



Bloodhound

(RÉ)
(EL)
COMPETITION
2023



a film by *Yamina Zoutat*



Shellac presents

Bloodhound

a film by Yamina Zoutat

A Close Up Films and Les Films d'Ici
production

Switzerland, France

Original title: **CHIENNE DE ROUGE**

1h36

1.85:1

Color

Sound 5.1

original French version

with English subtitles

SALES & FESTIVALS

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One morning, a woman wakes up with the desire to film blood.

In her city of Paris, she encounters a blood conveyor, a medical transplanter, a “chimera”...
Then she remembers a trial she covered, a long time ago. The contaminated blood case.

In the meantime, in the depths of a forest, a bloodhound tracks a prey.

INTERVIEW WITH YAMINA ZOUTAT

As your voice suggests in the film, was the starting point of BLOODHOUND a vision when you woke up one morning?

Yes, I woke up one morning, my mind pierced by these simple words: "I want to film blood". It upset me so much I first dismissed this desire. But the more I dismissed it, the stronger it came back. It was mysterious to me, beyond my understanding. If I ended up following this desire, it was because I felt it resonated with our society, our past and our present. That very morning, I saw red. A torrent of images from films stormed before my eyes. I wanted this peculiar film to be scattered with shots that were not from me but from the history of cinema, from the visions we all share in common. And to film human, animal, genuine blood, something that is not fake, I flung myself into a quest for encounters. We all move around with our 5-to-6 liters of blood but, whenever one actually sees it, one senses the danger. So I wondered how to show blood and realised, more importantly, how difficult it was to find some.

That's why your filming your own blood.

I immediately thought of filming my period because I knew I could easily access this blood. Then, quickly enough, the woman's body turned

into a major leitmotiv in the film. I wanted it to be seen at all stages of life, from the blood conveyor's baby on the picture he shows to my mother, who's the oldest of all the characters. I was very inspired by the work from anthropologist Françoise Héritier, especially her interviews with author and filmmaker Patric Jean. She insists on this distinction: woman's blood flows out naturally whereas men shed it intentionally. This Intimacy is put in perspective with the collective. I read once again all the religious texts addressing this matter: they all agree about it, women are impure, sullied by this blood. This angers me to see women belittled because of this blood of life. Had I been a man, I never would have made this film. I made it with my body as a starting point. It is my woman's way of seeing the world but also my woman's body at work behind the camera. I can see myself in each and every person I film up close.

When you were a court reporter, you covered the political aspect of the 1999 contaminated blood case. How does this major political scandal connects with the more intimate part of the film?

Back then, I had been warned by my superiors a few days before the trial began: "you shall not show blood". I never accepted this commandment, although I abided by it initially. This trial was extraordinary on several aspects. It took place before the Republic's Court of Justice, set up to protect the officials. A judge was presiding it but

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it was composed of politicians. When I found the only recorded image of the trial, when the Court enters the room, I was stunned to see only men, all the same age. On top of that, the trial took place in a conference center in a very well-off district of Paris and not in a place of justice, that is cut from the rest of the world and where a judgment can be rendered independently, away from the pressures exerted by society.

As for another peculiarity, victims were heard as simple witnesses. They could not press charges and their claims be heard which goes against the very contradictory nature of a trial. I was 28 and facing a denial of justice. I had the feeling I was not doing my job properly, to be reporting on this trial in an abstract way, with the technocratic language used during the proceedings. With this film, 20 years later, I wanted to give a face back to the victims I heard telling their stories. That is why I edited pictures sent by the families into the film. The damages caused by this case are tremendous. It questioned the judiciary, medical and political powers. When I started working on this project, in 2017, it was before COVID but when it sprung up, I felt this new epidemic was echoing with it.

One of the scenes has a significantly different mood from the rest of the film, the reconstitution of a violent assault: in which context did this simulation take place?

After the 2015 Paris attacks, the medical staff set up advanced trainings to deal with mass shootings. It is a thoroughly staged simulation aiming at teaching the right actions to take to sort the victims. Med students play the

victims. Everyone has a very specific role evolving in time. It is the only scene in which blood is not blood but "red". I did not want one to think it is an actual crime scene, I display all the signs to indicate it is fake. However, and that might just be one of strength of the documentary form, the fake appears as terribly real. I believe to see these images gives us a chance to come together as a society, understand the world we live in.

BLOODHOUND is a film which feels constantly on the loose, even on the lookout. It is always moving around, especially on the streets of Paris through the character of the blood conveyor.

The title comes from these hunting dogs trained to find the wounded animals by tracking their blood traces. I wanted the film to be like this: on the edge, restless, as an influx. I perceive it as a great network of circulation, just as the blood system is. It mattered to me to film these cruises through Paris, my territory, like a dog's territory. Medically, blood is not a liquid but a tissue. This notion pushed me towards putting the stories altogether in a heterogeneous form, and look for depths in meaning. I feel like I am part of this territory. This film was a way of checking on this city, today. For the film to premiere in the heart of Paris, at the Cinéma du Réel, it is highly significant to me.

**Interview by Raphaëlle Pireyre
March 2023**

YAMINA ZOUTAT

Algerian-Italian, born in Yverdon, Switzerland. Yamina Zoutat first worked for more than ten years as a court reporter in Paris. The criminal court was her "film school".

Awarded by the Prix de la Création for her first film *LAUNDRY* (2010), then the Silver Sesterce for her first feature film *6999 DOORS* (2017) at Visions du Réel, her films have been screened in many international festivals, including Buenos Aires, São Paulo and Quebec, and have been distributed in France.

6999 DOORS – 87 min – 2017

LAUNDRY – 43 min – 2010



BLOODHOUND

Written, directed, shot and narrated by **YAMINA ZOUTAT**

Writing advisor **RICHARD COPANS**

Photography advisor **CLEMENT APERTET**

Assistant director and additional images **HUGO ORTS**

Sound **SYLVAIN COPANS**

Editing **DAMIAN PLANDOLIT**

Color grading **RODNEY MUSSO / COLOR GRADE**

Sound mix **DENIS SÉCHAUD / MASE STUDIO**

Archives **DYVIA BABECOFF**

Producers **JOËLLE BERTOSSA & FLAVIA ZANON** (Close Up Films, Geneva)

Coproducer **RICHARD COPANS** (Les Films d'Ici, Paris)

A **CLOSE UP FILMS** and **LES FILMS D'ICI** production

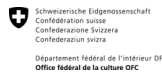
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