

Adèle et le monstre
MEMESIS

Avec :
Cassandre Rousseau
Emmanuel Buffet
Olivier Barbudeau
Tafisco Mbarga

Opérateur RONIN
Jérémy Adam

Laura Bonanni

un film de :
Francis Frenkel



NEMESIS

Adèle et le monstre

English Title :

Memesis, Adèle and the monster

Directed by

Francis Frenkel

Cast

Laura Bonanni

Emmanuel Buffet

Olivier Barbudeau

Tafisco M'Barga



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SYNOPSIS

Adèle is an ordinary woman. Beneath this apparent normality lies a deep-seated neurosis that gradually distorts her perception of reality. She begins to experience disturbing sensations, as if another part of herself were taking control. Meanwhile, a series of violent and unexplained murders shakes the city—men are being stabbed night after night.

Caught between dreams and reality, Adèle seems to be somehow connected to these crimes



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

This short film was born out of the need to address a painful subject: rape. It's a topic that runs through me personally and touches me deeply. It's intimate.

I chose to illustrate, in a raw and direct way, the invisible scars and deep wounds left by rape. The character I'm portraying exists in real life. Fortunately, she is still with me—and she did not choose the fate I gave my character.

Adèle hears on the radio that a serial killer is targeting men in her city. Gradually, everything seems to point toward her as the culprit: her strange behavior, her absences from work, her automatic gestures, her dissociative episodes... She follows men in the street, breaks down in her bathroom, appears consumed by uncontrollable urges. Then images begin to surface—violent, brief, unbearable—fragments of memory: she was raped. The viewer understands this, though it is never explicitly stated. The entire film rests on this tension between reality, fantasy, and psychological construction. The viewer is kept in a state of doubt: is she the one killing these men? Is it revenge? A projection? But in truth, Adèle is taking revenge only in her mind—trying not to collapse, trying to soften the pain. By the end of the film, the truth falls apart: it wasn't her. The killer has been caught. What we witnessed was something else entirely—a descent, an internal collapse. Even this fantasy of power is taken from her. Her anger is no longer hers. She falls. Literally.

This is neither an investigation nor a manifesto. It is a 15-minute attempt to approach, head-on, what a raped woman goes through: the shock, the dissociation, the sense of alienation, the rage, the desperate attempt to survive.

It's not a film "inspired by" true events—it's a film nourished by lived experience. By the act of standing beside a life that burns. I wanted the film to create a space of unease—an uncertain territory where the line between real and imagined is constantly blurred. Because that's exactly what trauma does: it distorts everything. It breaks things. Memory, time, identity, and the body.



THE PROJECT

In January 2025, I stepped down from my role as Director of a higher education campus for Applied Arts in Nantes to devote myself fully to the making of this short film—because this project answered a real and urgent need.

My close friend and actress, Laura Bonanni—who had just become a mother for the second time—wanted to return to acting under my direction. Her very limited availability led us to develop a completely free-form and fragmented working method, without a traditional shooting schedule or continuity.

Without a schedule, assembling a crew or setting a conventional budget became impossible. So I made a radical choice: to make this film without waiting, entirely on my own, adapting to Laura's availability. We shot together for five months, three to four hours at a time, once or twice a week.

But this was never meant to be a "handheld camera" film lacking artistic ambition. Quite the opposite—I paid close attention to the lighting, costumes, and set design, and we bet everything on time as our main resource. Time to refine the preproduction, design a shooting setup that was ultra-light and self-sufficient, to experiment, rewrite, reshoot, and carefully shape every detail, leaving nothing to chance. We didn't compromise—on anything.

The project was designed from the very beginning with these conditions in mind:

- A spread-out shoot, broken into small sequences
- No more than three actors per scene
- No heavy equipment, no bulky lighting setups
- Locations chosen for their natural light and acoustics

This is how *Némésis, Adèle and the Monster* came to life: a handcrafted, independent, and rigorous film that embraces high standards despite the total absence of technical means. A film that dares to be precious, emotional, intense, violent, expressionist, and lyrical.

This is the result of six months of patient, passionate work—from writing to postproduction—for a 15-minute film created with festivals in mind.

A film made alone, but carried by the unwavering support of Laura, our loved ones, our families, and a few friends to whom we offer our heartfelt thanks.



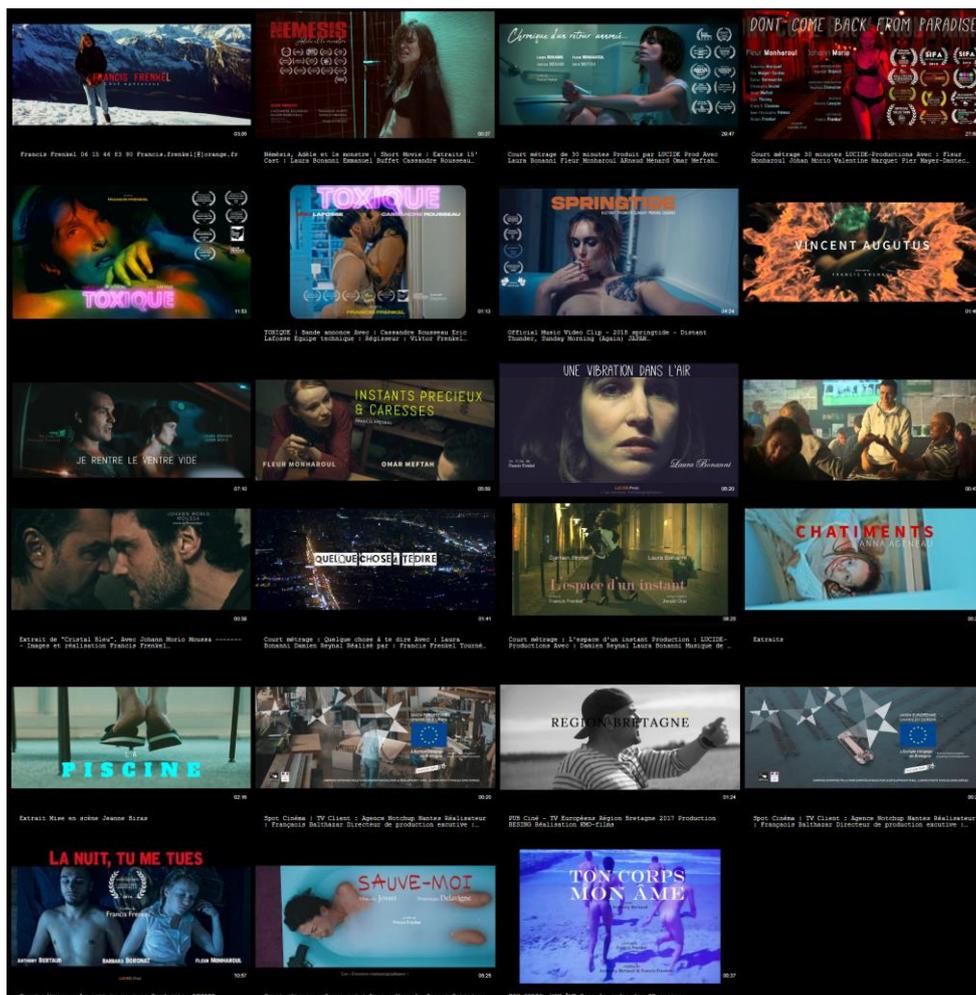
FRANCIS FRENKEL



I was born in 1965 in Madagascar. I am married and the father of three children. I graduated from the Nantes School of Fine Arts in 1989, followed by a European Master's degree in Animated Film in 1990. I began my career as a product designer, then became a creative director in several Paris-based agencies. I later worked as a director of photography, film director, and executive producer for nearly 15 years within my own production company.

My short films, as well as my cinematography for music videos, commercials, and documentaries for television and cinema, have received around thirty international festival selections and awards.

I currently teach lighting, cinematography, and camera operation at a film school (Cinécréatis in Nantes).



LAURA BONANNI

I was born in Paris in 1987. I have been an actress all my life and recently became a mother of two very young children. I trained in acting in Madrid at the school *La Cuarta Pared* and in Paris at the *Charles Dullin* school.

When I arrived in Nantes, I met Francis Frenkel, and we started a collaboration that has never stopped for over 10 years!



When Francis offered me the role of Adèle in *Némésis*, I had just become a mother for the second time. This project came at the perfect time: it allowed me to reconnect with acting, with what I deeply love, while respecting the demands of my new life as a mother of two young children.

Together with Francis, we established a flexible shooting rhythm designed to balance my personal life, preparation, and filming. This spread-out way of working over several months was invaluable.

It gave us the time to let certain scenes mature, to abandon others, and to imagine new ones. This living process allowed me to gradually approach Adèle without trying to fix or judge her. I grew attached to inhabiting her from the inside, feeling her vulnerabilities, her descent, her silences. Working like this, over time and with trust, gave the role a depth I might not have found otherwise. This unique method became a strength. It allowed me to truly embody Adèle, shaping week after week a clearer picture of my character, her shadows, and her fury.

Francis guided me toward a highly expressionist, visceral, and physically demanding style of acting, showing me scenes from films by Żuławski, Gaspar Noé, and Cassavetes. He wanted the scenes to feel almost uncomfortable to watch! It was dizzying, but deeply liberating.

It was an acting experience both wild and profoundly human.

