



BRUNO CAMILLE JULIETTE

BINOCHÉ

CLAUDEL 1915

DUMONT

**3D PRODUCTIONS**

*present*

# **CAMILLE** **CLAUDEL** **1915**

a film by

**BRUNO DUMONT**

Starring

**JULIETTE BINOCHÉ**

Freely adapted from the works and letters of Paul Claudel,  
the letters of Camille Claudel and medical records.

RUNNING TIME: 1H37

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High definition pictures and press kit can be downloaded from  
**[www.wildbunch.biz](http://www.wildbunch.biz)**

## **OPENING CREDITS**

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Born in 1864 in Aisne, Northern France, Camille Claudel is a sculptress, the older sister of the writer Paul Claudel, her junior by 4 years.

She is first Auguste Rodin's student, then his mistress for fifteen years, until she leaves him in 1895.

In 1913, following the death of her father, having spent ten years as a recluse in her studio on the quai Bourbon in Paris, she is confined by her family, first to the mental hospital at Ville Evrard near Paris, then to an asylum at Montdevergues, in the Vaucluse.

## **SYNOPSIS**

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Winter, 1915. Confined by her family to an asylum in the South of France - where she will never sculpt again - the chronicle of Camille Claudel's reclusive life, as she waits for a visit from her brother, Paul Claudel.

# CAMILLE CLAUDEL 2012

## *Excerpts from the documentary*

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**Bruno Dumont:** The project has its origins in a phone message from Juliette Binoche. I was shooting "Outside Satan" at the time. I received a long message from Juliette, whom I had never met, in which she said she wanted to work with me. I thought she was foolhardy to do that. So for a month or so I asked myself: "What can I do with her? Because I'm very happy to work with actors, but I'm often not sure what to do with them..."

**Juliette Binoche:** A few weeks went by between my leaving the message and the time we met. When we did, I had the idea of a theme for a film and in fact Bruno told me he wanted to film a woman in solitude, in a house.

**Bruno Dumont:** As chance would have it, I was reading a book about Camille Claudel's life during her incarceration, and Juliette and she are about the same age. It triggered something in my mind and I said to myself: "That's it!" I like the fact that we know nothing about her life during her confinement, except for the medical notes. The thought of writing a screenplay from nothing appealed to me. I'm making a film about someone who spends her time doing not much and I liked that, cinematographically speaking. I found it extremely interesting to make a film about both confinement and idleness. So the idea of shooting three days in the life of Camille Claude became - with the different elements I had, the diary, etc - a choice in which I firmly believe, which is to say that you can tell everything starting with the incidental. You don't have to tell someone's whole life. You can tell the truth in a few seconds.

**Juliette Binoche:** He told me: "This woman does nothing, she's neutral"- one of his favourite words - so we follow her into her "nothingness". But of course, for an actor, there's an intense interior life that is often recalled by seemingly insignificant events. There's a great intensity within her and her ordered life in the asylum.

**Bruno Dumont:** The idea was to shoot with real people suffering from mental illness; that was the project. So we had to find a place where we'd have both sets and a proximity to the sick, in other words, a hospital where the doctors would agree to let the patients take part in the film. I never thought of the film in any other way. When I met the nursing staff I listened to them very closely. I didn't turn up saying: "Here I am, I'm making a film, etc." I accepted many things about the reality of these women. I didn't try to manipulate them and turn them into something other than who they are.

**Juliette Binoche:** The rule we had from the start - so we wouldn't have unpleasant surprises in the middle of shooting, since we all made a huge deal out of filming there (much more than

necessary in fact) - is that everyone had to call me Camille. During the shoot everyone called me Camille because it was easier, in case a patient improvised a line.

**Bruno Dumont:** It was a good idea, having the nurses play the sisters, something I hadn't thought of at the beginning. I asked myself: "What if something went wrong during a take, what would we do?" So my assistant Claude and I thought: "The nurses should play these roles." And they agreed. Straight away things were unified; it was coherent. They were stakeholders and I think one of the reasons the medical authorities agreed to do this was because their staff was going to be there. We are not medically trained, so talking to the staff every day and having them with us was great. At the same time, they helped us, they had their own input for the direction, they were there, placing them, holding them, pushing them.

My task was to integrate these people who are in the film today. Céline, Alexandra, Rachel, they became characters in the end. So Jessica is Jessica, I have no comment to make about her. I didn't have to direct her. When I film Rachel, when I film Jessica, or Christiane, I have nothing to do, I set up my camera and I shoot... I do it simply, there's no fuss, because they give something unimaginable, something it would be impossible for any actor to do, and that was what I needed to try to convey the environment in which Camille Claudel found herself, and about which she speaks. But it will be Christiane, Myriam, Jessica, contemporary mental patients, who are saying something ancient, still valid today, about which there isn't much comment to make. There is nothing to say.

I never know what's going to happen, and that's exactly what interests me. Each time I say "action", something unexpected will happen, but the unexpected is welcome, it's even necessary in this kind of work where everything is planned. Thus there is a pressing need for an extremely rigorous construction, which can allow the unexpected. It is necessary to have precise spaces into which the unexpected can enter. You can give one of the patients a piece of scotch-tape to look at so you'll get a certain look, they'll do that if they have to, they will play by our rules and constraints.

I think the film leads the audience into the reality of confinement, without words, since there are only shouts, pain, time, boredom, the gaping shapes of mental illness which are clearly "non-word", emotion... At the same time, Paul and Camille are intellectuals, quite capable and powerful in expressing themselves through speaking and creating. This is clear from Camille's letters and Paul's oeuvre. They possess an exceptional power to go deep within their beings; therefore the film is built on Camille's range of extreme emotions, the furthest reaches of her pain, which is to say she plays tormented scenes in a very... almost-expressionist manner, pushed to the very limits. But she does go towards the spoken word. Her words exist in her letters, it is necessary, even for Juliette, to tear herself open, to let go but at the same time to return to the text, at a given point, something has to be said.

**Juliette Binoche:** Bruno gave me Camille's letters and said: "You have to make these yours." So I started to re-write them slightly, in order to make them less literary, incorporating other letters here and there, then emailed it to him, to provoke a response, to know if this was the direction in which he wanted to go. Since he was quite allusive and hadn't given me a script, I was really in the dark. He said: "But that's not it at all. You took out this word, this sentence..." And he added: "I want you to improvise." I said: "OK, so in fact you want this to be extremely precise but improvised." And he replied: "Exactly!"

**Bruno Dumont:** I can't put words into Camille Claudel's mouth, from my point of view, things she didn't say, that poses a real problem for me. Yet I also have a problem with listening to an actor reciting. I fight with actors to try and stop them reciting, and that's what's difficult. It isn't always easy for them because they're not used to it, they are performers so they need a text to interpret, and when there isn't one they can get a bit lost.

**Juliette Binoche:** The challenge of this film is that it's mostly silent with only two or three moments with a lot of speaking, as if all the words she hadn't been able to say come out in a rush, all at once. I learned these four tightly typed pages by heart then we played the scene with Paul, and Bruno took out most of the text. He wanted me to improvise so I did what I could. It's not easy since I'm not used to it, but I find the challenge very exciting.

**Bruno Dumont:** I don't need an actress to be perfectly posed for a shot. But she might want that, so I have to explain... Juliette is good for that, she likes it, even if it destabilizes her. But it's good, to have a destabilized actress in a film about a destabilized character, it works. One can accept weakness from someone who is psychologically very fragile and very tormented. At the same time she is also tormented by the difficulty of playing certain scenes. It creates torment and in fact it feeds Camille, and that pleases me greatly.

# END CREDITS

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Camille Claudel will spend the last 29 years of her life in this asylum, where she will die on the 19th October 1943, at the age of 79.

Buried in a communal grave, her body will never be found.

Paul Claudel died on the 23rd February 1955. He will visit his sister until the end.

He will not attend her funeral at Montdevergues asylum.

# BRUNO DUMONT

Director

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## Biography

Born March 1958, Bruno Dumont taught philosophy before dedicating himself to cinema.

## Filmography

- 2013 **CAMILLE CLAUDEL 1915**  
*Berlin Film Festival - Official Competition*
- 2011 **OUTSIDE SATAN**  
*Cannes Film Festival - Un Certain Regard*
- 2009 **HADEWIJCH**  
*Toronto Film Festival - Fipresci Award*
- 2006 **FLANDERS**  
*Cannes Film Festival - Grand Jury Prize*
- 2003 **TWENTYNINE PALMS**  
*Venice Film Festival - Official Competition*
- 1999 **L'HUMANITÉ**  
*Cannes Film Festival - Grand Jury Prize*  
*Cannes Film Festival - Best Actor*  
*Cannes Film Festival - Best Actress*
- 1997 **LA VIE DE JÉSUS**  
*Cannes Film Festival - Golden Camera Special Mention*  
*Nominated for Best First Work at César Awards*

# JULIETTE BINOCHÉ

*Camille Claudel*

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## Selected Filmography

- 2013 **CAMILLE CLAUDEL 1915** by Bruno Dumont
- 2012 **ANOTHER WOMAN'S LIFE** by Sylvie Testud  
**COSMOPOLIS** by David Cronenberg
- 2010 **CERTIFIED COPY** by Abbas Kiarostami  
*Best Actress - Cannes Film Festival*
- 2008 **PARIS** by Cédric Klapisch  
**SUMMER HOURS** by Olivier Assayas
- 2007 **FLIGHT OF THE RED BALLOON** by Hou Hsiao-hsie
- 2006 **BREAKING AND ENTERING** by Anthony Minghella
- 2005 **HIDDEN (CACHÉ)** by Michael Haneke  
**MARY** by Abel Ferrara
- 2002 **JET LAG** by Danièle Thompson
- 2000 **THE WIDOW OF SAINT-PIERRE** by Patrice Leconte  
**CODE UNKNOWN** by Michael Haneke
- 1998 **ALICE AND MARTIN** by André Téchiné
- 1996 **THE ENGLISH PATIENT** by Anthony Minghella  
*Academy Award® for Best Actress in a Supporting Role*  
*Best Actress - Berlin International Film Festival*
- 1995 **THE HORSEMAN ON THE ROOF** by Jean-Paul Rappeneau
- 1993 **THREE COLOURS: BLUE** by Krzysztof Kieslowski  
*César for Best Actress*
- 1992 **DAMAGE** by Louis Malle
- 1991 **THE LOVERS ON THE BRIDGE** by Leos Carax
- 1988 **THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING** by Philip Kaufman
- 1986 **THE NIGHT IS YOUNG** by Leos Carax
- 1985 **HAIL MARY** by Jean-Luc Godard  
**LA VIE DE FAMILLE** by Jacques Doillon  
**RENDEZ-VOUS** by André Téchiné

# CAST

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*Camille Claudel* - **JULIETTE BINOCHE**

*Paul Claudel* - **JEAN-LUC VINCENT**

*Doctor* - **ROBERT LEROY**

*Priest* - **EMMANUEL KAUFFMAN**

*Miss Blanc* - **MARION KELLER**

*Young Novitiate* - **ARMELLE LEROY-ROLLAND**

*Patient in restraints* - **MYRIAM ALLAIN**

*Sister Régine* - **RÉGINE GAYTE**

*Sister Nicole* - **NICOLE FAURITE**

*Intern* - **ERIC JACOULET**

*Sister Florence* - **FLORENCE PHILIPPE**

*Sister Christelle* - **CHRISTELLE PETIT**

*Sister Sandra* - **SANDRA RIVERA**

*Patient in bath* - **CLAIRE PEYRADE**

*With the participation of the nursing home residents:*

**Alexandra Lucas**

**Daniele**

**Jessica Herrero**

**Myriam Laloum**

**Christiane Blum**

# CREW

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Written and Directed by  
**BRUNO DUMONT**

Producers  
**JEAN BREHAT, RACHID BOUCHAREB. MURIEL MERLIN**

Production Manager  
**CÉDRIC ETTOUATI**

DP  
**GUILLAUME DEFFONTAINES**

Sound  
**PHILIPPE LECOEUR**

Editors  
**BRUNO DUMONT, BASILE BELKHIRI**

Mix  
**EMMANUEL CROSET**

Art Director  
**RITON DUPIRE-CLEMENT**

Wardrobe  
**ALEXANDRA CHARLES, BRIGITTE MASSAY-SERSOUR**

Make-up  
**NATALI TABAREAU**

Hair  
**STEPHANE MALHEU**

'Making of'  
**VIRGINIE BARBAY**

Production  
**3B PRODUCTIONS**

Coproducers  
**ARTE FRANCE CINÉMA, CRRV NORD PAS-DE-CALAIS, LE FRESNOY,  
STUDIO NATIONAL DES ARTS CONTEMPORAINS**

With the participation of  
**ARTE FRANCE, CANAL+, CINE+, CNC**

With the support of  
**RÉGION PACA, RÉGION NORD PAS-DE-CALAIS**

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