

vendredi film
presents

VINCENT LINDON

SANDRINE BONNAIRE

COULD THIS
(JE CROIS
QUE JE L'AIME) **BE LOVE**
A FILM BY **PIERRE JOLIVET**

CO-STARRING

FRANÇOIS BERLÉAND

LIANE FOLY

KAD MERAD

WRITTEN BY PIERRE JOLIVET ET SIMON MICHAEL

SYNOPSIS

Lucas (Vincent Lindon), 43, a rich, divorced businessman, is irresistibly attracted to Elsa (Sandrine Bonnaire), 38, a fashionable ceramist, whom he has commissioned to make a fresco for the front hall of his company's offices.

After being taken for a ride recently by a woman, Lucas decides to ask his company's private detective, Roland Christin (François Berléand) to investigate why this pretty woman is still single.

The unscrupulous private eye applies the most modern espionage techniques to his mission. But Lucas had better be careful. If Elsa ever finds out...

PIERRE JOLIVET

I was able to write a comedy about love only because I felt my work had matured sufficiently to delve into such a deeply intimate subject as the way love is born, in this instance between and 43-year-old man and a 38-year-old woman.

I'd never shot a love story before and telling one is almost as scary as falling in love itself. But I could only talk about love through a character of my age. I haven't courted a woman for nearly twenty years, so this was a way of reliving the beginning of a love affair – the moment when you fall in love. Except that, because of his age, it's extremely complicated for Lucas.

When we were doing research for Elsa, we found ourselves with piles of books about great Japanese ceramicists – all for maybe ten lines of dialogue. But those ten lines really provide the texture of the character.

I started out with the idea that love is always a mystery, so Lucas – played by Vincent Lindon – asks his company's private detective – François Berléand – to raise the veil of mystery that enshrouds this young ceramicist – Sandrine Bonnaire. His motivation is what enabled us to flesh out Vincent's character. Why the heck would he do a thing like that? And the answer is that his previous relationship was with a woman, who was in fact working undercover in his company and providing information to a competitor.

That's what made writing the film so much fun. For "nothing more than love" Lucas uses his company's vast resources in the secret hope, maybe, of finding an irredeemable flaw in Elsa that will give him an excuse not to get involved. And the funny thing is that Elsa has nothing very much to hide. Which Lucas can't believe, but it

makes her even more attractive in his eyes – and even more scary. Like all men, beautiful, successful, free-thinking women terrify Lucas.

It's easy to write for Vincent and François now because I know them by heart. I can totally identify with Vincent. I know how he walks, how he talks... It's a real luxury and a great pleasure to write for an actor of such quality. I also like the idea of writing for a kind of troupe of actors that I know and love. François and I go back a long way, to my very first feature. Working with him is a habit that I can't and don't want to break.

From her career as a singer and live performer, Liane Foly has a magnificent ear and an innate sense of rhythm. At the very first read-through of the script, I got a sense that she was burning the music of the dialogue into her memory.

It was obvious that the film would depend hugely on the actress who played Elsa. Fortunately, Sandrine said yes very early on. It was quite a bold move for her because fast-talking verbal comedy was completely new for her. And comedy requires total discipline. The big question was whether the two leads would have the chemistry to make their verbal battles work. Sandrine would have to run fast to keep up with Vincent, but in a style all of her own.

The sets are a vital part of this film because the characters are defined by their apartments, studio, office and so on. I involved my production designer, Emile Ghigo, in the process from an early stage, when I was still writing. He came up with the idea of the mosaic on the floor and ensured that its full meaning only became apparent when seen from Vincent's office on the third floor. It was a wonderful idea.

SANDRINE BONNAIRE E L S A

- *Do you want some help?*
- *Sure, maybe. How's it going?*
- *I only just started. Who are you?*
- *The guy who's paying.*
- *Right... My patron.*
- *And you're my artist, I suppose?*
- *I suppose.*

Sandrine Bonnaire shot to fame at the age of 16, playing a teenager brutally confronted with her sexual awakening in Maurice Pialat's *A Nos Amours* (1983). She starred in two other Pialat movies, *Police* (1985) and *Sous le Soleil de Satan* (1987), before becoming the favorite actress of other great directors, such as Claude Chabrol (*A Judgment in Stone*, *Heart of Lies*), Jacques Rivette (*Jeanne la Pucelle I & II*) and Patrice Leconte (*Monsieur Hire*, *Intimate Strangers*). Sandrine has also worked with numerous other European directors. With Isabelle Huppert, she won the Best Actress award at the 1995 Venice Festival for her performance in Chabrol's *A Judgment in Stone*. She has also won two César awards and been nominated on five other occasions.

“ Vincent is terribly charming but also very grounded, in a masculine, virile way. He always seems in a hurry in his approach. He has tremendous energy, and he's audacious and generous. He really listens to you. He looks you in the eye. Once he's sized up what's needed, he goes for it. He leaves his ego in his trailer and gives his character all he's got. He's like me – very instinctive – and that's probably why we got on so well.

I like my character because she's a craftswoman. She works with her hands, an artist creating frescoes and amazingly beautiful mosaics. She's a rebel, but she's often right and she makes sure everyone knows it. She's also very stubborn. She's so much like me! When she decides to do something, she does it. When she decides to finish a job, nothing stands in her way. She decided to be single for a time in her life and she was. She's a very spunky chick.

What I like about Pierre Jolivet is that he never makes the same film twice. That's very rare nowadays. He loves actors and knows how to direct them. Comedy is like a musical score. It has a tempo you have to respect. Pierre got us working very hard on keeping up the pace, interrupting each other, talking while doing lots of different things. Pierre's very meticulous and demanding, but even more so with himself than with others. ”

VINCENT LINDON LUCAS

- *I guess the great thing about art is that everyone's allowed an opinion.*
- *Except me, apparently.*
- *But in business... I mean, if you asked me what I thought about the Dow Jones right now...*
- *I've absolutely no intention of asking you that.*

In a remarkable career that began with supporting roles in major movies of the 1980s, such as Jean-Jacques Beineix's *Betty Blue* and Claude Sautet's *A Few Days With Me*, Vincent Lindon has starred in three Claude Lelouch movies (*There Were Days and Moons*, *All That For This?*, *The Beautiful Story*), three Coline Serreau movies (*Crisis*, *La Belle Verte*, *Chaos*), and three Benoît Jacquot movies (*Seventh Heaven*, *The School of Flesh*, *Don't Make Trouble*). *Could This Be Love* is the sixth time he has worked with Pierre Jolivet. Vincent Lindon won the prestigious 1989 Jean Gabin prize and has been nominated for two Best Actor César awards. His most recent credits include Nicole Garcia's Cannes selected *Selon Charlie* (2006). Sandrine and I first met on a Claude Sautet film in 1987. We nearly made a couple of other together, but we knew that the day we'd finally end up on a set together, we'd say, "Great! At last!"

“ I was really pleased going to the studio every morning, to be with Sandrine. The days when she wasn't in the scene, I used to think, "Shoot, Sandrine won't be around today." It's as simple as that. I really like her and I find her very touching. We have a remarkably straightforward relationship. It could even be love!

I like the way Pierre sees me and the image he sends back of me. Supposing he'll take me on for his next couple of movies, that'll make eight or nine we'll have shot together. I'm really excited about how movie fans of the future will look back over our collaboration. ”

ON NE BE

FRANÇOIS
BERLEAND
ROLAND
CHRISTIN

Hold on, she's single, pretty, smart and financially independent. No kidding, that scares guys off. Of course, she can't find a man. A bigger "glitch" than that just doesn't exist!

François Berléand is one of France's most popular and most instantly recognizable character actors. Having started out on the stage, his outstanding performances in Bertrand Tavernier's *Captain Conan*, Louis Malle's *Milou en Mai*, Jacques Audiard's *A Very Discreet Hero* and Catherine Breillat's *Romance* among other major pictures of the 1980s and 1990s made him a household name. More recently, François starred in the international box-office sensation *The Chorus* (2004), Claude Chabrol's political thriller *The Comedy of Power* (2006), and Guillaume Canet's adaptation of Harlan Coben's bestseller *Tell No One* (2006).

“Actually, I hate my character because he's not the hero of the film and it's about time that Pierre wrote a leading role for me. Also, he wears black the whole time and I hardly ever wear black. Anyway, I guess you have to get used to things.

But in fact, I adore this character because he's such a great guy. He is so tactless and can't help himself playing or fiddling with things. He's a real handyman. He tries to do his best and winds up in exactly the wrong place at the wrong time. But when he gets kicked out the front door or the window, he sneaks back in through the back door.

I was in Pierre's debut picture in 1984 and he's been incredibly loyal to me ever since. He's given me some truly wonderful parts to play.”



L I A N E F O L Y J E A N N E L A R O Z I È R E

- *Jeanne, I want you to look over those contracts from A – Z.*
- *I'll check the commas and periods, too.*

Liane Foly launched her incredibly successful singing career in the mid-80s with the hit single *Besoin de Toi* that led to her first album, *The Man I Love*. She has since released eleven albums, including the double-live *Une étoile dort* (2005). In 1992, Liane recorded a duo with Charles Aznavour for the French version of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, and in 1995 Sydney Pollack used her song *Les petites notes* on the soundtrack of *Sabrina*. After flirting with the cinema for so long, Liane has now decided to take the plunge. *Could This Be Love* is her first major film role.

“ I play a woman who is the complete opposite of me. I'm always smiling and she's always frowning. She talks in a really deep voice – which is what makes her frown – and she's austere, rigid, power-hungry and motivated by money. Even when she's trying to charm people, she's totally cynical. And as for the way she dresses...

I first met Pierre over twenty years ago when I arrived in Paris. His brother, Marc, directed my first one-woman show. And he's directing my new show, too. They are both very talented, sweet and uncomplicated guys.

I'm new to the movies, but when I was a kid, I used to adore dressing up. My parents ran a drugstore with a huge stock of toys and disguises. My girlfriends and I used to make up games, just like in the movies. One of us would play the princess or the good fairy, and so on. ”



PIERRE
JOLIVET
DIRECTOR

Pierre Jolivet started in show business as a stand-up comic with his brother, Marc. He soon started writing and producing films, including Luc Besson's first two features *The Last Combat* and *Subway*. In 1995, Pierre moved into directing himself with the thriller *Stricte ment Personnel*. In his subsequent films, which include *Fred* (1996), *A Mere Mortal* (1991) and *My Little Business* (1999), Pierre has covered every genre from satire to drama via social comedy. *Could This Be Love* is his first romantic comedy.

After working for the Paris police department and French intelligence, Simon Michaël brought his expertise of crime and criminals to the cinema in the mid-1980s with the first in the smash-hit *Ripoux* trilogy (*Le Cop I*, *Le Cop II*, *Part-Time Cops*), directed by Claude Zidi, with whom Simon wrote seven films in all, including *La Totale* (1991), remade by James Cameron as *True Lies*, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger. *Could This Be Love* will be his fifth movie with Pierre Jolivet. On top of over twenty TV movies and mini-series, his other credits include *Le Solitaire* (1987) by Jacques Deray, *Flag* (1987) by Jacques Santi and Romain Goupil's *Maman* (1990).

CO-WRITER
SIMON
MICHAEL

CAST

Elsa
Lucas
Roland
Jeanne Larozière
Rachid
Brigitte
Albert
Francis
Lola
Marina
Della Ponte
Sumo Yakeshi
Boissière
Antonia
Lucas's ex-wife

Sandrine Bonnaire
Vincent Lindon
François Berléand
Liane Foly
Kad Merad
Guilaine Londez
Albert Dray
Pierre Diot
Mar Sodupe
Clémentine Poidatz
Venantino Venantini
Brian Bigg
William Boisgerault
Silvana Gasparini
Nancy Tate

cou

CREW

Directed by
Produced by
Screenplay

Director of Photography
Film Editor
Script Supervisor
Sound
Production Designer
Costumes
Production Manager
Casting

Pierre Jolivet
Vendredi Film
Pierre Jolivet
Simon Michael
Pascal Ridao (A.F.C.)
Yves Deschamps
Maggie Perlado
Pierre Excoffier
Émile Ghigo
Élisabeth Tavernier
François Hamel
Brigitte Moidon