

THIERRY de GANAY
présente

THIERRY LHERMITTE

CAROLINE CELLIER



Le Zèbre

un film de
JEAN POIRET

Scénario et dialogue : **JEAN POIRET** Adaptation : **MARTIN LAMOTTE** et **JEAN POIRET** d'après le roman de **ALEXANDRE JARDIN** publié aux Editions Gallimard.

Musique originale composée et dirigée par **JEAN-CLAUDE PETIT**. Chanson interprétée par **ALAIN SOUCHON**.

Coproduction : LAMBART PRODUCTIONS-TF1 FILMS PRODUCTION Avec le concours des Soficas : CREATIONS, COFIMAGE 3 et INVESTIMAGE 3.

Avec la participation de CANAL + et du Centre National de la Cinématographie. Bande originale du film disponible en cassette et disque compact.

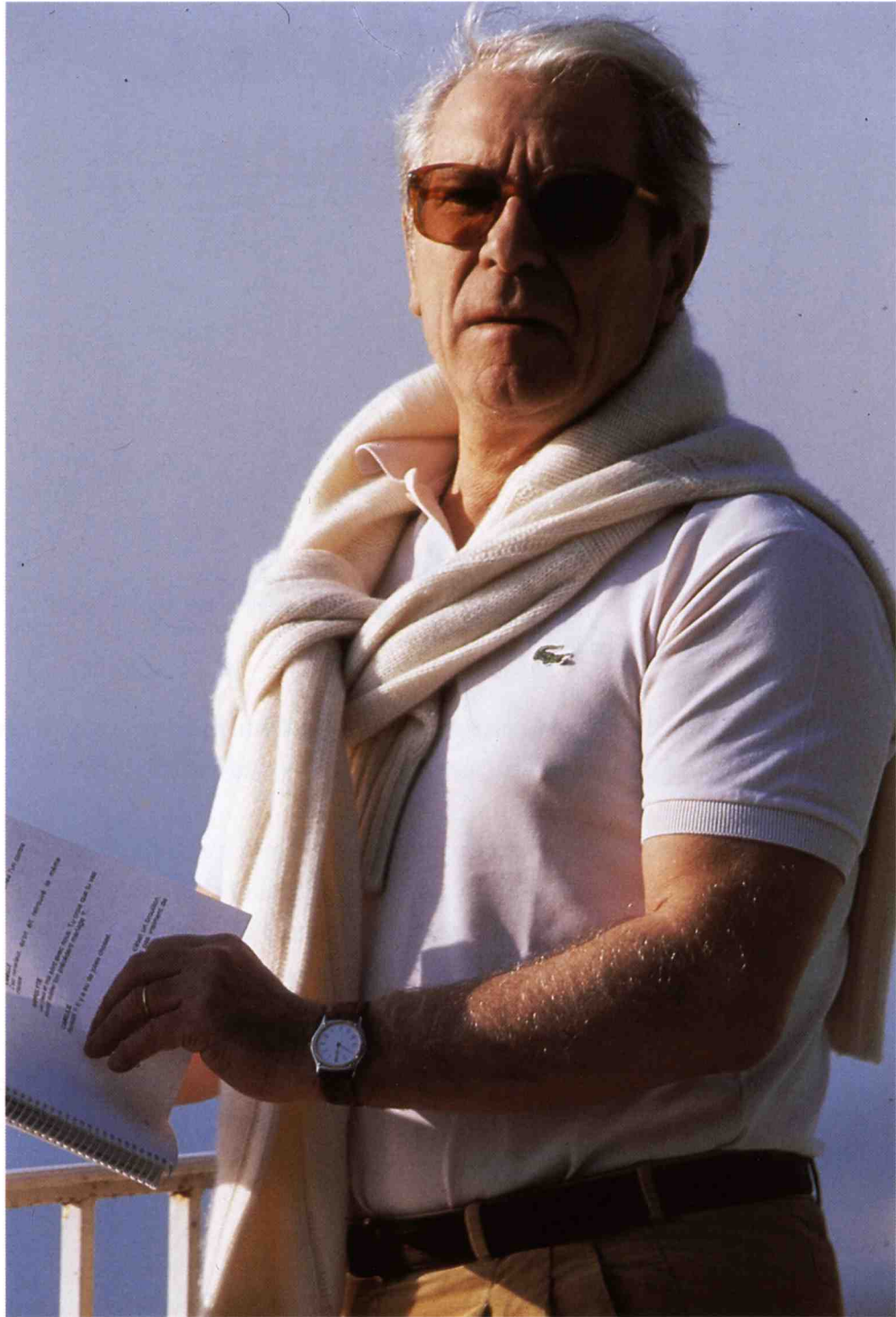
Le Zèbre

(The Oddball)

A good fifteen years ago, Hippolyte and Camille married for love.

Hippolyte rejects the looming prospect of routine family life, of complacent happiness born of domestic sloth, comfort, sobriety and security.

The time has come for Hippolyte to act, to once again inspire in Camille the overwrought, ecstatic sensuality and sentimentality they once knew. The re-taking of Camille will be waged like a battle: all's fair in love and war. His arsenal consists of his imagination, his sense of fantasy, his audacity, and above all, his infinite love.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Hippolyte Pécheral is a successful forty-ish attorney in a small provincial town. For fifteen years, he has been married to the lovely Camille, a literature teacher, who has given him two children - by definition two beautiful children - Laurent, 13, and Nathalie, 10. Theirs is the happy home incarnate, and there is not a cloud on the horizon of their domestic bliss. And yet... and yet... Fifteen years of married life... Routine sets in... An insidious complacency... Just the merest hint of humdrum... (nothing at all, really). A shadow of, oh, not really saturation, but... familiarity. This is Hippolyte's nagging fear, especially as he is a purist, an idealist, and couldn't bring himself to accept anything less than eternal passion. And especially since every day he witnesses the tying and untying of marital knots and watches the cases pile up in divorce court. The Zebra - that's his nickname - has avoided the traps up to now. Because of his fantastical nature, his adorable madness, his sense of humour - and the perfect repartee that he and his wife share. But marriage, like power, is wearing. The impact of his verbal charm is somehow not what it was. He feels something vaguely ominous in the offing. So he hatches a plan to transport them back to the passion of yesteryear, a time of living dangerously, of surprises, of always finding something new and of never knowing what you'd find, all of which, in its own crazy way, kept the flame alive. Our story is the story of his eternal plots and strategems, his ongoing game of cat and mouse with a woman who loves but doesn't always understand, and so sometimes rebels. The thing that seduced me, apart from Alexandre Jardin's story of love to the death, was the two characters - playing out for one another and acting out together for the benefit of those around them a startling, unpredictable, unfathomable quest for endless love.

Jean POIRET



INTERVIEW WITH THIERRY DE GANAY

W

hen I read *Le Zèbre* by

Alexandre Jardin, I was conquered by the endearing familiarity of the characters, the constant renewal of the most unexpected situations, and above all the universal accessibility of the subject matter.

But the filmic adaptation obviously posed specific problems.

Martin Lamotte originally wanted to transpose directly the action of the book in order to preserve the *Zèbre*'s fantasy element. At the same time, the character of Camille grew in importance, and a balance was achieved in what in fact became the story par excellence of a couple. I knew that Jean Poiret wanted to direct a film, on condition, of course, of finding a subject that was to his taste.

After numerous conversations, he agreed to embark on this adventure, first of all bringing his personal touch to the script, to its construction, and of course writing the dialogue.

Jean Poiret was not just a virtuoso of improvisation, he tirelessly chiselled his script, with an extraordinary sense of timing, and constant attention to detail. During the shoot, he always took care to convey to everyone his "way of seeing things". And the film proves that he succeeded. He was always attentive to the actors: as an author, his text was at the service of their talent, and as an actor, he shared a vivacious and warm complicity with them.

At the beginning of March, the edit had already advanced quite a bit under his direction. He had already seen the film in its quasi-final form very shortly before his death. He was overjoyed at the idea of working with Jean-Claude Petit with whom he had spoken about the music.

His friend Pierre Mondy took charge of the post-synchronisation. Everyone took care to be scrupulously faithful to his intentions.

This film is truly Jean Poiret's film. It is his adaptation, his dialogue, his spirit of things.

Today, even though his absence affects me, he will always be present, and I will always be grateful to him for agreeing to direct his first film with me.



INTERVIEW WITH THIERRY LHERMITTE

This terribly sentimental character hiding behind mountains of mediocrity pleased me. I like this form of humour. Sometimes it's laughter and facetiousness that best convey the most serious things. Jean was a specialist in that department.

I was also very enthused about his adaptation of Alexandre Jardin's novel. It is very different in its chronologie, but very faithful in spirit. I rejoiced with each line to discover how Jean defended the character of Le Zèbre.

Then there was the joy of shooting the movie. Very simply, I have never had as much fun except on stage in *Nuit d'Ivresse*. We had the ideal conditions for making the film a success. Whenever something wasn't right, we started over as many times as necessary until we got it. Jean liked actors. He was demanding, generous, inspired. You couldn't help but accept all of his suggestions. An actor like him directing other actors couldn't not inspire confidence.



INTERVIEW WITH CAROLINE CELLIER

Jean's first reaction after reading the book, which he loved, was to turn it down. He didn't think it was what the public expected of him. Something burlesque. Like *La Cage Aux Folles*, for example. But the subject matter, the relationship of a couple that speaks the same language with the same sense of irony and playfulness, was so close to what he loves that he finally accepted. We've been together for twenty-two years, and we have always had a very passionate relationship. He was always taking care that our relationship didn't wind down.

As soon as the contract was signed, we left for Biarritz and he began working.

When I came home at night, he would read scenes to me. And again, they were lovely, unforgettable moments of passion! That is how this wonderful, very personal - and at the same time very faithful - adaptation was born. Because, even if he takes us headfirst into pure comedy, little by little, the emotion makes itself felt. The process is typical of American comedies, which he loved. So, for the first time in my life on a film set, I was the director's wife. A priori, not an easy position to be in. But there was such complicity between us, that we understood one another with just a glance, he gave me two or three directions here and there, but that's all. On the other hand, back at the hotel each day after we'd finished on the set, we continued the work that we'd started before in the writing stage. Between us it was more an exchange than being directed.

Thank heavens he saw the final edit. That day, he said to me, "You know, I think I'm making the film I wanted to make!" After *Le Zèbre*, he still had lots of dreams and projects. In particular, to direct an opera, to write... Despite the fact he was anxious about time, he still was twenty in his mind. Jean was youth.

ARTISTIC CREDITS

Hippolyte	THIERRY LHERMITTE
Camille	CAROLINE CELLIER
Grégoire	CHRISTIAN PEREIRA
Marie-Louise	ANNIE GREGORIO
Alphonse	FRANÇOIS DYREK
Nathalie	CARINE LEMAIRE
Laurent	WALTER ALLOUCH
Anne	BRIGITTE CHAMARANDE
David	JEAN-MARIE CORNILLE
Nogaret	SAMUEL LABARTHE
Cazenave	PHILIPPE KHORSAND
Durieux	MAURICE ILLOUZ
Bonnange	LAURENT HENNEQUIN
Boy friend	PIERRE COGNON
Girl friend	DELPHINE QUENTIN
Mr Chenu	FRANCK LAPERSONNE
Mrs Chenu	SILVIE LAGUNA

TECHNICAL CREDITS

Director	JEAN POIRET
Producer	THIERRY DE GANAY
Screenplay, dialogue	JEAN POIRET
Adaptation	MARTIN LAMOTTE
	JEAN POIRET
Original Music	JEAN-CLAUDE PETIT
Line Producer	MONIQUE GUERRIER
Technical Consultant	ETIENNE DHAENE
Production Manager	HENRI BRICHETTI
Director of Photography	EDUARDO SERRA
Prop Managers	MARIE-LAURE BERTHELIN
	GÉRARD JAMES
Costumes	CAROLINE DE VIVAIZE
	FLORENCE DESOUCHES
Unit Manager	CHRISTINE DE JEKEL
Continuity	PATRICK AUBREE
Editor	CATHERINE KELBER
Sound Engineer	ALAIN LACHASSAGNE
Sound Mixers	CLAUDE VILLAND
	BERNARD LEROUX
Sound Editor	JEAN GOUDIER
Still Photograper	JEAN-MARIE LEROY

Filmed partly in Luzarches (Val-d'Oise)
and in the Nice area

Filmed in Panavision
Dolby Stereo Sound