDENNE
Cannes Film Festival Award for Best Actor
- 1999 ROSETTA by Jean-Pierre and Luc DARDENNE

CAST

Antonio DE LA TORRE	Leo
Marine VACTH	Virginie
Olivier GOURMET	The commissioner
Fabrice ADDE	Carl
NESSBEAL	Ben
Tibo VANDENBORRE	Arsen
Alexandre BOUYER	Ralph
Marie PAPILLON	Magali

LISTE TECHNIQUE

Director and screenwriter	Giordano GEDERLINI
Image	Christophe NUYENS
Sound	Philippe GRIVEL
Editor	Nicolas DESMAISON
First assistant director	Fabrice COUCHARD
Settings	Eve MARTIN
Costumes	Christel BIROT

Belgian production Jean-Yves ROUBIN (Frakas Production)
Cassandre WARNAUTS (Frakas Production)

French production Jérôme VIDAL (Noodles Production)

Spanish production Adrià MONÉS MURLANS (Fasten Films)

French Distribution Le Pacte
International Sales Le Pacte