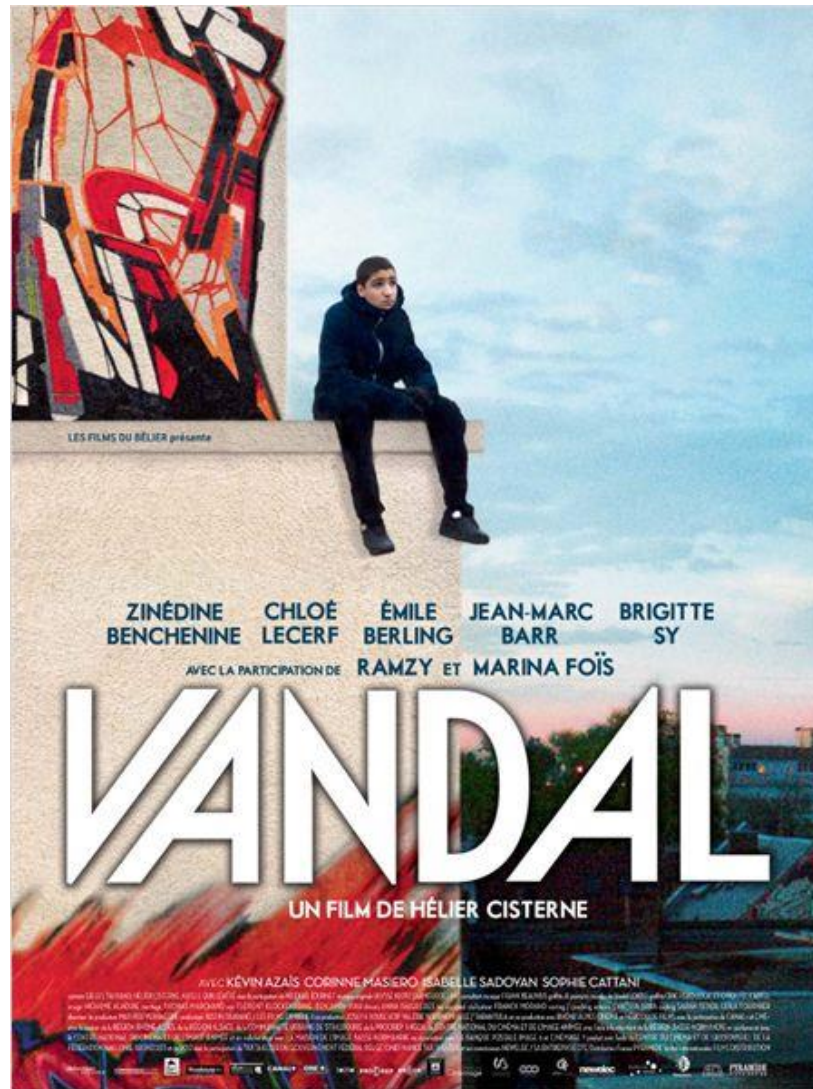


VANDAL

French with English subtitles



Directed by: Héliel Cisterne

Genre: Drama

Country of origin: France

Runtime: 84 min.

SYNOPSIS

Cherif's parents are divorced. His mother cannot cope any longer with his teenager's rebellious behavior. She sends him to live with his aunt and uncle in Strasbourg. There his uncle enrolls him in a vocational school to become a bricklayer. Cherif tries to adapt but his uncle's home atmosphere is stifling until his "perfect cousin" Thomas introduces him to the world of street art. At night they slip away to paint murals... For them it is artistry for the city it is vandalism. Cherif's nocturnal adventures spice up when he tracks Vandal a rival street artist.

REVIEWS

His [filmmaker's] main character's path, made up of dangers, tragedy and frustrated love, becomes a romantic alternative to the daily, by the book lives of adults.

Steeped into urban legends, borrowing from superhero movies, **Vandal** invents a fantasized realism that gives an astonishing power to the social scope of the story. An impressively well-mastered first feature film.

*(Translated from an excerpt of the film review in **Première Magazine**:*

La trajectoire de son personnage principal, faite de périls, de tragédie et d'amour contrarié, devient l'alternative romanesque à un quotidien adulte sans mystère. Marqué par toute une mythologie urbaine, empruntant aux films de super héros, Vandal invente un réalisme fantasmé qui offre à la portée sociale du récit une puissance étonnante. Un premier long métrage impressionnant de maîtrise.)

Adolescence is a world dear to **Heller Cisterne** (...). He just made his first feature film, **Vandal**, where he follows a young, rebellious and lonely teenager (superbly played by **Zinedine Benchenine**) into a world he is about to discover, that of graffiti artists.

The graffiti art by Vandal in the film and that Hichame Alaouié's camera appears to stroke, is signed by **Lokiss**, a multiform artist whose inspiration is the Czech painter František Kupka.

Condensed in its rhythm without idling, the film takes us into this world, breathless with empathy for Chérif, a somewhat lost teenager, full of love for his little brother. The times he spends with him far away on Skype or the times when he reunites with his family are tender and touching. We feel like helping him find his balance and get out of his shell, but he does not need us, he will find his way....

(Translated from an excerpt from <http://www.journalzibeline.fr/critique/deviens-qui-tu-es/>

*L'adolescence est un univers cher à **Helier Cisterne** (...). Il vient de réaliser son premier long métrage, Vandal, et c'est un jeune adolescent, Chérif (superbement interprété par **Zinedine Benchenine**), rebelle et solitaire, qu'il va suivre dans son exploration d'un monde qu'il découvre, celui des graffeurs*

*Les graff signés Vandal dans le film, que la caméra de **Hichame Alaouié** semble caresser parfois, sont ceux de **Lokiss**, un artiste multiforme, inspiré par l'œuvre du peintre tchèque, František Kupka.*

Le film au rythme dense, sans temps mort, nous emmène dans cet univers, à bout de souffle, en empathie avec Chérif, un adolescent un peu perdu, plein d'amour pour son jeune frère. Les moments qu'il passe avec lui, de loin par Skype, ou lors de retrouvailles familiales, sont tendres

et très émouvants. On a envie de l'aider à retrouver son équilibre et à sortir de sa carapace mais il n'a pas besoin de nous, il va trouver son chemin

DETAILS

◆ LANGUAGE

The film deals with a **troubled teenager** struggling to find his place in his family and in his society so the language will reflect the **tough reality** lived by Chérif the protagonist and his friends.

The language is strong throughout the film with frequency of the words “ass”, “f...” and “shit”, “bastard”. Sometimes the English translation is over the top like when it translates “he is full of shit” for “*Il dit n’importe quoi*”. On the other hand one can notice that words like “enculé” or even “putain” are often not translated.

Some French language is also under translated like, for example, “*Tu ne dis pas de conneries!*” = “Don’t lie” or “*Je m’en fous de lui*” = “I don’t care about him”

Some slurs are directed to girls who are not accepted in the Ork gang of graffiti street artists

✉ All in all expect **coarse language with use of expletives, aggressive** words at times and some **sexual connotations**.

◆ VIOLENCE

The violence is minimal in the film. There is some brawling between Chérif and one of his classmates who hides his trowel. No graphic details.

Chérif is often tense: he takes his father by the collar out of frustration.

From a distant shot, the ORK gang is trying to dislodge the rival artist Vandal from the top of his train wagon by throwing stones at him. By accident his head hits some electrical line which gets him electrocuted. He falls on the ground. All the shots are distant and even difficult to distinguish.

The tension between Chérif and his cousin’s gang is ambient. The members of the gang don’t trust him; they reject him when he has his girlfriend into their hiding place.

◆ NUDITY

None

◆ SEXUAL ACTIVITY

When Chérif and Elodie fall in love, they engage in some loving gestures with some mild sexual innuendo.

◆ HORROR

When Chérif visits Vandal's "lair", he comes upon images of open mouths, silent screams, teeth or fangs. These images give a fantastic dimension to the film as well as a mysterious wrap to the always invisible, ghost-like Vandal.

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT

- ✕ At the beginning of the film, Chérif is seen driving a stolen car at great speed and screaming with excitement and joy. This thrilling scene is quickly smothered by the fact that Chérif is severely reprimanded by a judge. Here a philosophy starts to emerge: Chérif calls his act "borrowing a car"; the judge calls it "stealing a car"
- ✕ The film constantly deals with two points of view: the teenagers who approach graffiti as a form of art and the city/law that consider it as an act of vandalism. This involves a dark atmosphere of secrets, hiding and fleeing the police and the adults' law.
- ✕ Chérif lives a difficult moment with his family. He is separated from his little brother. His mother lives with a man he does not like and his father is about to have a child with another woman.
- ✕ The atmosphere at his uncle's place is hard to take for rebellious Chérif
- ✕ Chérif's cousin Thomas is showing two faces: one of a nice obedient son by day and by night he is leading a gang of street artists. It is his way of asserting himself in the controlled family environment.
- ✕ Chérif feels guilty about the fall of Vandal. Through his silence and behavior [wanting to pay tribute to Vandal] he shows remorse as well as a sharp sense of responsibility [he tries to phone the police to save Vandal]
- ✕ Chérif is a good teenager at heart: he shows love to his brother; he does not disrespect Elodie and he has a conscience.

PICTURE GALLERY FROM THE FILM



www.journalzibeline.fr

Chérif devant un « tag » de Vandal



www.wat.tv

Chérif et Elodie



www.myfrenchfilmfestival

Chérif takes his dad by the collar out of frustration



www.myfrenchfilmfestival

Chérif in Vandal's hiding place



<http://www.culture-alsace.org/vandal>

Chérif looks out for the police while Thomas and his friends « tag » the wall



<http://www.20minutes.fr/strasbourg/1233925-traces-vandal>

Chérif pays tribute to Vandal