

Official Selection

tiff

Toronto International
Film Festival 2019

PAPRIKA FILMS, ARTÉMIS PRODUCTIONS & TARANTULA PRESENT

Two of Us

A FILM BY FILIPPO MENEGHETTI

SYNOPSIS

Two retired women, Nina and Madeleine, have been secretly in love for decades. Everybody, including Madeleine's family, thinks they are simply neighbors, sharing the top floor of their building. They come and go between their two apartments, enjoying the affection and pleasures of daily life together, until an unforeseen event turns their relationship upside down and leads Madeleine's daughter to gradually unravel the truth about them.



A WORD WITH THE DIRECTOR

The film is centered on a couple of women in their seventies who are secretly in love. How did you get the idea to tell this story?

The inspiration for the complexity of my protagonists' life choices and their inability to completely own them, with regard to their families, came from various people I have known, whose trajectories made a deep impression on me. For so long, I wanted to write a film about them, but I wasn't sure of the best angle to approach it.

Then, one day, when I was about to ring a friend's doorbell, I heard voices coming from the top

floor. I went upstairs to take a look. The front doors of the two apartments up there were open, and the voices were those of two women talking to each other from their respective apartments. I lingered for a few minutes, unseen and in silence. It really was very intriguing. Later, my friend told me that the two women were widows in their seventies, who warded off loneliness by constantly keeping their doors open and making the landing between them part of an enlarged apartment that covered the whole top floor. That triggered something in my head, and I could picture my story. My protagonists would live together in that way, hiding their romantic involvement by appearing to the world to be

mere neighbors. Lots of images sprang to mind as the arrangement, which was metaphorical while also simple and routine, took shape in my brain. The project was born.

The surprising thing is that much later, when I was working on the script with my cowriter, I heard about a couple who lived almost exactly like Nina and Madeleine to conceal their relationship from their families. Life imitating art, I suppose.

So the architectural aspect was at the core of the film?

Yes, before we even started writing. The two interconnecting apartments would be the protagonists' living space and, at the same time, a symbolic place that reflects and expresses their dealings with the outside world. In Madeleine's

apartment, every detail, every object tells the story of her family. Its coziness constantly reminds us of the burden weighing on her shoulders - the bonds around her, the chains holding her. Nina's apartment is more mysterious. We only see it later in the movie, just as the character gradually reveals herself. As for the landing, it is the pivotal space between the two apartments. The two front doors, which are always open initially, start to shut, turning this porous space into a kind of border. Those images - open doors, closed doors - seemed a simple and effective metaphor for Nina's exclusion by Madeleine's family. And it allowed me to play with genre a little. From the start, I wanted to shoot this love story as if it were a thriller: an eye looking through a peephole, an intruder in the night... The idea was to borrow from the codes of suspense, while reinterpreting them so they sit coherently with the universe of the film.

How did you develop the characters with your actresses?

Barbara Sukowa and Martine Chevallier committed to the project at a very early stage, which allowed us to write the characters for them. I wanted Nina and Madeleine to be played by actresses who are comfortable with their age while exuding strength. I didn't want audiences to perceive them as victims, but as heroines fighting for their love. The film tells the story of a struggle, the story of a passion that is as obstinate as it is affectionate. But that struggle is also a way to explore issues that fascinate me. How does the gaze of others influence our acts? What inner conflict roils us when confronted with that kind of censorship? The obstacles that stand in their path sometimes lead Nina and Madeleine to extreme behavior. I didn't want us to feel sorry for them. Similarly,

I didn't want Anne, Madeleine's daughter, to be seen as an oppressor. That's why Léa Drucker was perfect for the part. She gives the character vulnerability and forces the audience to feel empathy for her. Anne is an incredibly loving daughter who always looked up to her mother as a role model. She would do anything for her, but she is rattled when she finds out that Madeleine has been living a lie. That explains the harshness of her reaction. Each character has light and dark sides.



BARBARA SUKOWA FILMOGRAPHY



2019
DEUX / TWO OF US
by Filippo Meneghetti

2015
STEFAN ZWEIG, FAREWELL TO EUROPE
by Maria Schrader

2011
HANNAH ARENDT
by Margarethe von Trotta
Deutscher Filmpreis for Best Actress
Bavarian Film Award for Best Actress

2001
**THIRTEEN CONVERSATIONS
ABOUT ONE THING**
by Jill Sprecher
Florida Film Critics Award for Best Ensemble Cast

1997
IN THE NAME OF INNOCENCE
by Andreas Kleinert
Bayerischer Filmpreis for Best Actress

1993
M. BUTTERFLY
by David Cronenberg

1990
EUROPA
by Lars von Trier

1986
ROSA LUXEMBURG
by Margarethe von Trotta
Best Actress – Cannes Festival
Deutscher Filmpreis for Best Actress

1981
MARIANNE AND JULIANE
by Margarethe von Trotta
Best Actress – Venice Festival

LOLA
by Rainer Werner Fassbinder
Deutscher Filmpreis for Best Actress

LÉA DRUCKER FILMOGRAPHY



CINEMA

2019

LA SAINTE FAMILLE / THE HOLY FAMILY

by Louis-Do de Lencquesaing

DEUX / TWO OF US

by Filippo Meneghetti

2018

PLACE PUBLIQUE

by Agnès Jaoui

2017

JUSQU'A LA GARDE / CUSTODY

by Xavier Legrand

César Award for Best Actress 2019

Nomination for Best Actress – Globes de Cristal 2019

Nomination for Best Actress – Lumières 2019

2014

**LA CHAMBRE BLEUE /
THE BLUE ROOM**

by Mathieu Amalric

2001

CHAOS

by Coline Serreau

1999

MES AMIS

by Michel Hazanavicius

TV SERIES

2015-2017

THE BUREAU

by Eric Rochant

MARTINE CHEVALLIER FILMOGRAPHY



CINEMA

2019
DEUX / TWO OF US
by Filippo Meneghetti

CHANSON DOUCE
by Lucie Borleteau

2013
PAS SON GENRE / NOT MY TYPE
by Lucas Belvaux

2012
**LES ADIEUX À LA REINE /
FAREWELL MY QUEEN**
by Benoît Jacquot

2006
**NE LE DIS À PERSONNE /
TELL NO ONE**
by Guillaume Canet

**JE VAIS BIEN, NE T'EN FAIS PAS /
DON'T WORRY, I'M FINE**
by Philippe Lioret

2005
ENTRE SES MAINS / IN HIS HANDS
by Anne Fontaine

1995
JEFFERSON IN PARIS
by James Ivory

THEATRE

2007
LE RETOUR AU DÉSERT
by B.M. Koltès
directed by Muriel Mayette
Molière Award for Best Actress 2007

DIRECTOR FILIPPO MENEGHETTI



Originally from Padova, Italy, Filippo's earliest work experience was on New York's indie film circuit. After film school and an Anthropology degree in Rome, he co-wrote the feature *Imago Mortis* (2009). He worked as a first assistant for several years before starting to direct his own short films, *Undici* (2011, codirected by Piero Tomaselli) and *L'intruso* (2012), which screened and garnered prizes at festivals in Italy and abroad. In 2018, Filippo moved to France where he made his next short, *The Beast*, which screened in competition at SXSW 2019 and can now be seen at international festivals. *Two Of Us* is Filippo's first feature.

WRITER MALYSONE BOVORASMY

After graduating with an M.A. in literature, Malysone Bovorasmy started working as a film and TV journalist for various publications before moving into screenwriting. She took the TV series creative writing course at La Fémis in 2017 and is currently working on various projects for TV. For the cinema, after cowriting *Two Of Us* with director Filippo Meneghetti, she cowrote *Eelam*, directed by Lawrence Valin, currently in development with Agat Films and winner of the Emergence 2019 award.



PAPRIKA FILMS

Under the guidance of Pierre-Emmanuel Fleurantin and Laurent Baujard, Paprika Films aims to discover and support new talents in cinema and TV.

Ambitious documentaries and feature films are the company's primary sectors of activity, most often powered by a strong societal commitment.

FILMOGRAPHY

FEATURE FILMS

2020 **PROMESSE DE L'INVISIBLE** by Marie Amiguet

2019 **DEUX / TWO OF US** by Filippo Meneghetti
TIFF 2019 Discovery

2017 **LA MARCHÉ DE L'EMPEREUR II - L'APPEL DE L'ANTARCTIQUE / MARCH OF PENGUINS 2, THE NEXT STEP**
by Luc Jacquet

2016 **TIERRA YERMA** by Miriam Heard

2015 **FRENZY – ABLUKA: SUSPICIONS** by Emin Alper
Festivals: Toronto 2015 / Busan 2015 / Les Arcs 2015

2012 **JUST THE WIND** by Bence Fliegauf
Silver Bear, Berlin 2012

DOCUMENTARIES

2018 **L'ODYSSÉE DU LOUP** by Vincent Steiger

2017 **ANTARCTICA, SUR LES TRACES DE L'EMPEREUR**
by Jérôme Bouvier

2017 **LES SECRETS DES ANIMAUX DES GLACES**
by Jérôme Bouvier et Marianne Cramer

2015 **L'ÈRE DE L'HOMME** by Dimitri Grimblat

SHORTS

2017 **LA BÊTE / THE BEAST** by Filippo Meneghetti

2015 **LE MONDE QUI NOUS PERD** by Alexandra Badéa

2014 **ZERO M2** by Matthieu Landour

2014 **LEFTOVER** by Tibor Banoczki and Sarolta Szabo
Césars 2016 shortlist in the category Best Animated Short

CREDITS

STARRING

NINA **BARBARA SUKOWA**
MADELEINE **MARTINE CHEVALLIER** DE LA COMÉDIE-FRANÇAISE
ANNE **LÉA DRUCKER**
MURIEL **MURIEL BENAZERAF**
FRÉDÉRIC **JÉRÔME VARANFRAIN**

DIRECTED BY **FILIPPO MENEGHETTI**
SCREENPLAY **FILIPPO MENEGHETTI, MALYSONE BOVORASMY**
WITH ADDITIONAL WRITING BY **FLORENCE VIGNON**

PRODUCED BY **PIERRE-EMMANUEL FLEURANTIN, LAURENT BAUJARD**
COPRODUCED BY **ELISE ANDRE, DONATO ROTUNNO, PATRICK QUINET, STEPHANE QUINET**
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER **PHILIPPE LOGIE**

TWO OF US IS A **PAPRIKA FILMS** PRODUCTION
IN COPRODUCTION WITH **TARANTULA, ARTEMIS PRODUCTIONS, VOO & BE TV, SHELTER PROD**
WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF **FONDS NATIONAL DE SOUTIEN À LA PRODUCTION AUDIOVISUELLE DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG**
IN ASSOCIATION WITH **TAXSHELTER.BE & ING**
WITH THE SUPPORT OF **TAX SHELTER DU GOUVERNEMENT FÉDÉRAL**

DE BELGIQUE, CENTRE NATIONAL DU CINÉMA ET DE L'IMAGE ANIMÉE, RÉGION OCCITANIE, CINECAP 2, ARTE / COFINOVA AND L'ANGO
WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF **DOC & FILM INTERNATIONAL AND SOPHIE DULAC DISTRIBUTION**

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY **AURÉLIEN MARRA**
PRODUCTION MANAGER **VINCENT CANART**
1ST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR **BRICE MORIN**
PRODUCTION DESIGN **LAURIE COLSON**

CASTING **BRIGITTE MOIDON, VALÉRIE PANGRAZZI**
SOUND **CÉLINE BODSON**
COSTUMES **MAGDALENA LABUZ**
FILM EDITOR **RONAN TRONCHOT**
ORIGINAL SCORE **MICHELE MENINI**

FRENCH DISTRIBUTION **SOPHIE DULAC DISTRIBUTION**
INTERNATIONAL SALES **DOC & FILM INTERNATIONAL**

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS:

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE: FRENCH
YEAR: 2019
RUNTIME: 95 MIN
FORMAT: DCP 2K
ASPECT RATIO: 2.39:1
SOUND: 5.1

CONTACTS

PAPRIKA FILMS

PIERRE-EMMANUEL FLEURANTIN

LAURENT BAUJARD

10 rue des Goncourt 75011 Paris

+ 33 1 82 28 41 83

SOPHIE DULAC DISTRIBUTION

MICHEL ZANA

60 Rue Pierre Charron 75008 Paris

+ 33 1 44 43 46 00

SALES

DOC & FILM INTERNATIONAL

DANIELA ELSTNER

CEO

13 rue Portefoin 75003 Paris

+ 33 1 42 77 56 87

CLEMENCE LAVIGNE

Sales & Acquisitions Manager

+ 33 6 77 91 37 97

c.lavigne@docandfilm.com

THEO LIONEL

Festival Manager

+ 33 7 88 63 82 26

t.lionel@docandfilm.com

GORKA GALLIER

Head of TV Sales

+ 33 6 30 99 72 06

g.gallier@docandfilm.com

ESTELLE DE ARAUJO

Sales - TV, Digital & Series

+ 33 6 37 01 74 07

e.dearaujo@docandfilm.com

PRESS

INTERNATIONAL PRESS

BRIGITTA PORTIER

ALIBI COMMUNICATIONS

+32 477 98 25 84

brigittaportier@alibicomunications.be

BETTY BOUSQUET

UNIFRANCE

+ 33 6 85 95 57 61

betty.bousquet@unifrance.org

FRENCH PRESS

HASSAN GUERRA

guerrar.contact@gmail.com

+33 6 23 24 08 90

