Credits not contractual

Cast

Marina Hands
Bruno Ganz
Josiane Balasko
Amanda Harlech
Isabel Karajan
Muftie
Lionel Dray
Olivier Perrier

Crew

Director	Patricia Mazuy
Screenplay	Simon Reggiani, Patricia Mazuy
Producers	Grégoire Debailly (Lazennec & Associés)
	Gilles Sandoz (Maïa Cinéma)
	Hanneke van der Tas (Vandertastic)
Music	John Cale
Cinematographer	Caroline Champetier
Sound	Jean-Jacques Ferran
Production Design	Thierry François
Editor	Mathilde Muyard
Casting (France)	Antoinette Boulat
Line Producer	Thomas Santucci

Le Pacte

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MARINA HANDS
BRUNO GANZ

ISABEL KARAJAN
JOSIANE BALASKO

OF WOMEN AND HORSES

(SPORT DE FILLES)

Le Pacte

A FILM BY PATRICIA MAZUY

Synopsis

The story of a rider on the quest for a horse. Her horse.

Disgusted to see the horses that she trained to the top levels of jumping taken away from her, Gracieuse decides to start over in the world of dressage when she meets the legendary trainer Franz Mann. Franz, now exhausted and cynical, is managing the domain of a rich landowner.

But when Gracieuse finally realizes that Manifestant is the right horse for her, she discovers that her talent is nothing when confronted with the personal interests and the high financial stakes of the game…

Director's Note

The horses in the film are the living raw material with which is told the story of a man who is slave to a woman who owns him through money, and who crosses paths with a young woman rider consumed by her equestrian passion.
It's a tale of money for him, of a drug for her. Gracieuse (Marina Hands) is a horse riding junky; Franz (Bruno Ganz) is her dealer.

What Gracieuse does with the horse she steals – called Manifestant – is like a bank robbery. What Franz does in taking Manifestant back from her is like saying: "I'm taking the loot."

In this movie, filming horses means filming money and the pleasure it can buy. These horses are like suitcases full of banknotes in a heist movie. These living banknotes prosper, change, improve and flaunt themselves, to the great delight of the women who ride them and who fight over the trainer. Franz rules over his clients because he holds the keys to the pleasure they gain from riding. But he is also their slave, because it is they who pay.
To demonstrate this process, Franz's equestrian lessons become the raw material which underpins the narrative. Through visible actions which make the rider perspire, poke out their tongues, suffer, but finally experience pleasure. Managing to film how Manifestant becomes a great champion between the legs of Gracieuse shows how she robs the bank.

For me, Franz and Gracieuse are two almost mythical heroes.

Gracieuse is a cut-rate heroine. She is suspended in her quest for the sublime, which torments her come what may. She is a heroine because she never shifts her focus, even at the risk of sustaining serious injury. Marina on horseback isn't just an actress who can ride; she has a deep, existential love for equestrianism. She has a grace and a stature in the saddle that she communicates to us because it is essential to her.

Franz, slave to the business and the women owners, is apparently a cowardly son-of-a-bitch, who can't muster the courage to leave his wife, who's lost in his bourgeois pantomime and his insincerity. When he is picked up by Gracieuse, in Germany, he becomes a hero who pays a heavy price for his freedom, having found renewed authenticity in love. The unusual couple he forms with Gracieuse create a cynical, joyous and irreverent epilogue.

The glamour-kitsch of competition dressage becomes cinematographic when seen alongside the crudeness of the relationships and life in the stable. The film's emotion is all the more palpable since the ribbons, plaited manes and tails, riding crops, stylish bridles and reins, all this rather kinky S&M leather gear is juxtaposed with the rain and mud around the edge of the paddocks.

The filming of the work will be seen from a wide point of view, often on foot, while the effects of the work will be tighter. The first scenes of the lessons are structured around power relationships, gradually moving towards more lyricism with Gracieuse and Franz.

The moments on horseback and in the stables serve to tell the story of a young woman – somewhere between Cinderella and The Terminator – who awoke the soul of a brilliant and manipulative old horseman.

Patricia Mazuy