



OFFICIAL SELECTION  
FESTIVAL DE CANNES  
SPECIAL SCREENING

# HANDS UP

(LES MAINS EN L'AIR)



MARGARET MENEGOZ presents

VALERIA BRUNI-TEDESCHI  
LINDA DOUDAeva

JULES RITMANIC LOUNA KLANIT LOUKA MASSET JEREMIE YOUSAF DRAMANE SARAMBOUNOU

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF HIPPOLYTE GIRARDOT

# HANDS UP (LES MAINS EN L'AIR)

A FILM BY ROMAIN GOUPL



2010 • French • 1h30 • 35mm • 1.85 • Dolby SRD

[www.lesmainsenlairlefilm.com](http://www.lesmainsenlairlefilm.com)

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**M**arch 22, 2067.

Milana recalls what happened to her 60 years before... Paris, 2009. Milana is a fifth grade student of Chechen origin. Her gang of friends includes Blaise, Alice, Claudio, Ali and Youssef.

One day, Youssef, whose parents are illegal immigrants, is deported.

Milana seems likely to be next on the list.

Sensing the danger, the children decide it's time to act. They swear they'll always stay together and plot ways of saving Milana...



# INTERVIEW WITH ROMAIN GOUPIL

## ■ What was the starting point for this movie?

First, there was a sense of powerlessness in the face of the government's policy of deportation of illegal immigrants. More specifically, there was the case of a boy in Amiens, northern France. When the police knocked on the door, his father escaped over the rooftops. His son tried to follow him and fell off. He was taken to hospital in a coma. Then there was a young woman in Paris, who tried to climb out the window when she heard "Police!" She fell to her death. Finally, in the Paris suburbs, a man jumped into a river to escape ticket inspectors and drowned. In what state of complete anxiety must these people live to be driven to such extreme actions? Also, what started things off for me was that these policies and their consequences, in the electoral context of 2007 and even now, are used by politicians to boost their ratings in opinion polls.

## ■ How did your reaction develop into an idea for a movie?

Someone I know has a little boy of Vietnamese origin. One day, he asked my friend when he would be forced to leave the country, because he'd seen several of his friends disappear from school. The boy had come to realize that he belonged to a category that was stigmatized and under threat. My idea was that the film should show children taking the initiative, independently of the adults and, to a certain extent, against them. Their friend Youssef has been deported.

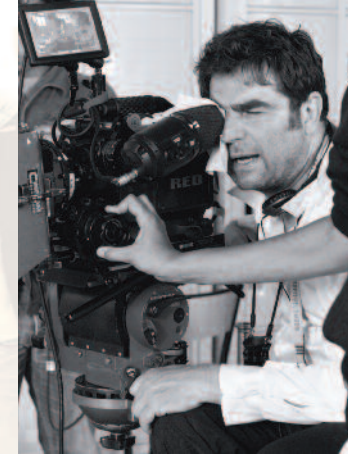


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Now Milana is in danger. The whole group is under threat. So, they get organized without saying a word to the adults, whose alarmist leaflets and speeches merely reinforce the sense of total danger. The children can only rely on themselves now.

## ■ The children provide the impetus in a way that's very important in all your films - as a gang of friends.

It's as if the group - the "we", the bond with others - enables me to perpetuate the utopia that something else is possible. Groups are present in all my films - the band of activists in *Mourir à 30 ans*, the secrets a group of girlfriends share in *Une mort la mort*, my own bunch of friends in *Une pure coïncidence...* This relationship to others keys in with my own personal story, with the idea that we can reinvent the rules. It's also the idea behind the scene where the children act out a text by Stevenson, having a secret sign of recognition, lanterns hidden under their coats "to keep our glory contained".

## ■ How did you bring Valeria Bruni-Tedeschi into the project?

It was planned for her, but she hesitated some time before accepting. We had lots of long talks in the months prior to the shoot. We developed her character together. Valeria's contribution was crucial. She chose Cendrine's clothes and hairstyle and devised a very singular relationship to

femininity and motherhood for her. Most of the other adults in the film are well meaning but missing the point. Only Cendrine has an instinctive sense of what's going on, the risks and the unbearable nature of the threat the children feel.

■ **Of course, the phrase at the beginning, *I don't recall now who was President in 2009*, resonates particularly strongly with Valeria in the film.**

I wanted her to play Cendrine well before she became, through no fault of her own, Nicolas Sarkozy's sister-in-law. That complicated matters for a while, then we all decided just to move forward.

■ **How did you come up with the character of Cendrine's brother, played by Hippolyte Girardot?**

There's an ongoing and very lively debate among people who support illegal immigrants, between those, for example, who argue that all immigrants should be given working papers and those who argue that only immigrants who apply, who are interacting with French society, who have jobs, kids at school, etc, should get papers. I wanted the film to reflect this debate and also to show the opposing reaction from someone in Cendrine's family who leaves his children with her for the vacation. Her brother has evolved in a completely different direction and what he says to his sister is excessively violent in the context of their personal relationship. He's a bastard! I wanted to play that role, but after we discussed the characters, Valeria thought it would



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be better if I played her husband, defending what you might call the "reformist" line. So I asked my friend Hippolyte to take up the extreme position.

■ **How did you find Linda Douadaeva, who plays Milana?**

I wanted audiences to sense that the children were a real gang of friends, so after many auditions, we organized for the children we'd chosen to meet up and spend some time together. Then, as always happens when you're casting, at the last minute a little Chechen girl and her mother (Malika Douadaeva, who plays Milana's mother in the film) arrived from Lyon, and it was simply obvious that she was Milana. We had to change everything and introduce the other children to a new Milana they'd never met before and who was the character the whole movie revolved around. It gradually fell into place. We did several read-throughs and spent some time together, playing and play-fighting...

■ **Did you improvise a lot with the children?**

In some scenes, it was vital to stick to the dialogue, while in others we had much more freedom. Often, after a take, the children started joking with each other and that was really good. As a result, I sometimes used those situations and included their spontaneous reactions in the scene.

■ **How did you choose how the children would express themselves?**

I didn't want "teen-speak" or "street-speak", which would have seemed artificial and simply for effect. I wanted a more neutral way of speaking. In any case, the film is more fairytale than realist, even though it's set against very real events. I don't like it when movies use children to express adult emotions, when smart words are put in their mouths to make older folks laugh. I wanted the film to be with them, among them... Whenever possible, I evacuated the adults from scenes by choosing tight-angled lenses and by giving the children the run of the soundtrack, to the extent that only viewers under the age of 18



Photo © ÉMILIE DE LA HOSSERAYE

will hear when the gang's mobiles ring to signal something's up, because the ringtone is totally inaudible to adults. For the music, I didn't want rap or techno. Philippe Hersant, the composer, came up with a score, using the cello mostly, which has the advantage of being in counterpoint to the situation while evoking the idea that these are the recollections of the elderly lady that Milana has become in 2067. It could also be music from that period.

■ **Why did you shoot with a digital camera?**

I hesitated for a long time. I prefer the look of 35mm to digital HD. The camera we used combines the advantages of digital and 35mm, in terms of perspective and depth of field in particular. On top of that, it's called "red"! We were able to shoot long takes from many angles and explore all kinds of games or battles between the children without worrying about the cost of the film stock, because we were on digital.

■ **What is the importance of the opening and final scenes, both set in the future?**

They extract us from the nauseous slurry that we're mired in at the moment and that could unacceptably alter our perception of the issues by framing the debate in terms that in 50-60 years will be seen as simply shameful. There's a sense that the people responsible for the present situation, like the cowards who refused to help Sarajevo and those who averted their eyes from Rwanda and Chechnya, can already prepare the speeches of repentance they'll utter in 50 years' time. The elderly Milana recalls a situation that is beyond belief in 2067 - what children were subjected to in France in the first decade of the 21st century - and that begs the question, How long will it take to realize that what is happening today is quite simply intolerable?

■



## CAST

Cendrine VALERIA BRUNI-TEDESCHI  
Milana LINDA DOUDAIEVA  
Blaise JULES RITMANIC  
Alice LOUNA KLANIT  
Ali LOUKA MASSET  
Claudio JEREMIE YOUSAF  
Youssef DRAMANE SARAMBOUNOU  
Rodolphe HIPPOLYTE GIRARDOT  
Luc ROMAIN GOUPIL  
Milana's mother MALIKA DOUDAIEVA  
Claudio's mother SISSI DUPARC



## CREW

Screenplay ROMAIN GOUPIL  
Cinematography IRINA LUBTCHANSKY  
Editing LAURENCE BRIAUD  
Production Design JEAN-BAPTISTE POIROT  
Sound SOPHIE CHIABAUT  
HELENE DUCRET  
DOMINIQUE DALMASSO  
Assistant Director GUILLAUME BONNIER  
Production Manager ANGELINE MASSONI  
Unit Manager CHARLES ZEMER  
Produced by MARGARET MENEGOZ/LES FILMS DU LOSANGE  
With FRANCE 3 CINÉMA  
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## VALERIA BRUNI-TEDESCHI

### Selective filmography

1987 - **Hotel de France** by Patrice Chéreau • 1990 - **C'est la vie** by Diane Kurys • 1993 - **Normal people are nothing exceptional** by Laurence Ferreira Barbosa • 1994 - **Forget me** de Noémie Lvovsky • 1996 - **My man** by Bertrand Blier • 1996 - **More** by Pascal Bonitzer • 1997 - **I can't stand love** by Laurence Ferreira Barbosa • 1998 - **Those who love me can take the train** by Patrice Chéreau • 2001 - **The milk of human kindness** by Dominique Cabrera • 2002 - **Once upon an angel** by Vincent Perez • 2003 - **It's easier for a camel...** by Valeria Bruni Tedeschi • 2005 - **Cote d'Azur** by Olivier Ducastel and Jacques Martineau • **Time to leave** by François Ozon • **Munich** by Steven Spielberg • 2007 - **Actresses** by Valeria Bruni Tedeschi • 2009 - **Regrets** by Cédric Kahn • 2010 - **Hands up** by Romain Goupil

## HIPPOLYTE GIRARDOT

### Selective filmography

1983 - **First name: Carmen** by Jean-Luc Godard • 1984 - **Fort Saganne** by Alain Corneau • 1986 - **Manon of the Spring** by Claude Berri • 1988 - **Paradise calling** by Arielle Dombasle • 1989 - **Tough life** by Eric Rochant • 1991 - **Out of life** by Maroun Bagdadi • 1992 - **Barjo** by Jérôme Boivin • 1994 - **Yvonne's perfume** by Patrice Leconte • 1996 - **1914 the glorious summer** by Christian de Chalonge • 2003 - **Playing 'In the company of men'** by Arnaud Desplechin • 2004 - **Kings and queen** by Arnaud Desplechin • 2005 - **The moustache** by Emmanuel Carrère • 2006 - **Lady Chatterley** by Pascale Ferran • 2007 - **Flight of the red balloon** by Hsiao-hsien Hou • 2008 - **Later** by Amos Gitai • **A Christmas tale** by Arnaud Desplechin • 2010 - **Hands up** by Romain Goupil



## ROMAIN GOUPIL

### Feature films

- 1982 **Half a life**  
*Caméra d'Or - Cannes 1982*  
*Prix de la Jeunesse – César Award for Best Debut*  
*Nominated to the Oscars*
- 1983 **La Java des Ombres**  
*Locarno International Film Festival*
- 1989 **Maman**  
*Tubingen International Film Festival*
- 1993 **Letter for L...**  
*Venice Film Festival / Namur International Film Festival*
- 1995 **Sa vie à Elle**  
*Civis Prize – Europa Prize*
- 1999 **Dawn to death**  
*Directors' Fortnight – Cannes 1999*
- 2002 **Pure coincidence**  
*Directors' Fortnight – Cannes 2002*
- 2010 **Hands up**  
*Special screening – Cannes 2010*







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