



LE REFUGE

**A RICH JUNKIE COUPLE
LOSE CONTROL IN FRANÇOIS
OZON'S NEW FILM**

François Ozon's new film is a matter of life and death. *Le Refuge* opens with the fatal overdose of a wealthy young Parisian, Louis, and his girlfriend Mousse's discovery that she is carrying his child. Mousse retreats to the coast to kick her own drug habit and await the birth, but her isolation is broken by the arrival of Louis's brother. It's a slip of a film, and plays in a different key to the French director's musical thriller *8 Women* and his baroque English-language melodrama *Angel*. But *Le Refuge* could be his most arresting character study, with Mousse – brilliantly portrayed by a pregnant Isabelle Carré – joining the director's long line of enigmatic heroines. Ozon told Dazed about his labour of love.

DAZED & CONFUSED: What's the background to *Le Refuge*?

FRANÇOIS OZON: I wanted for a long time to make a film about pregnancy – I was just waiting for a pregnant actress. When I knew that Isabelle Carré was pregnant, I thought it was the right opportunity. I didn't want to use a fake belly. I thought it could be like a documentary about an actress. The fact that Isabelle was pregnant meant she was less in control than she usually is. The most important thing in her life was not the film, and that allowed me to steal some interesting moments.

Did it help that you were shooting in high-definition?

Yes. The crew was very small and we didn't have to wait around for the right light. It was good for me because I had the opportunity to shoot at some difficult moments,

such as between day and night – which the French call “*entre chien et loup*” (between the dog and the wolf).

Like your earlier films *Under The Sand* and *Time To Leave*, *Le Refuge* explores mortality...

They make a kind of trilogy. *Under The Sand* was the story of a woman who tried to accept the death of a man she loved. *Time To Leave* was about accepting your own death. *Le Refuge* is also about a character accepting the death of the man she loved. Each time, I tried to follow the strange ways in which the character accepts death. In *Under The Sand*, Charlotte Rampling's character prefers to live with a ghost. In *Time To Leave*, the man is gay and makes love with a woman because he wants to leave something on earth after his death. For Mousse, in *Le Refuge*, being pregnant is not about having a baby particularly, but about keeping life in her belly. That idea interested me: to make a link between pregnancy and surviving.

Text CHRIS WIEGAND
Le Refuge is released on August 13

FIVE EASY PIECES

**BOB RAFELSON'S CULT
CLASSIC CELEBRATES ITS
40TH ANNIVERSARY**

One of Jack Nicholson's finest roles – particularly the famous ‘chicken salad’ scene – is resurrected at the BFI this month 40 years after it was released. Greenlit on the back of *Easy Rider*'s success, Bob Rafelson's film is set in 1970, Vietnam-era America, with Nicholson snarling and captivating in his role as Bobby Dupea, an oil-rigger and drifter running from nowhere to nowhere. Living in a trailer with his waitress girlfriend, Dupea is escaping a privileged middle-class existence, with the film's soundtrack alternating



between Tammy Wynette and classical to reflect the schism. When his father becomes ill, Bobby's life catches up with him and he embarks on a road trip from California to his childhood home of Puget Sound on the east coast. Nicholson has said the role had certain similarities to his own life at the time, admitting, “I was playing it as an allegory of my own career.”

Text INDIGO WEEKS
Out on August 13



FILM(S) OF THE MONTH: MICHAEL ROBINSON

**THE DELIRIOUS FILMS OF
EXPERIMENTAL FILMMAKER
MICHAEL ROBINSON**

Wrenching emotional truths out of the pop culture crock pot – sitcoms, video games, romance novels, pop super-hits, original and found footage – is film artist Michael Robinson's MO. Despite his extensive use of popular icons Robinson isn't reheating retro or dishing out arch-ironic nostalgia. “I'm interested in paranoia and hysteria,” he says. “Creating a space that hovers between overly-romantic sentiment and apocalyptic terror.”

Robinson's oblique narratives and intricate sound designs arouse subliminal fears while simultaneously pulling on heartstrings. Unsurprisingly, the utterly captivating *The General Returns From One Place To Another*, a collage of a low-budget

Christian film, *The Hollies ‘Air that I Breathe’* and text from a dramatic monologue, was recently voted #17 on *Film Comment*'s list of the 50 best avant-garde films of the decade. The 28-year-old was also voted #10 of the top 50 avant-garde filmmakers in the same poll. His latest short, *If There Be Thorns*, combines VC Andrews, Shirley Jackson, Stevie Nicks, Elton John, William Burroughs and his own footage. “I want to create an intense, revelatory experience for the audience,” he says. “If I can give someone goose bumps for any reason, then that's good.”

Text ANANDA PELLERIN
Michael Robinson's films will be shown this summer at the MoMA PS1's GNY exhibition.

