

KINO LORBER

presents

CAMILLE CLAUDEL  
1915

A film by Bruno Dumont

Starring  
Juliette Binoche

Freely adapted from the works and letters of Paul Claudel, the letters of Camille Claudel and medical records.

*2013 / 2.35:1 / 97 minutes / Mono / In French with English subtitles*

A Kino Lorber Release  
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# KINO LORBER

## OPENING CREDITS

Born in 1864 in Aisne, Northern France, Camille Claudel is a sculptress, the older sister of the writer Paul Claudel, her junior by 4 years. She is first Auguste Rodin's student, then his mistress for fifteen years, until she leaves him in 1895. In 1913, following the death of her father, having spent ten years as a recluse in her studio on the quai Bourbon in Paris, she is confined by her family, first to the mental hospital at Ville Evrard near Paris, then to an asylum at Montdevergues, in the Vaucluse.

## SYNOPSIS

Winter, 1915. Confined by her family to an asylum in the South of France - where she will never sculpt again - the chronicle of Camille Claudel's reclusive life, as she waits for a visit from her brother, Paul Claudel.

## END CREDITS

Camille Claudel will spend the last 29 years of her life in this asylum, where she will die on the 19th October 1943, at the age of 79. Buried in a communal grave, her body will never be found. Paul Claudel died on the 23rd February 1955. He will visit his sister until the end. He will not attend her funeral at Montdevergues asylum.

## BRUNO DUMONT

Director

### Biography

Born March 1958, Bruno Dumont taught philosophy before dedicating himself to cinema.

### Filmography

2013 CAMILLE CLAUDEL 1915

Berlin Film Festival - Official Competition

2011 OUTSIDE SATAN

Cannes Film Festival - Un Certain Regard

2009 HADEWIJCH

Toronto Film Festival - Fipresci Award

2006 FLANDERS

Cannes Film Festival - Grand Jury Prize

2003 TWENTYNINE PALMS

Venice Film Festival - Official Competition

1999 L'HUMANITE

Cannes Film Festival - Grand Jury Prize

Cannes Film Festival - Best Actor

Cannes Film Festival - Best Actress

1997 LA VIE DE JESUS

Cannes Film Festival - Golden Camera Special Mention

Nominated for Best First Work at Cesar Awards

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## CAST

Camille Claudel - JULIETTE BINOCHE  
Paul Claudel - JEAN-LUC VINCENT  
Doctor - ROBERT LEROY  
Priest - EMMANUEL KAUFFMAN  
Miss Blanc - MARION KELLER  
Young Novitiate - ARMELLE LEROY-ROLLAND  
Patient in restraints - MYRIAM ALLAIN  
Sister Regine - REGINE GAYTE  
Sister Nicole - NICOLE FAURITE  
Intern - ERIC JACOULET  
Sister Florence - FLORENCE PHILIPPE  
Sister Christelle - CHRISTELLE PETIT  
Sister Sandra - SANDRA RIVERA  
Patient in bath - CLAIRE PEYRADE

With the participation of the nursing home residents:  
Alexandra Lucas, Daniele, Jessica Herrero, Myriam Laloum, Christiane Blum

## CREW

Written and Directed by  
BRUNO DUMONT

### Producers

JEAN BREHAT, RACHID BOUCHAREB, MURIEL MERLIN

Production Manager - CEDRIC ETTOUATI  
Director of Photography - GUILLAUME DEFFONTAINES  
Sound - PHILIPPE LECOEUR  
Editors - BRUNO DUMONT, BASILE BELKHIRI  
Mix - EMMANUEL CROSET  
Art Director - RITON DUPIRE-CLEMENT  
Wardrobe - ALEXANDRA CHARLES, BRIGITTE MASSAY-SERSOUR  
Make-up - NATALI TABAREAU  
Hair - STEPHANE MALHEU  
'Making of' - VIRGINIE BARBAY

### Production 3B PRODUCTIONS

Co-producers ARTE FRANCE CINEMA, CRRAV NORD PAS-DE-CALAIS, LE FRESNOY,  
STUDIO NATIONAL DES ARTS CONTEMPORAINS

With the participation of ARTE FRANCE, CANAL+, CINE+, CNC  
With the support of REGION PACA, REGION NORD PAS-DE-CALAIS

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## **JULIETTE BINOCHÉ**

*Camille Claudel*

### Selected Filmography

- 2013 CAMILLE CLAUDEL 1915 by Bruno Dumont  
2012 ANOTHER WOMAN'S LIFE by Sylvie Testud  
COSMOPOLIS by David Cronenberg  
2010 CERTIFIED COPY by Abbas Kiarostami  
Best Actress - Cannes Film Festival  
2008 PARIS by Cedric Klapisch  
SUMMER HOURS by Olivier Assayas  
2007 FLIGHT OF THE RED BALLOON by Hou Hsiao-hsien  
2006 BREAKING AND ENTERING by Anthony Minghella  
2005 HIDDEN (CACHE) by Michael Haneke  
MARY by Abel Ferrara  
2002 JET LAG by Daniele Thompson  
2000 THE WIDOW OF SAINT-PIERRE by Patrice Leconte  
CODE UNKNOWN by Michael Haneke  
1998 ALICE AND MARTIN by Andre Techine  
1996 THE ENGLISH PATIENT by Anthony Minghella  
Academy Award(R) for Best Actress in a Supporting Role  
Best Actress - Berlin International Film Festival  
1995 THE HORSEMAN ON THE ROOF by Jean-Paul Rappeneau  
1993 THREE COLOURS: BLUE by Krzysztof Kieslowski  
Cesar for Best Actress  
1992 DAMAGE by Louis Malle  
1991 THE LOVERS ON THE BRIDGE by Leos Carax  
1988 THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING by Philip Kaufman  
1986 THE NIGHT IS YOUNG by Leos Carax  
1985 HAIL MARY by Jean-Luc Godard  
LA VIE DE FAMILLE by Jacques Doillon  
RENDEZ-VOUS by Andre Techine

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## CAMILLE CLAUDEL

### Interview with Bruno Dumont and Juliette Binoche

Bruno Dumont: The project has its origins in a phone message from Juliette Binoche. I was shooting "Outside Satan" at the time. I received a long message from Juliette, whom I had never met, in which she said she wanted to work with me. I thought she was foolhardy to do that. So for a month or so I asked myself: "What can I do with her? Because I'm very happy to work with actors, but I'm often not sure what to do with them..."

Juliette Binoche: A few weeks went by between my leaving the message and the time we met. When we did, I had the idea of a theme for a film and in fact Bruno told me he wanted to film a woman in solitude, in a house.

Bruno Dumont: As chance would have it, I was reading a book about Camille Claudel's life during her incarceration, and Juliette and she are about the same age. It triggered something in my mind and I said to myself: "That's it!" I like the fact that we know nothing about her life during her confinement, except for the medical notes. The thought of writing a screenplay from nothing appealed to me. I'm making a film about someone who spends her time doing not much and I liked that, cinematographically speaking. I found it extremely interesting to make a film about both confinement and idleness. So the idea of shooting three days in the life of Camille Claudel became - with the different elements I had, the diary, etc - a choice in which I firmly believe, which is to say that you can tell everything starting with the incidental. You don't have to tell someone's whole life. You can tell the truth in a few seconds.

Juliette Binoche: He told me: "This woman does nothing, she's neutral"- one of his favourite words - so we follow her into her "nothingness". But of course, for an actor, there's an intense interior life that is often recalled by seemingly insignificant events. There's a great intensity within her and her ordered life in the asylum.

Bruno Dumont: The idea was to shoot with real people suffering from mental illness; that was the project. So we had to find a place where we'd have both sets and a proximity to the sick, in other words, a hospital where the doctors would agree to let the patients take part in the film. I never thought of the film in any other way. When I met the nursing staff I listened to them very closely. I didn't turn up saying: "Here I am, I'm making a film, etc." I accepted many things about the reality of these women. I didn't try to manipulate them and turn them into something other than who they are.

Juliette Binoche: The rule we had from the start - so we wouldn't have unpleasant surprises in the middle of shooting, since we all made a huge deal out of filming there (much more than necessary in fact) - is that everyone had to call me Camille. During the shoot everyone called me Camille because it was easier, in case a patient improvised a line.

Bruno Dumont: It was a good idea, having the nurses play the sisters, something I hadn't thought of at the beginning. I asked myself: "What if something went wrong during a take, what would we do?" So my assistant Claude and I thought: "The nurses should play these roles." And they agreed. Straight away things were unified; it was coherent.

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They were stakeholders and I think one of the reasons the medical authorities agreed to do this was because their staff was going to be there. We are not medically trained, so talking to the staff every day and having them with us was great. At the same time, they helped us, they had their own input for the direction, they were there, placing them, holding them, pushing them. My task was to integrate these people who are in the film today. Celine, Alexandra, Rachel, they became characters in the end. So Jessica is Jessica, I have no comment to make about her. I didn't have to direct her. When I film Rachel, when I film Jessica, or Christiane, I have nothing to do, I set up my camera and I shoot... I do it simply, there's no fuss, because they give something unimaginable, something it would be impossible for any actor to do, and that was what I needed to try to convey the environment in which Camille Claudel found herself, and about which she speaks.

But it will be Christiane, Myriam, Jessica, contemporary mental patients, who are saying something ancient, still valid today, about which there isn't much comment to make. There is nothing to say. I never know what's going to happen, and that's exactly what interests me. Each time I say "action", something unexpected will happen, but the unexpected is welcome, it's even necessary in this kind of work where everything is planned. Thus there is a pressing need for an extremely rigorous construction, which can allow the unexpected. It is necessary to have precise spaces into which the unexpected can enter.

You can give one of the patients a piece of scotch-tape to look at so you'll get a certain look, they'll do that if they have to, they will play by our rules and constraints. I think the film leads the audience into the reality of confinement, without words, since there are only shouts, pain, time, boredom, the gaping shapes of mental illness which are clearly "non-word", emotion... At the same time, Paul and Camille are intellectuals, quite capable and powerful in expressing themselves through speaking and creating. This is clear from Camille's letters and Paul's oeuvre. They possess an exceptional power to go deep within their beings; therefore the film is built on Camille's range of extreme emotions, the furthest reaches of her pain, which is to say she plays tormented scenes in a very... almost-expressionist manner, pushed to the very limits. But she does go towards the spoken word. Her words exist in her letters, it is necessary, even for Juliette, to tear herself open, to let go but at the same time to return to the text, at a given point, something has to be said.

Juliette Binoche: Bruno gave me Camille's letters and said: "You have to make these yours." So I started to re-write them slightly, in order to make them less literary, incorporating other letters here and there, then emailed it to him, to provoke a response, to know if this was the direction in which he wanted to go. Since he was quite allusive and hadn't given me a script, I was really in the dark. He said: "But that's not it at all. You took out this word, this sentence..." And he added: "I want you to improvise." I said: "OK, so in fact you want this to be extremely precise but improvised." And he replied: "Exactly!"

Bruno Dumont: I can't put words into Camille Claudel's mouth, from my point of view, things she didn't say, that poses a real problem for me. Yet I also have a problem with listening to an actor reciting. I fight with actors to try and stop them reciting, and that's what's difficult. It isn't always easy for them because they're not used to it, they are performers so they need a text to interpret, and when there isn't one they can get a bit lost.

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Juliette Binoche: The challenge of this film is that it's mostly silent with only two or three moments with a lot of speaking, as if all the words she hadn't been able to say come out in a rush, all at once. I learned these four tightly typed pages by heart then we played the scene with Paul, and Bruno took out most of the text. He wanted me to improvise so I did what I could. It's not easy since I'm not used to it, but I find the challenge very exciting.

Bruno Dumont: I don't need an actress to be perfectly posed for a shot. But she might want that, so I have to explain... Juliette is good for that, she likes it, even if it destabilizes her. But it's good, to have a destabilized actress in a film about a destabilized character, it works. One can accept weakness from someone who is psychologically very fragile and very tormented. At the same time she is also tormented by the difficulty of playing certain scenes. It creates torment and in fact it feeds Camille, and that pleases me greatly.