

LES FILMS DU FLEUVE AND ARCHIPEL 35 PRESENT

# YOUNG AHMED

A FILM BY  
JEAN-PIERRE AND LUC DARDENNE



WINNER  
BEST DIRECTOR PRIZE  
CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

Film at Lincoln Center  
57th New York  
Film Festival  
2019 Official Selection



IDIR BEN ADDI

OLIVIER BONNAUD MYRIEM AKHEDDIU VICTORIA BLUCK CLAIRE BODSON OTHMANE MOUMEN

SCREENPLAY BY JEAN-PIERRE AND LUC DARDENNE. EXECUTION OF PRODUCTION: BENOIT DENIAUX (CINEMA) MARIE-HELENE DOZD (CINEMA) JEAN-PIERRE DUREY (CINEMA) JULIEN SICART (CINEMA) THOMAS GAUDER (CINEMA) IGOR GABRIEL (CINEMA) COSTUME DESIGNER: MAIRA RAMEHDAN-LEVI (CINEMA) FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: CAROLINE TAMBOUR  
PRODUCTION MANAGER: OLIVIER ABRASSART (CINEMA) POST PRODUCTION MANAGER: SEBASTIEN DEMEYERE (CINEMA) CEORIC ETTOUATI (CINEMA) PRODUCERS: JEAN-PIERRE AND LUC DARDENNE (CINEMA) DENIS FREYDLINE (CINEMA) DELPHINE TOMSON (CINEMA) ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS: YAN GOY DE KEYSER (CINEMA) ARLETTE ZYLBERBERG (CINEMA) LES FILMS DU FLEUVE ARCHIPEL 35  
FRANCE 2 CINEMA PROXIMUS RTBF (BELGIAN TELEVISION) WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF CANAL+ (CINEMA) FRANCE TELEVISIONS WALLONIE (THE BRUXELLES-CAPITALE REGION) PRODUCED WITH THE HELP OF THE CENTRE DU CINEMA ET DE AUDIOVISUEL DE LA FEDERATION WALLONNE-BRUXELLES  
WITH THE SUPPORT OF EURIMAGES THE TAX SHELTER OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF BELGIUM CASH KAFKA PICTURES CASH KAFKA PICTURES MOVIE TAX SHELTER EMPOWERED BY BELFUS IN ASSOCIATION WITH WILD BUNCH DIAPHANIA CINEART AND GEM DISTRIBUTIONE INTERNATIONAL SALES WILD BUNCH

LE CERCLE ROUGE POUR FIDELITE' AU FILM. CREDITS: [unreadable]

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**Y O U N G  
A H M E D**

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**1H24 - DCP - 1.85 - 5.1**

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**KINO LORBER**

## DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

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When we finished writing this screenplay, we realized that, in a way, we had written the story of the fruitless attempts made by various characters to dissuade the young fanatic Ahmed, our main character, from carrying out his murderous plan. Whoever these characters may be – his teacher Inès, his mother, his brother, his sister, his caseworker, the judge, the psychologist at the detention centre, his lawyer, the owners of the farm where he is placed, their daughter Louise – not one of them manages to reach the hard, mysterious core of this boy ready to kill his teacher in the name of his religious convictions.

When we began writing, we never imagined that we were creating such an inscrutable character, capable of eluding us to such an extent, of leaving us without any possibility of a dramatic construction to catch up with him and bring him out of his murderous madness. Even Youssof, the imam at the fundamentalist mosque, this magnetic figure who has harnessed the energy of the adolescent's ideals to focus it on purity and hatred of impurity, even he, the master, is surprised by his disciple's determination. But could it be any different? Could it be any different when the fanatic is so young, almost a child, and when, moreover, his charismatic master encourages him to venerate a martyred cousin, a dead man?

How to halt the headlong rush towards murder of this fanatical boy, cut off as he is from the kindness of his educators, from the love of his mother, from the friendship and romantic games of young Louise? How can he be stopped in a moment when, without resorting to naïve optimism or an implausible happy ending, he could open up to life, converting to the impurity he has loathed until that point? What scene, what shots, could allow us to film that transformation and trouble the gaze of the audience that has entered Ahmed's night, as close as possible to that which possesses him, and to that from which he would finally be delivered?

Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne

## SYNOPSIS

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In Belgium, today, the destiny of young Ahmed (13), caught between his imam's ideals of purity and life's temptations.

# JEAN-PIERRE AND LUC DARDENNE FILMOGRAPHY

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Jean-Pierre Dardenne was born in Engis (Belgium) in April 1951.  
Luc Dardenne was born in Awirs (Belgium) in March 1954.

Together they have directed numerous documentaries.

In 1975, Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne founded the production company *Dérives*, which has produced more than eighty documentaries, including their own.

In 1994, they founded the production company Les Films du Fleuve.

## SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY AS DIRECTORS

### 1987: Falsch

Starring Bruno Cremer

### 1992: Je pense à vous

Starring Fabienne Babe,  
Robin Renucci

### 1996: The Promise

Starring Jérémie Renier,  
Olivier Gourmet, Assita Ouédraogo

### 1999: Rosetta

Starring Emilie Dequenne, Fabrizio Rongione,  
Anne Yernaux, Olivier Gourmet  
Palme d'Or and Best Actress for Emilie  
Dequenne – Cannes FF 1999

### 2002: The Son

Starring Olivier Gourmet,  
Morgan Marinne, Isabelle Soupарт  
Best Actor for Olivier Gourmet – Cannes FF 2002

### 2005: The Child

Starring Jérémie Renier, Déborah François,  
Jérémie Ségard  
Palme d'Or – Cannes FF 2005

### 2008: Lorna's Silence

Starring Arta Dobroschi, Jérémie Renier,  
Fabrizio Rongione  
Best Screenplay – Cannes FF 2008  
Prix Lux – 2008

### 2011: The Kid with a Bike

Starring Cécile de France,  
Thomas Doret, Jérémie Renier  
Grand Prize of the Jury – Cannes FF 2011

### 2014: Two Days, One Night

Starring Marion Cotillard, Fabrizio Rongione  
European Film Awards – Best Actress  
for Marion Cotillard 2015  
Academy Award® Best Actress  
Nomination for Marion Cotillard 2015

### 2016: The Unknown Girl

Starring Adèle Haenel, Olivier Bonnaud

### 2019: Young Ahmed

Starring Idir Ben Addi, Olivier Bonnaud,  
Myriem Akheddiou, Victoria Bluck,  
Claire Bodson, Othmane Moumen

## CAST

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### Ahmed

Idir Ben Addi

### Inès

Myriem Akheddiou

### Mother

Claire Bodson

### Caseworker

Olivier Bonnaud

### Louise

Victoria Bluck

### Imam Youssef

Othmane Moumen

## CREW

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### Written & Directed by

Jean-Pierre and  
Luc Dardenne

### Sound Editor

Valène Leroy

### Post Production Supervisor (Belgium)

Sébastien Demeyere

### 1st Assistant Director

Caroline Tambour

### Mix

Thomas Gauder

### Post Production Supervisor (France)

Cédric Ettouati

### DP

Benoit Dervaux

### Production Designer

Igor Gabriel

### Stills Photographer

Christine Plenus

### 1st Assistant Camera

Amaury Duquenne

### Costume Designer

Maira Ramedhan-Levi

### Producers

Jean-Pierre and  
Luc Dardenne,  
Denis Freyd

### Chief Editor

Marie-Hélène Dozo

### Make-up

Natali Tabareau-  
Vieuille

### Editor

Tristan Meunier

### Location Manager

Guillaume Fernandez

### Executive Producer

Delphine Tomson

### Sound

Jean-Pierre Duret,  
Julien Sicart

### Production Manager

Olivier Abrassart

### Associate Producers

Tanguy Dekeyser,  
Arlette Zylberber

## CREDITS

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A Les Films du Fleuve, Archipel 35, France 2 Cinema, Proximus, RTBF (Belgian Television) co-production, with the participation of Canal +, Ciné +, France Télévisions, Wallimage (Wallonia), the Brussels-Capital Region, produced with assistance from the Film and Audiovisual Center of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and Eurimages, with the support of the Tax Shelter of the Belgian Federal Government, Casa Kafka Pictures, Casa Kafka Pictures Movie Tax Shelter empowered by Belfius, in association with Wild Bunch, Diaphana, Cinéart and BIM Distribuzione. International Sales Wild Bunch.

