

EUROPACORP
Presents

FRANK GRILLO JAIMIE ALEXANDER ROSCHDY ZEM MARIE-JOSEE CROZE

INTERSECTIONS

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY
DAVID MARCONI

Runtime: 101'

FRENCH NATIONAL RELEASE: January 30th, 2012

Synopsis

A well-heeled couple is honeymooning in Morocco... The bride's lover pops up with his own agenda... A cutthroat diamond smuggler is being carted off to prison... An enigmatic woman is traveling with a baby... Their stories all collide in a brutal car crash in the middle of the Sahara. Those who survive have no choice but to join forces to get out of there alive. But who can be trusted? Then a mysterious stranger appears on the dunes. Destinies intertwine on this journey peppered of plot twists, lies and betrayals... And what if none of it happened by chance?

The Origins of the Project

"*Intersections* was a passion project burning inside me that I had to get out," says director David Marconi. It was inspired by people I knew, things I'd experienced and stories I'd heard. I combined them all in a kind of stew and simmered it in the hot cauldron of the desert."

Marconi began making films in high school. After attending film school at the University of Southern California, he made his first feature, *The Harvest*, in 1993, which was shot entirely on location in Mexico. He spent the next fifteen years writing scripts for tent-pole films for various studios (such as Tony Scott's *Enemy of the State* and early drafts of *Mission Impossible 2* and *Live Free and Die Hard*).

"*Intersections* was born out of this kernel of an idea about an accident that occurs in the middle of nowhere and how the lives of the survivors — desperados with secrets who are all on the run for various reasons — intersect by chance.

"So I went to Morocco and stayed in little casbahs out in the desert to research the story. As a writer, when you spend time in the places you write about, you absorb things — the culture, the environment, the customs of the local people. You experience the unpredictable and unexpected, things you normally wouldn't just sitting at a desk in Los Angeles. After a while, the story takes you on its own path. I believe that, to truly own the material, you have to live and experience it as much as possible, to find a way to tie into the reality of the characters and events."

The Car Crash

Of course, the most challenging scene in the film to shoot was the spectacular automobile accident that brings these six characters together and forever links their destinies. Marconi worked closely with stunt coordinator Dominique Fouassier on the conception and realization of that complex and very carefully orchestrated stunt.

Fouassier and his crew prepped four cars for the character of Travis and two for Scott. They fitted the interior of all the vehicles with steel roll cages to protect the stuntman. They put in smaller gas tanks, to avoid fires, changed the brakes and put in heavy-duty shock absorbers for the jump. Then they sent the cars to Morocco, to test them in advance.

"If it had been a studio film, we would have rehearsed the flip," Marconi interjects. "But we didn't have that. We just had these terrific stunt guys who said, 'If we can't do a test run, we'll just have to be extra careful when we do it.' Then they built a series of ramps that would propel the vehicles even further."

"Dominique drove one of the vehicles 50 miles an hour, straight into the van," Marconi continues. "I said, 'You're not going to brake?' He goes, 'No, just before I hit the van, I'm going to accelerate. If you brake before you hit something, the nose drops and the entire vehicle comes right through the windshield. But if you accelerate, the nose goes up and you protect yourself.' For lack of a better term, the guy had balls of steel."

"We were also lucky enough to have lots of small digital cameras in crash boxes," says Fouassier, "so we could put them pretty much wherever we wanted, including the spot where the 4x4 was going to land. My car took a 50-foot drop and landed right on top of one of the crash boxes. We were worried about the camera but the crash box took the shock entirely and the camera was still rolling. So we got some pretty interesting shots."

Then stunt double Yann Tremblay did the second rollover, in Travis' car. "That was even more difficult," says Marconi. "In the first crash, you have Dominique flying over a ramp and driving straight into a van. In the second crash, Yann hit the ramp, which started the vehicle rolling. The idea was that it was going to roll over the Renault and wind up upside-down beyond it. But it hit the Renault, flipped up into the air, came down on the Toyota and then rolled over. I'm watching this going, 'Oh, my God! It looks terrific but I think you just killed my two main characters.' Fortunately they weren't actually in the vehicle. And the roof was caved in just enough that they could have survived. It was that additional hit to Scott's and Taylor's car that made the accident even more intense. So I said, 'We've gotta bash the actors up more. We've gotta put blood on her and dislocate his shoulder.' As a writer-director, you can rework those things right on the spot. You sit down and figure out how it works story-wise and how you can take advantage of the 'accidents' that just occurred."

"But when you look at the final storyboards," Fouassier adds, "it's almost shot-for-shot what we have in the film."

The Characters

SCOTT DOLAN is a hotshot New York hedge fund manager, rolling in dough, his Blackberry perpetually glued to his fingers. On his honeymoon in Morocco, he appears to be madly in love with his knockout new bride, Taylor. But does he have a blind spot where she is concerned?

TAYLOR DOLAN is a sultry American beauty with a very dark side. She clearly has a weakness for all that glitters and no qualms about using her slinky body to get whatever she wants. Honeymooning in Morocco, she seems to have hit the jackpot with her filthy rich new hubby, Scott... but for some reason she's brought her lover along!

TRAVIS is an Australian hunk who moved to New York and got in a little over his head. Working for Scott and playing nooky with his boss' bride... is he caught in a web of betrayal and deceit that's barreling toward disaster?

OMAR is a cutthroat Algerian diamond smuggler — in handcuffs and on his way to prison when we meet him. Once freed of his shackles, he's a menace to anyone in his path — a man with an icy gaze who'd just as soon kill you as look at you... but even he is not impermeable to the wiles of a seductive beauty.

AUDREY is an inscrutable French woman traveling with a baby. We don't know where she's coming from or where she's going or if the baby she's unable to nurse is really her own... And what if it's not?

AYUB is Audrey's swarthy chauffeur, trapped in his vehicle after the accident takes place. His relationship to Audrey remains an enigma... as do his hidden motives.

CYRIL is a dangerous French gangster from Marseille who's just escaped from prison... and thirsts for revenge.

ODETTE is a French woman hiding out in a remote Moroccan village. Beaten and left for dead in a pool of her own blood, her true identity and fate remain unknown...

SALEH is the man of mystery who emerges from the desert like a living mirage. A Moroccan of few words and cunning cleverness, he steps into the wake of a brutal car crash and begins to subtly orchestrate every turn in this darkly treacherous dance with death.

The Actors

FRANK GRILLO (Scott)

On the script...

It's very much like the movie *Crash*, in that several different stories all come together in the end, and you realize that nobody is who you think they are and everything becomes very dangerous.

On the character of Scott...

Scott certainly has a lot of dark sides, a lot of secrets. I think all human beings have secrets, things that we don't want to share with anybody. The characters in *Intersections* are no different. But their secrets are actually detrimental to one another's health.

On preparing for the role...

I just kind of let the desert do its thing because we were out in the middle of the Sahara Desert and that really affects you.

On chance...

I don't believe in coincidence. I think everything happens for a reason or because it's supposed to happen. Luck is an intangible thing. Some people seem to have more luck than others.

JAMIE ALEXANDER (Taylor)

On the movie...

Intersections is a movie about people at their most extreme and what they're willing to do, what they're capable of doing, when they're caught in a situation that threatens them as human beings.

On the character of Taylor...

I didn't want Taylor to be some pretty face that was a dime a dozen. She had to be intelligent and powerful enough in her sexuality to get people to do what she wants.

On shooting in the desert...

We had so many incredible experiences. Phenomenal sand tornados would just rip through the desert. You could stand forty feet from one and it would roll right past you. They were almost like spirits. It was the most extraordinary sensation. Then there were the sunsets, the sunrises...

MOUSSA MAASKRI (Omar)

On the character of Omar...

Omar is a character whose sole response is violence. It's a reflex. But he's no less dependent upon his desires than anyone else. So he's also capable of lots of affection, love, caring... You just have to press the right button.

On chance...

There's an Arab proverb that goes, "Chance is just another word for ignorance." I love that! Nothing happens by chance. We make everything happen.

MARIE-JOSÉE CROZE (Audrey)

On the script...

I liked the fact that these people just meet up by chance and are forced to get along and bond together in order to survive. I've always dreamed of doing something like this. It's not just an action film. There are characters with psychological underpinnings, and you sense that each of them can have fairly extreme reactions. That's why I wanted to do this project.

On the character of Audrey...

We don't know if Audrey reacts out of love or blindly, but she does commit acts that are fairly violent and very immoral. She doesn't have a sense of good and evil. I don't judge her. I didn't hate her or love her; I just played her.

On Roschdy Zem...

I was very excited about my scene with Roschdy Zem at the end of the film, where his character reveals himself and mine doesn't. They're two characters we've followed throughout the film and we think we know them, and then they meet. Shooting that was very exciting. My character didn't have much to do before that. She does a lot of observing, she's very interior. But in that scene there's a shock. Those two people come up against one another in a violent way and that was really wonderful to play. Especially since I love working with Roschdy. Then, I had a real scene with him. I'd waited 7 ½ weeks to do a strong scene. That's a really beautiful memory.

I had already worked with Roschdy Zem on the film *Ordo* in 2004. I love working with people I've enjoyed working with before, in a new context. There's already a trust between you. You don't have to be polite. You're just there to do a scene together and it feels good.

On the desert...

We spent seven or eight weeks in the desert.

For an actor, it's great to work on a real location. Everything's real. It's pretty inspiring. But it's also trying — the sun was constantly beating down, it was really cold in the morning, really hot in the middle of the

day, then it would get cold again at night. But that desert light can't be imitated. You don't see that anywhere else. It makes for some incredible images.

ROSCHDY ZEM (SALEH)

On the script...

The script intrigued me, in the same way the viewer is intrigued in watching the film. David Marconi's universe is fairly mysterious. Even his way of writing, his way of developing his characters is mysterious.

On the film...

In the situation presented in the film, there's a group of characters and there are several possible solutions, but nobody knows which is the right one. Obviously each of their personalities emerge vis-à-vis the various options that present themselves. So selfishness, cowardice, bravery, recklessness... all these personality traits that we all have arise because the situation demands it, because they're in danger. That's a classic conflict in novels and films — what happens to people when they face a perilous situation? Do they help each other or, on the contrary, do they become cowardly and betray one another? All these qualities are interesting to explore and develop in a story like *Intersections*.

On the character of Saleh...

The characters in *Intersections* are all linked, directly or indirectly. They all have something to hide, except for my character who turns up after the accident. Saleh is the one we know the least about. He's a man of few words. He doesn't pour his heart out. He has no ties to the others. We only gradually discover who he is, why he's there and what his objectives are.

Saleh embodies the notion that justice must be done. And that's important. Meaning that he who has sinned must be punished, the thief must return what he's stolen, the killer must be killed — symbolically, of course. Saleh is a very upright man. That's also why he's there, to see that justice is done. The guilty must pay, one way or another.

On the director...

As far as I'm concerned, meeting David Marconi is what made me want to do this project — stumbling upon such a passionate director who was so obsessed by his film. Listening to him talk sucked me in and made me want to be part of this project because I could feel how invested he was. That's something I need to feel in my discussions with a director.

David Marconi is the ultimate director. He loves his actors. That's very important. As he'd written action films, like *Die Hard*, my one fear was that he'd be overly focused on technique, on framing, etc. I have to admit, he was anything but that. We all always felt incredible support from our director.

On the desert...

The desert is a fairly strange location. We had the entire desert to ourselves, with that infinite panorama. Yet, at the same time, it was very claustrophobic. Because we were on a single set in the middle of the desert for five or six weeks. But the moment you walked one hundred yards away from the set, there was nothing and you immediately went right back, pulled back in by that set. As if the crew were our life jacket. There was that paradox — a sense of freedom and a simultaneous sense of imprisonment, because there was nowhere to go. In fact, that's sort of what the film is about.

On chance...

I'm fairly Cartesian, but with a fatalistic Oriental side — meaning that everything happens the way it's supposed to. I sometimes have the feeling that things are written in advance.

CAST AND CREW LIST

CAST

SALEH.....	ROSCHDY ZEM
SCOTT DOLAN.....	FRANK GRILLO
TAYLOR DOLAN.....	JAIMIE ALEXANDER
AUDREY.....	MARIE-JOSÉE CROZE
OMAR.....	MOUSSA MAASKRI
TRAVIS	CHARLIE BEWLEY
AYUB	AFIF BEN BADRA
CYRIL.....	CARLOS LEAL
ODETTE.....	GABRIELLA WRIGHT

CREW

A COPRODUCTION

With the participation of
Written and directed by

CASTING

DOP

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

COSTUMES

1st ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

SCRIPT

SOUND

EDITOR

PRODUCTION MANAGER

ORIGINAL SCORE

LINE PRODUCER

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

CAR STUNT COORDINATOR

EUROPACORP

GRIVE PRODUCTIONS

CANAL +

DAVID MARCONI

JOHN PAPSIDERA (CSA)

THOMAS HARDMEIER (AFC)

BERTRAND SEITZ (ADC)

SOPHIE PUIG

DAVID CAMPI-LEMAIRE

(AFAR)

LAURENCE COUTOURIER

SAMUEL COHEN

ALEXANDRE HERNANDEZ

DIDIER LOZAHIC

JULIEN REY

JEAN-MARC ABBOU

BÉNÉDICTE BELLOCQ

RICHARD HOROWITZ

FANNY BESSON

GARETH UPTON

DOMINIQUE FOUASSIER