



# *Eldorado*

Directed by Bouli Lanners



Belgium/2008/In French with English Subtitles/80 min./  
1:1.85/Dolby Digital/Unrated

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## **SYNOPSIS**

Yvan and Elie are two loners. They wander aimlessly through their lives. Yvan is a quick-tempered 40-year-old dealer in vintage cars. Eli is a young burglar and ex-junkie. One day Yvan catches young Elie trying to burgle him. Instead of beating him up, he becomes strangely attached to him and agrees to drive him home to his parents in his old Chevrolet. Yvan and Elie are both nostalgic about lost relationships, which is what leads them to undertake a bizarre journey through a region that is as spectacular as it is crazy. Both are trying to find the pieces of a puzzle that they want to put back together, but it might be too late.

## **AWARDS and FESTIVALS**

**WINNER-** Best European Film- Director's Fortnight, **2008 Cannes Film Festival**  
**SPECIAL MENTION-** **2008 Pesaro Film Festival**

OFFICIAL SELECTION

**Warsaw Int'l FF**

**Haifa Int'l FF**

**London Int'l FF**

**Thessaloniki Int'l FF**

**Gijon Int'l FF**

**Goteborg Int'l FF**

**AFI European Union FF**

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The idea for the film came from a true story. One night I came home and caught two burglars in the act. One was hidden under my bed, the other under my desk! It was an unlikely situation; three guys who were scared and a long night spent talking. Based on that unforgettable event, I constructed and invented a story in which the anecdotes are transformed, fleshed out, and end up coming together. The adventure between Yvan and Elie is true fiction, mixing together things from real life and moments of pure invention. When I was writing, it never occurred to me to play the role of Yvan. My producer, Jacques-Henri Bronckart, suggested it and ended up convincing me. It is true that the character I had written was a lot like me. I ended up in front of and behind the camera, a crazy experience that was made possible by my cast and crew. But it wasn't always easy for me to judge the quality of the rushes when I was constantly seeing myself on screen, in shorts or my underwear, in the middle of a river. It taught me a lot about humility.

I wanted to move beyond an image of Belgium as a sad, grey place to something more cheerful. I opted for a very colorful film full of light, and shot in 35mm in Wallon landscapes that evoke the Far West or Montana, more than social realism. Jean-Paul De Zaeytijd, the cinematographer, did a fantastic job, and when you watch the film it makes you think of an old, worn-out cowboy.

Yvan and Elie are two loners. They wander aimlessly through their lives. But they are both nostalgic about lost relationships, which is what leads them to undertake this journey. Both are trying to find the pieces of a puzzle that they want to put back together. But it is too late.

When I was a kid, every weekend, we would travel from La Calamine to Bastogne and back to see my grandparents. I would press my nose up against the window watching the landscape go by. The car was like a cocoon and I loved it. Even now, I am meditative. If the landscape streams by when I'm just sitting there, I still love it. The sideways track shot is the best invention on earth. So I always have to put at least one of them in my films. I can't help myself.

This is one of the most important things for me. I can drive for days or even weeks to find one. When I've found it, I keep going back to it. I dissect it, I inspect it closely and I rewrite the scene based on what it inspires in me. Philippe Groff, the production manager, and I went for long drives to Belgium's nooks, crannies and dead-ends. We found three epicenters that we could use as bases, so the whole shoot took place over a distance of less than one hundred and fifty kilometers.

Fabrice Adde reminded me of someone. Straight off, I knew he was the character I was looking for. He had that fragility, that capacity for lies and at the same time a gentleness. Discovering and working with an actor that nobody knows yet is

like finding a little treasure. It makes me really happy. It is the same for the other roles in the film. They bring great richness to this very unlikely cast.

I mix the infinitely sad with infinitely stupid situations to get a laugh. In this way, I tried to give depth, humanity and a way into themes that are close to my heart...I mixed the truly sad and the truly dumb. Even though my dietician tells me to avoid it, I like sweet and sour more than anything.

From the writing stage to editing, I work with music. It is an integral part of the film. I wanted a soundtrack that was tailor-made. I was lucky someone introduced me to Renaud Mayeur, whose warm, rugged riffs were exactly like what I had been listening to all through the writing process. An Pierlé and Koen Gisen composed a piece of petrifying beauty. My friend Stefan Liberski gave me his little creation like you'd buy someone a drink in a bar. And to top it off, we bought the rights to three songs that were really important to me: The Milkshakes, from my teen years, Jesse Sykes...It adds up to the powerful, spellbinding soundtrack that I dreamt of from the outset.

## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

**Bouli Lanners** was born in Belgium in 1965. A self-taught painter, he worked at every possible job on shoots for Belgian television before making himself popular on Canal+ Belgium, by acting in sketches on "Snuls", a comedy show created in 1989. Since then, he has directed films and played many supporting roles in Belgian and French productions, including *The Carriers are Waiting* by Benoît Mariage, *Aaltra* by Benoît Delépine and Gustave Kervern, *Bunker Paradise*, *Enfermés dehors* by Albert Dupontel, *When the Sea Rises* by Yolande Moreau, *A Very Long Engagement* by Jean-Pierre Jeunet, *Cow-Boy* by Benoît Mariage, *Asterix at the Olympic Games*, in which he plays the King of the Greeks, and *I Always Wanted to be a Gangster* by Samuel Benchetrit. We will soon see him in *Où est la main de l'homme sans tête* by the Malandrin brothers, and in *Louise Michel* by Delépine and Kervern.

In *Eldorado*, his second feature film as a director, he plays the lead. In 1999, he wrote and directed *Travellinckx*, a short road movie in black and white super 8, which did a world tour of film festivals. Two years later, the short film *Muno* confirmed his unusual style and was selected for the Directors' Fortnight at Cannes and many other festivals. In 2005, he made his first feature film, *Ultranova*, a tender and ironic portrait of a group of misfits and a quirky look at his native Wallonia, which was awarded a prize at the Berlinale. He is currently writing his next two feature films.

# CREDITS

## Cast

Yvan  
Elie  
The Collector  
The Nudist  
Elie's Mom  
The Mechanics  
  
The Bikers  
  
The Man from the Parking Lot

**Bouli Lanners**  
**Fabrice Adde**  
**Philippe Nahon**  
**Didier Toupy**  
**Françoise Chichéry**  
**Stefan Liberski**  
**Baptiste Isaïa**  
**Jean-Jacques Rausin**  
**Renaud Rutten**  
**Jean-Luc Meekers**

## Crew

Director  
Screenplay Et Dialogues  
Cinematographer  
Sound Engineer  
Set Designer  
Costumes  
Production Manager  
Line Producer  
Film Editor  
Sound Editor  
Mixers  
  
Soundtrack  
  
Producer  
Co-Producer

**Bouli Lanners**  
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**Jean-Paul De Zaeytijd**  
**Olivier Hespel**  
**Paul Rouschop**  
**Elise Ancion**  
**Philippe Groff**  
**Pablo Bogaty**  
**Ewin Ryckaert**  
**Marc Bastien**  
**Franco Piscopo**  
**Benoît Biral**  
**Renaud Mayeur**  
**An Pierlé & Koen Gisen**  
**Jacques-Henri**  
**Jérôme Vidal**  
**Lazennec & Associates**