

## « ROAD MOVES VIE »

The actress Dominique Frot is as far removed from me as the active woman Dominique Frot. It's only and exclusively when I find myself on certain film sets that this distancing gives way to a consistency, a human quality. That's my only real work. There's a part of the unconscious and part of lucidity to which I agree to abandon myself. I stretch towards it all the time: to what is happening, to what happened, to what life aspires and the processes which prevent it to do so. It's a hope, a passion, the only way to master the fear and the joy that surpass me. But I can only approach these questions on some film sets, not at all on all. It's the hidden face of my work. I rather like the other one as well. They are Siamese twin faces. With Larry Clark, it is the hidden face I find.

On this face, the presence of others protects me from myself, and thus, their ability to assimilate. This is necessary because although one represents man subjected to brutality, none, or very few (or are they?) are capable of living outside it in order to judge it. Because this brutality implies an almost complete adaptation. So among others, who somehow hold me back, the world is in order. This order protects me from the consequences of a standoff, yet sometimes won, against total aberration. It's my way of writing. The set is the paper. My body, the pen. If I were to write, the work would be the same. But without the others to hold me back. Above the abyss everything is terribly real. But without parapet, there would be no abyss at all.

When Larry Clark offered me this role, I first heard at the audition and then saw in the script that it was possible in there to find the hidden face of my work, this face my life is connected, related to. I can't confine this life to a series of arbitrary circumstances when it aspires to a succession of awarenesses. The sensation of having found that side of my work was confirmed when I met with Clark. *I arrived as his place, his first assistant being as welcoming as the apartment where he introduced me. Smiles, who do not boast to hide nothing. Movements that do not interrupt the stillness, exchanges that do not erase the silence. It's okay. The two young guys chosen for the roles are there. Larry films the scene. Nothing begins. Everything happens. The presence of one of those young guys is so strong that it erases the idea of the "actor." All works. Larry is satisfied. Collected exchange of a few words. By the window, I'm having my first cigarette of the day. It is 19.30. I leave. I provided. I could walk all night in Paris.*

We live in a brutal society made possible by a certain culture. Culture it is therefore not the icing on the cake, it is still and always a place of conflict where the very story is shaped, as cynical as it might be. When you arrive on a shoot you can have the sensation of living as if you were climbing a mountain with a rope worn to the point of breaking, where you just continue, self-confident but unaware. Almost everything on a shoot makes you think that all is well. The assistant, keeping the actor at hand just as long as he should, to ensure the presence of the latter the very second he is requested on the set, hears nothing of the rope being worn. But this call comes from beyond the craft service table and other drinks to which he tries to scotch the actor. He's done his job, his piece of the rope might still hold for some time. The film is concerned with the rope as a whole. The actor knows that the important thing is to sail. Without anchor, no sailing. Without sailing, no anchor.

Some things are unimaginable, some scripts give to read the unimaginable, joining the concerns of our own present time. So I have to try to imagine these things as unimaginable as they can be. By sticking to this impasse of the imagination, would let the unimaginable grow. Filming such scenarios serves this purpose, to try to share the unimaginable, and by which what is played joins the concern of everyone's present time. So thank you to the production who engages in and enables this sharing. Even though the cinema becomes the image of what has become impossible to say.

To be able to do my work as an actress, I have to make sure that when you say « action », I can come up with, head to toe, a perception that reflects the contents of the script. It is always writing, and writing comes from afar, a state of consciousness of unknown location. It brings forth a fear that holds life strongly, believing in a powerful continuous joy. A sensation of astonishment as I feel invisible in a body with very fuzzy boundaries, almost fluid, even more lively as my life seems to depend on very few things, so that I doubt its reality as much as those around me. I would be a transposition of the life that exists somewhere, a fragment assigned to me by chance, being there by chance. And then, clearly an error has crept into it all, more vertiginous than the cosmos. We could have invented identities, like railway stations, to find and amuse ourselves. We are persons named "x", we are not « x". We are not, we are made to be. Obviously, my life is not mine though it is I who live it and will end up dying from it. With the same sense as that of a blind, my silence gives me a curious, chopped speech; I hear fluid sequences of words that lacerate me, as an order filling a void.

And here I am like someone who wants to do something else within a body appearing. The actor knows that there is always something better to do than to do something. Say nothing of whom and what, guilty or not. I advance within the role, sentenced to interpret it, as if I wanted to get rid of it and publicly go into seclusion, through the role as "the mother of Math." Then I suddenly feel as being at an equal distance from all things. I'm equidistant

from sleep and memory, woman and man, the ephemeral and the immortality of world-views devoured.

Leaning over Math I see, with his mother's eyes, a house struck by lightning. I look through the rubble; I see millions of people who do not understand and hold their arms up in the air. The skull of the child badly welded suggest an unknown world: a fear that encompasses all others like an earlier life form than thought.

Urgently, get out of the skin. Sport love asceticism orgy, whatever, but get out. All negates her. Anywhere: leave. What doesn't seem able to exist she'd like to having thought of. This mother, like certain people, was never a child, but is slowly becoming one, descending deeper into herself day after day.

To perceive what life aspires to achieve; I want to know that hope.

I do the actor (I'm at loss with the word actress) for that, I throw my body into the community to see how we could sort things out differently. This is writing.

It is by playing that I write. Larry Clark wrote by filming. Writing requires passing certain boundaries. We are confronted with why and how and whom to suit, we ourselves accepted these walls, offered by love under the banner of which education is given, as natural.

Cry madness write crime, it tears from reason to write. In the work might be released this need for something of the unlimited and the prohibited.

A script such as "The smell of us" gives strength to yet again go beyond these boundaries, accepted, forgotten to the point of being forgotten having been forgotten. I again face what makes me accept the periodically. It's violent. My work is not a « job ». It's the construction of a growing insight if I am to bear it. It saves me, even if it is by and for destruction. It's like Clark's kids, they move away, they go beyond, and simultaneously, they destroy themselves, to expel what keeps them from moving beyond. This is how I feel it. This script echoes the actor. His goings-back and forth. Only periodically can you bear to know that the rope is worn out and about to break. Periodically, the children of "The smell" descend, like victims seeking the arms of their executioner, in the neighborhood apartments: the cellars already buried, where one speaks a language that no longer exists. Where one could be in breath's time, as if the rope was unworn. The young people of "The smell" oscillate between a life above the asphalt, and below, in the apartment's cellars. This world devoured by images is also the breath of the adults, when they return from an apnea into the bottomless darkness. Several sequences of "The smell" evoke the crossover of "breath"; this "pose", founded on a mythical misunderstanding.

Man, it reinvents itself all the time brand new with each breath. How is it that after sleep has dismantled all the workings of the mind, of memory, of will, the re-assembly doesn't not occur in exactly the same way and doesn't reform a different character, another me? Even industry may live, extended, immediate moments cut or separated from what precedes and what follows.

Each individual is the result of a relationship between a limited being's sensation of the unlimited. Man knows not to be the center of the world, he can grasp the limitless, but it is forbidden to live it, to live beyond. He endorses the ban of surpassing himself. He is a rabbit that car's headlights illuminated. We are the candle flame. Each individual comply with being only the candle itself. That's what chairs are for, and names, identities, positions, and borders. These objects make history, and man cannot live without history. The flame has for her that you cannot make her your own. Yet the face humanity we believe to have, periodically asks to be erased. Each individual fights an endless battle between what stops, freezes, fixes it, and what, on the contrary, changes it, renews it, makes it depart, pushes it into hundred of existences etc. .... The institution, the « position », and all that we are, have to make do with this data. Unexpected life and inner self disappear behind the expected life, the self construed by the outside world, life as astonishment, violent, becomes unreachable, disappears under the safety standard and the norms of things, to destroy anything unreasonable.

I went back to the set of "The Smell of us", after having performed the work expected of me. I was tempted to be there for nothing. See if it was possible. Being there "without function", "without justification." Wearing the "unclassifiable" of "no reason", needless to the canvas. Behind every person, in or out of a script, filmed or not, there's more than one person who meets the 36 private and professional roles, which reassure him and with him his entourage. There is a human being, speechless, even if he doesn't care to know it anymore. All, actors, technicians, directors, characters, speechless.

In contrast, there is fear, the one organized by the human being itself, in order to stifle this joyful terror: Everyone gives the other a wrongful look that protects him from all the wrongful looks he can imagine others giving him, likely to stir up the mud on the bottom of a glass of water. It is fiction. Aberration. Less terrible than fright I guess, we constantly create terror. Behind it there is an immobile self. Does one say of a man crossing the Antarctic by plane that he, at a particular moment, is on a sea of ice or over the tumultuous heart of the ocean? Between what stirs within each of us in silence and which manifests itself in the clarity of consciousness, there is a tension. The halt of the action, the eclipse, can accommodate this tension and the conflicts to which it gives rise. In the distance and in silence, we never find what we seek for but what we don't. What we thought we came to film can at its periphery reveal what could be a lesson in a different way of seeing and filming. Thus the periphery is important. The time away from filming. I dream of the making a film, expanded over a year, where one has

time to face a different interpretation of what's at play and taking place. Something else is always happening, and everything is part of something else. A community, however founded, is always a bit about the invention of a possible world, to confront it with the real world. In my eyes it's what the young people in "The Smell of us » do, even if they destroy themselves. This is what could take place on a shoot if it's not preconceived or fixed. The crew and cast a bit on skateboards.

We all know things, not because we can read them or show them, but simply because such things exist. To my surprise, those who achieve the unexpected and invent the possible are not only men of knowledge and method. Mostly they are unusual minds, beings of preposterous vision.

Falling asleep with fear of waking up as someone else. Surprised finding myself the same. How come that among a thousand people I could possibly be, it's always the same who disembarks? Sleep dismantles all the workings, and yet the next day the day before disembarks. Assimilation to existing relations, whichever they might be?

What about life then ... one that would take this into account, while maintaining the continuity of a fiction, of knowledge, identity, "recognition"; and which would welcome this paradoxical coexistence, like a surprising creation of a bridge between the child everyone would have been and adult we have become. Because the "known" is not "recognized" and "recognized" is not « known".

In short, the decision to make a film could open doors for something that far exceeds the purpose of the film. Filming permits endless dialogue between imagination and experience, which permits to form a still finer representation of what we call "reality".

"Life" and "evolution" are almost synonymous; because a life that does not change is dead. A filming set, where everything is known in advance, is dead. The characters within the script do what they do, just because they live within themselves, their "known" is not "recognized". They weave their « known", their "living experience », within the « recognized", death we will say (for simplicity) and sometimes it makes some sparks. Their secret "fake" is a path to find balance between their intimately "known", and their accepted "recognition", criticized, identified, caught, by their family. Their real secret is what they perceive as possible to know about what is nowhere to be seen, other than the perception of its very existence. Everyone needs to see themselves in others, and thus retaining for others freezing-binding identities. There is thus the recognized to which it is possible to return and to contain oneself. Yet everything is in motion. Life as well as science is (re)searching.

Clark's children regularly escape from their family home. The house is the dark summary. The house is memory. The apparent strength of the house is unreal. The box office too.

They are on skateboards. They live in motion. Their balance is obtained at the price of constant mobility. They advance, drowned by the speed in a medium that weakens the earth, hope may be to bypass the unknown. The breaking of a taboo is like a must, an obscure willingness to kill something. No doubt to call forth the unknown.

They invented and destroyed themselves at the same time, probably to forget what keeps them from crossing certain boundaries, beyond which they could be facing the existing instead of the consensual. Every sensation is a door that once existed. By their constant movement they move away from themselves while recognizing each other, trying to invent, to create, recreate, escape, but also to restrain themselves just like the works of fictions assessed by the culture from which they spring.

As some authors, they draw us to follow them, to pass these limits, or at least to touch them, if one takes the liberty to go that far.

I took the mobile numbers of some skateboarders. We agreed to call each other some day.

*As a form of recreational interlude, a small combination of thought and a souvenir:*

*At a time, I participated in Marathons, without any record in mind, but rather the idea of community life in motion. At the same time, I played the role of a little punk living together with her gang at Chaillot ("The Park" by Botho Strauss). I had brought with me some TGP technicians living in the projects into the theatrical adventure, and had presented them the director. As a group they were inseparable, and followed one another without ever separating, even in the most intimate affairs. If necessary, they would wait all night, sometimes on the carpet in the next room, for the one whose desire was dictating that day. One of them ended up touring with Besson. I found him one day. He had radically returned to his gang mates.*

We are all the same. A film crew is the spitting image of these skateboarders. Everything we are doing there is fragile, moving, weakened by being parked, within a production; but we're also strong and happy to share it, because disobedience needs a framework to get the world back on track. We are here to make but a small act of victory over the total aberration that elsewhere each and all of us feed in order to survive. But we keep on doing it, happy to be parked. Outside they envy you, thinking they know where you are, respecting you, it may even be expected for you to be pushed out of work, which would confirm the power that they rightfully claim over you. Or else, one fears that your good behavior in this sharing would reduce their power over you privately. Sometimes the stories we tell are the stories of what happened; sometimes they are the image of what we would have liked to see happen, unconscious justifications for the lives that we ended up living.

Physical violence, admitted to a certain limit, is less terrible than psychological violence under camouflage.

Working life becomes the skate gang of private life, the private life of privacy. But it is not so simple: one tries to read on just how we could do but feed the aberration. Capturing an act of victory, whose source is art, over this aberration, would permit, beyond the film, to recognize each other differently than by tit for tat.

Social life never takes into account the scientific discoveries and progress it imposes. Today, the constantly changing means of communication are literally sinking a section of our values, like the Titanic. But we live and must live as if we weren't on a sinking ship. Every child whose eyes and actions reminds us that we're on such a Titanic, will be seized up, obliterated, in a manner of speaking pinned up in a manner as to render the walls unnecessary. We are the new nomads, yet imprisoned by every step we take, instead of tasting the metamorphosis that the road offers. The faces in of the first shots of the Hollywood evening shortly before the outbreak of Wassup Rockers are terrible. In the run, a few shots comes back: the consequences of this eruption. The mask. The chase. Their return home on skateboards. The beautiful scene between Kiko and a girl. The music of Jonathan. And in Bully: chilling, the strategy referred to on coming out of the car, and the immediate echo of its implementation.

When I arrive on set I arrive hungry for this dimension where the unlimited is there, where we hesitate to recognize us each other; or where, if I pass some acquaintances, I could pass them by without flinching, or so with an insane joy of « recognizing » them. A joy about that one feels when one is distant from oneself. I manage it, and I consider it to be my job, craving while observing the process prohibiting the surpassing of ourselves.

We can talk about love or rape ... this unlimited in all of us hasn't penetrated language and the inhibition that daily life is. Intentions, meaning, wrongful look act as laws. What exceeds information focuses on the sexes; creating all the fictions that center the body, strengthening the prison of identity, of property. The bodies holding to one another, first by affection, then by hatred towards the outside and hatred of one another, creating another being. The "son" card must be played big to justify the father, if not to venge him. This child hardly born will be shrunk, and named so as to be before existing, pinned down like a butterfly under glass. To not know certain stories, whose intricacy unknowingly shapes the present, can be a serious mistake.

All lives sum up to a single nightmare.

"The smell of us » after many detours on skateboard, reveals genealogy. The sequences centered on father and son, as well as the scene with Ken Park

himself, which concludes that other film by Clark, remains with me before me all. I say it before the end of these lines, my job is only and only the question: is neurosis the only survival, the unimaginable its outcome?

In any field whatsoever, research represents to me the most exciting of revolts against the inconsistency of the universe. When I arrive on a set, my job is to have forgotten everything, I believe that doing something begins by forgetting all, so to come for nothing. My principal role is that of being an actress. My apparent goal is to hold a role. It is a goal without goal: playing the goals of a character who perceives one beyond those listed. My function gives me the right to be there. The character I play is always in a situation made up of multiple roles that give her a reason to suffer or wanting in one way rather than another. These are roles given by the different settings in which she lives, needed to be framed, so she can perceive that she isn't living off those sufferings or joys, all recognized, but off an other one, prohibited. This one prohibited, erases the old ones, by the ceasing to define and delimit the character. Common to us all, this prohibited joy is quiet and remains unshared. The character only but passes everywhere, without any intention, under all intentions justifying its presence or disappearance. She and I find ourselves, one as unjustified as the other, asking ourselves how, by making ourselves exist by one another, we mutually deny each other. How, by denying one another, we make each other exist and thereby give life and hence the same denial of (and to) people posted around us, filming us, who then share the same condition: existence/denial. Thus I am looking for what drives me and with me my role, like a crowd too slow to flee, body and soul towards the others, so that this strange reality casts its hidden face. Nature eternally repeats the same notes, which we receive diffuse, without melody. We sought it on earth, until realizing that it is up to us to write the score, to give sound, a form that without us isn't. It can be the meaning of a human life.

For me, working on this side is always a micro attack. To get closer to Clark through his work, like a writing, is foreseeing that I find the sensation of denial by everything, and if life is awareness and not just a succession of conjectures, I'd like to take the "road moves the life" of my successive awarenesses. My work saves me, let alone by destruction.

### **CONCLUSION**

*Having arrived at the location of the shoot : the position of the building in question, next to the Parc Monceau: I've already been there! A memory completely erased! The apartment confirms this feeling. I was 20. A friend, a sister, and I had, through an archaeologist, spent several hours there to listen and contemplate the fruits of many years of research, spread out over a large table as long as the room. In the light of "The Smell" and more particularly a sequence I witnessed live on the combo where I was offered to take a look, my memory suddenly underwent a categorical changed.*

*The potential difference between the person I was then and who I've become, rendered unthinkable today the present existence of the sis that, at the time, shared the moment of archaeology. Both sprung from an enclosure close to the filming of "The smell," we were bound together by the music, whether played or not. We met a few months before the outbreak of the memory against the building of "The smell". Unthinkable for me! An insoluble difference in potential between who I was and who I am. And yet: the Phoenix of our music, of our wanderings.*

*The apartment I entered for the filming of "The smell" ought to be similar to the archaeological, on a lower floor of. There were two grand pianos. The owner had beautiful hands dislocated by osteoarthritis. Her gaze prevailed everywhere. As a concert pianist she had been programmed all over the world. She was happy to share this distant souvenir without tarnishing it with nostalgia. The same diplomas as me, the same great music school close to this apartment of "The smell." Her teacher was Cortot, the Louis Jouvet of music, my teacher's teacher. I am able put off, pushing them thousands of kilometers, places that represent an unlikely period of my life in terms of what I have become. To confuse space and time is a solution. Meeting this lady pianist bore into my head. I took 10 minutes, walked away from the building of "The smell." I found myself in the enclosure mentioned above, at the Ecole Normale Supérieure of music, only steps away from the shoot. Behind the doors, multiple pianos played. I heard a senseless music, for me. I went back to "The Smell »: the script is a sort of link between the child everyone is and the adult he will become. The owner lent me her room to wait in; a large library with all the scores from my adolescence. Enough to blow my head off. After some time, Clark announced that he'll visit me with his assistant in this room, to which he is led, in order to talk about the scene we're shooting. I say very little, I listen. I feel that he disembarks with the music of his, the archeology of his, and his space-time omelette. Remains to help myself to the omelette "mother of Math." The pot is too petite.*

Dominique Frot, le 8 août 2014