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FESTIVAL DE CANNES  
2021 OFFICIAL SELECTION

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# EVERY- THING WENT FINE

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A FILM BY

**FRANÇOIS OZON**

CHARLOTTE RAMPLING  
ÉRIC CARAVACA  
JACQUES NOLOT

HANNA SCHYGULLA  
GRÉGORY GADEBOIS  
JUDITH MAGRE

FRANCE – 1H50 – 1,85 – DOLBY SR/SRD – VISA 153 296

## SYNOPSIS

At the age of 85 Emmanuèle's father is hospitalized after suffering a stroke. When he wakes up diminished and dependent, this vital and curious man who loves life asks his daughter to help him die.



## INTERVIEW WITH FRANÇOIS OZON

### How did you meet Emmanuèle Bernheim?

I met Emmanuèle in 2000, through my agent at the time, Dominique Besnehard.

I had shot the first fifteen minutes of *Under the Sand* and the shoot was on standby for production and financing reasons. No one liked the script or the initial footage, so Dominique suggested I meet a writer I didn't know, Emmanuèle Bernheim, for a script rewrite. He sensed we'd be a good fit and he was right: we immediately hit it off and went on to become friends.

We shared similar tastes in films, and in actors and their physicality, and I loved her very physical style of writing, "to the bone" as she put it, which was akin to scriptwriting.

### What was your reaction when you read *Everything Went Fine*?

She sent me the galley proof of her book and I was extremely moved to discover and share in her experience with her father. I loved the rhythm, the tone, the accelerating ending, the climactic suspense that feels almost like a crime novel, and the two sisters' ambiguous and ambivalent relief at having accomplished their "mission."

Emmanuèle asked if I'd be interested in adapting the book for the cinema. I was sure it would make a beautiful film, but it was so much her own story that, at that particular moment in my life, I couldn't see how to make it mine. Other filmmakers took an interest and there were a number of bids on the rights. She kept me informed up to the selection of Alain Cavalier, who unfortunately was unable to bring the project to fruition because of Emmanuèle's cancer. However, out of that experience, Cavalier made a beautiful documentary, *Living and Knowing You Are Alive* in 2019.



### What made you want to adapt it now?

Emmanuèle's death, her absence, made me want to be with her again. Perhaps also, on a personal level, I felt more prepared to plunge into her story. I often need time with the books I've adapted, to let them mature, to figure out how to make them mine.

And I wanted to work with Sophie Marceau. I'd pitched her several scripts and ideas in the past, and we'd run into each other a lot, but nothing ever materialized. I intuitively felt this was finally the right moment, the right project. So I sent her Emmanuèle's book, which she loved. And I started writing the screenplay.

### You're exploring a social issue here, as you did in *By the Grace of God*, but your approach this time is very different. Here, you're taking a more intimate angle.

In *By the Grace of God* I started with personal experiences, but soon the film expands to explore the group experience and the politics of the issue. Here, I'm honing in Emmanuèle's personal experience. The film never becomes a debate about euthanasia. Obviously we're all led to ponder our own feelings and questions about death, but what I was interested in above all was the relationship between the father and his daughters.

However, in telling this story, I felt some of the intense stress Emmanuèle must have felt as she confronted a society that doesn't let us organize a desired death in a legal and structured way. I don't think the children or loved ones of the person should have to bear that burden and all the accompanying guilt.

### How did you go about adapting the book?

Emmanuèle writes about actions in a behaviorist way. The book is full of dialogue and discussion, so adapting it was fairly simple, fluid and chronological. But there were holes in the story, and I kind of sensed what they encompassed without being entirely sure. So, as with *By the Grace of God*, I did my own investigating, principally with the living participants of the story: Emmanuèle's partner Serge Toubiana and her sister Pascale Bernheim.

There was one glaring absence in the book: Claude de Soria, Emmanuèle's mother, whom she'd hardly ever mentioned to me. The book's one blind spot. All I knew is that she was very ill and chronically depressed.

### In the film, we learn that she is an artist.

I learned that myself quite late, after Emmanuèle died. Claude de Soria was an important sculptress, recognized in the art world. I was surprised to learn there was another artist in the family, in addition to Emmanuèle, the writer. Pascale Bernheim gave me a book about their mother and showed me her work and a documentary where we see her working with cement. Claude de Soria never intellectualizes or conceptualizes her work. She evokes it concretely, in organic, material terms. Emmanuèle was the same with her writing. Her first book is called *Le Cran d'Arrêt (Switchblade)*. I couldn't help but see a reference to Claude de Soria's sculptures, which look like knives or blades. This lineage in their work nourished my imagination about the family and made Emmanuèle's rejection all the more interesting. She had none of her mother's works in her home.

### Another storyline: the enigmatic G.M., whose name is Gérard in the film.

In the book everyone is clearly named except for the mysterious G.M, who was André's lover. The sisters never liked him and that was their code name for him: G.M. for Grosse Merde (Shithead)! Emmanuèle was worried about how he'd react, which is why she didn't name him in the book. I also changed his name.

Emmanuèle and her sister were convinced he was the one who turned them in to the police and they were very angry. Because of him, it was even more impossible for them to accompany their father to Switzerland. I was intrigued and amused by this character, who I did not meet. I imagined that Gérard truly loved André and wanted to save him. In the film, Emmanuèle defends Gérard at the end, saying he went to the cops out of love.

### How free did you feel to take these liberties with the reality as told in the book?

Naturally I had no desire to betray Emmanuèle. But I needed to make the story my own. I knew Emmanuèle well enough to know she would not have been offended and would not have censored me. She may have even liked that the G.M. character wasn't so bad after all. She

was generous in her writing, with a tendency to soften the violence and focus on the humanity and the beauty in things.

**Emmanuèle and her sister Pascale are very close, but there's also a bit of rivalry.**

André asked Emmanuèle to help him die, not Pascale. This implies things about the family psychology and neuroses that were not explicit in the book, and it sparked my imagination. In truth, Emmanuèle was alone when she received the final phone call from the Swiss lady. But I wanted to put the two sisters together, though Emmanuèle keeps the call for herself.

**What André is demanding of his daughter might seem unacceptable, but his mischievousness makes him irresistible.**

Some people have so much charisma you can't help but love them. They're obnoxious and cynical, but at the same time so intelligent, charming and funny... André is a deeply selfish person, but he's full of life. He married Claude de Soria out of bourgeois convention, but he nevertheless lived his life the way he wanted, with no constraints, embracing his homosexuality. He did whatever he wanted, with no compassion or consideration for anyone else, aside from his grandson.

Emmanuèle often spoke of her father. She loved and admired him. I know they laughed a lot. We feel that in the book, and it was important for me to express it in the film.

**The character of the patient who shares André's room at the hospital, played by Jacques Nolot, represents a different type of potential father figure.**

Yes. He's a man who sees Emmanuèle in her role as a daughter: "Your father is lucky to have a daughter like you." Whereas André couldn't care less. He never thanks his girls. In the ambulance at the end he could've thanked them for all they'd done, but no, it's all about him! He was a brilliant man, you couldn't say no to him, but he was a bad father. He put Emmanuèle down when she was a child, calling her fat and ugly. Emmanuèle said she'd rather have been his friend than his daughter.

**You'd been wanting to work with Sophie Marceau for a while.**

Sophie Marceau is an actress of my generation. I "grew up with her" and she's always interested me.

I liked filming her now, in her early fifties. This film is sort of a documentary about her, in the same way *Under the Sand* was about Charlotte Rampling. She's not making anything up. She's there, present, feeling and expressing her sensitivity. In the kitchen with Serge at the end, she breaks down and climbs into his arms. I didn't write the scene that way. I didn't want her to cry, I wanted to save her emotion for the phone call with the Swiss lady. But Sophie felt it differently, and she was right.

**Tell us about the choice of André Dussollier to play the "incorrigible old man" who is her father.**

I love André in Alain Resnais' films. And in Rohmer's *Le Beau Mariage* (A Good Marriage). He was instantly enthusiastic about this story and immediately understood the character. He loved the deadpan humor, and brought a delightful cheekiness to the part. I showed him videos of André Bernheim so he could take inspiration from his personality and manner of speaking. And we did a lot of research on strokes. The book was very precise, and we also met with doctors who explained the different phases of a stroke's aftermath to make it as real as possible.

André's precision, his obsession with credibility around the stroke, and his way of speaking all truly enhanced the role. He had no fear for his image - he let us shave his head and deform his face with a prosthetic. I told him, "When the audience first sees André, they need to be shocked and not believe it's you." I wanted André's paralysis to be pronounced at the start. As he gets closer to death, it subsides and his verve and joie de vivre return.

**This is the third time you've worked with Géraldine Pailhas.**

I thought of Géraldine immediately to play Sophie's sister. There are parallels in their careers that make it easy to imagine them as sisters. They both started out with Claude Pinoteau and worked with Maurice Pialat when they were young. It was once again a real pleasure to work with Géraldine. She always understands what I want instantly.

She slipped right into the character of Pascale, and she and Sophie had a real chemistry. They're very different people, but got along splendidly.

Charlotte Rampling was the obvious choice to play their mother. It's a small but key role; her presence is very important. And I wanted to shine a light on Claude de Soria, the artist. These arguments won Charlotte over, along with our attachment to Emmanuèle through *Under the Sand*.

#### And Hanna Schygulla in the role of the Swiss lady?

I'd met her years ago at the Hamburg festival, where she gave me the Douglas Sirk Award! I admire her as an actress. I loved her work with Fassbinder.

At first I asked her if she could do a Swiss-German accent, but it wasn't very harmonious. And since I loved the tone of her voice and her soft German accent when she speaks French, I said, "Forget the Swiss-German thing. You'll be a German woman working in Switzerland."

In the book, Emmanuèle hugs the policewoman. But I wanted her to hug the Swiss lady, a beautiful character, bursting with an enigmatic humanity.

#### Filming a bedridden man in a hospital must present particular challenges for a director.

It does indeed. Filming a character lying in a hospital bed implies a fixed camera and repetitive shot-reverse-shots. Fortunately there were several location changes. André Bernheim changed hospitals a number of times and we followed those changes. We start at Lariboisière, a public hospital, then move to a posher hospital before ending up in a private clinic. These changes allowed us to explore very different hospital experiences along the way.

#### The swimming scene in Brittany is emblematic of your desire to slip life into the story wherever you can.

The film could have taken place entirely in a hospital room, but I didn't want to make a morbid, medical huis-clos. André Bernheim was very much on the side of life. His desire to die springs from the fact that he can no longer live the way he loves to live. The film is on the side of life, as was the book.

In the same vein, whenever I could inject a little humor or

irony, I did it. It came naturally with the situations and the characters. And it was necessary. When you're making a film on the side of life, you need laughter. Emmanuèle was very funny and loved to laugh. Her father too, it seems. They shared a black humor. I'm sure she would have loved that I filmed the scene Pascale told me about where the Q falls out of the word "coquille" at the restaurant in the clinic.

#### The film feels a bit like a journal, punctuated by dates.

This story is a countdown, so dates are important. They matter to André. He's the one who wants to reschedule his death after canceling the first appointment. His biggest fear is that he'll lose his marbles and no longer possess the free will necessary to determine his own death. His daughters will no longer be able to organize the trip if he loses the ability to make the decision consciously. As we move closer to the fateful day, the suspense builds: Will he go through with his plan? Change his mind, or dig in his heels?

#### The flashbacks add a temporal and fantasmatic dimension to the story.

They were quite surprising in Emmanuèle's book, far removed from her usual writing style. I really wondered whether to keep them, and if so, how to film them? I wanted them to be evocative rather than explicative. Reminiscences of her father's cruelty.

#### The Jewish faith is evoked, notably when the American cousin criticizes André for wanting to end his life after so many in their family had died in the camps.

In real life it was André's sister and not his cousin who'd survived the camps. I used that detail to create an episode with his cousin Simone. This was also something I added that was not in the book. It seemed important to understand the stakes involved in André's decision to die with regard to the family history. Emmanuèle never spoke to me about it.

André asks for the Kaddish to be read at his funeral for the beauty of the prayer. This was the esthete in him. He was not religious.

### Any last words?

I'm glad to have told this story, but I wish Emmanuèle were still here. I would've loved to have shown her the film. She was so frank, so honest and always hit the mark. She'd have given me her opinion, which was always important to me in my work.

What makes me happy today is to think that the film might inspire people to discover the work of Claude de Soria and, especially, to read or reread Emmanuèle's books.





## INTERVIEW WITH SOPHIE MARCEAU

François Ozon has been wanting to work with you for a long time.

In the past when François thought of me it wasn't the right time yet, or the right role, but the desire to work together was mutual! I've loved his films for a long time. He's an eclectic director, energetic, curious, with a keen eye for observing society and its foibles.

I was particularly struck by *See the Sea*. That film was incredible. Then later, *Under the Sand*, *Swimming Pool*... I also loved Angel. The character was very romantic, though not necessarily very nice, but that's ok. We're allowed to make movies about selfish people. As *Everything Went Fine* proves with the father character!

Even before I read *Everything Went Fine*, I was ready to get on board. I couldn't turn François down yet again! Then the material convinced me, and the project fit me like a glove. Films are intersections of diverse desires. To work with a director, play a role, explore a subject, experience a moment... This was a beautiful intersection.

Did you know Emmanuèle Bernheim?

I knew Emmanuèle a little, through her work as a screenwriter with various directors. But I didn't know her books. When François gave me *Everything Went Fine*, I discovered a writer who, in just a few details, plunges you into the psychology and pathos of death. Her story is radical but never violent or brutal. It simply rings true.

I was struck by the similarities in François' and Emmanuèle's creative processes. They have the same flair for factual storytelling, good pacing, perfect mechanics. Their characters could be more analytical, but choose instead to approach life with humor and spontaneity: going from one art exhibition to the next, one lunch



date to the next... They're pragmatic aesthetes. They waste no time with small talk or complaints. "No crybabies!" as the father says in the end.

Emmanuèle and François also share the art of expressing life through concrete details, using them as the lens through which to explore the big upheavals in our small existences and how we deal with them. They were made to work together!

**At the heart of the film is a father who wants "to end it."**

As we worked on the film, I would picture an old Indian going to die up on his mountain. It's all part of a ritual, and someone will accompany him on it...

I think euthanasia should be an individual choice. We need to take the desire to die more seriously. It's part of our pact with life. We mustn't abandon people just before they die. This story showed me how you can die with dignity in a country where it's still illegal. I love the "crime fiction" element, it adds suspense. Pascale and Emmanuèle become outlaws who have to "bury the proverbial body," which in this case isn't even dead yet! The situation is almost vaudevillian when they hide André at Emmanuèle and Serge's place.

**Despite its serious subject, there is indeed a lot of humor in the film.**

Extreme crises like these are rollercoaster rides that lend themselves to comical situations and nervous or uncontrollable fits of laughter. Grief is something we all must face at some point in our lives, so we might as well laugh about it too. André helps us with that. He's so cheeky and magnificent with his selfishness and tantrums. Emmanuèle is subjected to his death whereas he has chosen it - it's not the same energy. This adds complexity to the film and keeps it from ever being a gratuitous tearjerker.

Her father's decision hits Emmanuèle like a sledgehammer, and the immediacy of it also injects levity into the story. Emmanuèle has no time to mope around. She has to spring into action and manage a highly unusual situation, made all the more brutal because André is recovering from a close brush with death. His decision to truly end it is like a second death, just when she's starting to hope he might make it.

**His choice is also made all the more brutal because he asks her to organize it.**

Maybe that's what children are for... and girls in particular! It's no accident that he asked Emmanuèle to help him end it. Emmanuèle was so warm and helpful, no doubt in part because she lived in fear of losing this somewhat unattainable father, who lived selfishly, as fathers often do, especially from that generation.

**Death was always lurking around them and was central to their bond. He had suicidal tendencies, and she fantasized about killing him when she was a child.**

Children have a fear of their parents dying as it underscores their vulnerability. Young Emmanuèle also feared that her father might shoot himself in the head. So when he asks her to help him die, it triggers memories of death's omnipresence between them all those years. It thrusts them back into their historic dynamic: She must once again submit to her father, put what he wants first. And once again, all the accompanying frustration will go unexpressed. I really picked up on Emmanuèle's love of horror films. No doubt it was an outlet for her pent-up rage.

**Emmanuèle is very close to her sister.**

I only have a brother, so I loved acting out the fantasy of a close sister relationship! Especially with Géraldine Pailhas. I love her work, and we're both a bit tomboyish, we're no girly-girls! We may have idealized their relationship a bit. I don't know what they were like together in real life. But this crisis, though it did trigger a few resentments, really brought their complicity to the surface.

We learn that Pascale may have been less loved than her sister. But their father is so unusual and selfish that they both have issues with him. Different issues of course, but equally heavy ones, and their complicity helps them feel less alone as they bear their respective burdens. Their mutual fascination and admiration for their father also brings them close. They can laugh, poke fun and let off steam.

**How do you embody a character that actually existed?**

Personally, I don't really distinguish between characters who actually existed and fictional ones when it comes to playing them!

It was impossible to become a carbon copy of Emmanuèle. Physically we don't look at all alike, and it's irrelevant, because this story has a strong universal pull. However we did align closely with her taste in colors and clothes. The way you dress really helps you create a character. Emmanuèle liked subtle colors, blues, greys and blacks, and practical, comfortable clothes. And she often wore sneakers. That all says a lot about her, how grounded she was, her philosophy of life.

#### Did you feel a need to meet those close to her?

I'd met Serge Toubiana before and saw him once before the shoot, but not to discuss the film. However I did read the lovely book he wrote about Emmanuèle, *Les Bouées Jaunes*. That helped me see Emmanuèle through the eyes of the man who loved her. He brought her into the light and revealed a few small, private details that helped me know her better.

Emmanuèle was very much in love with her partner, he brought balance into her life. She was more relaxed with him, she became more childlike, less responsible, no longer the tough Emmanuèle who never gives up. It's very helpful to know such things when you're playing a character.

#### What was it like working with André Dussollier?

André, what an actor! He made me laugh, he made me cry. I love that after all these years, he's still so passionate and such a professional. André is always at the heart of the work, in his acting and in his interacting. He brings to life so beautifully the terrible and yet oddly irresistible appeal of the character.

This was also the first time I've worked with Charlotte Rampling. She has such a beautiful light. And she's English, so I was completely won over!

As for Eric Caravaca, he's crazy charming and so intelligent. Serge is a small role, but it's true to the character: He's there and not there, but always very loving despite his absences. And he loves Emmanuèle's father deeply. They have interesting banter about art and cinema.

#### And what was it like working with François Ozon?

Every director has their own way of working. François is

efficient, clear, rigorous. He's organized and direct, he doesn't beat around the bush. Once you understand the meaning of a scene, he doesn't dwell on psychological details.

François is always behind the camera, even in life! He's always observing you. Not necessarily in order to use everything, more to select what he needs. To find the colors that suit you. Actors like to be seen this way.

It can be a fine line between rehearsals and takes with him. We get in position and start rehearsing, and the next thing you know, he's caught up in the scene and starts the camera. It can be unsettling at first, but you need to keep moving with him. Everyone has to be on their toes, from the crew to the actors, and he doesn't want us hiding away in our trailers! François' set is like a tightrope that you never fall off. His approach demands a real presence of mind and intense focus, but it also saves a lot of time and energy.

I hadn't acted in several years and coming back to a set, with this powerful story to tell, these acting partners, this crew and this director made me so happy and really renewed my desire to be an actress.



## INTERVIEW WITH ANDRÉ DUSSOLLIER

### Did you know François Ozon's films?

Yes, some of them, and I would've loved to have been in one!

With a role and partners like this, *Everything Went Fine* is a rare occasion in the life of an actor. I loved Ozon's characteristic concision in the script. It reminded me of his great ellipses in *In the House*. And I enjoyed the challenge of playing a man who finds himself in a tricky physical situation, and who had been the father of a friend of François'. I was immediately concerned with capturing the truth of the character.

### Did you read Emmanuèle Bernheim's book?

No. I didn't want to be encumbered with unnecessary comparisons. The script was really François' work, and that's what I needed to dive into. If he chose to omit certain elements from the book, it's that he didn't want them in the film and it was not my place to interfere. For the same reason, I didn't want to meet any of André Bernheim's friends or loved ones.

### How do you approach a character who's in such an unusual physical and moral situation?

François had me watch a few documentaries about people who'd chosen to die in dignity. There was one in particular about a woman who didn't seem all that ill. We follow her from her home to the place in Switzerland where she goes to die. I was mightily impressed by her determination to formulate that final decision and see it through.

As for the physical credibility of the illness, we met a doctor at Lariboisière hospital who works on the rehabilitation of stroke victims. I was sitting there, no makeup, and I started talking to her in the voice I'd come up with for the character, to see if it was realistic enough, to see if the effects of the illness on my speech were credible.



I also had something quite exceptional: the video Emmanuèle Bernheim took of André Bernheim saying he wants to end it. That was an extraordinary resource. It was like a bible for my acting. I went back to it every day to soak up his way of being and speaking. Not to copy him - he wasn't widely known - but to glean inspiration from his spirit, to absorb his rhythm, his diction.

### When we first see you in the film, you're virtually unrecognizable.

Prosthetics are an important tool for bringing to life such a character. I salute the work of prosthetic makeup designer Pop (Pierre-Olivier Persin), who created André's partial facial paralysis: the atrophied muscles, drooping eyelids, downturned lip, skin inertia, and the contrast with the unaffected side of his face.

Getting into those prosthetics took two and a half hours each morning. It was a drag and a bit painful, but I had to earn the right to play André Bernheim !

### André is charismatic despite his physical state.

André is anything but a pathetic character. Each time he feels better, his daughters get happy and hopeful that he might change his mind, as is the case nine times out of ten. But he still wants to die, better health notwithstanding! Nothing will make him change his mind, not even his efforts to complete his phonetic therapy. I'm impressed by that. I don't think I'd have the strength to look death in the eye like he does. He's one of those determined people who are utterly true to themselves. He dares to be who he is. He never wears a mask or cowers behind conventions. André has a strong, frank and direct personality. We're touched by his authenticity, tough as it is.

### André's behavior can be pretty out of line. Especially when he falsely accuses his daughters of wanting to get rid of him!

I loved playing that! André is like a big kid. He tries to wriggle out of facing his daughters' anger – and the Q drops out of "coquille" right on cue! We also get glimpses of what a lousy guy he could be when the girls were young. And even now he says to Emmanuèle, "You were such an ugly child!" Saying things people usually don't say

was a lot of fun. André is one of those freeing characters who revs your engines. I think he has the same effect on the audience. He lightens the weight of the conventions and heaviness around the subject.

### André also displays a robust physical vitality with the young men he encounters.

I love that André doesn't deprive himself of anything. François would whisper in my ear, "Check out the male nurse walking by!" He suggested a few things that weren't planned, and he knew I wouldn't refuse because I always liked his improv ideas. The scene where a nurse's aid washes André is a good example. That image is so intelligent, raw, truthful, a beautiful scene from someone as discreet as François.

### André asking his daughter to help him end it is quite shocking.

It may seem evil or twisted to ask your favorite daughter - who incidentally has more than once fantasized about killing you - to help you end it. But I see it more as a gesture of love. He asks her specifically because they have a special, rich and privileged bond. Their relationship is unique and truthful. And it's the level of their bond that keeps the film from ever slipping into pathos.

### So what was it like working with Sophie Marceau?

It was pure joy. She's so alive. Sophie is a star, but on set she's down to earth, spontaneous and genuine. I think her way of being comes through in the film. There was a moment on the shoot that really moved me. When Emmanuèle films her father with the cellphone for the second time, Sophie had her back to the camera as I was making my statement . She started to cry as she was filming me. I figured François would turn the camera around and film her, but he didn't. And she wasn't expecting him too, either. She was simply caught up in the emotion. Géraldine Pailhas also has a very special way of being. Her benevolent gaze, her presence, her kindness really helped me.

And working with Charlotte Rampling again. How I love her humor!

And then there's Hanna Schygulla, who plays the sublimely

serene Swiss lady who organizes André's solemn departure with no trace of affectation or pathos. I'd worked with her in the theater. We were in Jean-Claude Carrière's play *L'Aide Mémoire* together. It was fun working with her again. The casting on the film is very inventive. It enriches the characters, corresponds to them.

#### François Ozon has a reputation for shooting very quickly.

The hard part in general for us actors, at least for me, is all the waiting on set while the tech crew sets up. Acting is like a pressure cooker bursting to explode, be set free, fly... So I love that François moves so quickly. He's rapid but respectful. He'll try anything he might need, but never gets bogged down in futility. In some ways he reminded me of Alain Resnais. I used the more formal "vous" with both of them, and we shared the same wonderful sensation of bonding through the work. Far more meaningful than the ubiquitous superficial signs of affection. François lives through his work. That's how he feels things, relates to people and gets to know them. I'm convinced there's no better way to know him than to work with him.

#### And the fact that he's behind the camera?

He's the first director I've worked with who does that. I thought it was great to see him behind the camera. It's like he's the first member of the audience. He goes around the set with his camera. Nothing escapes him. We sense he could capture life itself without missing a trick. This inspires us to show him everything about our character that we can. We want to surprise him from one take to the next, as in a game of cat and mouse. Feeling him experiencing each take with us enhances the pleasure of acting.

"The essence is in the details." One day I sent that quote to François because it reminded me of his films. They never dismiss the smaller moments that are part of life. On the contrary, those moments are at the very heart of his films.



## INTERVIEW WITH GÉRALDINE PAILHAS

### This is your third time working with François Ozon.

It's such a pleasure for an actress to work on his set, to be part of his universe, and to now be considered one of his regulars.

And I was so moved that his new film was the adaptation of Emmanuèle Bernheim's book. That François had decided to prolong his relationship with his dear friend by bringing his cinematic vision to her written work. That he was going to tell her story so faithfully. I was so moved, but François said, "You mustn't cry, we're going to make a beautiful film!"

### Did you know Emmanuèle Bernheim?

When Maurice Pialat died, Sylvie Pialat brought his friends together to mourn him. We all took turns, sharing those three days of mourning like a tribe, gathered around the body of this man we'd all loved so much. Emmanuèle and Serge were among the friends who were mourning Maurice. Naturally that created a bond. After that, I'd often run into Emmanuèle on the 63 bus. Sometimes we talked, notably about the deaths of our fathers, which happened one after the other. I also remember talking with her about François.

### Did you read *Everything Went Fine*?

I sure did, in two hours, and it felt like I was holding my breath! It's a very important book in my life as a reader, and I think the screenplay is extremely faithful to it.

Then we brought some of our own ideas to the set. That's the famous embodiment phase, and François is a director who places importance on that. He listens to his actors, and considers our suggestions. He really likes to run the gamut of emotions. We'd shoot scenes in a myriad of ways, sometimes taking them to extremes, going from outright hilarity to total doom and gloom. That's a lot of



fun for an actor, especially since I trust him. I know he'll adjust the levels, choose the takes he needs to keep everything coherent and harmonious. Or to make it grating, disharmonious or edgy, if that's what he decides is best. It's playful to work like that, offering him the range of emotions he needs.

### Did you meet the real Pascale Bernheim?

My bond with Emmanuèle Bernheim and Serge Toubiana, my relationship to the book, and what I knew of François and Emmanuèle's friendship were already strong elements to help me compose the character. So I preferred to keep Pascale as I had perceived her in the writings of Emmanuèle and François. And since she didn't express any need or desire to meet me, I felt authorized to create the character out of my imagination. I know we will meet when the film comes out, and I'm very moved by that. Also, since Sophie couldn't meet Emmanuèle, it was more important to create a true, sensitive bond between these two fictional sisters than to try to adhere to reality.

### Beyond the complexity of the family context and the situation, Pascale and Emmanuèle are very close.

The childlike bond between the two sisters was a big factor in the book. They were like heroines straight out of The Famous Five books! They occasionally exchange some sharp words. Pascale has to swallow a few bitter pills and grit her teeth sometimes, but there is such trust between the sisters that she never seems to resent Emmanuèle for being their father's clear favorite. That's just the way it is. They don't compete with each other. We sense they needed to be a team in order to deal with such a father, and the couple he formed with their mother Claude.

### He asks Emmanuèle to help him end it, not Pascale.

I imagine that being loved less than her sister was painful for Pascale. But it may also have been salutary, allowing her to escape his devouring and rather monstrous love and all the demands that came with it. Though it's not the point of the story, I can't help but think that Pascale found a way out when she created her own family.

In the way I wanted experience the film and my character, I told myself that although Pascale may be the least loved

in the family, she doesn't feel angry or spiteful about it. Parents - despite what they may tell themselves or pretend - cannot feel the same love for each of their children. If we don't accept that, we risk spending our lives disappointing, or feeling disappointed. The best we can do is juggle with it, as Pascale does in the film.

### Was this your first time working with Sophie Marceau?

Our paths had vaguely crossed once or twice. It's actually quite surprising it hadn't been more. When we met at François' office for the fittings, Sophie took my face in her hands and said, "Wait, let me look at you!" I found her display of tenderness so spontaneous and genuine, and I wasn't at all surprised. I'd imagined her that way.

### Did you talk about the two filmmakers you have in common: Claude Pinoteau and Maurice Pialat?

The first time yes, like comparing notes. Then it was as though we'd deleted our histories so we could come together for this project and be François Ozon's actresses.

We were thick as thieves, very bonded, like Emmanuèle and Pascale. On the last day of the shoot we both realized that oddly, we'd had few opportunities to have one or more sisters in our films. We really loved being sisters for those few weeks. You can feel that on screen. François was so right to bring us together.

We laughed a lot with André too. We could feel his jubilation, his appetite for playing that rotten old man. And the more rotten he was, the more he made me laugh. He brings a youthfulness, this crystalline quality that is uniquely his own. That father is not just some cold, nasty rich guy who orders people around and won't take no for an answer. We are ultimately won over by this man, thanks to André, who gives the character his charm, and his humanity, which runs very deep.

### At the heart of the film there is a social issue, but it is approached here from an intimate angle.

Most human beings would do everything in their power to avoid death, no matter how inevitable. That's instinctive. I've seen loved ones and acquaintances fight death down to the last second, who had to be told it was time to let go and find acceptance. That really affected me. Personally, I



believe there should be legislation and structures in place so individuals can decide for themselves how they want to die. What's troubling in this story is that beyond the ethics, which naturally merit debate, we are confronted with the cruelty of a father asking his own children to organize his death. At one point, the sisters and the audience are convinced he's going to drop his plan. He's feeling better, not suffering anymore, starting to eat normally again and enjoying life. The father's cruelty is at its apex when it turns out he's determined to carry out his terrifying plan no matter what.

This very personal story provides many points of entry for the audience to feel their own feelings about death, its presence in their lives or, on the contrary, their banishment of it. There's nothing more intimate than our relationship to the decrepitude of our parents. That time that comes when they're no longer autonomous. The ironic inversion of trajectories.

**Despite its heavy subject, the film is laced with humor.**

François' approach is so human, so tender, so intelligent. There's no cynicism, no morbid or sadistic glee in the way he explores death. He recounts the event at the level of two women who are trying to meet the task by remaining themselves. In other words, two women who are no better equipped than the rest of us, and who've decided to keep laughing together, because what choice do they have? What choice do any of us have, in such tragic circumstances?



## CAST

EMMANUÈLE..... SOPHIE MARCEAU  
ANDRÉ ..... ANDRÉ DUSSOLLIER  
PASCALE ..... GÉRALDINE PAILHAS  
CLAUDE ..... CHARLOTTE RAMPLING  
SERGE ..... ÉRIC CARAVACA

THE SWISS LADY..... HANNA SCHYGULLA  
GÉRARD ..... GRÉGORY GADEBOIS  
ROBERT ..... JACQUES NOLOT  
SIMONE ..... JUDITH MAGRE  
THE LAWYER..... DANIEL MESGUICH  
CAPTAIN PETERSEN..... NATHALIE RICHARD



## CREW

SCREENPLAY BY ..... FRANÇOIS OZON  
DIRECTED BY ..... FRANÇOIS OZON

FREELY ADAPTED FROM ... TOUT S'EST BIEN PASSÉ  
BY EMMANUÈLE BERNHEIM  
(éditions GALLIMARD)

PRODUCED BY ..... ÉRIC ET NICOLAS ALTMAYER

CINEMATOGRAPHY ..... HICHAME ALAOUIE

SET DESIGN ..... EMMANUELLE DUPLAY

COSTUMES ..... URSULA PAREDES

EDITOR ..... LAURE GARDETTE

SOUND ..... NICOLAS CANTIN

SOUND EDITOR ..... JULIEN ROIG

SOUND MIXER ..... JEAN-PAUL HURIER

FIRST ASSISTANT ..... MARION DEHAENE

CASTING DIRECTOR ..... DAVID BERTRAND

HAIR ..... FRANCK-PASCAL ALQUINET

MAKEUP ..... NATALI TABAREAU-VIEUILLE

PRODUCTION MANAGER ..... AUDE CATHELIN

STILLS PHOTOGRAPHER ..... CAROLE BETHUEL





## EMMANUÈLE BERNHEIM,

is the daughter of art collector André Bernheim and sculptress Claude de Soria. A French writer, essayist and screenwriter, she was born on December 13th, 1955 in Boulogne-Billancourt and died on May 10th, 2017 in Paris. Author of *CRAN D'ARRET (SWITCHBLADE)* in 1985 and *UN COUPLE* in 1988, she won the Prix Médicis for her 1993 novel *SA FEMME*, published by Editions Gallimard. She collaborated with François Ozon on his screenplays *UNDER THE SAND*, *SWIMMING POOL*, *5x2* and *RICKY*. Her novel *VENDREDI SOIR* (1998) was adapted into a film by the same name and directed by Claire Denis. She then worked with Alain Cavalier on his proposed adaptation of her book *EVERYTHING WENT FINE* entitled *LIVING AND KNOWING YOU ARE ALIVE*. Her cancer was diagnosed during the project, which became a documentary because of her death.

