



LUBNA AZABAL (Selective filmography)

2012 - **Goodbye Morocco** by Nadir Moknèche • 2011 - **Des vents contraires** by Jalil Lespert • 2010 - **Freemen** by Ismaël Ferroukhi • 2009 - **Incendies** by Denis Villeneuve • 2007 - **Body of lies** by Ridley Scott • 2006 - **24 Mesures** by Jalil Lespert • 2005 - **Paradise now** by Hany Habbu-Assad • 2003 - **Exiles** by Tony Gatlif • **Viva Algeria** by Nadir Moknèche • 2002 - **Almost Peaceful** by Michel Deville • 2000 - **Loin** by André Téchiné



FAOUZI BENSÂÏDI

(Actor) 2012 - **Goodbye Morocco** by Nadir Moknèche • **Death for sale** by Faouzi Bensaïdi • 2006 - **What a wonderful world** by Faouzi Bensaïdi • 2003 - **A thousand months** by Faouzi Bensaïdi • 2002 - **The Wind Horse** by Daoud Aoulad-Syad • 2001 - **Loin** by André Téchiné • 2000 - **Plaits** by Jillali Ferhati • 1997 - **Mektoub** by Nabil Ayouch / (Director) 2012 - **Death for sale** • 2006 - **What a wonderful world** • 2003 - **A thousand months**

CREW

Screenplay and directing..... Nadir Moknèche
D.O.P..... Hélène Louvart
Sound..... Marc Engels
Film editor..... Stéphanie Mahet, Olivier Gourlay
Production Designer..... Johann George
Original score..... Pierre Bastaroli
Associate Producers..... Bénédicte Bellocq, Souad Lamriki
Co-producer..... Denis Delcampe
Producers..... Nathalie Mesuret, Bertrand Gore

A coproduction Blue Monday Productions, France 2 Cinéma, Rhône-Alpes Cinéma, Need Productions • With the participation of France télévisions, Ciné +, Centre de la Cinématographie et de l'Image Animée, Région Rhône-Alpes • In association with Cinéma 6, Agora Films, Inver Invest • With the support of Tax Shelter du Gouvernement Fédéral Belge, Programme Média by l'Union Européenne, Procirep-Agoa-Agicoa, Cofinova Développement • French distribution and International Sales Les Films du Losange

CAST

Dounia..... Lubna Azabal
Dimitri..... Rasha Bukvic
Ali..... Faouzi Bensaïdi
Fersen..... Grégory Gadebois
Gabriel..... Ralph Amoussou
Mourad..... Abbes Zahmani
Isabelle..... Anne Coesens



RASHA BUKVIC (Selective filmography)

2012 - **Goodbye Morocco** by Nadir Moknèche • **A good day to die hard** by John Moore • 2011 - **Armed Hands** by Pierre Jolivet • **Three Worlds** by Catherine Corsini • 2010 - **Beloved** by Christophe Honoré • 2009 - **Coco Chanel & Igor Stravinsky** by Jan Kounen • 2008 - **Pardon My French** by Sophie Fillières • **The Invisible Women** by Agathe Teyssier • 2007 - **The Heir Apparent: Largo Winch** by Jérôme Salles • 2003 - **Belgrade 011** by Michael Pfeifenberger



GRÉGORY GADEBOIS (Selective filmography)

2012 - **Goodbye Morocco** by Nadir Moknèche • 2011 - **Angèle et Tony** by Alix Delaporte • **Farewell, My Queen** by Benoît Jacquot • 2010 - **The Woman in the Fifth** by Pawel Pawlikowski • 2009 - **Gainsbourg** by Joann Sfar • 2008 - **Frontier of Dawn** by Philippe Garrel • 2006 - **The Last Gang** by Ariel Zeitoun • 2005 - **Have mercy on us all / Seeds of Death** by Régis Wargnier • 2004 - **The wound** by Nicolas Klotz • 2003 - **Olga's chignon** by Jérôme Bonnell

NADIR MOKNÈCHE



Photo © Emile Loez

2012 **GOODBYE MOROCCO**
2007 **PALOMA DELIGHT (DÉLICE PALOMA)**
2004 **VIVA ALGERIA (VIVA LALDJÉRIE)**
2000 **THE HAREM OF MADAME OSMANE (LE HAREM DE MME OSMANE)**



SYNOPSIS

Single mother Dounia lives with a Serbian architect in Tangiers –a scandalous relationship in the eyes of her Moroccan family. The couple supervises a construction project, where earthmovers uncover 4th century Christian tombs decorated with ornate frescoes. Dounia embarks on a lucrative but illegal trade in the hope of making some quick money so she can leave Morocco with her son and her lover. But one of the construction workers disappears...

1H42 • SCOPE • COLOR • DOLBY SRD • 2012

INTERNATIONAL SALES: LES FILMS DU LOSANGE

22, avenue Pierre 1^{er} de Serbie - 75116 Paris

Tel. : +33 1 44 43 87 13 / 28 / 24 • Fax: +33 1 49 52 06 40

► **AGATHE VALENTIN**
(Head of Sales)
a.valentin@filmsdulosange.fr
+33 6 89 85 96 95

► **LISE ZIPCI**
(TV & Library Sales)
l.zipci@filmsdulosange.fr
+33 6 75 13 05 75

► **MARINE GOULOIS**
(Festivals Manager)
m.goulois@filmsdulosange.fr
+33 6 84 21 74 53

www.filmsdulosange.fr



BLUE MONDAY PRODUCTIONS presents

LUBNA AZABAL RASHA BUKVIC FAOUZI BENSÂÏDI GRÉGORY GADEBOIS
RALPH AMOUSSOU ABBES ZAHMANI MALIKA EL OMARI WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF ANNE COESENS

GOODBYE MOROCCO

A FILM BY NADIR MOKNÈCHE

FB • Imprimerie Gération Graphic 01 39 95 41 26



INTERVIEW

BENJAMIN STORA / NADIR MOKNÈCHE

Benjamin Stora: Coming out of the film, you immediately think: “Wow! Lubna Azabal is fabulous as a film noir heroine: a manipulative femme fatale, a praying mantis.” Was the role written for her?

Nadir Moknèche: I'd hit a rough patch in the writing. The character of Dounia Abdallah still needed work. Lubna left me a message saying that she was in Paris and wanted to have dinner with me. I hadn't seen her in several years. I was waiting for her at the restaurant. She was late. Suddenly I saw her walking toward me, lit up by the streetlights. She had changed physically. I almost didn't recognize her. And then, all over again, I saw Kathie in *Out of the Past*, going to meet Jeff. It's a splendid meeting scene in which Kathie first appears in the semi-darkness, and then comes out in the Acapulco sun. That evening I didn't say a word to Lubna. I went home and watched Tourneur's film again. That's when I started working on Dounia's character with her in mind. The non-linear narrative became obvious, along with the before and after of that fateful night that would determine everybody's destiny.

B.S: Why this non-linear narrative?

N.M: Gabriel's disappearance is the height of violence, a primitive scene in both the literal and figurative sense. Everything turns on that one moment. At what point should it be revealed to the viewers? It's also a story in which the past constantly crops up in the characters' present: the fresco, Dounia and Ali's childhood, the ex-husband, Gabriel's body... My other concern was to treat complex subjects (the status of women, harragas,

north/south relations, etc.) without using the characters to serve an analysis or a cause. The non-chronological structure seemed to me an effective tool, a means of sustaining the suspense.

B.S: I find that the components of film noir, such as tragic destiny, the perverse and poisonous relationship between past and present, fit well with today's Arab societies. The characters are caught up in situations beyond their control and forced to make desperate decisions. The act, even if Ali is the one who carries it out, hardens Dounia. You wonder how she can go that far.

N.M: I've noticed how movies have trouble portraying “hard” female characters except when the subject is treated in a burlesque fashion, like with Tarantino. It's even worse when the woman is Arab.

B.S: It's always disturbing to see women with power, who manage men, not only in the Orient or in the Maghreb. Those who know Arab societies from the inside are fully aware of the power women have in the private sphere. Here the transgression comes from Dounia's exercising this matriarchal domination in the public sphere, on the work site.

N.M: I can't write a female Arab character any other way. It's plain to see, as in Tunisia today, that women's status is constantly called into question. It's a permanent obsession in Muslim societies. Dounia of course isn't stoned or locked up. They've just taken away custody of her child. She's allowed to kiss him in the doorway. They

even threaten not to let her see him again. Why? Because she loves a man from another religion and another country. She knows that across the strait, 7 miles away from Tangiers, a woman can marry whomever she wants to, even another woman! She says to herself, “Why not me?”

B.S: The film fits in with the great wave of individualization that has begun in the Arab-Muslim world; a desire for independence, to steer one's own fate, interests, material interests. All of that is of course very brutal. All the characters want to decide for themselves, they want to be themselves, in control of their own lives, down to the Senegalese workers, starting with Gabriel... Some of them lose their lives in the process.

N.M: That is my struggle, refusing to be just a link in a chain. I left home when I was 16. For me Dounia Abdallah's character symbolizes this combat down to the very choice of her name: Dounia means “Life here below” and Abdallah “God's servant (slave).” She refuses to submit to his law.

B.S: Among the various taboos you confront, one of them is interfaith marriage. A Muslim woman, unlike a man, is not entitled to marry a non-Muslim. In Egypt, it's one reason for the clash between Copts and Muslims. The problem also exists in France. Children of this sort of marriage are not recognized in the country where their parents were born, such as Morocco. Isn't it an even greater provocation to choose a Serb when you know what happened in former Yugoslavia?

N.M: Meeting Rasha Bukvic brought me back to my childhood in Algiers. Back then I had friends who were Yugoslavs. Naturally I'd thought of a French or a Spanish architect. But in that case Dounia could be suspected of going with him out of self-interest. Dimitri is a bit like the Moroccans; he can't get a visa for Europe. A “bum”, as Ali calls him.

B.S: Northern Morocco is known for hashish smuggling. You preferred to deal with contraband



archeological artefacts. What is that fresco, a virgin?

N.M: It's an orant, a praying figure. They were a common motif in this period of early Christianity before it became the official religion of the Roman Empire. I knew that there was a smuggling network of archeological relics between Morocco and Europe. Since I'm interested in that period of early Christianity in North Africa, I chose a paleo-Christian fresco.

B.S: Christianity is associated with European presence in the 19th and 20th centuries, precisely in the cosmopolitan city of Tangiers. One forgets that most of the Church fathers were Berbers: Tertullian, Augustine, etc. There is a false impression that the history of Morocco and the Maghreb in general begins with Islam. And suddenly the past looms. A past that some tried to bury, to forget once and for all.

N.M: I wasn't aware of this history myself, my own history. The only liberty I took with the historical fact is that the Berbers, unlike their Roman coreligionaries, were against figurative representation. I found the orant / Dounia symbolism interesting.

B.S: When it comes down to it, we're dealing with a romantic drama: two men, three if you count the ex-husband, love the same woman. I was very moved by Ali: stirring, sensitive, a victim of terrible loneliness; seeing him in his little room, his single bed, his parakeets. You are known for your fabulous female roles. This is your first great male character, and he speaks only in Arabic.

N.M: It's the first time I've written such a major male character, with lines in my native tongue. You may find it funny, but Ali sort of foisted himself on the story. I didn't see him coming until he was simply there. As I made progress on the script, he, the maid's son, raised himself to Dounia's level. Ali has always been in love with her. But he can't manage to talk to her, even less to woo her. And it doesn't boil down to a matter of social class, even if that is central.

B.S: The security guard characters are also highly representative of this social poverty found in Morocco, and that sometimes produces terrible violence.

N.M: It makes you think of the Casablanca suicide bombers!... Ali has a suicidal behavior. Instead of being crazy about God, he's crazy about a woman.

B.S: Dounia and Ali grew up together. That makes the scene at his place all the more terrible. She goes so far as to call him a slave. She is... I was going to say, almost castrating.

N.M: She doesn't want to leave him any hope whatsoever. Dounia realizes that she is attracted to Ali.



Maybe because he's shown her how far he'll go for her. She buries the past that poisons her. She will tame her passion. Nothing must thwart her plan to leave with her son and her lover.

B.S: It is easy to imagine this story taking place in Algeria. Why Morocco?

N.M: I am basically banned from shooting in Algeria. They refused to grant a release certificate for Délice Paloma. Since I've been cut off from my source of inspiration, I had to sever my emotion ties with Algiers. I haven't been back there since August 2006.

B.S: They're afraid of a movie? That says a lot about the fragility of Algeria today. Don't you want to fight back?

N.M: Making a film is already a combat. It took me more than five years to make *Goodbye Morocco*. Particularly when the story takes place in that part of the world, there's not a lot of money available. And then there is always the risk of censorship as soon as you talk about nudity, religion, in short, everything that interests me in a film.



B.S: Your style has become more defined with each new film, as if we were witnessing the construction of a body of work. Right from the film's opening scene, you think: “Nadir Moknèche never loosens his grip. He keeps showing physical freedom, sexuality, violence – the body of a woman smoking a cigarette, handling money.” The character is sketched out right from the start. Extreme freedom or the way you deal with matters of homosexuality can be hard to accept. Could Fersen not have been a homosexual?

N.M: Sexual tourism in Morocco, particularly among European gays, is an open secret. I couldn't film Tangiers without showing it. The spirit of Paul Bowles is still there. The character played by Grégory Gadebois is not a cliché. One might expect him to be with a Moroccan: but no, he's with a Nigerian.

B.S: After taking such an extraordinary path, this woman who absolutely wanted to escape from everything and break all the rules, reverts to the norm. Could another ending have been possible?

N.M: A man was killed! Dounia is broken. She goes back to square one. That doesn't mean she's finished. Now, one can always imagine another ending, a “happy ending.” Personally, I have little hope in what they call the Arab Spring. Maybe because I'm in too much of a hurry to see change. It's probably due to the current zeitgeist. ■

BENJAMIN STORA IS A UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR SPECIALIZED IN CONTEMPORARY MAGHREB HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS 13 AND INALCO (NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL LANGUAGES, PARIS). HE IS THE FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR OF THE MAGHREB-EUROPE INSTITUTE. HE HAS PUBLISHED SOME THIRTY BOOKS, INCLUDING MAROC, ALGÉRIE, HISTOIRES PARALLÈLES, DESTINS CROISÉS, THE OUTCOME OF THREE YEARS IN RABAT STUDYING NATIONALISM IN MOROCCO AND ALGERIA.