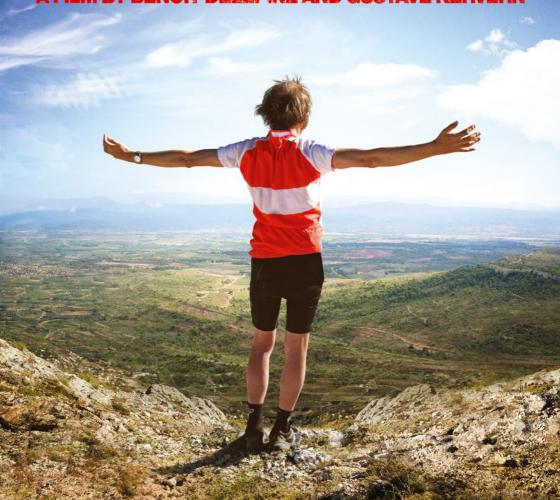


MICHEL HOUELLEBECQ NEAR DEATH EXPENSION OF THE PROPERTY OF THE



NO MONEY PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE

A FILM BY BENOIT DELEPINE AND GUSTAVE KERVERN WITH MICHEL HOUELLEBECQ

SYNOPSIS

Paul works for a cable company and is burning out.

On Friday the 13th, the news on TV sends him a signal that it's time for him to make a life-changing move.

Escaping from the boredom of his routine to the mountains of Provence, he will live a near death experience.

DIRECTORS' NOTE

It's what we'd always dreamed of.

To make a film without any constraints, financial or otherwise.

Just seven of us, in the mountains, with a single, ordinary camera.

The bare minimum.

With one and only intention: to express what's been weighing on our minds.

Our era confronted by death.

As our only actor, we chose Michel Houellebecq, the writer we believe best captures the times in which we live. We hoped that this intellectual acuity would be reflected in his performance and it was. He brought our words to life.

When faced with Death, there is nothing more beautiful than Truth .

Benoît Delépine and Gustave Kervern

ELEVATION

Above the valleys and the lakes: beyond The woods, seas, clouds and mountain-ranges: far Above the sun, the aethers silver-swanned With nebulae, and the remotest star,

My spirit! with agility you move Like a strong swimmer with the seas to fight, Through the blue vastness furrowing your groove With an ineffable and male delight.

Far from these foetid marshes, be made pure In the pure air of the superior sky, And drink, like some most exquisite liqueur, The fire that fills the lucid realms on high.

Beyond where cares or boredom hold dominion, Which charge our fogged existence with their spleen, Happy is he who with a stalwart pinion Can seek those fields so shining and serene:

Whose thoughts, like larks, rise on the freshening breeze Who fans the morning with his tameless wings, Skims over life, and understands with ease The speech of flowers and other voiceless things.

- Flowers of Evil, Charles Baudelaire

SELECTED DIALOGUE - MICHEL HOUELLEBECQ

"I always thought killing yourself takes not only bravery, but also luck.

Countless suicides fail because of bad luck.

Some of those desperate souls see this, out of cowardice, as a divine sign.

Not me.

One of the few qualities people see in me is **professional conscientiousness**.

I've always seen a job through to the end, both at work and at home.

As a child, for example, I always cleared my plate."

"There was a tree that same shape next to my parents' house. Beside it was a rock, and a rubber boot sticking out of the ground. It terrified me because it got me imagining all kinds of things.

How can you face life when you're scared of a rubber boot?"

"Obsolete. That's all. I'm 56 years old and I'm obsolete.

56, my grandfather's age when I was seven.

Back then, you could just be old, a grandpa.

You quietly waited to retire. No one asked you to achieve any objectives, or go beyond them. You weren't expected to look nice, to dress young, to be virile, to still screw, to do sport, to eat healthily, to love your wife like the day you met, to be best friends with your kids. You weren't expected to be creative, to be funny, to have passions. You were lucky, Grandpa. You could be just an old man. Look at me. Having reached your age, **I've become a sorry guy.** Obsolete."

"When I married you, I was proud.

I never really told you, but you can count the women I've known on the fingers of one mitten. Physical love never meant much to me.

Especially since after each orgasm, I fell into a black hole.

I always wanted to die after screwing.

I was sure that with you, my silences would be understood. I knew that life would be sweet. I never cheated on you. I lost my freedom but I gained peace."

"Life must be intoxicating... Life must be intoxicating... Life must be intoxicating."

"When it comes down to it, nature's a drag.(...) At the start of my stay here, I did feel some benefits. The relative purity of the air, the soothing silence... But I soon felt the shortcomings of this environment. Modern man simply needs comfort. He didn't strive for centuries to invent loads of things to then not make the most of it.

The bed, to not sleep on the ground; running water, to not have to go to the well; central heating, to no longer be cold; supermarkets, to not grow stuff yourself; the car, to no longer walk.

If we're going to stay on this Earth, it might as well be in nice conditions. I have to say, I've always been very rigorous – almost autocratic even – when it comes to choosing couches. Sitting comfortably is essential for me.

I can no longer put up with the harshness of nature. My body demands quilted leather."

"Paul, really, you talk too much and don't commit suicide enough."

MICHEL HOUELLEBECO

Poet and novelist, he was awarded the prestigious Prix Goncourt in 2010 for La Carte et le Territoire (The Map and the Territory), published by Flammarion.

DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHY

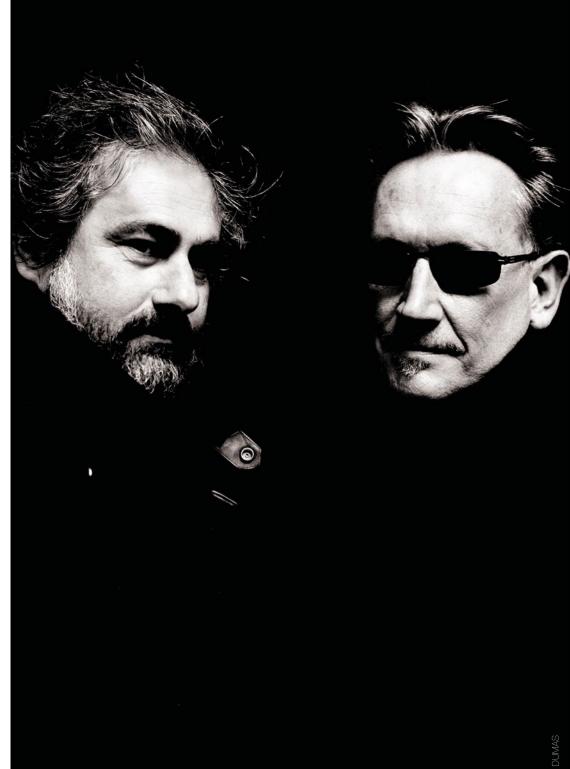
Benoît Delépine and Gustave Kervern acquired their skills and knowledge by working in television, both writing and performing sketches. Benoît worked on popular satire shows -- Guignols de l'Info and Groland -- and Gustave on the French rock-n-roll program, Le plein de Super. They met while working together on the show Groland. Their complicity brought them to develop a first feature film screenplay. Encouraged by Maurice Pialat, they shot their first feature film as writers-directors "Aaltra" in 2003, a dark comedy in black and white, a road movie in wheelchair about two disabled men travelling from Picardie to Finland, ending with an appearance by Aki Kaurismaki, who's encounter was a seminal moment in their lives.

"Aaltra" was critically acclaimed and well received by audiences, allowing them to continue their collaboration on "Avida", a metaphysical, absurd, and surrealistic comedy presented at the 2006 Cannes Film Festival, Official Selection, out-of-competition.

In 2008, their dark comedy "Louise-Michel" premiered in Official Competition at the Donostia-San Sebastian International Film Festival where it was awarded the Jury Prize for Best Screenplay. A Special Jury Prize for Originality was also awarded to the film at the Sundance Film Festival. Audiences and critics have praised the film all around the world. "Mammuth" with Gérard Depardieu, their fourth feature-film as writers-directors, was presented in competition at the Berlin International Film Festival and nominated for several César Awards. Finally, their latest film, "Le Grand Soir", with Benoit Poelvoorde and Albert Dupontel, won the Special Jury Prize of the Un Certain Regard section at the 2012 Cannes Film Festival.

"Near Death Experience" is their sixth feature film collaboration.

Benoît Delépine, born 1958. Gustave Kervern, born 1962.



DIRECTORS' FILMOGRAPHIES

BENOÎT DELÉPINE

Cinema:

2014 **NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE** official selection Orizzonti at the Venice Film Festival

writer, director, producer

2012 LE GRAND SOIR official selection Un Certain Regard

at the Cannes Film Festival writer, director, producer

2010 MAMMUTH official selection in competition

at the Berlin International Film Festival

writer, director, producer

2008 **LOUISE-MICHEL** official selection in competition

at the San Sebastian International Film Festival

writer, director, producer

2006 **AVIDA** official selection out-of-competition

at the Cannes Film Festival

writer, director, actor

2004 **AALTRA** official selection in competition

at the International Film Festival Rotterdam

writer, director, actor

1998 MICHAEL KAEL writer, actor

1996 A L'ARRACHÉ short film prized at Gérardmer Film Festival

Writer, director, actor

Television:

1992-2014 **GROLAND** Canal+ satirical program, writer, actor

1990-1996 LES GUIGNOLS DE L'INFO Canal+, writer

1989 **DYNAMO** La Sept, cultural program, producer

1988 **Canal+** writer of various short programs

Benoît Delépine was editor of the CREATION magazine and has written the scripts of the comic books L'imposteur (2000), La Bombe (2002) and God Killer (2003); he is currently releasing S et Fils with comic-book artist Diego Aranega.

GUSTAVE KERVERN

Cinema:

2014 **NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE** official selection Orizzonti

at the Venice Film Festival writer, director, producer

2014 DANS LA COUR by Pierre Salvadori, actor

2012 **LE GRAND SOIR** official selection Un Certain Regard

at the Cannes Film Festival writer, director, producer

2010 YA BASTA! short film, codirector, writer

2010 **MAMMUTH** official selection in competition at the Berlin International Film Festival

writer, director, producer

2008 **LOUISE-MICHEL** official selection in competition

at the San Sebastian International Film Festival

writer, director, producer

2006 AVIDA official selection out-of-competition

at the Cannes Film Festival

writer, director, actor

2006 **ENFERMÉS DEHORS** by Albert Dupontel, actor

2004 AALTRA official selection in competition

at the International Film Festival Rotterdam

writer, director, actor

1996 **DELPHINE: 1, YVAN: 0** by Dominique Farrugia, actor

Television:

2000-2014 **GROLAND** Canal+ satirical program, writer, actor

2002 CAMÉRA CAFÉ M6, actor

1999 « H » Canal+ series, actor

1994-1995 **LE PLEIN DE SUPER** Canal+ musical program

With Yvan Le Bolloc'h and Bruno Solo, writer, actor

1995 **AUDIARD EN TOUTES LETTRES** documentary, writer

Gustave Kervern is the author of the books 50 PROPOSITIONS POUR SAUVER VOTRE POUVOIR D'ACHAT (2008, Danger Public), PETITS MOMENTS D'IVRESSE (2011, Autrement) and IMPERTINENTS (2013, Cherche Midi).



CAST AND CREW

CAST

Paul Michel Houellebecq
The poacher Bertram Marius
Woman in the car Manon Chancé

CREW

NO MONEY PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

a film written and directed by Benoît DELÉPINE and Gustave KERVERN

Screenplay Benoît DELÉPINE and Gustave KERVERN Directors Benoît DELÉPINE and Gustave KERVERN

Producers Benoît DELÉPINE and Gustave KERVERN

Director of Photography Hugues POULAIN
Sound Guillaume LEBRAZ

Line Producer Philippe GODEFROY

1st Assistant Director Gérard BONNET

Editor Stéphane ELMADJIAN

Assistant Editor Mélanie BENARD
Production Manager Pierre-Yves MARTRON

Production Assistant Virginie BERRACHI

Associate Producer Charles-Edouard RENAULT

In partnership with le CNC
With the participation of CANAL+ and CINE+

WILLI LITE PALLICIPATION OF CANAL+ AND CINE+

2014 - France — Couleur
— 90 min — Format 2.39 — Dolby SR / SRD

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