

Happy End (2017) Haneke

P Michell, 2020

Centres on the Laurents, an upper-class family living in a spacious mansion in Calais consisting of octogenarian patriarch Georges ([Jean-Louis Trintignant](#)); daughter Anne ([Isabelle Huppert](#)), whom he has put in charge of the family construction business; surgeon son Thomas (Matthieu Kassovitz), who is with his second wife, Anais ([Laura Verlinden](#)) and their newborn son); and Anne's dissolute adult son, Pierre ([Franz Rogowski](#)). Their lives may seem elegant on the surface but they all have their problems. Into this morass comes Eve ([Fantine Harduin](#)), who is Thomas' 13-year-old daughter from his first marriage and who has arrived after her mother ends up in a coma following an overdose of sedatives

A tight ensemble both onscreen and off-screen portrays the events in what initially seems in slow motion. Note phone messages at beginning. Haneke uses exceptionally long cinematic takes that makes Happy End a challenge at first viewing. Creating a different experience.

Major part of this experience is the use of lighting and cinematography – see Christian Berger, below.

The film includes two notable people from the French New Wave.

Errata – I incorrectly stated that Trintignant was in the final scene in Francois Truffaut's '400 Blows'. It was Jean-Pierre Leaud. My apologies.

Creative Personnel

Michael Haneke – Director & Writer (24 films as Director, 34 as writer)

Earlier films inc: Funny Games (1997), The Piano Teacher (2001), Cache (2005), Armour (2012). A noted auteur works with regular film crew – cinematographer, editor, etc. Regular actors also. (Not unlike John Ford and Hitchcock.)

His work often examines social issues and depicts the feelings of estrangement experienced by individuals in modern society. Haneke has made films in French, German, and English and has worked in [television](#), [theatre](#), and [cinema](#). He also teaches film direction at the [Film Academy Vienna](#).

Master of his craft, Michael Haneke is considered one of the greatest film artists working today and one who challenges his viewers each year and work goes by, with films that reflect real portions of life in realistic, disturbing and unforgettable ways.

It's the case that I don't want to tell people what they should take away from the film. It's my experience that a film doesn't end on the screen but in the minds of the viewers, and, in fact, it's my experience as well that there are as many different films as there are viewers of the film. Each person sees the film differently.

Christian Berger – Cinematographer (33 films)

Favoured cinematographer by Haneke.

1973 founded own production company. Extensive work as a documentary film-maker. In 1977 built experimental video studio. Works with and gives technical support for various young film-makers. Besides his work as director of photography he also teaches cinematography at the [Filmacademy Vienna](#).

For the Haneke film *The White Ribbon*, he studied Ingmar Bergman's celebrated cinematographer, Sven Nykvist. Film was shot in colour then turned into black & white. This was the first foreign film to receive American Society of Cinematographer's - best Cinematography Award.

Berger invented the [Cine Reflect Lighting System](#) which he uses on his films. In simplistic terms uses special reflectors with minimal artificial light, to 'harness natural light, not mis-direct it'.

Monika Willi - Editor (32 films)

Works in both documentary and narrative film medium. Highly regarded

Other frequent collaborations: Barbara Albert, Michael Glawogger.

Jean-Louis Trintignant (100 films)

Prolific theatre and cinema work. Turned down lead in *Last Tango in Paris* as he didn't like the nude scenes. Became famous in *And God Created Woman* (1956). Has acted with most of the directors of the French New Wave inc: Vadim's *Les Liaisons dangereuses* (1959), Chabrol's *Les Biches* (1968), Bertolucci's *The Conformist* (1970). Was married to Stephane Audran.

Like Huppert is well regarded at Cannes. He appeared in 10 films that were lined-up for the Palme D'or at Cannes : [Un homme et une femme](#) (1966), [My Night at Maud's](#) (1969), [Z](#) (1969), [La terrazza](#) (1980), *La nuit de Varennes* (1982) , [Rendez-vous](#) (1985), [Three Colors: Red](#) (1994), [The City of Lost Children](#) (1995), [A Self-Made Hero](#) (1996), [Amour](#) (2012).

He appeared in two movies that were nominated for the Best Picture Oscar in addition to win the Foreign-Language Film category : [Z](#) (1969) and [Amour](#) (2012).

Although he has been retired since 2003, he only comes back to working on films if Michael Haneke is directing. He considers Haneke the greatest director alive and would act for him in any film (in both big and small roles). Michael Haneke also considers Trintignant one of his all time favourite actors (alongside with Marlon Brando).

The best actors in the world are those who feel the most and show the least.

Isabelle Huppert (141 films)

Successful actor working in both theatre and cinema.

Made her name in Goretta's *The Lacemaker* (1977). Was in Cimino's ill-fated *Heaven's Gate* (1980). Did many films with Claude Chabrol inc *Une affaire des Femmes* (1988). Goddard's *Suave qui peut (la vie)* (1980). Hal Hartley's *Amateur* (1980).

This is her third film with Haneke inc *The Piano Teacher* (2001).

She is the actor who has had the most films in the official competition of the Cannes Film Festival (20 films, as of 2017), and one of only four actresses who have won the Best Interpretation Awards twice - for [Violette Nozière](#) (1978) in 1978 and [The Piano Teacher](#) (2001) in 2001.

Acting is a way of living out one's insanity.

Matthieu Kassovitz – Actor (57 credits) / Director (13 credits)

Acting work includes *Munich* (2005) and *Amelie* (2001), *Fifth Element* (1997), *Napoleon in War and Peace* (2016) TV series.

Acted and directed 6 episodes for *The Bureau* (2020) TV series. Directed *Crimson Rivers* (2000), *Gothika* (2003).

Disowned big budget Hollywood made *Babylon A.D.*, which he directed and wrote in 2008:

I'm very unhappy with the film, I never had a chance to do one scene the way it was written or the way I wanted it to be. The script wasn't respected. Bad producers, bad partners, it was a terrible experience.

Fantine Harduin (13 credits)

Young actress. Known for *Fanny's Journey* (2016).

Nominated for a [Magritte Award for Most Promising Actress](#) for *Happy End*.

Appeared on TV shows as a *Mentalist* – mind reader.