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# DANS LA MAISON

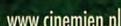
Een film van FRANÇOIS OZON

FABRICE LUCHINI

KRISTIN SCOTT THOMAS EMMANUELLE SEIGNER DENIS MÉNOCHET ERNST UMHAUER

JEAN-FRANÇOIS BALMER BASTIEN UGHETTO

SCÉNARIO ET FRANÇOIS OZON ADAPTATION DE "EL CHICO DE LA ÚLTIMA FILA" DE JUAN MAYORGA MUSIQUE PHILIPPE ROMBI IMAGE JÉRÔME ALMERAS A.F.C. DÉCORIS ARNAUD DE MOLÉRON COSTUMES PASCALINE CHAVANNE MONTAGE LAURE GARDETTE  
PREMIER ASSISTANT HUBERT BARBIN SCÉNARISTE FRANCINE CATHELAIN L.S.A. SON BRIGITTE TAILLANDIER BENOÎT GARGONNE JEAN-PAUL HURIER CASTING SARAH TEPPER A.R.D.A. DIRECTEUR DE QUÉRY MILSHEIN PRODUCTEURS ÉRIC ET NICOLAS ALTMAYER  
COPRODUCTION MANDARIN CINEMA F.O.Z. FRANCE 2 CINEMA MARS FILMS PARTICIPATION DE CANAL+ CINÉ+ FRANCE TÉLÉVISIONS EN ASSOCIATION AVEC LA BANQUE POSTALE IMAGE 5 COFIMAGE 23 PALATINE ÉTOILE 9 AVEC LE SOUTIEN DE LA RÉGION ÎLE-DE-FRANCE  
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# SYNOPSIS

DANS LA MAISON is François Ozons ijzersterke opvolger van het succesvolle POTICHE en zijn eerste samenwerking met Kristin Scott Thomas.

Germain (Fabrice Luchini) is leraar Frans op een middelbare school. Hij raakt ontmoedigd door het ingeleverde huiswerk van zijn leerlingen tot hij het korte verhaal 'In het huis' leest. In het opstel dringt een 16-jarige jongen binnen in de woning en familie van een klasgenoot. De schrijver van het verhaal is Claude, een onopvallende jongen op de achterste rij van de klas.

Germain leest het opstel vol enthousiasme voor aan zijn vrouw (Kristin Scott Thomas) en besluit Claude aan te moedigen verder te schrijven aan het verhaal. De enige manier voor Claude om dat te doen is door binnen te dringen in het huis van zijn klasgenoot. Waarom is Claude zo geobsedeerd door het huis? Wat heeft hij daar te zoeken? En wat gebeurt er met zijn fascinatie voor de sensuele moeder van zijn klasgenoot?

Germain raakt steeds meer gebiologeerd door het verhaal, maar de inbreuk op de privacy leidt tot een serie van oncontroleerbare gebeurtenissen. Germain en zijn vrouw raken verzeild in een subtiel spel, waarin realiteit en fictie met elkaar aan de haal lijken te gaan.

DANS LA MAISON is een knappe en spannende film over obsessie en verlangen. Met o.a. Fabrice Luchini (POTICHE, LES FEMMES DU 6<sup>e</sup> ETAGE), Kristin Scott Thomas (IL Y A LONGTEMPS QUE JE T'AIME, HAAR NAAM WAS SARAH) en Denis Ménochet (INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS).

**Dans La Maison/105 minuten/Frankrijk, 2012/Frans gesproken**



DANS LA MAISON wordt in Nederland gedistribueerd door ABC Cinemien  
Beeldmateriaal kan gedownload worden vanaf [www.cinemien.nl/pers](http://www.cinemien.nl/pers) of vanaf [www.filmdepot.nl](http://www.filmdepot.nl)  
Voor meer informatie: ABC - Cinemien, Gideon Querido van Frank, [gideon@cinemien.nl](mailto:gideon@cinemien.nl)

# CAST & CREW

Germain	Fabrice LUCHINI
Claude	Ernst UMHAUER
Jeanne	Kristin SCOTT THOMAS
Esther	Emmanuelle SEIGNER
Rapha senior	Denis MÉNOCHET
Rapha junior	Bastien UGHETTO
The principal	Jean-François BALMER
The twins	Yolande MOREAU
Anouk	Catherine DAVENIER
Screenplay and Adaptation	François OZON Freely adapted from the play “The Boy in the Last Row“ by Juan MAYORGA
Production	Eric AND Nicolas ALTMAYER
Director of Photography	Jérôme ALMERAS A.F.C.
Sound Engineer	Brigitte TAILLANDIER
Production Manager	Oury MILSHTEIN
1st Assistant Director	Hubert BARBIN
Casting Directors	Sarah TEPER & Leila FOURNIER
Production Designer	Arnaud de MOLERON
Costume Designer	Pascaline CHAVANNE
Head Make-up Artist	Gill ROBILLARD
Head Hairdresser	Franck-Pascal ALQUINET
Editor	Laure GARDETTE
Sound Editor	Benoît GARGONNE
Re-Recording Mixer	Jean-Paul HURIER
Original Music by	Philippe ROMBI
Still Photographer	Jean-Claude MOIREAU



# FRANÇOIS OZON



François Ozon (Parijs, 1967) kwam in 1990 met zijn Master in Film op zak binnen in de beroemde Franse Filmacademie La Femis waar hij regie studeerde. Sindsdien heeft hij een hele reeks films op super-8, video, 16mm en 35mm gedraaid. Veel van zijn korte films deden mee voor competitie in verscheidene internationale filmfestivals. Na zijn bejubelde SITCOM maakte hij nog een aantal films die veel lof en succes ten deel vielen, waaronder 8 FEMMES, SOUS LE SABLE en SWIMMING POOL. In DANS LA MAISON werkt Ozon voor het eerst samen met Kristin Scott Thomas.

2012	<b>DANS LA MAISON</b>
2010	<b>POTICHE</b>
2010	<b>LE REFUGE</b>
2009	<b>RICKY</b>
2007	<b>ANGEL</b>
2005	<b>LE TEMPS QUI RESTE</b>
2004	<b>5X2</b>
2003	<b>SWIMMING POOL</b>
2002	<b>8 FEMMES</b>
2001	<b>SOUS LE SABLE</b>
2000	<b>GOUTTES D'EAU SUR PIERRES</b> <b>BRULANTES</b>
1999	<b>LES AMANTS CRIMINELS</b>
1998	<b>SITCOM</b>
1997	<b>REGARDE LA MER</b>
1996	<b>UNE ROBE D'ETE</b>

# KRISTIN SCOTT THOMAS

Kristin Scott Thomas, geboren op 24 mei 1960, kreeg internationale bekendheid met haar rollen in BITTER MOON, FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL en THE ENGLISH PATIENT. Sinds de jaren 80 heeft ze ook veel betekend voor de Franse cinema. Op 19-jarige leeftijd vertrok zij naar Parijs, waar ze ook haar drie dochters groot bracht. Ze ontving veel lof voor haar rol in de Franse film IL Y A LONGTEMPS QUI JE T'AIME.



- 2011 **DANS LA MAISON** by François Ozon  
**BEL AMI** by Declan Donnellan and Nick Ormerod  
**SALMON FISHING IN THE YEMEN** by Lasse Hallström  
**CHERCHEZ HORTENSE** by Pascal Bonitzer
- 2010 **THE WOMAN IN THE FIFTH** by Pawel Pawlikowski  
**NOWHERE BOY** by Sam Taylor-Wood
- 2009 **IN YOUR HANDS** by Lola Doillon  
**LOVE CRIME** by Alain Corneau  
**HAAR NAAM WAS SARAH** by Gilles Paquet-Brenner
- 2008 **LEAVING** by Catherine Corsini  
**IL Y A LONGTEMPS QUE JE T'AIME** by Philippe Claude
- 2007 **SEULS TWO** by Eric and Ramzy  
**LARGO WINCH** by Jérôme Salle
- 2005 **THE VALET** by Francis Veber  
**TELL NO ONE** by Guillaume Canet
- 2004 **MAN TO MAN** by Régis Wargnier
- 2003 **ADVENTURES OF ARSENE LUPIN** by Jean-Paul Salomé
- 2002 **PETITES COUPURES** by Pascal Bonitzer
- 1999 **RANDOM HEARTS** by Sydney Pollack
- 1998 **UP AT THE VILLA** by Philip Haas
- 1997 **THE HORSE WHISPERER** by Robert Redford
- 1996 **AMOUR ET CONFUSIONS** by Patrick Braoudé  
**SWEET REVENGE** by Malcolm Mowbray
- 1995 **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE** by Brian de Palma  
**THE ENGLISH PATIENT** by Anthony Minghella  
**RICHARD III** by Richard Longraine
- 1994 **LE CONFSSIONAL** by Robert Lepage  
**ANGELS AND INSECTS** by Philip Haas  
**THE POMPATUS OF LOVE** by D.J Paul
- 1993 **FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL** by Mike Newell  
**AN UNFORGETTABLE SUMMER** by Lucian Pintilie
- 1991 **BITTER MOON** by Roman Polanski
- 1990 **AUX YEUX DU MONDE** by Eric Rochant
- 1989 **LE BAL DU GOUVERNEUR** by Marie-France Pisier  
**DR GRAESSLER** by R. Faenza
- 1988 **FORCE MAJEURE** by Pierre Jolivet  
**BILLE EN TETE** by Carlo Cotti
- 1987 **AGENT TROUBLE** by Jean-Pierre Mocky  
**LA MÉRIDienne** by Jean-François Amiguet  
**A HANDFUL OF DUST** by Charles Sturridge
- 1985 **UNDER THE CHERRY MOON** by Prince

# FABRICE LUCHINI



De uit een Italiaanse familie afkomstige Fabrice Luchini groeide op in Parijs, tussen de groente en het fruit dat zijn ouders verkochten. Fabrice ontwikkelde op jonge leeftijd al een passie voor literatuur en acteren. Zijn doorbraak kwam in 1970, toen hij samenwerkte met Eric Rohmer in de film **LE GENOU DE CLAIRE**. Zijn grote liefde is theater maar hij speelt ook graag in speelfilms. Recentelijk speelde hij in **LES FEMMES DU 6<sup>e</sup> ETAGE** en **POTICHE**.

- A DAY AT MUSEUM** by Jean-Michel Ribes  
**THE GIRL FROM MONACO** by Anne Fontaine
- 2007 **MOLIÈRE** by Laurent Tirard  
2006 **JEAN-PHILIPPE** by Laurent Tuel  
2005 **LA CLOCHE A SONNÉ** by Bruno Herbulot and Adeline Lecallier  
2004 **INTIMATE STRANGERS** by Patrice Leconte  
2003 **THE COST OF LIVING** by Philippe Le Guay  
2001 **BARNIE'S MINOR ANNOYANCES** by Bruno Chiche  
1999 **KEEP IT QUIET** by Benoît Jacquot  
**NOTHING ABOUT ROBERT** by Pascal Bonitzer
- 1998 **PAR CoEUR** by Benoît Jacquot  
1997 **LE BOSSU** by Philippe de Broca  
**AN AIR SO PURE** by Yves Angelo
- 1996 **HOMMES, FEMMES, MODE D'EMPLOI** by Claude Lelouch  
**BEAUMARCHAIS, THE SCOUNDREL** by Edouard Molinaro
- 1995 **L'ANNÉE JULIETTE** by Philippe Le Guay  
1994 **COLONEL CHABERT** by Yves Angelo  
1993 **TOUT ÇA POUR ÇA** by Claude Lelouch  
**TOXIC AFFAIR** by Philomène Esposito  
**THE TREE, THE MAYOR AND THE MEDIATHEQUE** by Éric Rohmer
- 1992 **LE RETOUR DE CASANOVA** by Edouard Niermans  
**RIENS DU TOUT** by Cédric Klapisch
- 1990 **LA DISCRÈTE** by Christian Vincent  
**URANUS** by Claude Berri
- 1988 **LA COULEUR DU VENT** by Pierre Granier Deferre  
**THE LARK** by Pierre Zucca
- 1987 **FOUR ADVENTURES OF REINETTE AND MIRABELLE** by Éric Rohmer  
**LES OREILLES ENTRE LES DENTS** by Patrick Schulmann
- 1986 **MAX MY LOVE** by Nagisa Oshima  
**CONSEIL DE FAMILLE** by Costa Gavras  
**HÔTEL DU PARADIS** by Jana Bokova
- 1985 **P.R.O.F.S.** by Patrick Schulmann  
**ROUGE GORGE** by Pierre Zucca
- 1984 **FULL MOON IN PARIS** by Éric Rohmer  
1983 **ZIG ZAG STORY** by Patrick Schulmann  
1982 **T'ES FOLLE OU QUOI** by Michel Gérard  
1978 **PERCEVAL LE GALLOIS** by Éric Rohmer  
**VIOLETTE NOZIÈRE** by Claude Chabrol
- 1975 **NÉ** by Jacques Richard  
**VINCENT MIT L'ÂNE DANS LE PRÉ** by Pierre Zucca
- 1974 **CONTES IMMORAUX** by Walerian Borowczyk  
1970 **LE GANOU DE CLAIRE** by Éric Rohmer  
1969 **TOUT PEUT ARRIVER** by Philippe Labro

- 2011 **DANS LA MAISON** by François Ozon  
**ASTÉRIX ET OBÉLIX : GOD SAVE BRITANNIA** by Laurent Tirard
- 2010 **POTICHE** by François Ozon  
**LES FEMMES DU 6<sup>e</sup> ETAGE** by Philippe Le Guay  
**MY FATHER'S GUEST** by Anne Le Ny
- 2008 **PARIS** by Cédric Klapisch

# INTERVIEW MET FRANÇOIS OZON

**IN THE HOUSE was inspired by the Spanish play “The Boy in the Last Row” by Juan Mayorga...**

I was particularly struck by the teacher-student relationship when I read the play. We root for both the teacher and the student. Both points of view are presented, by turns. Usually students learn from their teachers, but here, the learning goes both ways. And the back-and-forth between reality and writing lends itself to a playful reflection on storytelling and the imagination. These somewhat theoretical questions are really brought to life in the play. The Germain-Claude relationship represents the essential partnership in any creative endeavor: the editor and the writer, the producer and the director, even the reader and the writer or the audience and the director. When I read the play, I saw a chance to speak indirectly about my work, the cinema, inspiration and its sources, what it is to create, what it is to be an audience.

**How did you go about adapting the play for the screen?**

The play is a continuous stream of dialogue. There are no acts, no truly contained scenes. The locations are not specified or differentiated, we're everywhere at once: the classroom, the art gallery, the house, the park. My first job was thus to create a space-time structure, organize the story in terms of time and location.

Next I considered placing the action in England. I had immediately pictured the pupils in uniforms, a custom that no longer really exists in France. Germain sees his pupils as sheep - a herd of imbeciles made one by the uniform - and then one kid stands out, the boy in the last row. But placing the action within the context of the English school system implied more adaptation and a long casting process, so I got the idea for a pilot school conducting an experiment to bring back the uniform, which is a recurring debate in France.

I eliminated and simplified a lot of things. In the play, young Rapha was a very good philosophy student, as opposed to Claude, who is good in math. The kids' dialogue was too sophisticated for the reality I wanted to illustrate, too theatrical, too removed. And a lot of theories were developed in the play about the act of creation. I retained only what touched me personally and worked directly with the story.

The fundamental question was how to represent Claude's writing. The first installment is read in its entirety by Germain, alerting the audience to the existence of the continuing narrative to come. Establishing the device quickly and clearly from the beginning allowed me to break free of it that much faster. The second installment is visualized and commented in voiceover by the narrator, Claude. As the film progresses, there is less and less voiceover. Dialogue and images take over, it's cinema.

We're as fascinated by Germain's writing lessons as we are by Claude's writing. Evoking the process of fictionalizing does nothing to diminish the pleasure of watching it come to life on screen, nor does it prevent us from believing it.

And yet what happens in the house is pretty unremarkable, rather trite. At one point I wondered whether I should add something more dramatic, steer the film toward thriller or mystery, make it more Hollywood. Then I realized the real challenge at hand was to make normality fascinating: the father's problems at work and obsession with China; the son's love of basketball and affection for Claude; the mother's boredom and dreams of interior decoration. The idea was to make these ordinary things extraordinary in the telling and the filming, so the tension would rise. The script was designed to encourage audience participation, to actively stimulate the imagination and get us involved in the story. There are missing pieces, and as the film progresses the difference between writing and reality is harder to discern. The editing was crucial in making the original device fade into the background, reinforcing the ellipses and playing with the confusion between reality and fiction.

**You even go so far as to physically introduce Germain into Claude's fiction.**

That's a reference to a common theatrical device that Bergman used to great

effect in *WILD STRAWBERRIES* and Woody Allen also uses a lot. I didn't want any special effects, I wanted Germain's intrusions to be very concrete. There comes a point when Germain has to penetrate the fiction, become an active participant. When Claude kisses Esther, Germain steps out of the pantry because the desire is too intense for him. He's the one who told Claude to love his characters, and Claude simply took that advice and ran with it. Germain is constantly getting tripped up by his own discourse.

**When Claude asks Esther to run away with him at the end, we wonder if it's actually happening or if he's making it up.**

That's right, especially since in the next scene we see him waking up. He might have dreamt it. Esther herself says, "What happened between us never existed." Gradually reality and imagination blend to become one because to me, at the end of the day, it's all real. Even Rapha's suicide is real because Claude wanted it to happen. We have to surrender to the fiction and stop asking questions.



**The insistently recurrent music helps us surrender.**

Yes. I wanted rhythmic music that would hook the audience. The melody that often plays during the writing passages has a serial feel to it, making you want to know what Claude is going to write next. It permeates the whole film. As with *SWIMMING POOL*, I gave the script to Philippe Rombi before the shoot and he proposed music in advance, which in turn inspired me and helped me determine my directing choices.

**Though hardly naturalist, the film has a strong social subtext. Claude is a disadvantaged child.**

That wasn't very clear in the play. We knew his father was handicapped and he didn't have a mother, but those details weren't developed or used. So I needed to create a social context for Claude. We sense from the beginning he's not from the same social class as Rapha, but only at the end do we discover his modest suburban home, confirming his humble background. It was important to discover and visualize Claude's origins late in the film, in order to understand how his initially ironic quest to find a place in the perfect family gradually turned into a feeling of love based on a real lack thereof.

**Can we consider the film a self-portrait?**

No, but I do relate to the relationship Claude has with Germain. The teachers who meant the most to me were those with whom I experienced a genuine exchange, with whom I didn't feel completely subservient. I experienced this late in my education, when I already knew I wanted to be a filmmaker, with

professors like Joseph Morder, Eric Rohmer and Jean Douchet. They nourished me, encouraged me and confirmed some of my instincts, sometimes in spite of themselves. My parents are also teachers. I've seen it all first-hand since childhood. I know what a drag it is to grade papers on the weekend, I know about pet students, tensions with administrators... I had a good handle on the subject. I knew how to approach the things teachers go through: the battles, the burn-out, the often ridiculous constraints of the education system they are subjected to (like the concept of the red pen being stressful to students).

**Another subtlety about the teacher-student relationship is that the student does not surpass the teacher. Claude likes Germain's book, and at the end they sit as "equals" on the bench.**

The play is different. It ends on the bench in the park across from Rapha's house, with Germain realizing Claude has entered his private life and met his wife. He slaps the boy, tells him he's gone too far and ends their relationship, protecting himself and staying with his wife. This ending didn't ring true to me. I felt everything needed to be totally shaken up in the film. Claude goes farther with his cruelty and there is a real interaction between he and Jeanne. Germain's private life is irreversibly altered by his relationship with Claude, everything is contaminated, as in Pasolini's TEOREMA.

**But unlike Pasolini's character, Claude is not a cold manipulator. He ends up getting personally involved.**

Claude believes he can infiltrate the family and destroy it from the inside but as it turns out, the family's love is stronger and Claude can't find his place, he is excluded. In many of my films I destroy the family, but here, the family unit possesses a centrifugal force which bonds them together and expulses outsiders. This family is self-sufficient. They have no need to make room for an outsider, which I find both beautiful and monstrous. Claude's dilemma is that he is both narrator and actor. He wants to find a place for himself in his story and, in so doing, he unexpectedly falls in love with Esther. Bit by bit his story gets away from him, he loses control, confuses his imaginary world with reality, becomes two people, becomes a character. By integrating the fiction, he sings his wings too. At the end Claude says, "My teacher had lost everything" but so has he, in a certain sense. A feeling of solitude and exclusion permeates the film.

Claude experiences solitude and exclusion through his writing, but he finds comfort and support in Germain. That's why it was important to reunite them in the final scene, at the rest home. In a way, it's a happy ending. I wanted to end on the bond between these two solitary souls who need each other to create fiction. I visualized that last scene early on: the two of them on a bench, gazing at windows like movie screens. Like the heroine in UNDER THE SAND who runs after a stranger on the beach, Germain and Claude prefer fiction to reality. It's what makes them feel alive.

**Fabrice Luchini is particularly moving in that final scene on the bench. The time that has passed shows in his face.**

Yes, he has surrendered something, there is an abandon, the character's cracks are showing. He no longer has his glasses, we see the bags under his eyes, his fatigue, his age. The wonderful thing about Fabrice is that he is devoid of the vanity typical of actors when it comes to their physique, their image. And he's not afraid to look ridiculous. We wanted to work together again after POTICHE and he was an obvious choice for Germain. He got totally involved in the role, he had no limits. In certain sequences, he liked the character so much and identified so strongly that he would add lines - I couldn't get him to stop advising Claude about writing! He loves to work, he loves rehearsing, sometimes to the point of vertigo. It's a director's dream to have an actor so devoted, so ready to serve the role. I could tell the film mattered a lot to him, it gave him a chance to express his love for literature. In POTICHE his character was totally against type, a real jerk, but here he could be himself, or at least closer to himself. Perhaps subconsciously, this role of transmitter touched on his own nature as an actor, the reasons why he chose this profession, particularly the theater, his fervor to transmit the great works of literature.

**How did you choose Ernst Umhauer?**

Claude is sixteen in the film and I soon realized actors that age lack the maturity required to play the role, so I turned to older actors. I noticed Ernst during the casting process, we did some screen tests. I felt he resembled the character: he comes from a small town, he's not really part of the circle of Parisian actors. He's nice-looking, but his beauty is mysterious and can be troubling, disquieting. He was twenty-one at the time of the shoot but still looked like a teenager, which was perfect. He's extremely photogenic and also has a beautiful voice, which was very important because Claude's voice is omnipresent in the film.

Germain and Claude are a real pair, and Fabrice knew Ernst would have to be good, and credible, for the film to function. He was extremely generous and patient with him. We tried to shoot chronologically as much as possible so that Fabrice could discover Ernst at the same time Germain discovers Claude.

**And Emmanuelle Seigner?**

I really thought of my casting in terms of pairings, not just for Germain and Claude but also for the two women. I absolutely wanted them to be complementary: one blond, one brunette; one intellectual, one sensual; one masculine, one feminine...

As soon as I began developing the love story between Claude and Esther I thought of Emmanuelle. I'd started a project with her a few years back that unfortunately never got made, a story along the lines of SUMMER OF 42 about a woman who falls in love with a teenager. What I love about Emmanuelle is she never intellectualizes, she gets right into the meat of the character.

**Emmanuelle Seigner is perfect in the role and yet she is cast against type here.**

She is often cast as sexually aggressive women, whereas in IN THE HOUSE she is maternal, sweet and tender. We wanted her naive, devoid of irony, in no way perverse. Her character is indolent, she has desires, but she lets herself be carried along. We went for understatement in the costumes, hair and makeup, to create what Claude calls "the middle-class woman". But her beauty is gradually revealed as the film progresses, through Claude's gaze and the love he feels for her.

**And Kristin Scott Thomas?**

We'd been dancing around each other for a while. I think she had a lot of fun with the role. She's a very Anglo-Saxon actress. She can speak French with no accent, but I encouraged her to keep it. I like her little errors in French, they're charming. It was a breeze working with her, the same pleasure I had working with Charlotte Rampling. Indeed, they often have the same intonations. And the couple she forms with Fabrice works very well. We believe in their intellectual connection, they have chemistry, their little expressions of affection are very natural, reminding us of Woody Allen and Diane Keaton. I was so pleased because they got to know each other on the shoot and immediately enjoyed acting together. Like Fabrice, Kristin has done a lot of theater. They understood each other.

**And Denis Ménochet?**

I'd seen him in Tarantino's INGLORIOUS BASTERDS. I tried out some other actors, but as soon as I chose Emmanuelle I started thinking in terms of couples. I brought Denis and Emmanuelle together for a scene and they instantly got along, like Fabrice and Kristin. Denis is very much a Method actor. He got totally involved in basketball and Chinese culture and came to the set with a lot of research under his belt. I had to encourage him to forget it a little. He has something of Rapha Senior in him naturally, a strong, sensual presence that was perfect for the role.

**And Bastien Ughetto?**

I initially imagined the character of Rapha Junior as a fat and awkward kid, overprotected at home and relentlessly teased at school. But it's difficult to do fat kids without falling into easy caricature. I came across a headshot of Bastien, his face was both beautiful and strange. I met him and really liked his presence. I went to see him in a play and quickly arranged some tests with him and Ernst. They had a strong chemistry and he was very good, capable of candor, naïveté

and a certain toughness. Like Ernst, he was twenty-one.

**Through Jeanne, you caricaturize the world of contemporary art.**

No, I'm just playing with the usual clichés people have about contemporary art. The avant-garde nature of the art Jeanne exposes serves as a counterpoint to the borderline reactionary classicism Germain champions. He places literature above all other art forms and particularly disdains contemporary art, which he understands nothing about. I thought it was funny to end the film with him staring at that building with all the inhabitants in their little boxes. It looks quite like a typical contemporary art installation!

**Why didn't you take the title of the play, "The Boy in the Last Row"?**

I felt that title focused too much on one aspect of the story, the idea of the proverbial «student in the back row» who stands out, who is different, often brilliant, yet ill-adapted to social life. I wanted to broaden the scope because to me, all the characters are important and the house is really at the heart of the story, as is the case in many of my previous films. The title IN THE HOUSE thus came naturally.