

# UN SILENCE





# PERSMAP



Drama - 2023 - BE - 120 minuten  
Bioscooprelease: 8 augustus 2024

## **Distributie**

Cinéart Nederland  
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# Synopsis

UN SILENCE is de nieuwe film van Belgische filmmaker Joachim Lafosse (LES IN-TRANQUILLES). Wanneer het zwijgen doorbroken wordt in het gezin van Astrid (Emmanuelle Devos) en haar echtgenoot François (Daniel Auteuil), dreigen de meest verontrustende geheimen boven te komen.

Samen met haar zoon Raphael en haar echtgenoot François (Auteuil), een spraakmakende advocaat, leeft Astrid (Devos) een geprivilegieerd leven. Op hun groot ommuurd landgoed kunnen ze de rust bewaren, ondanks de bekendheid die François geniet nadat hij betrokken was bij een van de grootste rechtszaken van de afgelopen jaren. Na 25 jaar stilte ziet Astrid het familiale evenwicht imploderen wanneer haar kinderen op zoek gaan naar gerechtigheid.

De film ging in wereldpremière op het Filmfestival van San Sebastian waar het deel uit maakte van de Officiële Competitie. Joachim Lafosse won met UN SILENCE de Prijs voor Beste Regie op het Filmfestival van Rome.





**Director: Joachim Lafosse**



## **Director's filmography**

A Silence (2023)  
The Restless (2021)  
Keep Going (2018)  
After Love (2016)  
The White Knights (2015)  
Our Children (2012)  
Before words (short film 2010)  
Private Lessons (2008)  
Private Property (2006)  
What Makes You Happy (2006)  
Private Madness (2004)

# Interview with Joachim Lafosse

## quote quote quote

### **How did you approach writing your tenth feature?**

Film by film, I realize there is a thrill in seeking, and in seeking to take yourself by surprise. The screenplay is the map of a journey. And the journey is the shoot, then editing.

### **Nonetheless, you write a script?**

Yes, but the rhythm, beats, silences, intensity of an expression, or evasion, cannot be put down on paper in a script. Tears springing forth, a stifled sob—you can't write that. Writing is a collective undertaking thanks to the actors.

### **So what's your process?**

With the actors, at the locations or sets, I rehearse the whole film before I shoot it. It was during those rehearsals, seeing Emmanuelle Devos and Daniel Auteuil bring Astrid and François to life, that we sensed how much shame and its disastrous effects were what we had to embody.

### **The subject of the film is shame?**

Yes, I think so, but I didn't grasp just how much it was when I was writing. We sensed it on set.

Crime provokes terror; terror provokes silence, which engenders guilt and shame. We are wrong to judge silence. It must be examined. It's a symptom.

You must never forget that silence is not the crime, and behind every silent person, there is an ordeal, difficulty to speak up, fragility.

It was magnificent to be able to film that feeling of shame with Emmanuelle Devos and the other actors. Caroline, Astrid's daughter, does not share her shame. She is able to take a step back from it, and has carried the burden of the crime for less time than her mother, while also living at a time when people evoke the necessity to listen and speak out. The shame is Astrid's. She has to confront her solitude. In some way, Caroline embodies a messenger for her mother.

### **How did you strike a balance between fiction and reality?**

The question doesn't arise in those terms. Sure, reality is always a more or less direct source of inspiration but, since this is a work of fiction, clearly not a documentary, fiction replaces reality. Fictional characters have their own agency.

If I wrote a story based on what became known as the Hissel affair in Belgium, it's because the case perhaps dealt with what each of us makes of shame, guilt and silence.

When I found out that the lawyer for the parents of Julie and Melissa, the little girls who were the victims of Marc Dutroux, had in turn been convicted, and everybody in



Belgium found out what his son had done, I immediately wanted to explore the tragic dimension of the case.

When I'm writing, whether it be *Our Children* or *A Silence*, the central question for me, as a filmmaker, is how did it come to this, what preceded the tragedy, how does an 18-year-old come to commit an unthinkable act.

Once again, the question is of shame. The shame of a teenager who sees his father appear as a media hero, the protector of the weak and defenseless, while he is aware of the deviances that the powerful patriarch hides in the heart of the family home.

However hard the sister, mother and father try either to cover up the truth or to bring it out into the open, it's an explosive mix for the son of the criminal who becomes a criminal in turn. As in all tragedies, the outcome is fatal, inevitable and devastating.

I also wanted to write this film because, as a teen growing up in Belgium at the time of the Dutroux affair, witnessing the "White March," I could not help but think that among the 400,000 people marching through the streets of Brussels to proclaim "Never again," there must have been a few masked wolves.

Twenty years later, when the Hissel affair came to light, it occurred to me that it was a chance to capture the shift from the fear of the lone pervert, the monster coming out of the woods, out of a widespread belief in purity, to a commendable questioning of what happens within our families and bedrooms.

### **Emmanuelle Devos, who plays Astrid, is practically in every shot...**

With Emmanuelle, we gauged how risky the undertaking was in building the character of Astrid, the mother. We had to delicately bring to life a woman who has kept quiet for over thirty years. To our eyes, she possesses a great narcissistic fragility. There is an age-old wound in her. To support her, Emmanuelle and I simply tried to observe and listen to our failings, fears, acts of cowardice, and our bourgeois inability to lose or take the risk of questioning the established order. We tried to follow her on her journey to her truth without judging her, in the knowledge that truth is multifaceted—the truth of the trial, the truth in the press, and the truth of human beings in all their complexity. In that respect, it seemed inconceivable to us not to go all the way to the trial because it may be through justice being done that Astrid and Raphaël have their dignity restored.

### **What led you to cast Daniel Auteuil?**

The character of François is not an easy one to carry. He scared people off. Daniel was very brave to accept it. At our first meeting, he said to me, "I'll try to embody the character before judging him. I can play him because I see perversity as a defense mechanism—the worst of all, but a defense mechanism all the same. François is a man fighting so no one will know. He is a man who cannot look at the truth for fear of collapsing."

### **What were your initial aesthetic choices?**

Along with my DP, I soon realized that it was a question of making those aesthetic

choices as inconspicuous as possible, keeping them under wraps. The story had to move forward surreptitiously almost, with the camera on the move without the audience noticing it. So everything was shot on a dolly, which I feel is more discreet than a Steadicam, less in-your-face (and I say that with the films of Claude Chabrol in mind).

A Silence is one of the films that demanded most of me in terms of precision and rigor. Since nothing must stand out, one movement too many was unacceptable, and so was scratched out. It was also about rejecting shot/reverse shot and high-angle/low-angle. Never look down on anything or anyone, and never loom over the scene.

### **The storytelling is intricate...**

For me, the logic was the same as for *Our Children*. I work exclusively on dramatic irony. Suspense matters less to me. There is some because it is a filmic device but what matters to me is, how did things come to this, and how to film that arc.

### **Plot revelations take place in shadow and light. Were paintings an inspiration?**

This is my seventh time working with DP Jean François Hensgens. Some painters may have inspired us but, sticking to our quest for sobriety, we favored an aesthetic approach that left space off-camera and avoided the spectacular in favor of nuances.

### **You paint a cruel picture of that bourgeoisie...**

I set out to film a bourgeoisie that never brims over, the provincial bourgeoisie that raises its children, gives them an allowance, lets the kid drive the drop-top. It's rarely seen in the movies but it exists. The setting I chose is a space that resists the winds of change. Or at least belatedly lets them in, even if Caroline is working on opening up the windows.

### **The music plays an important role...**

The whole sound editing process was crucial, as a way to bring out Astrid's soul as well as the underlying tragedy. We needed the music to set a particular tone and to remind people that no one is master in their own home. I worked with Olafur Arnalds, who did the music for *The Restless*. I was influenced by the Icelandic school, Arnalds and Johan Johansson, as well as by two young composers, Hania Rani and Meredi, and the work of a musician I greatly admire, TEPR.

### **Did you change a lot in editing?**

As with the cinematography, the idea was not to be aware of the editing, for it to lead the audience furtively along.

### **Since your first feature, you have asserted your own voice, your own style...**

You know, it's not the style that directs my movies, it's the substance that determines their style. Filmmaking for the sake of it is not my thing.

## DANIEL AUTEUIL (selected filmography)

2023 - A Silence by Joachim Lafosse • 2022 - The New Toy by James Huth • 2021 - Farewell Monsieur Haffmann by Fred Cavayé • 2019 - La Belle Époque by Nicolas Bedos • 2018 - The Other Woman by Daniel Auteuil • 2018 - Isle of Dogs by Wes Anderson • 2017 - Le Brio by Yvan Attal • 2016 - Shipwrecked by David Charhon • 2015 - Our Women by Richard Berry • 2013 - Fanny by Daniel Auteuil • Marius by Daniel Auteuil • Before the Winter by Philippe Claudel • 2012 - Blood From a Stone by Jacques Maillot • 2011 - The Well Digger's Daughter by Daniel Auteuil • 2009 - Someone I Loved by Zabou Breitman • 2008 - Me two by Bruno Lavaine and Nicolas Charlet • 2007 - Second Wind by Alain Corneau • 2006 - Napoleon and Me by Paolo Virzì • My Best Friend by Patrice Leconte • The Valet by Francis Veber • 2005 Hidden by Michael Haneke • One Stays, The Other Leaves by Claude Berri • 2004 - 36 by Olivier Marchal • 2003 - After You by Pierre Salvadori • Small Cuts by Pascal Bonitzer • 2002 - The Adversary by Nicole Garcia • 2001 - The Closet by Francis Veber • 2000 - Sade by Benoît Jacquot • 1998 - The Girl on the Bridge by Patrice Leconte • 1997 - On Guard! by Philippe de Broca • 1996 - Lucie Aubrac by Claude Berri • 1995 - Thieves by André Téchiné • 1993 - The Queen Margot by Patrice Chéreau • 1991 - A Heart in Winter by Claude Sautet • 1991 - My Life Is Hell by Josiane Balasko • 1988 - A Few Days with Me by Claude Sautet • 1986 - Paltoquet by Michel Deville • Manon of the Spring by Claude Berri • Jean de Florette by Claude Berri • 1984 - Love on the Quiet by Édouard Molinaro • 1983 - Les Fauves by Jean-Louis Daniel • 1982 - Will the High Salaried Workers Raise Their Hands! by Denys Granier-Deferre • Keeping Everyone Up by Gérard Lauzier • The Under-Gifted on Holiday by Claude Zidi • 1980 - Clara and the Why Not by Jacques Monnet • The Under-Gifted by Claude Zidi • 1977 Rape of Love by Yannick Bellon • 1975 - Act of Aggression by Gérard Pirès • 1973 - The Year 01 by Jacques Doillon





## EMMANUELLE DEVOS (selected filmography)

2023 - A Silence by Joachim Lafosse • The Dreamer by Anaïs Tellenne • 2022 - Mascarade by Nicolas Bedos • 2021 - Hear Me Out by Pascal Elbé • I Want to Talk About Duras by Claire Simon • 2021 - Deception by Arnaud Desplechin • 2020 - Perfumes by Grégory Magne • 2019 - My Days of Glory by Antoine de Bary • 2018 - Amin by Philippe Faucon • 2017 - Where I've Never Lived by Paolo Franchi • 2017 - Number One by Tonie Marshall • 2016 - Sweet Dreams by Marco Bellocchio • For My Son by Frédéric Mermoud • Frank and Lola by Matthew Ross • 2014 - Almost Friends by Anne Le Ny • If You Don't I Will by Sophie Fillières • 2013 - Jacky in the Kingdom of Women by Riad Sattouf • Violette by Martin Provost • Domestic Life by Isabelle Czajka • Just a Sigh by Jérôme Bonnell • 2012 - Where We Grew Up by Idit Cebula • The Other Son by Lorraine Lévy • 2011 - Bachelor Days Are Over by Katia Lewkowicz • The Moon Child by Delphine Gleize • 2010 - Partners by Frédéric Mermoud • 2009 - In the Beginning by Xavier Giannoli • Park Benches by Bruno Podalydès • The French Kissers by Riad Sattouf • Wild Grass by Alain Resnais • Coco Before Chanel by Anne Fontaine • 2009 - One Day You'll Understand by Amos Gitai • 2008 - All about actresses by Maiwenn • Unspoken de Fien Troch • A Christmas Tale by Arnaud Desplechin • 2007 - Two Lives Plus One by Idit Cebula • Those Who Remain by Anne Le Ny • Waiting for someone by Jérôme Bonnell • 2005 - La Moustache by Emmanuel Carrère • Nice Girl by Sophie Fillières • The Beat That My Heart Skipped by Jacques Audiard • 2004 - Kings and Queen by Arnaud Desplechin • Welcome in Switzerland by Léa Fazer • 2003 - Small Cuts by Pascal Bonitzer • The Red Knight by Hélène Angel • Gilles' Wife by Gilles de Frédéric Fonteyne • It's Easier for a Camel... by Valéria Bruni Tedeschi • 2002 - Nearest to Heaven by Tonie Marshall • 2001 - The Adversary by Nicole Garcia • Read My Lips by Jacques Audiard • 2000 - Esther Kahn by Arnaud Desplechin • Long Live Us! by Camille de Casabianca • Dad on the Run by Dante Desarthe • Ouch by Sophie Fillières • 1999 - Life Is For Loving by Noémie Lvovsky • Maybe by Cédric Klapisch • 1997 - Artemisia by Agnès Merlet • Moving Out by Olivier Doran • 1996 - My Sex Life... or How I Got Into an Argument by Arnaud Desplechin • 1995 - Anna Oz by Éric Rochant • 1994 - Mutual Consent by Bernard Stora • Forget me by Noémie Lvovsky • 1993 - The Patriots by Éric Rochant • 1992 - The Sentinel by Arnaud Desplechin





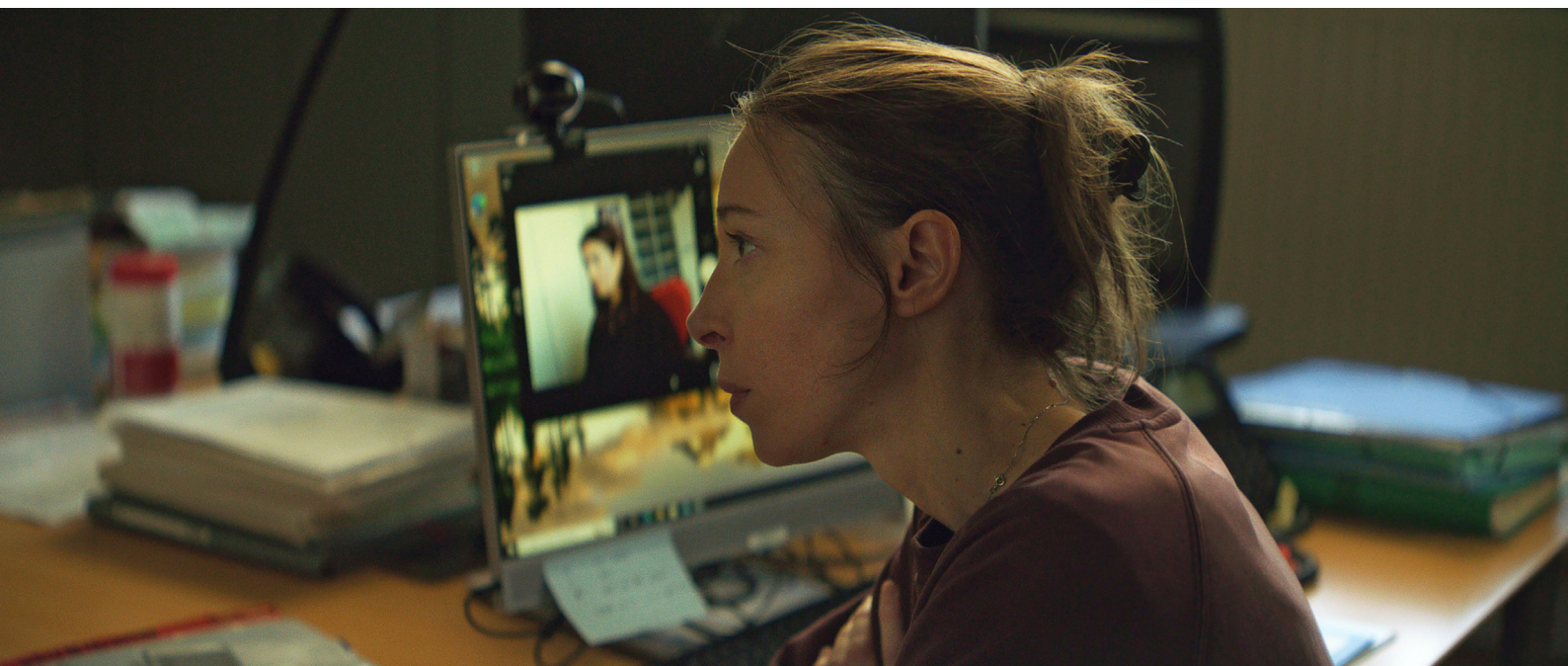
## MATTHIEU GALOUX

His first screen appearance.



## JEANNE CHERHAL

2023 - A Silence by Joachim Lafosse • 2015 - The Very Private Life of Mister Sim by Michel Leclerc • 2014 - No Land's Song de Ayat Najafi • 2008 - Copy of Coralie (short film) de Nicolas Engel • 2007 - La Consultation (short film) by Frédéric Vin  
Composer: 2021 - Tralala by Jean-Marie Larrieu & Arnaud Larrieu • 2014 - Des lendemains qui chantent by Nicolas Castro • 2011 - Les Françaises, en route pour le Printemps (documentary) by Yvan Schreck





# Cast

|                          |                    |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| François Schaar          | François Schaar    |
| Astrid Schaar            | Astrid Schaar      |
| Raphaël Schaar           | Raphaël Schaar     |
| Inspector Colin          | Inspector Colin    |
| Caroline                 | Louise Chevillotte |
| Gillet                   | Nicolas Buysse     |
| Barras                   | Karim Barras       |
| Christelle Guérin        | Larisa Faber       |
| Etienne Guérin           | Baptiste Sornin    |
| Shann                    | Shann Case         |
| Reporter 1               | Massimo Riggi      |
| Reporter 2               | Colette Kieffer    |
| Reporter 3               | Elsa Rauchs        |
| Reporter 4               | Jonas Wertz        |
| Ismaël                   | Ismaël Michiels    |
| Pierre                   | Damien Bonnard     |
| François Schaar's lawyer | Magali Pinglaut    |
| Barrister                | Laure Hemmer       |
| Mme Sautiaux             | Raphaëlle Bruneau  |



# Crew

|                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A film by                 | Joachim Lafosse                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Original Screenplay by    | Joachim Lafosse<br>Thomas Van Zuylen                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Cowriters                 | Chloé Duponchelle, Paul Ismaël                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Writing Collaborators     | Sarah Chiche, Matthieu Reynaert, Valérie Graeven                                                                                                                                                             |
| Photography               | Jean-François Hensgens                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Editing                   | Damien Keyeux                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Sound                     | Alain Goniva, François Dumont, Xavier Dujardin, Thomas Gauder                                                                                                                                                |
| Production design         | Anna Falguères                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Costume design            | Isabel Van Renterghem                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Makeup                    | Garance Van Rossum, Hugues Lavau                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Hair styling              | Laurent Bozzi                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| A coproduction by         | Stenola Productions, Samsa Film, Les Films du Losange, Prime Time                                                                                                                                            |
| Produced by               | Anton Iffland-Stettner, Eva Kuperman, Jani Thiltges, Régine Vial, Alexis Dantec, Antonino Lombardo                                                                                                           |
| Associate producers       | Tanguy Dekeyser, Valerie Berlemont, Philippe Logie, Claude Waringo, Bernard Michaux, Charles Gillibert                                                                                                       |
| Production manager        | Vincent Canart                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Line producer Luxembourg  | Brigitte Kerger-Santos                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Line producer France      | Fred Bellaïche                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Postproduction manager    | Olan Bowland                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Coproduced by             | RTBF (Belgian Television), Proximus, Voo & Bets, France 3 Cinéma                                                                                                                                             |
| with the participation of | France Télévisions, Shelter Prod                                                                                                                                                                             |
| With the support of       | the Center of Cinema and Audiovisual of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, Film Fund Luxembourg, National Centre for Cinema and the Moving Image (CNC), Flanders Audiovisual Fund (VAF)<br>The European Union |
| Cofinanced by             | Taxshelter.BE, ING, the Tax Shelter of the Belgian Federal Government and the Tax Shelter Investors, Brussels-Capital Region, Grand Est Region, Inspire Metz / Eurometropole of Metz                         |
| with the support of       |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| In partnership with       | the Centre National du Cinéma et de L'Image Animée (CNC)                                                                                                                                                     |
| In collaboration with     | Images Grand Est Office Cultural Agency and The Inspire Metz Services/ Eurometropole of Metz                                                                                                                 |
| With the support of       | Canal +                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| with the participation of | Ciné +                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| In association with       | Indefilms 11, Cinémage 17 Distribution Les Films du Losange, Cinéart, Samsa                                                                                                                                  |