

Mongrel Media

Presents

2 DAYS IN NEW YORK



A FILM BY JULIE DEPLY
(91 min., France/ Germany 2012)
Language : English

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2012 Tribeca Film Festival

Distribution



1028 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M6J 1H6
Tel: 416-516-9775 Fax: 416-516-0651
E-mail: info@mongrelmedia.com
www.mongrelmedia.com

Publicity

Bonne Smith
Star PR
Tel: 416-488-4436
Fax: 416-488-8438
E-mail: starpr@sympatico.ca

High res stills may be downloaded from <http://www.mongrelmedia.com/press.html>

SYNOPSIS

Hip talk-radio host and journalist Mingus (Chris Rock) and his French photographer girlfriend, Marion (Julie Delpy), live cozily in a New York apartment with their cat and two young children from previous relationships. But when Marion's jolly father (played by Delpy's real-life dad, Albert Delpy), her oversexed sister, and her sister's outrageous boyfriend unceremoniously descend upon them for an overseas visit, it initiates two unforgettable days of family mayhem. With their unabashed openness and sexual frankness, the triumvirate is bereft of boundaries or filters. . . and no one is left unscathed in its wake. The visitors push every button in the couple's relationship, truly putting it to the test. How will the couple fare. . . when the French come to New York?

ABOUT THE FILM

It's the next big step: meeting the relatives. Maybe you get a little nervous, take a little while to warm up to everybody, but, hopefully, everything will go smoothly. But somebody forgot to warn poor Mingus: HERE COME THE FRENCH.

After shooting her 2009 dark thriller, *The Countess*, writer/director/actress JULIE DELPY decided it was time for a comedy – a genre at which she had proven herself quite adept two years earlier, with *2 Days in Paris*, a successful romantic comedy co-starring Adam Goldberg. “I thought, ‘Okay, why not a sequel?’” she says. “But I knew I couldn’t do a sequel with the same guy, because that would be too much like *Before Sunset* and *Before Sunrise*, two romantic gems she had starred in and co-write with Ethan Hawke, directed by Richard Linklater. “Out of respect for those films, and for Richard and Ethan, I knew I couldn’t do that.”

So Delpy spent the next year or so thinking and taking notes, as she usually does, figuring out the next step in Marion’s life. “Marion seems to go from relationship to relationship. She’s not after getting the ring and getting married – her issue is commitment, chemistry and figuring out her life,” she says. “That’s the serious part.”

All good comedies, the director notes, have, at their core, a true reality. “I like to build on real ground – not necessarily drama, but on a reality. I’ll pick a subject matter that *could* be a drama. It doesn’t necessarily need to be a funny story. But then I turn it around with crazy situations and characters – that’s what makes it funny.”

The first thing Delpy had to figure out was who Marion’s new guy would be – and that didn’t take long. “I thought, ‘I want someone new as a boyfriend. Who is it?’ And the first person that came to mind was Chris Rock.”

While the obvious thought would be that Delpy wanted to create a bi-racial couple, that’s not the case. “It was never about that. I just love his energy. Chris has a neurotic side, which I really like. He has an angst about him that I think is endearing and which I thought would make a really interesting dynamic in this relationship.

Once she had decided on Marion’s other half, Delpy enlisted two old friends – ALEXIA LANDEAU and ALEX NAHON – to help her develop the story. Both had appeared in the previous *2 Days* film, as Marion’s sister, Rose, and ex-boyfriend, Manu, respectively. “I’ve known Alex since I was 19, and Alexia for about 14 years.” She and Landeau eventually wrote the final screenplay together.

“I had the story in mind, but I wanted to write with someone,” Delpy says. “I’ve been writing alone for many, many years. I love writing, but when I write alone, I can get stuck in my head. It’s like I’m talking to myself. But when I write with someone, it

becomes a game. You bounce ideas off each other. Of course, I always end up getting my ideas in!” she laughs.

The film begins with Marion giving us a quick capsule of what’s happened prior, explaining to her child – and us – how she is now a single mom with a young son, and that grandpa and Auntie Rose are coming for a visit – all via a pair of hand puppets. “I had actually used that with my own son,” she explains. “I wanted to explain to him what had happened to my mother, and that I needed to go back to work. And that was the perfect way for me to explain it to him, so that he wouldn’t feel abandoned.” Marion herself has a young boy (fathered by Jack, the Adam Goldberg character from the previous film), and Mingus has a young daughter, also from a previous marriage. “He’s had two marriages, so he’s not perfect at it either. He’s learned from his previous experiences to be on the lookout for a sign of anything crazy.” And over a two-day period, he gets an eyeful.

“Prior to the family visiting, the relationship is working just fine. But then we have two days – a time limitation, which is interesting – where her family comes to visit, and it stirs up all kinds of things for her.” Everything from the death of her mom, a gallery opening of her art, to the big question of whether the soul actually exists – which she explores by selling hers to an anonymous bidder as a conceptual art piece! “I wanted to bring all that out, so that Mingus can see it and ask, ‘So is this the real you?’” At the other end of the handle stirring the pot are the three visitors, led by Delpy’s own father, veteran French actor Albert Delpy, whose hilarious performance as Marion’s loopy dad, Jeannot, is one of the highlights of the film. “I was raised by a big child,” the director laughs. “He’s a wild beast. I saw him onstage in the 70s doing the most insane things, in plays that were just crazy. I’ve seen him play women, junkies. . . everything.” Delpy wrote the part specifically for her father (who also appeared in the previous film). “I know who he is, and I know what he’s capable of. And I know what to do to get him to go to a place where, you know. . . . ‘There he goes.’”

While the younger Delpy knew what to expect from Albert, it was a bit of a shock for Rock, it turns out. “I don’t think he was truly prepared to have an interaction with someone like my dad! I could see it in Chris’s face – at times, he was, like, ‘Oh, my God – what’s gonna happen?’ But it was all a lot of fun for everyone.”

Also visiting is Marion’s sister, Rose, played by Alexia Landeau. “Marion herself is not very analytical,” Delpy says of her own character. “She’s a bit neurotic and unaware of what she’s doing. She acts before thinking about what she’s about to do. She’s much like me, if I wasn’t as analytical as I am – I think everything through 10 times before doing it,” she laughs. Rose, she says, “is like Marion multiplied times 10.”

A child psychologist, the younger sibling has a penchant for analyzing the non-existent “problems” of her sister’s son, a constant irritation to Marion and source of many a cat fight in the film. “Rose is a bit jealous of her sister, whom she loves and wishes she was more like.” Though she herself has no sisters, the love-hate dynamic between the two was a familiar one to Delpy. “I’ve seen quite a bit of this between sisters, with friends

that have smaller or bigger sisters. With these two, it's a source of trouble, and it's really funny."

Making things worse is the presence of Manu (Alex Nahon), the uninvited ex-boyfriend of Marion – and current beau of her sister. Played with robust egotism by Nahon, Manu (especially with his girlfriend's help) is the source of plenty of trouble for Mingus – and plenty of laughs. "Manu is a nightmare come true," Delpy notes. "He says and does things that just make your skin crawl."

So wait a minute - aren't the French supposed to be those polite, sophisticated people with the berets who say "*oui*" and "*monsieur*" and all that? "Mingus isn't dealing with those kind of French," Delpy laughs. "He's facing the *Gaulois*." As in the Gauls, the ancient French who fought Julius Caesar and worshipped boars. "All they thought about was food, having fun and sex. We all come from those very tough-skinned, eccentrics." Just watch Albert Delpy's Jeannot in any scene in the movie, and you'll get the picture. While his character is mostly a serious one in the film, Chris Rock has plenty of opportunity to give us. . . Chris Rock. Particularly when, perplexed by any situation, Mingus has an informal chat with one of his heroes, President Obama (okay, one of those full-sized cardboard cutouts of President Obama you can get at any gift shop in Times Square). Everything from dealing relationships to whether it's cool to address him as "Barack."

As you'll probably guess, Delpy's comedic sense is based in her admiration of classic screwball comedies. "I love that stuff," Delpy says. "I was brought up on all kinds of different comedies, but I love absurd comedy."

In one hilarious sequence, for example, Mingus is trying in vain to have a reasonable conversation at the dinner table with Jeannot, who, barely speaking any English, gets "assistance" from Manu – who's not much better, mistranslating everything that comes out of Mingus's mouth. ["Aren't you on the radio?" "Yes, I have two shows on Public Radio and one on Sirius." "He says he has the flu, it may be serious."] If talking to Jeannot isn't hard enough by itself, the two sisters are going at it over Rose's continued misdiagnosis of Marion's son.

"I love this kind of mayhem – no one understands anything in a conversation that's going nowhere, and the sisters are fighting over kids and autism and screwing ex-boyfriends," Delpy says. "It's the kind of absurd moment that just makes me laugh."

The scene is also a perfect example of the incredible editing work of film editor Isabelle Devinck, who worked with Delpy on her last film, "*Le Skylab*." While, just as with her writing, Delpy often edits her films herself, she and Devinck worked together here as a kind of a tag team for comic timing. "She's my favorite person on the planet right now," the director states. "We have such a wonderful time working together, because we have the same sense of humor. It's like having two brains."

The mistranslation sequence required special care to turn out as funny as Delpy wished. “Isabelle and I spent three weeks on that scene alone,” she explains. “It was very important for it to have that experience of back-and-forth, between them trying to have this crazy conversation and the sisters fighting in the back. Those kinds of scenes are the trickiest things to do. If you’re a few frames off, it doesn’t work. It has to be understandable, so you can get what’s going on. The comedy has to work on both sides.” Another treat from the editing room is a wonderful series of montages, used, for example, to give us, in a fun, brief capsule, the path of Jeannot’s life, or fill us in on the visiting French’s day of sightseeing around the Big Apple. “Most of those kinds of scenes in movies show the characters with a few seconds at this famous location, a few at another. I thought it would be funny to have a montage of photos where we see every landmark in New York in 30 seconds.” The sequence is comprised of hundreds of snapshots, taken with a Canon 5D digital still camera – all looking like a tourist (from the looks of them, probably Jeannot) took them. “That was the goal.”

So does the French invasion have a positive or negative effect on Marion and Mingus’s relationship? Just ask the puppets. . .

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

JULIE DELPY (Director/Co-Writer/“Marion”) has made a name for herself as an actress, writer and director in Europe and the U.S. In 2005, she was nominated (along with her co-writers Ethan Hawke and Richard Linklater) for an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for *Before Sunset*, a follow-up to *Before Sunrise*, both of which she also starred in. As an actress, Julie has worked with some of the world’s most esteemed directors including Jean-Luc Godard, Krzysztof Kieslowski and Jim Jarmusch. She made her directorial debut with the short film *Blah Blah Blah* in 1995, and in 2007, she wrote, directed and starred in *2 Days in Paris*. In 2008, she directed *The Countess*, in which she co-starred with Daniel Brühl and William Hurt, and premiered at the Berlin Film Festival. In 2010, she directed and starred in *Le Skylab*, which premiered at the San Sebastian Film Festival, where it won the special jury prize.

ALEX NAHON (Co-Writer/“Manu”) is a French writer, director and actor. He wrote and directed short-films, music videos and commercials in France before moving to the US in 2007 serve as Artist In Residence for the NYC French Institute. Nahon's photographs have been exhibited in some of the most prestigious art shows in Europe and the US such as Macy's "Art Under Glass" in their NYC's Herald Square store in 2007 and Miami Art Basel in 2009. He is represented as a photographer by the Kips Gallery in Chelsea, NYC. In 2007, Alex Nahon made his on-screen film debut in Julie Delpy's *2 Days in Paris*, in which he originated the role of “Manu.” Next, Nahon is readying *Don't Shoot the Piano Player*, a film adaptation of a David Goodis novel, which he will be writing and directing. Vincent Gallo is set to star, with Bleiberg Entertainment producing.

CHRISTOPHE MAZODIER (Producer) began in 1993 as assistant to director-producer Volker Schlöndorff at the Studio Babelsberg near Berlin, where he stayed until he went independent in 2000. He produced his first film in 2002 with X-Filme Creative Pool, *Love in Thoughts (Was nützt die Liebe in Gedanken)* by Achim von Borries (Sundance and Berlinale 2004). He returned to France in 2004 to establish first Short Cuts, a film finance consulting company to help producers raise international financings, especially in Germany, UK and Belgium. Among various clients, he helped Daniel Toscan du Plantier with Benoît Jacquot's *Tosca*, Christophe de Pontfilly for his *L'Etoile du Soldat* or Fidelité with Cedric Kahn's *L'Avion*. In 2005, he established Polaris Film Production & Finance a production company based in Paris. Within Polaris he produced *2 Days in Paris* by Julie Delpy in coproduction with German 3L Filmproduktion (Spirit Award and César nominee, Berlinale 2008), Co-produced with German Tat Film and Austrian Lotus Film *Das Vaterspiel* by Michael Glawogger (Berlinale 2009), Co-produced with Belgium Saga Films, *Rondo* by Olivier van Malderghem, *H.H.* by Frederic Sojcher, and with French Quasar Picture, *Prey* by Antoine Blossier. He also went to teach at various schools or universities, like ESEC and Sorbonnes in Paris or Science Com' in Nantes.

SCOTT FRANKLIN (Producer) was born and raised in New York where he has established himself as a well-respected veteran of the NYC filmmaking community. He is an Oscar nominee for his work on Darren Aronofsky's *Black Swan* and a two-time recipient of the Independent Spirit Award for Best Picture. Franklin's next film to be released, the Madonna directed *W.E.*, premiered at the 2011 Venice Film Festival and is slated for release later this year. His previous film, *The Wrestler*, stars Mickey Rourke, Marisa Tomei, and Evan Rachel Wood, and was the recipient of the Golden Lion award at the 2008 Venice Film Festival. It won multiple awards at the 2009 Independent Spirit Awards, including Best Picture. Rourke and Tomei received Academy Award nominations for their performances, as well as a win for Rourke at the Golden Globes along with Bruce Springsteen for Best Song ("The Wrestler"). His previous film *Hounddog*, starring Dakota Fanning, Robin Wright-Penn, and David Morse, premiered at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival, where it was a finalist for the Grand Jury Prize. Before that, Franklin served as a co-producer on Aronofsky's *Requiem for a Dream*, which premiered at the 1999 Cannes Film Festival and was named in over 150 Top Ten Lists of 2000. It received many international awards, five Independent Spirit Award nominations, and star Ellen Burstyn received Golden Globe and Academy Award® Best Actress nominations. As the Associate Producer, his collaboration on Aronofsky's debut, π , premiered at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival where it won the festival's Best Director's Award. It went on to win several international awards including Independent Spirit Award for Best Screenplay and the Open Palm Gotham Award.

LUBOMIR BAKCHEV (Director of Photography) Born in 1970 in Varna, Bulgaria, Lubomir discovered his passion for photography at age 10 and entered in numerous photo competitions. At age 17, he organized his first personal photo art show. In 1990, shortly after the fall of the Berlin wall, he arrives in France and starts working as a Colour-Grader in a photo lab. In 1992, he began work as Camera Operator on commercial films as well as short films and documentaries. After more than thirty short-films, he began work as Director of Photography on feature films, notably on *Meet the Baltringues* (1998) directed by François Gerard and *Lokarri* (2000) by Jean-Pierre Grasset, before garnering attention for *L'Esquive (Games of Love and Chance)*, 2003) directed by Abdellatif Kechiche, which earned 4 Césars (Best Film, Best Script, Best Director). In 2003, he became a French Citizen. In 2005, he shot *La Graine et le mulet (The Secret of the Grain)*, Abdellatif Kechiche), winner of the Special Jury Prize at the 64th Mostra in Venice (2007). In 2006, he went on to shoot *Nos retrouvailles*, directed by David Oelhoffen, which entered the official selection at Cannes' International Critic's Week (2007). The same year, Director/Actress Julie Delpy turned to him to direct photography on her feature comedy *2 Days in Paris*. Bakchev also teaches as a professional instructor at l'ESAV (Ecole Supérieure d'AudioVisuel) in Toulouse.

REBECCA HOFHERR (Costume Designer) is a costume designer based in Brooklyn, NY, and born and raised in northeast Pennsylvania. She spent a few years in Massachusetts to attend college at The University of Massachusetts and the Boston School of Fashion Design. After college, she moved to NYC to do an internship on the

film *Imaginary Heroes*. Rebecca made the jump to Costume Designer on her first feature film, *Choking Man*, directed by Steve Barren. She was able to then work with Ethan Hawke and Vincent D'Onofrio on the film *Staten Island*, directed by James DeMonaco. Rebecca traveled to the Missouri Ozarks to design the Sundance 2010 Grand Jury Prize winner and Academy Award nominee for Best Picture, *Winter's Bone*. Most recently, Rebecca spent several months in Miami to design the fourth installment of the Summit Entertainment franchise *Step Up*, set to release in the summer of 2012.

ABOUT THE CAST

JULIE DELPY (Director/Co-Writer/“Marion”) has made a name for herself as an actress, writer and director in Europe and the U.S. In 2005, she was nominated (along with her co-writers Ethan Hawke and Richard Linklater) for an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for *Before Sunset*, a follow-up to *Before Sunrise*, both of which she also starred in. As an actress, Julie has worked with some of the world’s most esteemed directors including Jean-Luc Godard, Krzysztof Kieslowski and Jim Jarmusch. She made her directorial debut with the short film *Blah Blah Blah* in 1995, and in 2007, she wrote, directed and starred in *2 Days in Paris*. In 2008, she directed *The Countess*, in which she co-starred with Daniel Brühl and William Hurt, and premiered at the Berlin Film Festival. In 2010, she directed and starred in *Le Skylab*, which premiered at the San Sebastian Film Festival, where it won the special jury prize.

CHRIS ROCK (“Mingus”) The Brooklyn-raised comedian, who has garnered four Emmy Awards and three Grammy Awards as a writer and stand-up comedy work, recently appeared on Broadway to rave reviews in “The Motherf**ker With The Hat.” Rock’s first documentary, *Good Hair*, won the 2009 Sundance “Special Jury Prize” and was named one of the “Top Five Documentaries” in 2009 by the National Board of Review. His critically acclaimed HBO stand-up specials include “Bring the Pain,” “Bigger & Blacker” “Never Scared” and “Kill the Messenger”. Rock made his feature film debut in Beverly Hills Cop II in 1987. Additional film credits include *Boomerang*, *New Jack City*, *Lethal Weapon 4*, *Dogma*, *Nurse Betty*, *Head of State* (directorial debut), *Down to Earth* (co-wrote), *I Think I Love My Wife* (wrote & directed), *The Longest Yard*, *Madagascar* films, *Grown Ups*, *Death at a Funeral* and, of course, *Pootie Tang*. TV credits include NBC’s “Saturday Night Live,” HBO’s “The Chris Rock Show” and “Everybody Hates Chris,” which he co-created and narrated. His debut book, “Rock This,” appeared on The New York Times and Wall Street Journal bestseller lists.

ALBERT DELPY (“Jeannot”) is a renowned French stage and screen actor. He has appeared in six films directed by Patrice Leconte, including *Ridicule*, and three films with his daughter Julie, including *2 Days in Paris* (in which he originated the role of “Albert”). He also co-starred in Andrei Kontchalovsky’s adaptation of Anton Chekov, *La Mouette*.

ALEXIA LANDEAU (“Rose”) is an American actress and writer. She has appeared in numerous films and TV shows, both in France and the United States, including *2 Days in Paris*. Recent acting credits include Alexandra Cassavetes’ upcoming *Kiss of the Damned* and *Jerusalem, I Love You*, which she also wrote.

ALEX NAHON (Co-Writer/“Manu”) is a French writer, director and actor. He wrote and directed short-films, music videos and commercials in France before moving to the US in 2007 serve as Artist In Residence for the NYC French Institute. Nahon’s

photographs have been exhibited in some of the most prestigious art shows in Europe and the US such as Macy's "Art Under Glass" in their NYC's Herald Square store in 2007 and Miami Art Basel in 2009. He is represented as a photographer by the Kips Gallery in Chelsea, NYC. In 2007, Alex Nahon made his on-screen film debut in Julie Delpy's *2 Days in Paris*, in which he originated the role of "Manu." Next, Nahon is readying *Don't Shoot the Piano Player*, a film adaptation of a David Goodis novel, which he will be writing and directing. Vincent Gallo is set to star, with Bleiberg Entertainment producing.

EMILY WAGNER ("Susan") A native New Yorker, Emily is an actress, artist and writer. After receiving her BFA in Fine Art from Vassar, she moved to LA, where she wrote, produced and starred in films with her brother, noted indie director Andrew Wagner (*Counting*, *South Main*, *Looking For Jimmy*, *The Talent Given Us*) and writer/actress/director Julie Delpy (*Blah, Blah, Blah*, *Looking For Jimmy*), all of which went on to have successful festival runs. She wrote, produced, directed and starred in the popular web-series comedy "Motherhoodlum" on Strike.tv. Emily is perhaps best known for her work as paramedic Doris Pickman on "ER," whom she played for the entire 15-season run of the show. She received glowing reviews for her starring roles in Andrew Wagner's *The Talent Given Us* (Sundance, 2007) and in *Chronic Town* alongside Garry Marshall and Paul Dooley (Sundance, 2008). More recently, she appeared in Todd Phillips' *Due Date* with Robert Downey Jr. As a fine artist, Wagner has shown her work internationally and to critical acclaim. Her last two solo shows, exhibited at the Acuna Hansen Gallery were chosen as LA Weekly's "Pick of the Week" and her video piece "Twosome" was shown at the UCLA Hammer Museum in 2006. Wagner's hand-painted illustrations and textiles can be seen on the fabrics of Forever 21, Rory Beca, Hy & Dot, Curio & Kind and are regularly sourced by interior designers. She is currently partner in the design studio Same Dream As You.

DYLAN BAKER ("Ron") Film: *Secretariat*, *Trick 'r' Treat*, *Revolutionary Road*, *Across the Universe*, *Fido*, *Spider-Man 2 & 3*, *Head of State*, *Road to Perdition*, *Changing Lanes*, *Along Came a Spider*, *Thirteen Days*, *Happiness* (Indie Spirit Award nomination, Best Male Lead), *Disclosure*, *The Long Walk Home*, *Delirious*, and *Planes, Trains & Automobiles*. TV: *Damages*, *The Good Wife* (Emmy nomination, Outstanding Guest Actor in a Drama Series), *Smash*, *Kings*, *Drive*, *The Book of Daniel*, *The West Wing*, and *The Pitts!* Broadway: *God of Carnage*, *November*, *Mauritius*, *La Bête* (Tony & Drama Desk nominations), *Eastern Standard* (Theater World Award). Off-Broadway: *Sea of Tranquility*, *Homebody/Kabul*, *Pride's Crossing*, *The Common Pursuit*, *Not About Heroes* (Obie Award), *Tartuffe*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, & *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (NYSF). Spring 2012, directorial debut *Blast 23*.

CREDITS

Directed by
Julie DELPY

Produced by
Scott Franklin

Associate Producers
Dominique Boutonnat
Arnaud Bertrand
Hubert Caillard
Gérald Frydman
Jean-Claude Fleury
David Claikens
Alex Verbaere

Executive Producers
Helge Sasse
Matthias Triebel

Producers
Julie Delpy
Ulf Israel
Jean-Jacques Neira
Hubert Toint

Story by
Julie Delpy Alexia Landeau Alex Nahon

Screenplay by
Julie Delpy and Alexia Landeau

Editor
Isabelle Devinck

Costume Designer
Rebecca Hofherr

Casting by
Suzanne Smith Crowley

Jessica Kelly

Director of Photography

Lubomir Bakchev

Production Designer

Judy Rhee

CAST

Chris Rock

Julie Delpy

Albert Delpy

Alexia Landeau

Alex Nahon

Dylan Baker

Kate Burton

Malinda Williams

Talen Riley

and Daniel Brühl