

LIEGE

Liège



Cinema



© ClapLiège Congo River © Les Films de la Passerelle Joyeux Noël © Nord-Ouest Production Rosetta © Les Films du Fleuve



© Mars Distribution

"Le Couperet" [The Axe], by Costa Gavras. This film was shot in Liège under ideal conditions.



© actricesdefrance.org

Marie Gillain. This Liégeoise actress is rapidly becoming a star of European cinema.

▶▶▶ Cinema Has Top Billing

In recent years the Liège region has been making its mark as a very attractive location for shooting films.

But it provides more than a splendid backdrop. Many producers are from here or live here. This has brought some of them great rewards and well-earned fame. Production companies have also been created.

There has long been a true cinematographic culture in the Walloon region with many cinemas of very varied genres and with intelligent and bold programmes. For instance, Le Parc and Churchill cinemas, which are members of the Europa Cinemas network, not only show the better recent films in their original versions with subtitles but also offer the chance to meet producers and to see films as previews and

educational works. This interest in cinema is also to be seen at various international festivals that demonstrate the vitality of all the players in the sector, for example the Namur Francophone Film Festival, the Mons International Love Film Festival and also Anima, the Cartoon and Animation Festival, that is held in Brussels and Liège.

Public authorities support this movement. Various bodies have been created and measures have been taken to contribute to this success at the Liège level and at the Walloon region and Belgian levels : tax measures for specialised investment funds and bodies that aid producers and production companies with the artistic and logistical aspects that they have to deal with.

The province of Liège really has top billing ...



© Nord-Ouest Production

"Joyeux Noël" [Merry Christmas] by Christian Carion benefited from funding by two Liège businesses.



© Eugene Hernandez/indieWIRE

Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne have received awards in Cannes several times.



▶▶▶ XDC : Once Upon a Time There Was a Digital Revolution

EVS is a Liege company that specialises in the technology of slow-motion video that in particular provides the equipment for capturing the biggest sporting events from all over the world. This digital mastery has led to another project in partnership with Barco : XDC.

This branch of the EVS Group is involved in the digital revolution in cinemas with the design and manufacture of servers for a new generation of digital projectors. This process preserves all the image quality and it allows films to be distributed to cinemas by fibre optics. Many cinema managers in Europe have already adopted this system : 200 cinemas are already equipped and this figure will probably double by the end of 2006.

Distributors are very interested in this too since using the digital network and XDC's services may halve their costs. The Cannes Festival did the right thing when striking an exclusive partnership agreement with XDC : a new kind of Palme d'Or ...

 www.xdcinema.com



© XDC

▶▶▶ A Reserve of Actors, First Parts for the Extras

The province of Liege is overflowing with very good actors. The critics are unanimous on this point. Marie Gillain is the figurehead of this new generation, having been fêted from her very first film when she was scarcely 15 years old ("Mon père ce héros" [My Father the Hero] in 1991 by Gérard Lauzier with Gérard Depardieu). Since then her career has expanded with many films in France and abroad and several awards in France, Italy and Brazil among other countries. This Liege actress is also the face of big luxury brands (Lancôme, Piaget), giving her true star status. Marie Gillain remains attached to her origins, in particular by acting several times as a narrator with the Liege Philharmonic Orchestra. She would also like to shoot a film soon in the Liege region.

Besides her, other actors have acquired an international reputation. There is for instance Olivier Gourmet with the award for Best Actor at the Cannes Festival in 2002 (for his part in "Le Fils" [The Son] by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne). He is currently one of the most sought-after supporting actors in French cinema. He is also a teacher at Liege Conservatoire.

Other films by the Dardenne brothers have also introduced personalities like Emilie Dequenne, the winner of the Best Actress award at Cannes for her part in "Rosetta" (1999), the film that launched her career. And Déborah François, with the lead in the film "L'enfant" [The Child], who also received an award in Cannes in 2005.

These are only a few examples of the great potential in terms of actors and artistes emerging from the Conservatoires, Academies and other training establishments actors and artists.



Déborah François © Les Films du Fleuve

▶▶▶ Very Original Producers

The Dardenne brothers are a duo that are almost as famous as the Taviani brothers in Italy or the Coen brothers in the United States. With the success of their various films, "Rosetta", "Le Fils" [The Son], "L'Enfant" [The Child], rewarded by the Cannes Festival, Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne have created an enviable position for themselves in the world of cinematography. They offer innovative cinema outside the well-worn paths and full of humanity. And they are not the only ones.

Other producers, for example Harry Cleven, already have several firms that were received with enthusiasm to their credit. Having come from the Liege Conservatoire, he was first a stage actor, then a film actor and lastly a producer. He has already made three feature films, all three being awarded various prizes : "Abracadabra", "Pourquoi se marier le jour de la fin du monde" [Why get married on the day the world ends?] and above all "Trouble" with Benoît Magimel.

Bouli Lanners is also in this category of promising young Liege producers. With artistic training and with a long-standing passion for production, he recently made his first feature film, "Ultranova", a very original film that brought him well-deserved recognition in many countries including the Arthouse Award at the Berlin Festival in 2005.



Ultranova © Versus Production

▶▶▶ Very Productive Production Companies

The province of Liège has about fifteen production companies of various sizes. Some have already acquired an international dimension such as "Les Films du Fleuve" directed by the Dardenne brothers. They have received two Palmes d'Or and a Best Actor award at Cannes and they have produced or co-produced a dozen feature films ("Le Mystère de la Chambre Jaune" [The Mystery of the Yellow Room] by Bruno Podalydes, "Stormy Weather" by Solveig Anspach and "Le Couperet" [The Axe] by Costa Gavras, for example).

Other production companies are emerging in the Belgian and European market. These include "Versus Production" (with "Dans les Champs de Bataille" [On the Battlefields] by Danielle Arbid, which was awarded many prizes, "Mariées mais pas trop" [Married But Not Too Much] by Catherine Corsini and "En Territoire indien" [In Indian Territory] by Lionel Epp).

"Tarantula" defines itself as a European network of independent, autonomous companies gathered under one label. It has many feature films to its credit, some of which were selected in Cannes.

We should also mention the "Les Films de la Drève" production company managed by Jean-Jacques Andrien. His films "Le grand paysage d'Alexis Droeven" [The Endless Land of Alexis Droeven] and "Australia" have made their impact on Belgian cinema and one of the most recent co-productions, the Belgo-Moroccan film "L'Enfant endormi" [The Sleeping Child], won various awards in Belgium and also in France, Switzerland and Italy.

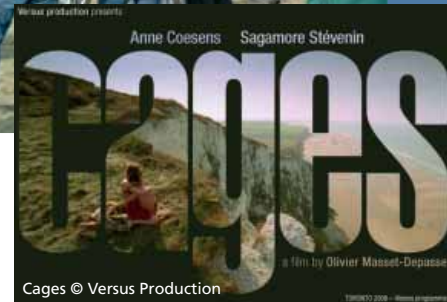
And besides this, "Les Films de la Passerelle" produces committed documentaries about political or social issues such as "Mobutu, Roi du Zaïre" [Mobutu, King of Zaire], "Iran, sous le voile des apparences" [Iran, Veiled Appearances], "Congo River" by Thierry Michel and also "Salvador Allende" by Patricio Guzman.



L'enfant © Les Films du Fleuve



Volours de chevaux © Clap Liège



Cages © Versus Production

■ desk@lesfilmsdufleuve.be
 ■ www.passerelle.be

▶▶▶ Flying-Cam : Beyond the Boundary

Flying-Cam was the first company in the world to offer aerial shots from remote-controlled mini-helicopters. Since then, the company has constantly perfected its equipment and it has been able to maintain its position as world leader. Flying-Cam works in 47 countries for over 800 clients. Its most recent projects include in particular the latest "Harry Potter" films, the latest "James Bond" films, "The Greatest Game Ever Played", "Mission Impossible 2", "Un Homme d'Exception" [An Exceptional Man], "Scooby Doo 2", "La Haine" [Hatred] etc. Besides the cinema market, the company works for advertising companies, television series, sports events, tourist offices, universities and also leisure parks such as Walt Disney Parks and Resorts and Six Flags. Flying-Cam participates in publicly funded programmes such as those by NASA too. In 1995, Emmanuel Prévinaire the inventor received an Academy Award from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in recognition of the invention of the Flying-Cam and the introduction of this tool to the cinema industry.

■ www.flying-cam.com



© FlyingCam



© FlyingCam

▶▶▶ HoverlorD, HD Digital Cinema

Set up with the support of Wallimage and located in the centre of Liège, HoverlorD offers its high-technology services for digital cinema. Benefiting from the experience and expertise of its two founders, this new company can not only ensure technical support for the hire of HD cameras, optical equipment and accessories of a very high standard but it can also advise in the field of digital post-production and supervise projects carried out both in terms of digital

calibration and conformation, tricks and special effects. Hoverlord already has to its credit several short fiction films and documentaries and also its first feature film, "Nuit Noire" [Black Night], by Olivier Smolders, shot entirely in High Definition with the new Viper camera from Thompson, an extremely manoeuvrable and sensitive little camera created specially for the cinema.

■ www.hoverlord.be (in French only) contact : ipc@hoverlord.be

▶▶▶ Mediacité Will Soon Raise the Curtain

Médiacité will soon be set up in the centre of Liege on a single site of 4.7 hectares (11.6 acres). This project managed by the property developer Wilhelm & co will have a cinema complex, companies in the audiovisual sector (including XDC, Hoverlord, Co-toon, Digital Graphics, ...), film studios, offices and recording studios for RTBF (a French-language Belgian broadcaster) : a range of high level players brought together in a "Médiacité cluster."

A shopping complex, a hotel and a car park with 2,400 spaces will complete the project which will extend to cover an area of 16 hectares (40 acres)!

This is an exceptional opportunity for investors in the audiovisual sector who will find all the infrastructure and skills they require for their projects on site.

 mediacite@wilco.be



© Wilhelm & Co, developer/planner


▶▶▶ A Vast Cinematic Plateau

Liege loves the cinema; this is not just a slogan. The filming locations are many here thanks to the variety and uniqueness of certain backdrops : the ambiance of Seraing, its iron and steel works and its crowded districts, certain streets or particular buildings in Liege, Huy and Verviers.

What is more, various Walloon and Liege bodies give considerable assistance to the work of foreign producers and production companies in search of suitable locations for filming, to actors and to technicians. Wallimage gives financial encouragement to the set-up and development of audio-

visual service companies. This Walloon audiovisual organization offers practical assistance such as a database of Walloon skills and coordinates the activities of the Walloon "Bureaux d'Accueil de Tournages" (filming set-up offices) through "Wallonie Tournages".

In the province of Liege, "CLAP", the Liege Province Cinema Set-up, helps with the location and production of films by means of a database of filming locations and a list of artists and technicians. It is also a link with local authorities and hotels.

-  www.wallimage.be
-  www.clapliege.be
-  www.wallonie-tournages.be
-  www.mediabase.be
-  www.cinergie.be




▶▶▶ The Tax Shelter

The "tax shelter" gives businesses – other than production and broadcasting companies – an opportunity to invest in the production of a feature film and to deduct up to 150% of the amount invested from its taxable profits. In 2004 this measure had already allowed 10 million euros of investment to be generated to the benefit of about twenty films.

Based in Liege, the company Fast Forward sees itself as an intermediary between the "tax shelter" investors and the production companies. The company offers a financial product that combines a tax benefit and profitability. Several films have already benefited from its expertise, these including a film produced by Luc Besson ("Dikkenek") and another in which Olivier Gourmet appears (the Canadian film "Congorama"). In addition, Inver Invest maintains privileged relationships with 3 well-known production companies and it offers the best conditions and guarantees in terms of return on investment. Based in Liege, this company has developed several relay aeries in Belgium so as to ensure that they are closer to the businesses.



Congorama © www.seraing.be

-  www.taxshelter.be
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