

Artificial Eye presents

NOT HERE TO BE LOVED

 (CERT TBC)

A film by STÉPHANE BRIZÉ

NOMINATED - BEST ACTOR PATRICK CHESNAIS - CÉSAR 2006
NOMINATED - BEST ACTRESS ANNE CONSIGNY - CÉSAR 2006



Starring

PATRICK CHESNAIS, ANNE CONSIGNY, GEORGES WILSON

France / 2005 / 93 Mins / In French with English Subtitles / Colour / 1:1,85 / stereo

TS PRODUCTIONS

UK RELEASE DATE: 8 JUNE 2007

**Opening at the West End venues
and selected cinemas nationwide**

An Artificial Eye Release

Images are available on image.net

For further information please contact Zena Howard on 020 7438 9548,
or Alistair Leach on 020 7438 9582
at Artificial Eye, Tel: 020 7240 5353 Fax: 020 7240 5242 or email

zena.howard@artificial-eye.com

alistair.leach@artificial-eye.com

Artificial Eye Film Company 22 Stukeley Street London WC2B 5LR

Stéphane Brizé's charming film **NOT HERE TO BE LOVED**, which became a sleeper hit in France, is his second feature. It shows Jean-Claude (Patrick Chesnais), a world weary older man whose days are spent in the thankless job of a bailiff, delivering paperwork to people facing eviction or seizure of their possessions.

Jean-Claude took over the business from his father, a brusque fault finding widower who tries the patience of the care workers in the rest home where his son dutifully visits him each Sunday. Across the street from Jean-Claude's office is a dance studio, and he decides to shake himself out of his dreary, stultifying rut by enrolling for tango lessons. There he is approached by Françoise (Anne Consigny) a woman who tells him that his mother was her babysitter when she was a child. She is learning to dance in preparation for her wedding.....

“There are characters at various ages in life, who have never learned to love or be loved... that often goes together. That's the crux of the film and explains the title, which is a kind of declaration of intent whose meaning is the opposite of what it says. As a result of all their deficiencies and traumas, the characters mess up their relationships, suffer, are weighed down by regret at the end of their lives, or would like to say what they feel deep down but can't or don't know how to. And yet, often, it doesn't take very much to unlock all that – a word, a gesture, and a little bit of courage. Except that when you never learned to do it, it can feel like climbing Everest.

“The reason I chose Tango lessons for the film was that I wanted the character of Jean-Claude to be confronted with something that unsettles him, moves him, shakes his foundations without him realizing why. I soon ruled out macramé and table tennis, and thought that he should go and take tango lessons. It was a kind of intuition. I'd always thought it was the dance that was best suited to Jean-Claude. It's very sensual and, at the same time, to my mind at least, not too scary for someone who's not totally tuned into his body and emotions. Tango also evokes a certain melancholy that resonates well with the character and is just right for my vision of the world.”

Stéphane Brizé

**NOT HERE TO BE LOVED
(JE SUIS PAS LÀ POUR ÊTRE AIMÉ)**

Director: STÉPHANE BRIZÉ
Screenplay: STÉPHANE BRIZÉ
and JULIETTE SALES
Director of
photography: CLAUDE GARNIER
Sound: XAVIER GRIETTE
Costumes: ANN DUNSFORD
Set decorator: VALÉRIE SARADJIAN
Original soundtrack CHRISTOPH H. MÜLLER
and EDUARDO MAKAROFF
Producers: MILÉNA POYLO and GILLES SACUTO

TS PRODUCTIONS

Françoise : ANNE CONSIGNY
Jean Claude: PATRICK CHESNAIS
Jean Claude's father: GEORGES WILSON
Thierry: LIONEL ABELANSKI
Jean Claude's son: CYRIL COUTON
Françoise's mother: GENEVIÈVE MNICH
Françoise's sister: HÉLÈNE ALEXANDRIDIS
The secretary: ANNE BENOIT

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SYNOPSIS

Jean-Claude is a world weary older man whose days are spent in the thankless job of 'hussier de justice' (the French equivalent of a bailiff), delivering paperwork to people facing eviction or seizure of their possessions. He took over the business from his father, a brusque fault finding widower who tries the patience of the care workers in the rest home where his son dutifully visits him each Sunday. Across the street from Jean-Claude's office is a dance studio, and he decides to shake himself out of his drear, stultifying rut by enrolling for tango lessons. There he is approached by a woman who tells him that his mother was her babysitter when she was a child. She is learning to dance in preparation for her wedding, but both she and Jean-Claude seem to share a longing for something more in their lives. A tentative bond develops, but each is justifiably cautious.

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An interview with Stéphane Brizé

Where did you get the idea for this film?

It all started with the simple desire to observe this man, who is absolutely incapable of expressing or receiving the slightest emotion, at a moment in his life when he is terribly vulnerable.

Having reached 50, Jean-Claude senses that he is in the last-chance saloon in terms of building a meaningful relationship. Like some of the other characters in the film, he has a choice to make, which will decide his whole future.

It is a choice that will lead to happiness or bitterness and regrets. By confronting the characters with this dilemma, I observe the unseen reasons that lead them to act in one way, or another, and reveal the paradox of decisions that sometimes contradict one's deepest desires.

They are characters at various ages in life, who have never learned to love or be loved... that often goes together. That's the crux of the film and explains the title, which is a kind of declaration of intent whose meaning is the opposite of what it says. As a result of all their deficiencies and traumas, the characters mess up their relationships, suffer, are weighed down by regret at the end of their lives, or would like to say what they feel deep down but can't or don't know how to. And yet, often, it doesn't take very much to unlock all that – a word, a gesture, a little bit of courage. Except that when you never learned to do it, it can feel like climbing Everest.

The questions my characters ask themselves, their desires, urges, fantasies, pain and mental blocks are universal and are rooted in a reality and a daily existence that we could call "ordinary". But I'm always surprised and delighted to note that, by observing daily life, it is not just the cruelty and brutality of certain situations that emerges, but humour and poetry as well. A bit like in a song by Alain Souchon or Benabar.

Could you describe the main characters in greater detail?

Jean-Claude is a man in his early 50s, very alone, very stiff, weary, with a difficult job that leaves him no room for even the tiniest display of affection. The relationship he has with his son is polite but distant and that with his father is simply painful. But, when we meet Jean-Claude for the first time, his shell is beginning to crack imperceptibly. At some point or another in his dreary day, Jean-Claude always opens his office window and watches and listens to the Tango lessons in the dance school opposite. If it had been a few years previously, Jean-Claude probably wouldn't have let the music get to him but he's at a vulnerable stage in his life when anything can happen. Jean-Claude lowers his guard and he finds himself confronted with feelings and emotions that he has never had to deal with. That's when comedy can erupt onto the screen because I put my character in a situation for which he is absolutely not cut out.

Françoise is a woman who, in my eyes, always finds it easier to help others than help herself. It's a character trait illustrated by her job as a careers adviser in a local school and by her relationship with her fiancé, whom she spends her whole time reassuring. Her personal desires always take a back seat and that's what characterizes her. At the

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same time, and this is what makes Françoise complex and worthy of our interest, outwardly, she appears to know exactly where she's headed. But, between what she does and what she feels deep down, there are years of conditioning. She finds herself caught between what's sensible – her upcoming wedding, making her mother happy, her sister's words of wisdom – and the sudden, intense emotion she feels when she meets Jean-Claude.

Objectively, it would be easier for Jean-Claude and Françoise to mess up but that idea annoyed me. Without being stupidly optimistic, I wanted to give my characters the chance of breaking free of shackles that had been holding them back for too long.

It's always very moving to see that even at an advanced age, we are always our parents' children. It's pretty much stating the obvious but if your relationship with them doesn't move forward over the years, the pain remains and can even get worse. At the age of 50, in the dark, respectable suit of an enforcer of the courts' decisions, Jean-Claude is still weighed down by terrible childhood memories and that is what makes him such an endearing character.

How did the actors prepare for the tango sequences in the film?

When we started prepping the film, neither Patrick nor Anne could perform a single tango step. In that case, there's no magic wand, you just have to take lessons. As you can imagine, tango is not something you pick up in three easy lessons. It's very complicated. So, a few months before we were due to shoot, Patrick and Anne went for private lessons several days a week. I wanted them to learn and feel comfortable with a few basic steps so that their dance scenes together would generate emotion. It's the kind of thing that's easier said than done. Claudia Rosenblatt, their dance teacher, made sure that they would bring a certain physicality and spontaneity to the dance scenes, and she soon confirmed something I felt quite intuitively: beyond any technical considerations, something definitely happened whenever Patrick and Anne were in each other's arms. That was the best way to prepare for those scenes because what I wanted to see on screen was the emotion, a sense of being on the edge of the precipice, not necessarily a perfect tango.

What was your approach to the original music?

The first question is: why the tango? I wanted the character of Jean-Claude to be confronted with something that unsettles him, moves him, shakes his foundations without him realizing why. I soon ruled out macramé and table-tennis, and thought that he should go and take tango lessons. It was a kind of intuition. I'd always thought it was the dance that was best suited to Jean-Claude. It's very sensual and, at the same time, to my mind at least, not too scary for someone who's not totally tuned into his body and emotions. Tango also evokes a certain melancholy that resonates well with the character and is just right for my vision of the world.

Once I'd made that decision, I had to plunge into a world I knew absolutely nothing about. First, I had to find out what music they play in tango lessons. So I listened to records for hours on end, under the guidance of a few people who are tango connoisseurs. It had to be a tango style I liked that also translated a particular emotion for each of the dance scenes. Gradually, one by one, I found each piece. Several are performed by Carlos Di Sarli and one by Horacio Salgan.

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Next, I had to find a composer for the original score. In my mind, it had to be tango and, as often happens, chance took a hand. A long time before the shoot, I met Eduardo Makaroff and Christoph H. Müller, two of the three founders of the Gotan Project. They read the script, liked it and we met to talk about it. We soon agreed that the music for the film shouldn't be inspired by their personal creations – remixes of tangos with electronic beats like they did so wonderfully on their album. What I liked about them was their sense of melody and so I asked them to keep it simple – a recognizable theme that recurs at various moments in the film with different arrangements – efficient and good, which is probably the biggest ask of all.

Unlike what usually happens, the music was composed before we began shooting because we needed at least one piece for the scenes when Patrick and Anne dance together. We made the most of our studio time to record the rest of the film's score.

What I like about that approach is that nobody felt locked into what was taking place on screen. It was all about getting across an emotion, adding another layer to the story. For me, the result is simply magical, uncomplicated and very moving.

Would you agree that making your second film is often harder than the first?

It's almost become one of the laws of the business that your second film is more complicated than the first. Not necessarily in terms of finance, more from an artistic point of view. I wasn't an exception to the rule and I had long periods of doubts before I got down to writing the film. The problem wasn't writing a movie, it was writing a story I really wanted to tell. In the end, despite all the constraints inherent to any project, I have made the film I wanted to make. Now, unlike after my first film when I wasn't sure what to do next, I have no shortage of ideas. I just have to put my finger on the one I want to spend two years of my life with.

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**Stéphane Brizé
Filmography**

- 2004 JE SUIS PAS LÀ POUR ÊTRE AIMÉ
(NOT HERE TO BE LOVED)
Feature
- An Artificial Eye Release -
Official Competition – Winner Best Film
San Sebastian Film Festival 2005
- UNE VIE DE RÊVES (DREAM LIFE)
Short Film
- 2004 LE BEL INSTANT (BEAUTIFUL INSTANT)
Documentary
- 1998 LE BLEU DES VILLES (HOMETOWN BLUES)
Feature
Directors' Fortnight Cannes 1999
Prize of the best Screenplay / Deauville Film Festival 1999
Official Competition / Montréal Film Festival 1999
Selection in film festivals of Toronto 1999/
Namur 1999/ Seattle 2000/New York 2000
- 1996 L'OEIL QUI TRAÎNE
Short
Grand Prize Vendôme Film Festival 1996
Grand Prize and Audience Award Rennes Film Festival 1997
Grand Prize Mamers Film Festival 1997
Grand Prize Alès Film Festival 1997
Best Actor Saint-Denis Film Festival 1997
- 1993 BLEU DOMMAGE
Short
Grand Prize Cognac Film Festival 1994

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Patrick Chesnais

Selected filmography as Director

2000 CHARMANT GARÇON (CHARMING FELLOW)

Selected filmography as Actor

2005 JE NE SUIS PAS LÀ POUR ÊTRE AIMÉ
(NOT HERE TO BE LOVED)
Directed by Stéphane BRIZÉ
- An Artificial Eye Release -

2005 TU VAS RIRE MAIS JE TE QUITTE
(TOO BLOND FOR AN ACTRESS)
Directed by Philippe HAREL

2003 CASABLANCA DRIVER
Directed by Maurice BARTHELEMY

2001 SEXES TRÈS OPPOSÉS (VERY OPPOSITE SEX)
Directed by Eric ASSOUS

IRÈNE
Directed by Ivan CALBERAC

2000 CHARMANT GARÇON (CHARMING FELLOW)
Directed by Patrick CHESNAIS

1999 KENNEDY ET MOI (KENNEDY AND I)
Directed by Sam KARMANN

1999 LES ENFANTS DU SIÈCLE
(THE CHILDREN OF THE CENTURY)
Directed by Diane KURYS

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Anne Consigny

Selected Filmography

- 2006 JE SUIS PAS LÀ POUR ÊTRE AIMÉ
(NOT HERE TO BE LOVED)
Directed by Stéphane BRIZÉ
- An Artificial Eye Release -
- 36, QUAI DES ORFÈVRES / 36
Directed by Olivier MARCHAL
- 2003 L'ÉQUIPIER (THE LIGHT)
Directed by Philippe LIORET
- 2002 EN JOUANT... "DANS LA COMPAGNIE
DES HOMMES" (IN THE COMPANY OF MEN)
Directed by Arnaud DESPLECHIN
- 1985 LE SOULIER DE SATIN (THE SATIN SLIPPERS)
Directed by Manoel DE OLIVEIRA