

EX NIHILO, KARÉ, ARTÉMIS

PRESENT

THE YOUNG LOVERS

A FILM BY CARINE TARDIEU



FESTA
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DI ROMA
OFFICIAL
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SYNOPSIS

Elegant, retired architect Shauna (70) crosses paths with Pierre, a happily married doctor in his 40s, who first made an impression on her in a brief meeting 15 years previously.

Both are quite troubled to meet again and begin an affair. While Pierre's family life is soon turned upside down, Shauna struggles with feelings she thought belonged to the past.

INTERVIEW WITH CARINE TARDIEU

The Young Lovers” was originally a project of Sólveig Anspach’s which you took over after she died. How was it passed on? How did you react to this proposal?

At the time, I found it hard to bear. I recoiled from the idea, but I agreed to read the screenplay. I was overcome with emotion, because through the story of her mother, Sólveig evoked without any doubt her own death. I had reservations about the screenplay: I found the project too dark and morbid. I was about to have a child and I was thinking more about life. So, when I went to see Agnès and Patrick, I thought I’d turn down the project. But after talking to them, I started to work on it, nonetheless. However, before I started work on the story, there was something I had to do: Sólveig had a 20-year-old daughter, Clara. I knew that the idea of this story being taken over by someone else was difficult, painful even. Clara, Agnès, and I met (Sólveig was there too, in spirit), and it was very moving. I wanted to tell Clara that I was going to make this story my own, a bit like "freely" adapting a novel, that it would not be "a Sólveig Anspach film", even though I wanted to remain faithful to Sólveig's vision. I asked her not only for her approval but also for her trust. She remembered that her mother had spoken about me kindly. She’d seen and liked my previous films, so she said yes... From then on, I felt liberated.

What did you change of the original project?

We kept the essence of the film, part of its plot, the traits of certain characters, some pivotal scenes, such as the one in which Shauna cannot get out of her bathtub, and the one in which Shauna's daughter understands that her mother has met someone - which is, in fact, the very first scene that Sólveig experienced and wrote. We characterized and developed Georges, the best friend, and completely reinvented the character of Jeanne, Pierre's wife. Finally, following a consultation with Raphaële Moussafir (with whom I co-wrote my two previous films) we imagined the prologue, in which the seed of this loving encounter is sown. We also pushed the film towards more light, less darkness...

Did Sólveig have a cast in mind? Did you make your choices based on that or not at all?

Originally, Shauna was Irish and Sólveig met Vanessa Redgrave who said yes. But time had passed, and during the rewriting, the character had evolved. I had to find "my Shauna"... I began by offering the film to Melvil Poupaud to play this passionate, fundamentally anxious doctor. He is a very good actor: seductive, mysterious and hypersensitive. Melvil was an obvious choice for me. For Shauna, I had to find an actress who completely accepted her age and could embody this "flamboyant woman who goes through life on tiptoes". It takes courage for an actress to accept such a role: dealing with old age and death head-on is not easy. You have to accept to give up part of the control over your own image whereas society nowadays pushes most actresses to give in to the illusory temptation of eternal youth... To put it bluntly, I couldn't consider offering the role to a woman who had resorted to plastic surgery. I don't blame those who give in to this temptation because I know how strong the pressure is, but as a director, I consider face lifts to be a curse. It was my casting director, Tatiana Vialle, who told me about Fanny Ardant. I had never worked with her, but I guessed she was brave... From our first meeting, Fanny shared with me both her enthusiasm and her fears, which in this case were not about old age or death. Fanny is very modest underneath her air of bravado and was afraid of being revealed... Literally and figuratively? I understood that kissing a man on screen

was not that easy for her, especially as the script did not avoid love scenes... She was afraid, like a first time, like Shauna about to make love to Pierre... It touched me deeply and I said to her: "You're scared, that's great! You are Shauna!". On set, it took us a few days to get used to each other, but once she trusted me, I could ask her anything. Fanny is such an intense, generous, precise actress, she impressed us all. Above all Melvil, who has an affection for her that comes across in the film. I'm generally very happy with the whole cast. I had great pleasure seeing Cécile de France again. It's the first time I've worked with an actress I've already directed, and this immediate trust is very valuable because it let us go even further. It was a rediscovery. And I love Cécile's way of preparing and concentrating, she's very conscious of herself, a very rigorous, virtuoso actress.

Beyond taking up Sólveig's torch, did this story resonate strongly enough with you to make it your own?

Although inspired by her mother, Shauna's character can't be reduced to a single woman: there is a part of Sólveig in her, a part of Agnès, a part of Fanny, a part of me... Shauna is the sum of all of us, who have in common the audacity not to sacrifice our professional life to our personal life, with the aim of experiencing all our passions at once. And the idea that love is possible at any age is particularly touching. The older I get, the more I feel like I'm freeing myself from a certain number of barriers that we impose on ourselves in adolescence or early adulthood. The idea that one can be born to oneself until the end of one's life, that there are still things to discover, transcend, and experience for the first time, I feel that deeply. And then, through its characters, this story addresses many other themes that are familiar to me: the parent-child relationship, friendship, loneliness, the courage of living despite our existential constraints...

Why does Shauna find it so hard to believe in this love story, in Pierre's love for her?

There is her age of course, but that's not the main issue: in spite of her apparent strength and her beauty, Shauna is a woman who has always doubted herself and who has never been well loved. It amazes her that a young, married man could fall in love with her. You can lack self-confidence at any age. Shauna is aware of her turmoil from the start. It makes her smile as long as their story is virtual, but she is afraid when it becomes a reality. As for Pierre, it takes him a while to become aware of what he feels, but once he allows himself to experience this love, he gives himself over to it body and soul, without any doubts: it is irrepressible, vital.

And yet it's hard for him too because this love endangers his couple, his family.

Yes, Pierre feels guilty, he's afraid that his family will fall apart.

Pierre's neglected wife (Cécile de France) suffers, but Pierre is not really guilty in the sense that he does not wish to harm her, as in tragedies.

All the benevolence in the world does not prevent inflicting pain. At first, Jeanne does not take her husband's extramarital affair very seriously because she has no doubts about her relationship. And she is right because deep down, the two of them love each other deeply. But when she learns that Shauna is 70 years old, she understands that it is not just a fling. Her husband's relationship with this woman "of a certain age" has every reason to scare her much more than if it had been a younger woman.

Cécile de France's laugh when she learns Shauna's age is very cruel.

Generally, married men cheat on their wives with younger women, and the portrayal of couples in the movies is mostly in this vein. If we had told the story of a woman who cheats on her husband with an older man, nobody would have been interested! In a way, I hope that in a few years' time, a love story between a forty-year-old man and an older woman will have become a non-issue... Although mentalities are changing, there is still a long way to go before this patriarchal pattern collapses. Sólveig was an activist, and I dare to hope that "our film" will add its stone to the building of the women's cause...

Around the Shauna-Pierre couple, there is also Georges, Pierre's friend, and Cécilia, Shauna's daughter. Did you create these characters to introduce a little lightness and comedy into what is more like a melodrama?

In the case of George, yes. He is Pierre's white clown, the funny, depressive friend who has built nothing, who has ephemeral affairs with younger women, and lives his life by proxy. Georges is a "Promise at Dawn" victim (Romain Gary's novel about his mother): he loved his mother too much and she died at the beginning of the film, and this love is insurmountable. So, he has great affection for Shauna. It is all the more dizzying when he discovers Pierre's affair with her... As for Cécilia, she is at a turning point in her life since her daughter leaves the nest, making her feel even lonelier. She is entirely devoted to her work and whether she likes it or not, suffers from seeing her mother in love when she herself is not. I have known Florence Loiret-Caille for a long time - she was one of Sólveig's favorite actresses, and it was very moving for us to find her in this role in which she literally embodies Sólveig... I am also very grateful to Tatiana Vialle for having introduced me to Sharif Andoura, an actor as endearing and singular as a Michel Simon in his day. Like the Fanny / Melvil duo, Fanny and Florence as well as Melvil and Sharif immediately developed a mutual affection that grew throughout the shoot. On the set, their complicity greatly simplified my work directing the actors.

Cécile de France plays a strong hand in a supporting role.

For this role, I needed an actress who was both very different from Fanny and could compete with her, which is not easy because in my eyes, Fanny will always be "La Femme d'à côté" (Truffaut's "The Woman Next Door"), in other words, a woman who is difficult to surpass in terms of seduction. I wanted a Jeanne with a solid, earthy appearance, an endearing woman of whom one could say that Pierre has no reason to be tempted to go elsewhere... Cécile has the intelligence to accept supporting roles with as much enthusiasm as she does lead roles. What matters to her is to have a character to defend.

How did you work with Elin Kirschfink, your director of photography?

Elin and I share a certain anxiety about not being up to the project that is entrusted to us! Hence an insatiable appeal for anticipation, preparation, research... I began by showering her with pictorial and cinematographic references, reflections on the characters, on the settings, on the rhythm of the film and its relationship to time (the film is full of clocks). We watched - or watched again - a certain number of feature films that have become references for the whole team: from the casting director to the sound engineer and the actors, I believe that whatever position they hold, everyone should be able to get involved in the making of the film. Among these references: David Lean's "Ryan's Daughter", which portrays a love affair in which the awakening to sexuality and sensuality are sublimated by magnificent images shot in Ireland. They inspired us, among other things, for the Irish part of the film, and especially

for the day for night during which Shauna and Pierre meet on the beach. Kieslowski's "Blue", in which love and death are intimately linked, for its sense of detail and infinite accuracy when dealing with the fragility of existence. We saw some Bergman films again - "Persona" and "Sarabande". Bergman himself said, I believe, that he filmed faces "like landscapes", with their stories and torments, not sparing their wrinkles and rough edges. Through certain close-ups, Bergman probes the looks and souls of his actors - of his actresses in particular. I am always moved when I see "Autumn Sonata". It inspired me a lot to film Shauna, among others. And finally, a sentimental comedy, "Un homme qui me plaît" ("A Man I Like") by Claude Lelouch, which deals magnificently with the expectation of love with all that it engenders of hope and anxiety. In fact, during the editing process, we included an excerpt from the film in which Annie Girardot is waiting for the man she loves at the airport. In order for the art direction to be coherent, we worked closely with the set designer, Jean-Marc Tran Tan Ba. For example, I wanted Shauna's apartment to be overflowing with photos and accumulated objects that testify to her long life. Pierre and his family are perched in a tower block, as if unconsciously imprisoned. Isabelle Pannetier, the costume designer, helped me to find a way to make the "great Fanny Ardant" a rather reserved, even shy woman, or Pierre a man who seems to have forgotten / lost himself and does not take care of himself... Following preparation and location scouting, we broke down the film with the first assistant and the script supervisor: we spent hours on the sets playing and replaying the scenes, taking turns acting out one character or another. It was quite fun, I must say, and very creative. This collective preparation phase was crucial and allowed us to save a lot of time during the shoot. With the benefit of all our reflections, this document (a kind of photo novel with our masked heads...) allowed everyone to refer to it throughout the making of the film. It cannot be said often enough how much directing is the fruit of a collaboration. From the writing of the script to the very end of the post-production, it is constantly enriched, if we are prepared to let it, by the strength of everyone's suggestions. On this film, I was lucky enough to work with people who were committed and generous. I am extremely grateful to them.

You mentioned your meeting with Agnès De Sacy and the resumption of the project. Can you talk about your writing or rewriting work with her?

Agnès knew that I wanted to revisit the script from top to bottom. She agreed to do it, which was a brave thing for her to do as the person who had promised to Sólveig. But I don't think she ever felt like she was betraying her. In fact, Sólveig was often there with us... I thought about her a lot during the making of the film. I don't know if she would have liked it, but I'm sure she would have been very happy that it existed. Agnès and I had a lot of fun working together even though we are very different. We don't have the same rhythm at all! I'm a morning person, she's an afternoon or evening person, I walk fast, she walks slow, I like to get straight to the point, she digresses... We took a step towards each other. Or maybe we were simply very complementary. Our first readers were our producers and their feedback, at every stage, was very constructive. It was they who, between two versions of the dialogue, suggested that we call on the benevolent, always pertinent eye of Raphaële Moussafir, thanks to whom the characters, among others, took on a real dimension.

How did the editing go with Christel Dewynter?

I had already worked with her on "Ôtez-moi d'un doute" ("Just to Be Sure"). Christel has an extremely valuable sense of rhythm and musicality. One of the difficulties of this story was to give a place to each of the characters that gravitate around Shauna and Pierre. Christel is one of those people who never give up! She uses an expression that I like very much and that I

have adopted: the film is only finished when nothing makes us "ashamed" anymore. In other words, the slightest dissonance forces us to rework things, everything is decided by the blink of an eye, by the slightest image. It's a fragile balance that must be consolidated throughout post-production. And I must say that in terms of being demanding, Paul Heymans, the sound editor, and Thomas Gauder, who mixed the film, are like Christel... The image editing was sublimated by this process of enriching and harmonizing the sound and music.

How did your third collaboration with the composer Eric Slabiak go?

Throughout the writing process, I gave Eric the various versions of the script to read, in which certain pre-existing works were already evoked that we kept in the editing process: one of Bach's Goldberg Variations, a Chopin Nocturne, the songs "Le Premier Bonheur du Jour" by Françoise Hardy, and "Lady of a Certain Age" by The Divine Comedy. All this music shares a melancholy feel which colors the film with a certain softness despite the harsh events its characters are confronted with. Before starting to shoot, I asked Eric to compose one of the themes of the film which had to directly impact the directing: when Pierre, passing through Paris, hesitates about meeting Shauna, the music coming from a public piano at the Gare de Lyon influences his emotional state and leads him to phone her. A race follows, which brings them closer to each other, in time with the music, itself embodied by a series of shots of the hands of the young pianist playing the instrument. Eric thus composed, for the shoot, what was to become one of the main themes of the film, which would later be developed in the edit.

Then, during the editing, Christel, immediately put over a number of sequences some pre-existing music that had not been mentioned in preparation. In particular, two guitar themes that brought a romantic suspense that was very appropriate to our melodrama and which Eric was greatly inspired by. The balance of this film lies on a tight thread between love (i.e. life), the passing of time, and death, which is omnipresent. By dint of going back and forth between Eric's studio and our editing room, we ended up finding the right, fragile balance between his composition and ours...

Would you define "The Young Lovers" as a melodrama, a rather serious romantic comedy?

It's definitely a melodrama which I think contains the idea that you should never fall so low that you can't get back up. It is my most serious film, but perhaps also the most ardent!...

We thank you for having written an optimistic ending. It would have been too painful to see such a love story end tragically.

As Pierre says, whatever time we have left, we must enjoy the air we still breathe together... I feel it all the more strongly since we have been battered by the waves of this pandemic that separates us from others, from our friends and family, at the pace of a melodrama, and that makes our reunions so precious each time. At a time when we are told not to touch and hug one another, when we are asked to remain sheltered from the world, it seems essential to me to tell the story of an elderly woman who, in the twilight of her life, enjoys and make the most of the time she has left. Answering death, or the fear of death, with the desire for life, is the subject of this film, and this is what Sólveig conveyed to me with this story. She knew she was dying, but she didn't know, when this film came out, how strongly it would resonate with its time.

INTERVIEW WITH FANNY ARDANT

What did you think after your first reading of the script of "The Young Lovers"?

I read it and was very passionate about the story. I really wanted to know how it ended. At the same time, I didn't think I was the right person to play Shauna. Then I met Carine Tardieu, and the way she talked about the film made me want to be part of this world. So, I said yes.

What were your fears?

It's hard to say. For me, the test of a script is whether you read it in one go. That's a good sign, and that was the case here. It was very well written, I really liked the dialogues, my character as well as the other characters: my lover's wife (played by Cécile De France), my daughter (played by Florence Loiret-Caille)... I liked this house in Ireland, I liked Shauna's journey... and especially what was said in this story: that the main thing in life is love. To quote Rosa Luxemburg: "The land belongs to the one who works it". This land was mine.

Did you share with Carine Tardieu the belief in this story, that of a love at first sight between a man in his forties and a woman in her seventies?

Nothing resists love. All fears and prejudices are always society's judgments. To make people fit into boxes, to eradicate unexpected behavior. I believe in crazy love, in love that goes beyond all the injunctions of society and ignores the gaze of others. Great love is always a story that goes against all odds. In the past, prejudices concerned differences in social background, then differences in religion... The more society wants to keep lovers apart, the more it consolidates and strengthens their bonds.

"The Young Lovers" shows that love is stronger than all social conventions.

Yes. Remember in the film, when my lover's wife learns my age, her first reaction is to burst out laughing. For her, the love between Shauna and Peter is unthinkable. Then, little by little, she realizes that her husband is becoming more and more sad by being separated from me, and her point of view changes... Thanks to the strength of love, the views of the characters around me change.

Carine Tardieu says that Shauna's age makes her love with Pierre more "dangerous" for Pierre's wife. It's not just a fling.

Absolutely. Often, couples' infidelities are about sexual attractions and one-night stands. Whereas here, between Shauna and Pierre, the age difference is proof that love is the only thing that could make them meet and bond so powerfully.

What do you think of Shauna, who seems to want this love story with Peter but does not dare to live it?

Shauna is not a seductress: she has no confidence in her own body. And it is precisely because she is falling in love that she hesitates. In her life, she has had several love stories. But you can have known many men and suddenly recognize the one who is unique, the one who is for you. This is what happens with Pierre, but she doesn't dare to believe it, she tells herself that she is dreaming, that she is in the middle of a fantasy. She struggles as if in a dizzy daze.

It is so beautiful that she does not believe it. She is afraid to break because she is more fragile at her age. That's why the scene with her daughter, Cécilia, is important. Shauna knows full

well that she will be exposed to social criticism, ridicule, and mockery... She is intelligent enough to foresee the obstacle of "what people will say" but she braves it and overcomes it.

Throughout the twists and turns of their love affair, Pierre is very convincing in persuading Shauna that she is not dreaming, that he loves her deeply, that this is not a passing fancy. Shouldn't his gestures, looks, and words dispel any resistance?

She doesn't want to drag a man into a relationship with a woman who has no future. Shauna is cultured, she has worked all her life, she is not just a romantic who has read too many love stories. She is afraid of dragging a man in the prime of his life down with her. And she distances herself out of love for him.

It's a cruel paradox and absolute romance: Shauna refuses to experience their love for the sake of love!

That's true love! To love someone more than yourself. To put their life and happiness before your own.

How did it go with Carine Tardieu with whom you were working for the first time?

I really like people who know what they want. And I like to go into a film and say to the director: "Do what you want with me". I'm obsessive by nature. If I listened to myself, I would always do the same thing. When I step into the world of someone who has a very precise idea of the character, the story, and the situations, I like it! I like the idea of losing my personality for the duration of a film. Carine knew perfectly where she was going with this film, she was very ready right down to the smallest detail, while remaining open to what was happening on the set.

How was your partnership with Melvil Poupaud?

I immediately felt that Melvil was very intelligent. That he was light, ironic, and sensitive. That he had a great respect for women. As he knew that I don't like myself, he protected me.

"The Young Lovers" seems to revive the idea of Love with a capital A: the magic spark between two people, whatever their social position, their origin, their gender, or their age... Love free from any ideological or societal labeling. What do you think about that?

This film is a great love song to love. The male character is wonderful. Love is always beyond politics; it is always the same magic since Tristan and Iseult. The film also says that we must live intensely in the present. Do not be afraid, embrace adventure and risk. It's each and every one's responsibility to speak about love, to tell love stories. Let everyone live freely the love story they're experiencing! Don't care if you look old-fashioned, or this or that. To miss out on the power of love is to risk losing your life.

This film is itself an act of love since it comes from a project of Sólveig Anspach's that she unfortunately did not have the time to complete.

When you think of the genealogy of this film, which comes from Sólveig Anspach's mother's love story, I think it's wonderful that this project has finally come to fruition.

Everyone defines themselves in terms of the place they give to love in their lives. Often politics, a career, power, or fame take the place that love has left free.

INTERVIEW WITH MELVIL POUPAUD

Melvil, after the first reading, what did you think of the script of "The Young Lovers"? What were its strengths? Possible points to discuss?

The script struck me with its melodramatic potential, in the best sense of the word: those films that make you thrill, cry, make you want to believe and fall in love. A certain tradition of romantic cinema, especially American, which goes from "Love Story" to "Something's Gotta Give", the films of Douglas Sirk or David Lean. Carine had suggested that I watch "Ryan's Daughter" again because it was one of her inspirations. And then, above and beyond the script, by talking with Carine and seeing her previous films, I understood the direction she wanted to go in: the choice of Cinemascope, of day for night, the desire to let the tender scenes last, the separations in the rain... All these cinematographic elements that transport the audience into a "larger than life" world.

We feel your admiration and pleasure in working with Fanny Ardant.

I really wanted to work with her. Fanny has taken on a dimension that few actresses have in France today, she has a charisma, a mastery, and at the same time, an ability to let go. There is a maturity in her acting, a state of grace. Fanny also has a fantasy and humor she brought to the character. She has the strength of a tragedian but also a perspective on herself and on cinema. She wants to have fun and I think that this is more and more evident in her acting. In this film, she is not just in the dramatic register of the aging woman.

Did you share Carine Tardieu's belief in this story?

Yes, absolutely, especially considering that it was based on a true story, a love story that Sólveig Anspach's mother had experienced with a doctor. When I read the script, it was self-evident, there was nothing twisted about it. I read it as an old-fashioned love story, a Hollywood melodrama. I believed in it even more when Fanny joined the film. I had met her a few times in life and I found her very attractive. She has never let go of this seductive aspect, she dresses carefully, without being a vamp, she has great class. It seems to me that very quickly in the film, we forget their age difference and we just see two characters who are made to be together.

The spark between two people overcomes all differences, be they social, gender, ethnic or generational.

Absolutely. I really discovered Fanny on this shoot by spending time with her. We became quite close, and I was under her spell. I was already under her spell before, but I discovered someone even more charming and seductive than I imagined and I was overwhelmed by her professionalism. She became a friend. It worked really well between us from the beginning of the shoot, we understood we were on the same wavelength, we had the same references, we exchanged books... This real complicity was perfect for the film. Carine let us both act, happy to see that we got along so well and that her choices were right for the film. The relationship between Fanny and I was crucial to this film. I feel very different from Pierre but I think, as Rivette said, that this film is still a documentary about the meeting between Fanny and me. Moreover, we shot between two lockdowns and we all felt this desire to be on a set, to act, to make cinema, to find a team. Everyone was happy to return to work, both the lead roles and the supporting roles. Sharif Andoura, Cécile De France, and Florence Loiret-Caille wanted

to be part of this story and identified with Shauna and Pierre. The secondary characters understand this love too.

With this love, Pierre makes his wife suffer, but the film does not cast a moral, guilt-inducing eye on him

For me, Pierre has no ambiguity, which makes him endearing, sympathetic. His wife and his friend, although they are a bit shocked at first, end up accepting this love with Shauna. They know that there is no perversity in Pierre, no ulterior motive. Usually, I like to play troubled characters, but this time, it was almost an effort to play a man who is transparent in his intentions. He is very whole, very honest. When I acted with Fanny, I let myself be led by her. She would say to me: "Melvil, you have to guide me", but in fact, it was I who relied on Fanny and I let myself be guided. I had Pierce Brosnan in mind: the person you can leave the keys to your car to, the guy you can count on, the honest, reliable guy.

What was it like working with Carine Tardieu?

She was very involved. I felt that she had a mission with respect to Sólveig. She did it in a very elegant, courageous, determined way... Because Carine is very determined, we feel that she can move mountains. She wanted to pay tribute to the original screenplay but also to enjoy herself. She immersed herself in Sólveig's project, but she brought her own ideas to it. Once she was confident with the whole cast and crew, nothing could stop her.

It seemed to me that this film re-established "naked" love, freed from all political, social or societal considerations. What do you think?

I quite agree. I don't think Shauna or Pierre would go to demonstrations to claim the right to love someone older! But if people want to fight for such and such a cause, that's fine. Some battles deserve to be fought. But this film is rather about two individuals who suddenly free themselves of society's gaze and let themselves be carried away by their feelings without demanding anything. That said, their story is not that common. What happens most often in couples with a big age difference is that a 70-year-old guy is with a girl who is 20 or 30 years younger. That the woman is the one in her 70s may seem unusual, even inappropriate, but "The Young Lovers" says that there is no reason for a woman in her 70s not to have a sex life. If this film has a "message", it's that a 70-year-old woman has the right to sleep with whoever she wants, even if it is a 40-year-old man. It's about the instant connection between two people who are meant to love one another.

INTERVIEW WITH CÉCILE DE FRANCE

What did you think of the screenplay of "The Young Lovers" after you first read it?

That it was time to offer the audience a love story like this one, that of an older woman with a younger man.

Why have films been made for so long about older men in love with younger women and never the other way around?

I always think, when I choose a film, of the audience who, by identifying with it, can vicariously thrill to a story that would resonate with them and their lives. Just like homosexuals who had to wait so long before being able to be moved by seeing a film that speaks directly to them without having to do mental and emotional gymnastics to feel in the characters' place. In addition to this humanistic aspect, the script is very beautiful; it moved me and excited me. I rediscovered Carine's world that I like so much when she deals with the parent-child relationship and friendship. And then all her characters, even the secondary ones, are so rounded.

Were you reluctant to play a "secondary" role who is not always pleasant, even if she has her reasons?

Absolutely not. I find Jeanne's character wonderful and very rich to play since all of the scenes I was in were very intense dramatically, exploring the whole range of emotions that a woman who is being cheated on can go through, having already gone through the worst...

How do you see your relationship with Pierre before the meeting between Fanny and Pierre?

They are a couple who went through a terrible ordeal that shook them yet united them forever... A couple that has never called itself into question...

How do you analyze the scene in which your character bursts out laughing when she learns Fanny's age?

She reacts the way our patriarchal society reacts, accustomed, as it is, to thinking that one cannot fall in love with an older woman, since this pattern has never been portrayed or only very rarely, in our collective imagination, reflected in film, literature or any other art form. Our emotional brain has not been shaped in this way, so it's normal that it makes us laugh, but mentalities are changing, which is a relief.

Do you understand the evolution of your character who ends up accepting the Pierre-Shauna relationship?

I love the way Melvil interprets the feeling of love, the moments when his face literally radiates, when he gives himself up body and soul, it's magnificent. It makes you want to be loved by someone who loves as he loves. Jeanne can't fight it...

What was it like, working with Fanny, Melvil, and Carine?

Unfortunately, I only had one scene with Fanny, but that moment was magical for me. What generosity she has, what she gave me in her eyes was overwhelming and she helped me a lot without speaking, just by her powerful yet fragile presence. With Carine and Melvil it was also nice and easy, simple yet concentrated. Each of my scenes were important in the unfolding of

the story and they helped me with their kindness and friendship. I didn't have many days with them but each one was intense and fun to do because we were so close together. What more can you ask for?

What do you think of the finished film?

I think that what touches me most about this film is the delicacy with which Carine films her actors, the gentle view of cinematographer Elin Kirschfink, the attachment that we have for all these characters, the lines that we want to remember, and the desire to fall in love that it creates. The film reminds us that no matter how old we are, the feeling of love is universal and makes us feel so alive!

ABOUT CARINE TARDIEU

After audiovisual studies in Paris, Carine Tardieu worked as assistant director on many films and TV movies, as well as a TV scriptwriter. Between 2002 and 2004, she directed two short films awarded at several international festivals. *Les Baisers Des Autres*, and *L'Ainé De Mes Soucis* won the Audience Award at the Clermont-Ferrand Festival. She was noticed by Christophe Rossignon from Nord-Ouest Productions, who then produced her first feature film in 2007, *La Tête De Maman*, co-written with Michel Leclerc. For her second feature, she adapted the novel *Du Vent Dans Mes Mollets* in collaboration with its author Raphaële Moussafir. Released in 2012, the film is produced by Antoine Rein and Fabrice Goldstein from Karé Productions. In 2017, the two producers supported her once again for her third film: *Otez-Moi D'Un Doute*, co-written with Raphaële Moussafir and Michel Leclerc. Her latest feature, *Les Jeunes Amants*, is produced by Karé Productions and AGAT Films and will make its international premiere at the Rome Film Festival.

FILMOGRAPHY

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 2021 | THE YOUNG LOVERS (LES JEUNES AMANTS) Drama, 112' |
| 2017 | JUST TO BE SURE (OTEZ-MOI D'UN DOUTE) Comedy - Drama, 100' |
| 2012 | THE DANDELIONS (DU VENT DANS MES MOLLETS) Comedy - Drama, 89' |
| 2007 | IN MOM'S HEAD (LA TÊTE DE MAMAN) Drama, 95' |
| 2004 | L'AÎNÉ DE MES SOUCIS Short, 14' |
| 2003 | LES BAISERS DES AUTRES Short, 14' |

CAST

Shauna

Pierre

Jeanne

Cecilia

Georges

Rosalie

Fanny Ardant

Melvil Poupaud

Cécile de France

Florence Loiret-Caille

Sharif Andura

Sarah Henochsberg

CREW

Director	Carine Tardieu
Screenplay	Sólveig Anspach, Agnès de Sacy, Carine Tardieu
With the collaboration of	Raphaële Moussafir
Based on an original idea by	Sólveig Anspach
Produced by	Patrick Sobelman, Antoine Rein, Fabrice Goldstein
Coproduced by	Patrick Quinet
Photography	Elin Kirschfink SBC AFC
Set design	Jean-Marc Tran Tan Ba
Original soundtrack	Éric Slabiak
Sound	Ivan Dumas, Thomas Gauder, Paul Heymans
Production management	Marianne Germain
Costume design	Isabelle Pannier
1st assistant	Mathieu Vaillant
Casting	Tatiana Vialle
Production department	Margot Luneau
Post-production management	Chiara Girardi
Production	Ex Nihilo and Karé Productions
In Co-Production with	France 2 Cinéma, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Cinéma, Artémis Productions, VOO & BE TV, PROXIMUS, SHELTER PROD
With the participation of	CANAL+, CINE+, FRANCE TELEVISIONS, Région Bretagne, Région Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes
In association with	CINECAP 4, CINÉMAGE 15, M11, SOFITVCINE 8, COFIMAGE 31, INDÉFILMS 9, LBPI14, SG IMAGE 2019, Taxshelter.be & ING
With the support of	Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée, Tax Shelter, Gouvernement Fédéral de Belgique, the Creative Europe Programme - MEDIA of the European Union
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Fionnuala Jamison, Managing Director

fionnuala.jamison@mk2.com

Olivier Barbier, Head of Acquisitions

olivier.barbier@mk2.com

Camille Dupeuple, SVP International Sales

Camille.dupeuple@mk2.com

Quentin Bohanna, International Sales

quentin.bohanna@mk2.com

Ching-Lo Hsu, International Sales

ching-lo.hsu@mk2.com

Anne-Laure Barbarit, Festival Manager

anne-laure.barbarit@mk2.com

Visit our website www.mk2films.com