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FESTIVAL DE CANNES

ON TOUR

(TOURNÉE)

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LES FILMS DU POISSON PRESENTS



OFFICIAL SELECTION
COMPETITION
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

ON TOUR

(TOURNÉE)

a film by
MATHIEU AMALRIC

**MIMI LE MEUX DIRTY MARTINI ROKY ROULETTE KITTEN ON THE KEYS
EVIE LOVELLE JULIE ATLAS MUZ MATHIEU AMALRIC**

FRANCE - 2010 - 111MN - 1.85 - DOLBY SRD/DTS - FR/ENG

www.tournee-lefilm.com





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SYNOPSIS

Joachim, a former Parisian television producer had left everything behind - his children, friends, enemies, lovers and regrets - to start a new life in America. He comes back with a team of New Burlesque strip-tease performers whom Joachim has fed fantasies of a tour of France, of Paris!

Traveling from port to port, the curvaceous showgirls invent an extravagant fantasy world of warmth and hedonism, despite the constant round of impersonal hotels with their endless elevator music and the lack of money. The show gets an enthusiastic response from men and women alike.

But their dream of a tour culminating in a last grand show in Paris goes up in smoke when Joachim is betrayed by an old friend and loses the theatre where they were due to perform. A quick return journey to the capital violently reopens old wounds...

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INTERVIEW WITH MATHIEU AMALRIC

Where did the inspiration for *On Tour* come from?

To tell the truth, from Laetitia Gonzalez and Yaël Fogiel, the producers, who, when the mixing of *La Chose Publique* wasn't even finished (way back in 2002!), said to me: "Now then, what's next?"

So, totally empty but very touched by their interest, I left for several days with Marcelo Novais-Teles, a friend who I often like to kick ideas around with.

And it was a text by Colette, *The Other Side of Music-Hall* that I'd been carrying round with me for a long time, which came back to the surface.

It consists of notes made during a tour, written for a newspaper which published them as a serial, sublime sketches of her life as an actress, a somewhat scandalous pantomime (Colette was then aged between 33 and 39), lost in the provinces: "*We run towards the hotel, to the stifling dressing room, and the blinding footlights. We run, impatient, chattering, clucking like poultry, towards the illusion of living fast, of being warm, of working, of barely thinking, of carrying within us neither regret, nor remorse, nor memories...*"

We searched for contemporary equivalents; in striptease, in night-life, elsewhere. But nothing came, we couldn't find this attraction for movement, Colette's taste for provocation bursting with health, like a declaration of freedom by the body. Everything brought us back to stories of necessity, to prisoners.

Is that when you thought of the New Burlesque girls?

In fact it was thanks to an article in *Libération* which delivered a contagious account of their appearance one night at the Zèbre, a Parisian cabaret. Across a double-page, there were already photos of Dirty Martini, the most Fellini-esque, and Kitten on the Keys, the one who plays piano. And suddenly, we had the sensation that Colette was there, in this playful and torrid sensuality, this intimate and political affirmation of the potential beauty of every body, regardless of age and however non-conformist they may be. The dangerous pleasure of performing, the timidity, the physical bravery, the tantalizing fragility.

That was the start. But at this stage, based solely on scraps of paper and some photos, as if to allow the imagination to blossom. I mean, I didn't want to meet them straight away in the flesh. I wanted to have a story first.

And it was just then that the French independent producer Humbert Balsan committed suicide. This hit me hard with the realization of the possible end of our mortal selves. What do you do when a force of resistance like him disappears?

Those are two apparently unrelated events.

Of course, but it's often the clash of two elements which gives rise to a story. Tenuous at first, but which obsesses you and feeds almost off itself, then on everything.

Marcelo and I had always explored another avenue: My fascination for producers, their folly and their bravery. Where do they find the strength to continue?

And we made the link. The story of a man struggling against his melancholy. A former TV producer who makes a momentary comeback thanks to these girls who he wants to proudly display in his country, like boastful proof of his resurrection, of his return.

Who wants to remain, in his unpleasant manner, a prince, whatever it costs him. But without a kingdom, and above all without power – apart, that is, from the pointless power of his liberty. A man with no home, who no longer knows if holding on means knowing when to leave the stage (which he's done), or knowing when to stay in the spotlight (which his friends have done).





So where did you see a show for the first time?

In Nantes, at the Banana Hangar, thanks to Kitty Hartl, dance programmer at the Lieu Unique theatre who, in a certain way, is the model for Joachim. I met the girls with Philippe Di Folco who came on board to finish co-writing the screenplay; he's a writer and a man curious about everything, passionately erudite. Three intense days and nights to superimpose, with smiles on our faces, our intuitions onto the reality. After that, I went to see some festivals with 150 acts in three days, in San Francisco, New York, Naples, and so on. And I put together my own troupe, step by step over at least two years.

New Burlesque gained wider acceptance through the media-savvy Dita Von Teese.

The actresses in *On Tour* are those who made possible the revival New Burlesque. In the beginning, it was a lesbian movement, which started in 1995 with a group called the Velvet Hammer. These girls have politics in their bodies, a resistance to formatted physiques which requires no words. Nowadays, New Burlesque has been somewhat appropriated into the canon of Las Vegas with its more conformist bodies.

***Mange ta soupe* was a film about your family, *Le Stade de Wimbledon* showed the woman you loved. For the first time, you direct yourself in *On Tour*: Is this a step into self-portrait?**

Goodness me, I don't know, I haven't really thought about it. I didn't want to appear in *On Tour*. Everyone except me seemed to know I was going to end up doing it! It became a joke which didn't make me laugh because I was genuinely looking for someone. And then yes, three weeks before the shoot, despite my misgivings, and protesting at first, it ended up being me.

Did the fact that you were acting in the film help you approach the directing differently?

Yes, it was quite practical, I must admit, and created an amusing complicity. I could orient the movement, generate surprises, receive them. Within the frame, you realize when it's the moment to make the drama come to the fore. During the scene on the train for example at the start of the film, I said to myself: "*OK, you like Ophüls, and like in Le Plaisir, you'd like to see all these women sleepy and lascivious in a compartment. But that doesn't make a scene!*" So I picked up my phone and I started shouting. An actor senses if there's something to get your teeth into, if there's a scene to be acted out. And immediately, the girls and the gorgeous Roky were all playing along.

And then Christophe Beaucarne, the director of photography, and I were concerned with just one thing: Striving so that the spectator goes with the characters and doesn't care who's making the film. It was like an obsession which translated into some very specific questions about the directing: The right distance, discretion, warmth, fluidity of movement, and also live sound.

The issue of documentary and drama comes up repeatedly in *On Tour*.

All the time. The question came up from the writing stage, then during the preparation for production – which, incidentally, I find increasingly difficult to dissociate from directing. Deciding where you spend the money is already part of the directing process; that's where the film is really defined, in fact. So you might as well get the project set-up right.

Then we had the intuition that to preserve the spontaneous energy that is vital for shows, we should set up a real tour. We thought the camera alone would not be enough for the girls, that they needed a packed hall. And we would sleep in the hotels where we'd film.

From Le Havre to Rochefort, passing through Nantes, we put on a free show for anyone who signed a release form. We could never have afforded all those extras! We only had two-and-a-half hours to shoot each sequence, even those including the dialogues, but that created an urgency, a precision which paradoxically bolstered the drama. Because the numbers were always watched, experienced by one of the characters and the directing was built around that.

There were of course some extraordinary moments, so many that the first edit lasted 3 hours 15 mins. What followed, with editor Annette Dutertre, was a struggle between drama and documentary. And unsurprisingly – though with at times some terrible regrets – the drama, the characters became the central force.

The film shows places that we usually experience in passing, like hotel chains. Why did you want to film in these “neutral” spaces in provincial France?

Colette spoke a lot about these places where you don't see anything. That's what you feel on tour: You're somewhere, without really being there. And I found there was an amusing misunderstanding: Joachim is fantasizing about America, while the girls are fantasizing about France and Paris. But they see almost nothing of it, or just that side of it.

There's an unsettling scene at a highway gas station between Joachim and the woman at the cash desk.

It echoes *Les passantes* by Georges Brassens: Just an exchange of glances, she who you could have loved... I like the idea of tours and circuses that go from town to town, the encounter between the residents and those who are just passing through. Very secret, unexpressed sentiments float around at toll booths and highways. And then there's the incredible actress, Aurélia Petit.

And all those uniforms too: cashiers, air hostesses, hotel staff, social obligations, obligatory obedience...

However strange and empty they seem, the hotels in *On Tour* become the locus of gaiety and abandon. The film is really a comedy!

Comedy, that depends on the moment. Joachim is so up-tight. But sure, the New Burlesque girls have a knack of transforming any place into a party. They never wallow in moaning. I love ham actors, people who like to make a table of people laugh, who go too far, but who we still need to have around. I'm always afraid they'll sink into despair. With the girls in the troupe, it's the same. There was no need for them to recount their past; their faces and bodies tell their own story. And yet, they can really transform a dull chain hotel into a place of desire.

Joachim feels that he is “surrounded by witches”. But who is he really?

Aha! We come back to the impenetrable mystery of the figure of the producer who, as the producer Jean-Pierre Rassam used to say, has the duty of shouldering irresponsibility, whatever the cost. And a producer is also an actor if he wants to survive, to charm, to terrify, to dream. Suddenly I'm thinking of Corneille's *Matamore*: “When I want I terrify, and when I want I charm”. The cigar, the glitz, the schmaltzy costumes, they are all just decoys, tools of the trade, traps. Here, as a tribute to veteran producer Paulo Branco, I wore a moustache. What's more, after making love, Mimi seems to think it's a dressing-up costume. At that moment, Joachim is just a man who's sleeping at last.

Is there an instruction manual for filming women between themselves?

I don't really believe in male filmmakers who supposedly know what's going on inside women's heads. Rather, let's just embrace the fact that cinema allows us to awaken the adolescent boy in us who fantasizes about girls' bedrooms. A moment during the shoot comes back to me, that on the balcony when Mimi is telling Dirty about her adventure in the bathroom. We shot several takes, they strolled about, Mimi's character remaining a little shame-faced and taciturn, but warming up in contact with her friend; that was the planned scene. Fine. We're about to change shot when an impulse comes to me: "Oh, Mimi, why don't you tell Dirty what just happened?" Mimi recounts, in her own words, then Dirty reacts, acting, (because once again, as show girls, they're always "dramatizing"). And there I am, behind the camera, headphones on, and thanks to their generosity and their playfulness, I entered the girls' bedroom!

The mere fact of filming these women becomes an event. They have such charisma!

I admit that the narrative stunt of bringing these American girls to France saved me from a certain ordinariness, that's for sure. Everything suddenly became interesting, fresh. We shared mutual fantasies, we exchanged our territories.

When you use the word territory, we come back again to this vision of a man amongst women...

Philippe and I would say: First of all, the power of the group. Joachim initially doesn't look at them individually, then we move in on one. Chance or destiny, whichever you like, conspire for them to come together and something happens. Which in fact brings him back, soothed, within the group. It is the women together who "adopt" him at the end.





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FILMOGRAPHY

MATHIEU AMALRIC

DIRECTOR

- 2010 TOURNÉE (On Tour) (Cannes Film Festival - Official Selection - Competition)
- 2007 DEUX CAGES SANS OISEAUX (Short)
À L'INSTAR DU PÈRE NOËL ET DE LA PIZZA (Short)
- 2003 14€58 (Short)
- 2002 LA CHOSE PUBLIQUE (Public Affairs)
- 2000 LE STADE DE WIMBLEDON (Wimbledon stage)
- 1997 MANGE TA SOUPE
- 1993 8 BIS (Short)
- 1992 LES YEUX AU PLAFOND (Short)
- 1990 SANS RIRES (Short)
- 1985 MARRE DE CAFÉ (Short)

Mathieu Amalric began in movies as : props person, assistant editor, 1st assistant with directors like Louis Malle, Romain Goupil, Alain Tanner, Joao Monteiro...



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SELECTIVE FILMOGRAPHY

MATHIEU AMALRIC

ACTOR

- 2010 TOURNÉE (On Tour) by Mathieu AMALRIC (Cannes Film Festival - Official Selection - Competition)
LES AVENTURES D'ADÈLE BLANC-SEC (The Extraordinary Adventures of Adèle Blanc-Sec) by Luc BESSON
- 2008 LES DERNIERS JOURS DU MONDE (Happy End) by Arnaud and Jean-Marie LARRIEU
LES HERBES FOLLES (Wild grass) by Alain RESNAIS
QUANTUM OF SOLACE by Marc FORSTER
DE LA GUERRE (On war) by Bertrand BONELLO
- 2007 L'ENNEMI PUBLIC NUMÉRO 1 (Mesrine: Public Enemy No. 1) by Jean-François RICHET
UN CONTE DE NOËL (A Christmas tale) by Arnaud DESPLECHIN
LE SCAPHANDRE ET LE PAPILLON (The Diving Bell and the Butterfly) by Julian SCHNABEL
Lumières 2008 - Best Actor
César 2008 - Best Actor
- 2006 UN SECRET (A secret) by Claude MILLER
ACTRICES (Actresses) by Valéria BRUNI TEDESCHI
LA QUESTION HUMAINE (Heartbeat Detector) by Nicolas KLOTZ

- ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
- 2005 LE GRAND APPARTEMENT by Pascal THOMAS
UN LEVER DE RIDEAU by François OZON
MUNICH by Steven SPIELBERG
MARIE ANTOINETTE by Sofia COPPOLA
- 2003 ROIS ET REINE (Kings and Queen) by Arnaud DESPLECHIN
César 2005 - Best Actor
Lumière 2005 - Best Actor
- 2002 UN HOMME, UN VRAI (A Man, a Real One) by Arnaud et Jean-Marie LARRIEU
- 2000 LA BRÈCHE DE ROLAND by Arnaud et Jean-Marie LARRIEU
- 1998 LA FAUSSE SUIVANTE (False Servant) by Benoit JACQUOT
TROIS PONTS SUR LA RIVIÈRE by Jean-Claude BIETTE
FIN AOÛT, DÉBUT SEPTEMBRE (Late August, Early September) by Olivier ASSAYAS
- 1997 ALICE ET MARTIN (Alice and Martin) by André TECHINÉ
- 1995 LE JOURNAL D'UN SÉDUCTEUR by Danièle DUBROUX
COMMENT JE ME SUIS DISPUTÉ...(MA VIE SEXUELLE) (My Sex Life... or How I Got Into an Argument)
by Arnaud DESPLECHIN
César 1996 - Breakthrough Performance Actor
- 1985 LES FAVORIS DE LA LUNE (favorites of the moon) by Otar IOSSELIANI
- ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



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THE NEW BURLESQUE

New Burlesque is a revived and updated version of a genre whose roots are firmly in the English and American music-hall tradition.

Originally, burlesque shows were a mix of social satire, musical numbers and innuendo, and they became a staple of the American theatrical scene during the 1920s and '30s.

Gradually, the genre dwindled to the most simple expression of on-stage nudity, becoming synonymous with striptease.

Since the 1990s, the revival of burlesque, known as Neo- or New Burlesque, has drawn inspiration from these two periods, building out from the striptease element to reintroduce theatre, choreography, glamour, humor, satire and a splash of mayhem.

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BIOGRAPHIES

GABARET NEW BURLESQUE

MIMI LE MEAUX



The Californian Mimi Le Meaux is one of the founders of the dames in Dis Dress duo, a project at the origin of Burlesque's revival in the mid-nineties. Directly descended from the great striptease acts of the fifties, her work has a strong connection to garage and punk rock music (she has notably performed with The Damned) and the aesthetic quality found in cult films and B movies. As Ben Vaughn sang, "When she shake her moneymaker / you better call the undertaker / She's like a good bad dream / She's a real scream".

KITTEN ON THE KEYS



Kitten sings. Kitten makes jokes. Kitten simpers. Kitten plays the piano, ukulele and accordion. Kitten rustles her lace feathers then gladly tears them off. Kitten puts on quite an act. Kitten makes every one of her multiple talents known. Kitten on the Keys briskly leads the Cabaret as master of ceremonies, spangled with songs like "Hole in my Head", "Kitty Muffins" and "My Girl's Pussy" where countless innuendos are far from insinuated.



DIRTY MARTINI

Dirty Martini, Miss Exotic World 2004, is one of the most renowned and beloved New Burlesque artists. There is no vanity in the word artist, here. Her masterful performance of classic burlesque routines (balloon pop striptease, oriental fan or seven veil dance) is enhanced twofold by her incredible grace. Her number in which she incarnates a justice figure who breaks free from her clothes, only to find more and more hidden dollars is hilarious and poignant. A must-see.



JULIE ATLAS MUZ

The performances of Julie Atlas Muz are on the borderline between Burlesque and contemporary dance, an invented place that brings the concerns of Art to burlesque and the appeal and torments of the flesh to Art. Her work varies from mermaid in a giant aquarium to ballet (“ I am the Moon and You are the Man on Me ”) to television appearances. Julie Atlas Muz is at once Miss Exotic World 2006 and a guest artist of both the Valence and Whitney Biennials. Infamous in her hometown of New York and sometimes hated by the press, her work is “Funny. Disturbing. Magnificent. Hideous.” according to the Village Voice.

EVIE LOVELLE

Face of an angel and a devilish body, Evie Lovelle seems to come straight out of a noir movie from the forties or fifties. Rita Hayworth in *Gilda*? Jane Greer in *Out of the Past*? Jean Peters in *Pick up on South Street*? The quintessential of bad lady, with less dress and more feather fans. Evie was awarded Miss Most Classic at the Burlesque hall of Fame in 2008, for a first apparition on a stage.



ROKY ROULETTE

The Cabaret New Burlesque is also for girls. Roky Roulette is the only person in the world to striptease on a pogo stick. His appearance as cowboy, sailor or businessman is difficult to judge with such fleeting costumes. The forever-bouncing Roky ends up completely undressed and unbridled in front of the crowd gone wild. His outstanding physical performance is one thing, but for many his incredible energy and enthusiasm is downright contagious.



CAST

MIMI LE MEAUX

KITTEN ON THE KEYS

DIRTY MARTINI

JULIE ATLAS MUZ

EVIE LOVELLE

ROKY ROULETTE

JOACHIM ZAND

FRANÇOIS

ULYSSE

BAPTISTE

BALTHAZAR

GIRL OF GAS STATION

MAN OF BUSINESS SOFTWARE

CABARET MANAGER

CHAPUIS

HOTEL(S) RECEPTIONIST

SUPERMARKET CASHIER

WOMAN AT THE HOSPITAL

POLICEMAN

JULIE FERRIER

Miranda COLCLASURE

Suzanne RAMSEY

Linda MARRACCINI

Julie ANN MUZ

Angela DE LORENZO

Alexander CRAVEN

Mathieu AMALRIC

Damien ODOUL

Ulysse KLOTZ

SIMON ROTH

JOSEPH ROTH

AURÉLIA PETIT

ANTOINE GOUY

ANDRÉ S. LABARTHE

PIERRE GRIMBLAT

JEAN-TOUSSAINT BERNARD

ANNE BENOÎT

FLORENCE BEN SADOUN

ERWAN RIBARD

JULIE FERRIER



CREW

Directed by: Mathieu AMALRIC

Photography: Christophe BEUCARNE

Sound: Olivier MAUVEZIN

Editor: Annette DUTERTRE

Production Manager: Frédéric BLUM

Screenplay by: Mathieu AMALRIC, Philippe DI FOLCO, Marcelo NOVAIS TELES, Raphaëlle VALBRUNE

First Assistant: Elsa AMIEL

Script Supervisor: Elodie VAN BEUREN

Sets: Stéphane TAILLASSON

Costumes: Alexia CRISP-JONES

Make-Up: Delphine JAFFART

Sound Mixing: Stéphane THIEBAUT

Sound Editing: Séverin FAVRIAUX

'New Burlesque' Consultant: Kitty HARTL

A production Les Films du Poisson - Laetitia Gonzalez et Yaël Fogiel

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Le Pacte