

I'VE LOVED YOU SO LONG

A film by
PHILIPPE CLAUDEL

Starring
KRISTIN SCOTT THOMAS ELSA ZYLBERSTEIN
SERGE HAZANAVICIUS LAURENT GREVILL FRÉDÉRIC PIERROT LISE SÉGUR

Original screenplay by
PHILIPPE CLAUDEL

Music composed by
JEAN-LOUIS AUBERT

A film produced by
YVES MARMION

A German-French production

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"I'VE LOVED YOU SO LONG" is a film about the strength of women, their capacity to shine forth, reconstruct themselves and be reborn. A story about our secrets, about confinement, about the isolation we all share...."

- Philippe Claudel

SYNOPSIS

Léa (Elsa Zylberstein) and Juliette (Kristin Scott Thomas) are sisters. The film begins with Léa, the younger sister by fifteen years, picking Juliette up at the airport. We soon realize that the two sisters are almost complete strangers to each other. Juliette has just been released from prison after serving a long sentence. Léa was still a teenager when Juliette, a doctor, was convicted of the murder of her six-year-old son. Léa contacted Juliette when she was released and suggested that Juliette come to live with her. Juliette had no particular desire to see her sister again.

Luc (Serge Hazanavicius), Léa's husband, is quite reserved, almost hostile, about Juliette's presence under their roof. Luc and Léa have two adopted Vietnamese daughters, who are 8 and 3 years old. Luc's father, Papy Paul (Jean-Claude Arnaud) also lives in the house. He's a charming old man who spends all of his time reading since a stroke deprived him of the power of speech.

Life together isn't easy to begin with. Juliette has to relearn certain basics. The world has moved on and she often seems confused. Although she may seem cold and distant, her attitude stems more from her being ill at ease. Helped by some, such as the kindly but tactless social worker and her open-hearted but depressed parole officer (Frédéric Pierrot) whose confidante she becomes, Juliette is also rejected by others, particularly employers who throw her out as soon as they find out what she did.

Léa's attitude is ambiguous. She avoids talking about Juliette's terrible crime and time in prison at all costs. She wants nothing to blunt the happiness of their reunion and getting to know each other again. Luc mentions it reproachfully, as does Juliette in a different way.

Gradually, the real Juliette emerges. She opens up to the world once more, thanks to her two nieces, with whom she becomes very close after being very stiff with them at the beginning, and Michel (Laurent Grevill), a friend of Léa's, and Papy Paul, who, in a more symbolic way, knows what it's like to be locked away. Juliette gets a job as a medical secretary at the local hospital on the condition that she never mentions she used to be a doctor. Her relationship with Léa becomes much stronger and more intimate. Even Luc succeeds in pushing his preconceptions to one side and seeing Juliette as his sister-in-law, not as a murderer.

But a huge question hangs over Juliette's renaissance. Why did she do such a terrible thing fifteen years ago? For all the others, it's a recurrent thought that they dare not put into words. And for Juliette, locked away in her secret, it's a burden to bear, which holds her back from engaging in her life and believing that she too has the right to be happy.

CAST

Kristin Scott Thomas	Juliette
Elsa Zylberstein	Léa
Serge Hazanavicius	Luc
Laurent Grevill	Michel
Frédéric Pierrot	Fauré
Lise Ségur	P'tit Lys
Jean-Claude Arnaud	Papy Paul
Mouss Zouheyri	Samir
Souad Mouchrik	Kaisha
Catherine Hosmalin	The teacher
Claire Jonhston	Juliette and Léa's Mother
Olivier Cruvellier	Gérard
Liliy-Rose	Emélia

CREW

Directed by	Philippe Claudel
Screenplay and dialogues by	Philippe Claudel
Executive producer	Yves Marmion
Producer	Sylvestre Guarino
Co-producer	Alfred Hürmer
Music	Jean-Louis Aubert
Cinematographer	Jérôme Alméras
Assistant director	Julien Zidi
Costumes	Jacqueline Bouchard
Sets	Samuel Deshors
Film Editor	Virginia Bunting
Sound Engineer	Pierre Lenoir, Stéphane Brunclair
Mixing	Gérard Lamps Armelle Mahé
Postproduction manager	Abraham Goldbat
Scriptgirl	Lucie Truffaut
Stills photographer	Thierry Valletoux
Make-up artiste	Gill Robillard
Hairstylist	Patrick Girault
International sales	UGC International
Trailer	SoniaToutCourt
Artwork	The Rageman

INTERVIEW WITH PHILIPPE CLAUDEL:

You've had great success with books and received many a prestigious literary prize. Why a first film after all these novels?

Whether they are born of words, film or paintings - I painted a great deal at a certain period in my life - images have always interested me. I love deepening our view of the world with them, illuminating it, questioning it through their intermediary, and bestowing on it a reflection. I've always been a film buff. When I was studying literature and history at the University of Nancy in the early 80s, we made many shorts. We were always behind or in front of the camera, screenwriters, cameramen, actors and film editors alike. I already was writing a lot at the time, but I also had a real desire to create and show images. Then the cinema came back into my life with Yves Angelo, whom I met in 1999, when Meuse l'oubli, my first novel, was published. He asked me to work with him. Our first collaboration, the screenplay for "At My Fingertips" became a film, which he directed and was released in 2002. Following that, I met producers. They ordered screenplays from me but proved unable to make them. Then came the great adventure of "Grey Souls": Yves wanted to make a film out of it. I wrote the screenplay, and he was nice enough to involve me in the project: scoutings, casting, readings with actors... He awoke in me a desire to have more control over a creation, until the very end. I was waiting for a deep desire and an important story to me to step up to direction. It's very complicated making a film, it requires so much energy, time and money. It's far more exhausting than writing. For a novel, I write it wherever I want and stop whenever I want. But when the motion-picture machine starts up, it can't be stopped. It's necessary to have - and here I speak for myself - a subject which profoundly inhabits us, to be able to bear it all, so that the desire remains intact, flamboyant and vital. Which happily was the case with this story.

Did it seem obvious to you not to make a novel out of it?

Ah, but of course. There was a clear separation in my mind. When bits and snatches of a story come to me, I immediately know if it's going to be for the cinema or a novel. When producers sometimes ask me if I would accept to novelize the script of a film they weren't able to make I answer no. I'd be incapable of it. And it would be of no interest whatsoever. But I make use of my talents as a novelist: my desire was, as for my books, to make a film which can touch different audience categories. Some people will see in it the story of two sisters trying to become close once again, while others will be more interested in the theme of incarceration. Some will focus on the rebirth of a woman, while others will watch the life of a family confronted with the unspoken, dark secrets... One can have a simplified reading of it, or one far more intellectual. I've always loved books or films which are aimed at the greatest number, which aren't intended solely for a single audience.

What was your starting point? The story of these two sisters? Did the recurring themes such as confinement and rebirth come next? Or did everything occur at once?

This story allowed me to crystalize scattered elements, such as confinement or secrets, which I had already tried to explore in my texts. One of my novels Quelques-uns des cent regrets, which appeared in 2000, already focused on a secret between son and mother. I'm fascinated by the principle of hidden life, that other who isn't quite who we believe they are, or who hasn't done what we think they did. Next, the theme of confinement is close to my heart: I taught at a prison

for eleven years. Then I wanted to write a story whose central characters were women. I haven't yet made it into a novel. I love women, I'm fascinated by their strength and capacity to stand upright, no matter what happens, and be reborn, support us and put up with us, the miserable men that we are. That has always struck me. It seems to me that men quickly subside, while women are something else. I imagined the story of these two sisters, Juliette and Léa, whom life separated for fifteen years before they meet anew. All this came together very rapidly. I quickly wrote an outline of the script in a notebook, then I left to travel in Lapland. Over there, in the winter, the nights are endless, while the day lasts barely two hours. That was a magic moment of writing. I returned in January with a screenplay which turned out to be virtually identical to the final shooting script. Everything was there, right in place, almost supernaturally. It was the very first time it's ever happened to me.

Did you think immediately of the actresses? Kristin Scott Thomas, for example?

No not immediately. In any event, not when writing. I first thought of Elsa to play Léa. I knew her a little in life, I wanted to do something with her. I've always loved that blend of joy and immense fragility she gives off. As for Kristin, she's a tremendous actress but who in French cinema has always appeared to me as underused, so I sent her the script. She really loved it, and, most importantly, she had the courage and intelligence to throw herself into the role of Juliette, which wasn't totally obvious. The first time I met her, I told her that I'd like her to be less beautiful on screen. I know how easy it is to gradually fall apart in prison. Inmates gradually take on the colour of walls, both inside and out. The walls become their clothing, their skin, their souls. It's very rare to be able to retain one's strength, one's inner light and desires. It was vital to show this. I next took great care in composing the rest of the casting. I wanted actors who weren't worn out either by the cinema or by fame, yet who remained great talents and who could lend truth to the characters.

Three actors who have the important roles in the film- like Laurent Gréville, Serge Hazanavicius or Frédéric Pierrot, aren't big stars either. So they're only all the more credible.

Laurent Gréville plays Michel. He's without a doubt the character closest to me in life. He taught in prison, just like me. He was once in love with a girl of whom he saw a kind of double in a painting hanging in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Nancy. This last story belongs to me. It was important for me that Laurent didn't have the physical appearance of seducer. I wasn't going to put in front of Kristin an actor looking like someone into whose arms she would obviously fall. I wanted someone who had a secret charm, someone who wasn't necessarily "handsome" at first sight, who could even be downright unpleasant, and who gradually bares himself, who becomes touching, and who reveals himself to be someone too has been an outcast, in the same way as Juliette. And so both of them, little by little begin to reconstruct something, without going too quickly for all that. The only tender gesture between them takes place at the very end, when she puts a hand on his shoulder as they come out of the museum.

He's also the only one of the entire bunch of friends to quickly guess Juliette's secret.

Because he was used to meeting women like her when he'd go to the prison. He belongs to that brotherhood of those men and women who have been destroyed. Lost souls recognise each other, I believe. In the same way, the character of Captain Fauré, played by Frédéric Pierrot, is likewise

Juliette's double. Frédéric Pierrot is an actor who possesses great humanity. He's a beautiful person and an actor who gives off uncommon force. Fauré, like Juliette, reveals a fractured humanity. He's without a doubt one of the characters who touches me most. Juliette is helped by all the characters. They draw her back to the side of life. They put back her on the side of light. They teach her all over again trust and the gestures of happiness. But Juliette doesn't do for Fauré what the others do for her. Their relationship raises the question of the good or bad we can do someone, unintentionally, without knowing it, through a gesture we make, or a word we utter or not. Sometimes we realize this only years later. Juliette isn't guilty for what happens to Fauré, but she might feel responsible, not having known how to answer him at the right time. They are very close, one is like the double of the other.

Awkward?...

In part, yes, from the point of view of intimate feelings, yes, but not in his human relationship with Juliette. Unlike his role as policeman might give one to suppose, he never judges her. Others at the beginning don't dare to speak to Juliette or ask her questions. Furthermore some make hasty judgements about her, which is human too, in the end. As for Fauré, he behaves normally with Juliette, quite like with Little Lys, Léa's daughter, who asks her the very questions the others dare not. This child is in a sense their spokeswoman, without them daring to admit it. She has all the naturalness and spontaneity of childhood in her insatiable curiosity.

What about Luc, Elsa's husband, played by Serge Hazanavicius?

He reacts to Juliette as many people would. As I too might react, no doubt. If he appears at the beginning almost unpleasant, you have to put yourself in his shoes. His wife asks him to take into his apartment, their home, a sister-in-law he's never met and who's just spent 15 years in prison. Luc represents the way many people look upon those who've just come out of prison.

At the beginning, we don't know if he's obnoxious by nature or if it's just an attitude around Juliette.

With Luc, Léa and their children, I wanted to set up a kind of "happy family". They seem happy enough, they have two adorable little girls, a pretty, comfortable house. Luc's father lives with them as well, an elderly mutist, but one who's ever smiling, ever reassuring, a kind of well-anchored rock on which the family rests. To all appearances, it's the ideal family. And then we gradually realize that that things aren't working quite as well as all that. And the unspoken resurfaces when Juliette moves into their home. A couple, Léa/Juliette, forms, yet to the detriment of the real couple. We understand that they hardly ever make love anymore. Léa thinks only of this sister whom life once snatched from her and who has now returned as if out of the blue. When she and her husband kiss romantically in the street, we have the feeling that something has been reborn between them. Moreover, in the story, two couples, from the point of view of trust and harmony, are reborn in parallel: Luc and Léa, on the one hand, and the two sisters, on the other. Why is there only the appearance of happiness? Juliette's incarceration and the family taboos which accompanied her, have completely destroyed her younger sister, in her life as adolescent, then next in her life as woman, wife and mother. But nevertheless everything starts to move and change once again when Juliette resurfaces. Juliette evolves but, thanks to her,

everybody around her evolves as well. Change takes place slowly. I couldn't film it in fast motion. Life is sometimes slow.

Moreover, the film is constructed in light touches, a job cut out for a novelist?

The story is voluntarily impressionistic. I write novels like filmmaker, but I write films like novelist. Readers often tell me that my novels are highly visual. Here, it's just the opposite, I adapted novelistic techniques to the image. I wanted that rhythm. That particular advance in the story which proceeds more by juxtaposition than by linear progression. I wanted to remain on faces, and give the actors and actresses the time to express their character's inner self. The choice of framing and rhythm of editing was key as well. I'm fed up with today's "pulsating" cinema, with its ultra rapid editing, bombarding us with images and cameras swirling about in every direction. I think it's important to learn over again waiting, patience, and even seeing.

Kristin Scott Thomas's face is impressive. She expresses so many things without a word. Yet, at the same time, she's secret, mysterious.

Kristin has great talent, and, at the same time, the role was written so that the character is thus. There's was a wonderful balance between her talent and the character she had to play. Elsa is just as impressive. That awkwardness which she gives off, that false cheerfulness, that smiling face but which constantly threatens to crack under the onslaught of tears. Framing and camera mobility also influence the evolution of the characters: Juliette's character, for example, is forced first of all into tight frames, which shut up and imprison. Next I widened the angle as if she were returning to the world. At the outset and during a whole part of the film, the camera on Juliette is always fixed, insistent, while the camera on others is lighter, more mobile.

In this film, you explore all sorts of family ties. First and foremost, the complicity between sisters...

Above all, I try to answer one question: can bonds be recreated after such a long separation? Especially when they were so close and when that closeness between them no longer exists? And if one has this desire, does the other truly share it? I wanted to make this intimate tie felt.

You also address the question of adoption, since the two girls, Clélis and Emélia, are both adopted children. Both come from Vietnam.

We have here of course the theme of secrets, present in more than one respect in the film, in this particular case rather the enigma of one's origins. And then a question which I wanted to ask: just what is a family? How does one build it? How do we become parents? And from the point of view of the children, just what are parents? There's also Léa's ambiguity as she declares at one moment not "to have wanted a child from her belly". All this obviously reflects the trauma created in her by her sister's gesture. To play the two children, I chose two little girls with a large difference in age to reflect that separating Juliette from Léa. Shooting Lise Ségur, the oldest, wasn't a problem, she felt very much at ease and completely natural, but Lys Rose, the youngest, gave us a real headache. Devilishly pretty certainly, but a little devil all the same, who often did just the opposite of what was asked of her... So it took tons of both patience and... candy!

The mother of the two sisters has Alzheimer's disease, Luc's father can't speak anymore, following a brain hemorrhage. Here, once again, did you wish to speak about confinement?

It wasn't my intention to draft an exhaustive catalogue of confinements, but it's one of the themes that is of great concern to me in life, and which I attempted to take up with my various characters. The film breaks down this theme into various modes, and different shots, from the prison and its consequences, to old age and Alzheimer's disease, from the solitude of the divorcee with Captain Fauré, to confinement in the mourning of the character of Michel, secrets we don't dare to reveal and in which we are walled up. Furthermore, ever since adolescence Léa has stopped growing, so that she's remained, in a way, cloistered in it.

During the picture, we sense that you're attentive to even the minutest details, little realistic touches and anecdotes full of humor.

I was highly rigorous when it came to placing the story and characters, as well as the set elements, costumes, make-up and hairstyles. So, I asked Kristin to undergo a physical transformation, to show all the years of incarceration tattooed on Juliette's face at the opening of the film. At the outset, she doesn't wear any make-up. So we focused in on her hair, accessories and every tiny detail which might make her all the more credible. When she steps out of prison, she wears a coat which corresponds to her previous life, but it's far too big because she's probably lost a lot of weight. She has a grayish complexion, her hair is colorless. She constantly bites her nails. And Juliette smokes, a lot, while Kristin doesn't smoke at all in real life. I insisted on this point: I didn't want her to pretend to smoke. If the character smoked, she really had to smoke. I chose for her the very worst cigarettes, bitter and ageless. I wanted there to be in smoking a perceptible disgust, a perceptible addiction. I acted in the same way with Elsa, by constructing the face and silhouette of Léa like those of a teenager who had stopped growing, who would have refused to do so. In real life, Elsa is a young woman who's always highly elegant, who loves fashion. So I really wanted to break with this image and had her wear clothing that she never would have dreamed of wearing otherwise. I cut out for Jacqueline Bouchard, our wardrobe mistress, models found in the catalogues of department stores such as La Redoute, Cyrillus, H&M and Monoprix. I see too many movies where the houses, even modest ones, are decorated by designers whose work far exceeds the level of life of those who are supposed to live in them, where any middle executive is dressed up in Prada. Not all people can buy themselves immense wardrobes or spend a lot of money on clothing.

The house is a real house of family, full of books...

The fact that the shoot takes place almost entirely in Nancy was for me indispensable. The entire credibility of the project depends on it. For the house, not one single detail of the set was left to chance. I put books I liked on the night tables and shelves. For the film pays tribute to books, and what they can bring to our lives. Luc's father and Juliette come together over their favorite books, like *Sylvie* by Nerval, that Juliette read and reread in prison. I was likewise highly attentive to the construction of the architectural lines in the film. Many lines are present, evoking prison bars, a chain hangs from the ceiling, as in an engraving by Piranèse, the stairs, the movement in the house, like so many prison gangways...Everybody might not see it, but I still know it's there. And then there are curves, rounded shapes, in the swimming pool scenes notably, where gentleness seems to return. For the colors, I went from hard grey to soft grey, from dark to

light. At the beginning the atmospheres are Hitchcockian and cold, only to become softer and warmer later. I spoke a lot about it with Jérôme Alméras, my cinematographer. We had to move little by little towards life.

How did you direct the actresses?

We had two readings together. With Elsa, it was very tactile. I surrounded her, reassured her, took her in my arms, embraced her, a little like an older brother. With Kristin, it was more intellectual, but no less intense. I advised her to read certain books. On the set, at the start, I composed for her kinds of haikus and would slip her little notes. I'd tell her: "Read this a little later, just before you act". I expressed to her sensations. "A droplet which falls on a stone"... "Look at a great empty well"... "The skin of that man's hands"... Little phrases like that. Next, I stopped all the little notes, I didn't want to get into a kind of easy habit, and preferred by far speaking with her. Before the scenes to be shot, we reflected out loud about the way she was going to play this woman, what she was thinking about, etc. Kristin and Elsa brought many ideas and suggestions as well.

What about the music? It gives rhythm to the film, it's highly important. Even the title, drawn from a child's song.

I wanted offbeat pieces, without a piano, just an acoustic and electric guitar. Jean-Louis Aubert, who's an artist I've long admired, and a good friend over the past few years, composed a music imprinted with poetry, a kind of a mental music which accompanies the evolution of Juliette's character. He's a man who has both a child's sensitivity and rare human delicacy. He liked both the subject and characters. I asked him to pass by the shoot as well. He came with his guitar and impregnated himself with the atmosphere. He sang for me, between two takes, a song by Barbara, "Quand reviendras-tu?" I instantly knew that this would be the theme music for the end credits. For the rest of the film, Jean-Louis recorded one full hour of music, blending variations on the theme of "Alter ego", a song he wrote that I love, and I asked him to rework some original compositions and one unreleased song in particular that I knew "Je t'attends", having heard it sung in a studio. And then, he enjoyed himself with the lullaby "A la claire fontaine". The song is part of our heritage. Whenever we sing these words, "I've loved you for so long", everybody immediately thinks: "Never shall I forget you". In the end, Jean-Louis gave me his music just before the end of the shoot. I had given him the dailies, pre-edited fragments and atmospheres so that he could work on them in parallel on his side.

Are you satisfied with your film?

I did, in the end and thanks to all those who worked with me, exactly I wanted to: telling a strong, sensitive, sincere story, optimistic despite its tragic starting point; a story about life which leads the central characters back towards light, rebirth, love and understanding. I hope that this film will help the people who'll see it become closer to others, and accept them such as they are, without judging them, and help them when they need it most, that is to say, always. I hope that it's a film of love, imprinted with humanity, and whose emotion will long endure in the hearts of the audience.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Philippe Claudel (Writer/Director) makes his directorial debut with “I’ve Loved You So Long.” He was born in Dombasle, a little town in northeastern France, where he still lives today. He was educated at University of Nancy, where he is currently a Professor of Literature. Claudel is best known as a novelist, though he has written for French television and co-wrote “Sur le Bout des Doigts” with Yves Angelo.

Claudel has published the following books:

Meuse l'oubli (published by Balland, Paris, 1999 Selected at 13rd First Novel Festival in Chambéry, 2000.)

Quelques-uns des cent regrets (published by Balland, Paris, 1999)

J'abandonne (published by Balland, Paris, 2000)

Le Café de l'Excelsior (with photos by Jean-Michel Marchetti, published by La Dragonne, Nancy, 1999)

Barrio Flores : petite chronique des oubliés (with pictures by Jean-Michel Marchetti, published by La Dragonne, Nancy, 2000)

Le Bruit des trousseaux (published by Stock, Paris, 2001)

Les Petites mécaniques (short stories, published by Mercure de France, Paris, 2002)

Les Âmes grises (published by Stock, Paris, 2003 Renaudot award 2003. screen adaptation by Yves Angelo, 2005)

Trois petites histoires de jouets (published by Virgile, « Suite de sites », Besançon, 2004)

La Petite fille de Monsieur Linh (published by Stock, Paris, 2005 screening adaptation in progress)

Le Monde sans les enfants : et autres histoires (drawings by Pierre Koppe, published by Stock, Paris, 2006),

Le Rapport de Brodeck (published by Stock, Paris, 2007)

Champagne-Ardenne, Alsace, Lorraine (pictures by Alex Webb, published by National Geographic, Paris, 2000)

Au revoir Monsieur Friant (published by Phileas Fogg, Paris, 2001, (essai on Émile Friant))

Nos si proches orientes (published by National Geographic France et Phileas Fogg, « France vagabonde », Paris, 2002)

La Mort dans le paysage (with pictures by Nicolas Matula, AEncrages & Co, « Voix de chants », Gérardmer, 2002)

Trois nuits au palais Farnèse (with Italian translation by Francesco Bruno, published by N. Chaudun, Paris, 2005)

Petite Fabrique des Sentiments (About the making of “I’ve loved you so long”, published by Stock, Paris 2008).

ABOUT THE CAST

Kristin Scott Thomas (Juliette) has become internationally renowned for her talent, elegance and commitment to her craft. Never shying away from challenging roles and determined not to repeat herself, Scott Thomas' body of work is an extraordinary collection of acclaimed film, television and theatre performances.

This fall, Scott Thomas will star in several highly-anticipated projects for the stage and screen. She will make her Broadway debut in The Seagull in a performance for which she won the Olivier Award for "Best Actress" during the play's recent run at London's Royal Court Theatre. Scott Thomas is part of a stellar cast, including Isla Fisher, John Goodman, Joan Cusack, and John Lithgow, for the upcoming film "Confessions of a Shopaholic", based on the novel by Sophie Kinsella. The Touchstone Pictures film is set to hit theaters in February 2009. Scott Thomas recently wrapped production on Stephan Elliot's "Easy Virtue". Based on the play by Sir Noël Coward, Scott Thomas stars opposite Jessica Biel, Ben Barnes and Colin Firth.

Scott Thomas won over audiences and critics alike with her Academy-award nominated performance in the late Anthony Minghella's "The English Patient", where she starred opposite Ralph Fiennes and Juliette Binoche. Of her performance, Kenneth Turan wrote, Scott Thomas "gives a gorgeous and magnetic performance that adds unanticipated new dimensions to an already formidable talent." For her performance she was honored by the National Board of Review, and was nominated for Golden Globe, the BAFTA, and the Screen Actors Guild Award.

Making her U.S. film debut in Prince's "Under a Cherry Moon", Scott Thomas went on to great acclaim in Mike Newell's "Four Weddings and a Funeral", opposite Hugh Grant and Andie McDowell, where she won a BAFTA award for Best Supporting Actress. Other notable credits include: Philip Haas' "Angels and Insects"; Richard Loncraine's "Richard III"; Brian DePalma's "Mission Impossible"; Robert Redford's "The Horse Whisperer"; Sydney Pollack's "Random Hearts"; Irwin Winkler's "Life as a House"; Roman Polanski's "Bitter Moon"; Paul Schrader's "The Walker" and Justin Chadwick's recent film, "The Other Boleyn Girl", where Scott Thomas starred opposite Natalie Portman and Scarlett Johansson.

In 2001, Scott Thomas was part of the ensemble for Robert Altman's acclaimed, Oscar®-winning film, "Gosford Park". The cast, which also included Maggie Smith, Helen Mirren, Michael Gambon, Ryan Phillippe, Derek Jacobi, Alan Bates, Emily Watson and Bob Balaban, went on to garner numerous awards and nomination including The SAG Award for Outstanding Performance by the Cast of a Theatrical Motion Picture and the Broadcast Film Critics Award for Best Ensemble.

Fluent in French and having been a resident of Paris since she was 19, Scott Thomas has appeared in numerous French films, including Guillaume Canet's "Ne le Dis à Personne" (Tell No One) Francis Veber's "Le Doublure" (The Valet) and Pascal Bonitzer's "Petites Coupures" (Small Cuts). In television, Kristin Scott Thomas has starred in a number of admired mini-series and made-for-TV movies including "Gulliver's Travels"; "Belle Époque"; "Body and Soul"; "Weep No More", "My Lady" and "The Secret Life of Ian Fleming".

Scott Thomas was born in Southwest England, and in her teens enrolled in drama school at Paris's École Nationale des Arts et Technique de Théâtre. For all of her success in film, Scott Thomas has maintained a deep connection to the theatre starring in celebrated revivals such as Pirandello's As You Desire Me and Chekhov's Three Sisters for London's Playhouse Theatre.

Elysa Zylberstein (Léa) has appeared in numerous film, theater and television productions in her native France. She most recently appeared on screen in Jean-Marc Moutot's "La Fabrique Des Sentiments" and "Mademoiselle Christine" for Raoul Ruiz, with whom she also worked on "Ce Jour La", "Combat D'Amour" En Songe", and "Le Temps Retrouve". Previous film credits include Guillaume Nicloux's "Le Concile de Pierre"; Michel Leclerc's "J'Invente Rien"; Karin Albou's "La Petite Jerusalem"; Chantal Akerman's "Demain on Demenage; Mathias Ledoux's "Three Blind Mice"; Antoine de Caunes' "Monsieur N"; "Feroce" directed by Gilles de Maistre; Annette Carducci's "Not Afraid, Not Afraid"; JJ Zilbermann's "L'homme est Une Femme"; Diane Bertrand's "Un Samedi sur La Terre"; and James Ivory's "Jefferson in Paris" among others. She won the Prix Michel Simon and was nominated for a Cesar for Most Promising Actress for her role in "Van Gogh" in 1992. She was also nominated for the Most Promising Actress Cesar for "Mina Tannebaum" in 1995, for which she won the Romy Schneider Award that year, and "Beau Fixe" in 1993.

Serge Hazanavicius (Luc) has acted in various stage and film productions in France. His stage credits include the works of Marivaux and Chekhov. He also appeared in several films, such as Laurence Ferreira Barbosa's "Normal People Are Nothing Exceptional and Etienne Chatiliez's "Happiness is in the Field."

Laurent Grevill (Michel) has appeared in several international hits such as Agnes Jaoui's "Look at Me, and Neil Jordan's "The Good Thief." He has twice been nominated for a Cesar Award, once for his performance as Paul Claudel in Bruno Nuytten's "Camille Claudel" starring Isabelle Adjani and Gerard Depardieu. His second nomination came for his work in Gerard Cobiau "The Year of Awakening." Other screen credits include Niels Arestrup's "The Candidate" and Tim Sullivan's "Jack and Sarah."

Frederic Pierrot (Faure) has appeared in several international theatre, film, and television productions. His credits include Jean-Luc Godard's "For Ever Mozart" and Ken Loach's "Land of Freedom." He has also worked several times with French director Bertrand Tavernier ("L.627," "Life and Nothing But," and "Captain Conan."). Additional screen credits include "Artemisia," "Mon Homme," and "Circuit Carole."