

Tell No One / Ne le dis a personne (2006) Canet

P Michell, 2021

Synopsis:

Paediatrician Dr. Alexandre Beck (François Cluzet) misses his beloved wife Margot Beck (Marie-Josée Croze), who was brutally murdered eight years ago when he was the prime suspect. When two bodies are found near where the corpse of Margot was dumped, the Police re-open the case and Alex becomes suspect again. The mystery increases when Alex receives an e-mail showing Margot ? older and alive. With the phrase “*Tell no one ...*” Then the film begins ...

A very well constructed ‘puzzle / thriller’ with ensemble cast, comparable to Hitchcock. Has at least three famous actors playing smaller roles. The director, is an additional treat in a small role related to Jean Rochefort and Kristin Scott-Thomas. Roger Ebert (below) comments on the ‘twinning of character’ in the film.

Many of the creative people wear other ‘hats’ in filmmaking.

Creative Personnel

Guillaume Canet - Writer / Director / Co-Scriptwriter (11 credits / 72 credits as actor)

This film is his second as director.

Well respected actor – was in line for Caesar award. Small role as son of Rochefort.

Shared script writing with Philippe Lefebvre.

Harlan Coben - Author

Best selling author of crime books.

He appears as the tall bald man who follows Dr. Alexandre Beck in the station.

Originally, author Harlan Coben had optioned off his novel to Hollywood, with Director Michael Apted attached. During this time, Writer and Director Guillaume Canet, who had loved the novel, had been calling up Coben with his take on the novel. Coben was immediately impressed with Canet's passion for the story, and his vision, stating that Canet understood that the novel was a love story first, and a thriller second, which Hollywood never got. When the option with Hollywood fell through, Coben decided to give him a chance.

Christophe Offenstein – Cinematographer (47 credits)

Filmed Valley of Love (2015) set in Death Valley. Also directs films. Nominated for Caesar for best cinematography for this film. Filmed Little White Lies (2010) for Canet.

Mathieu Chedid – Music (20 credits)

Did the music for the hilarious animated Tour de France spoof – The Triplets of Belleville (2003). Records as -M-.

Francois Cluzet – Dr Alexandre Beck (109 credits)

Starred in incredibly popular The Intouchables (2011) [about a paraplegic and his assistant] and French Kiss (1995). Actor and director – aren't they all! Had a son with actress Marie

Trintignant, daughter of Jean-Louis. [She tragically died after a fight with her then boyfriend Bertrand Cartat.]

Marie-Josée Croze – Margot Beck (63 credits)

The wife of Alexander, who seems to be eliminated early in film – smallish role ...

Canadian actress who rose to stardom after Munich (2005). Seems to select challenging roles with major directors. Now lives in France.

Kirstin Scott-Thomas – Helene Perkins (97 credits)

Cornish actress who speaks French fluently.

Was told by a school teacher back in her native England that she wouldn't make it as an actress because there was no money to be made of it and that's what influenced her to move to France (when she was 19) where she currently still resides.

Considers herself more French than British, having lived in Paris for more years than in her homeland.

The casting choice of her as Katherine Clifton in The English Patient (1996) led to a dispute between the studio and the producers of the film. Originally, 20th Century Fox was to finance the film, but they preferred a more well-known actress to play Katharine instead of Thomas. Demi Moore lobbied particularly hard for the role. After the producers refused to give in on a series of casting choices, Fox backed out of the film, and the project was uncertain just as production was about to begin. However, within a few weeks - during which the cast and crew stayed on in Italy without knowing if the film would be made - the film was picked up by Miramax.

Quote:

I'm not complaining. I love the teamwork of making films, and you get to go to the most beautiful places. It's a very privileged life in that respect. And you live about eight different lives when you're making a film - 12 hours a day for 6, 8, 10 weeks just pretending to be someone else. I find that very stimulating. And then every now and then I go to a film that just blows you away, and that encourages me to want to make another.

Nathalie Baye – Maître Elysabeth Feldman (107 credits)

His attorney. Example of small part given to well known actress / director. Married to Johnny Hallyday.

Jean Rochefort (1930-2017) – Senator Gilbert Neuville. (160 credits)

Began his career in late 1950s. Famous character actor who 'illuminates' scenes with his face. Alternates between theatre and film. Films to look out for: Tall Blond Man with One Black Shoe (1972), Phantom of Liberty (1974) and The Man on a Train (2002) with Johnny Hallyday [later remade with Donald Sutherland as Rochefort character in 2011]. .

Guillaume Canet and Jean Rochefort share a lot with the characters they play. Gilbert Neuville (Rochefort) is a horse breeder and his son Philippe (Canet) is a show jumper. In real-life, Canet was born to a family of horse breeders and was a show jumper with the French National Equestrian Team. As for Rochefort he has been a horse breeder since the sixties, he owns Le Haras de Villequoy, and served as the equestrian events consultant for France Televisions at the 2004 Olympics.

Budget - Made around three times its cost of E11.7M, Worldwide take US\$33.4M

Reviews

Tell everyone about Tell No One.

[come2whereimfrom](#) 28 June 2007

Based on the best selling novel by Harlan Coben this is how a thriller should be made. If you thought Jack Bauer had bad days wait till you meet Dr. Alex Beck (played superbly by Francois Cluzet) the film starts with him along with his wife spending sometime by a lake when she and then he are attacked, she is murdered and he is put into a coma. Skip eight years into the future and although never forgetting his wife's memory he has to a certain extent rebuilt his life. Then things start to turn, when two bodies are discovered buried near the lake and certain evidence suggest a link to Alex and the unsolved case of his murdered wife, suddenly it looks like he is in the frame, again. Then Alex begins to receive e-mails from an anonymous source at first but which seem to be coming from his wife, could she still be alive? And if so what the hells been going on? At 2hrs 11mins this isn't by any means a short film but it is handled so well by director Guillaume Canet that not once did I even notice the time, from the moment the story hooks you it never lets go right up to the end. As Alex starts to dig deeper and deeper to try and uncover the truth you are with him all the way discovering things as he does and when the whole thing finally unfolds it really is quite breathtaking. This film for me had everything, a brilliant script, a seasoned cast, twists and turns, Jeff Buckley's 'lilac wine' used to amazing effect (you will know what I mean when you see it) stunning cinematography, complex subplots that never once get too confusing, it truly is one of the most enjoyable and intelligent films I've seen for a long time.

The case of the Fateful Skinny-dip

Roger Ebert, 2008

"Tell No One" will play as a terrific thriller for you, if you meet it halfway. You have to be willing to believe. There will be times you think it's too perplexing, when you're sure you're witnessing loose ends. It has been devised that way, and the director knows what he's doing. Even when it's baffling, it's never boring. I've heard of airtight plots. This one is not merely airtight, but hermetically sealed.

The set-up is the simple part. We meet a married couple, sweethearts since childhood: Alex ([Francois Cluzet](#)) and Margot ([Marie-Josée Croze](#)). They go skinny-dipping in a secluded pond and doze off on the raft. They have a little quarrel, and Margot swims ashore. Alex hears a scream. He swims to the dock, climbs the ladder and is knocked unconscious.

Flash-forward eight years. Alex is a pediatrician in a Paris hospital. He has never remarried and still longs for Margot. Two bodies are found buried in the forest where it is believed she was murdered, and the investigation is reopened. Although Margot's case was believed solved, suspicion of Alex has never entirely died out. He was hit so hard before falling back into the water that he was in a coma for three days. How did he get back on the dock?

Now the stage is set for a dilemma that resembles in some ways "[The Fugitive](#)." Evidence is found that incriminates Alex: a murder weapon, for example, in his apartment. There is the lockbox that contains suspicious photographs and a shotgun tied to another murder. Alex is tipped off by his attorney ([Nathalie Baye](#)) and flees out the window of his office at the hospital just before the cops arrive. "You realize he just signed his own confession?" a cop says to the lawyer.

Alex is in very good shape. He runs and runs, pursued by the police. It is a wonderfully photographed chase, including a dance across both lanes of an expressway. His path takes him through Clignancourt, the labyrinthine antiques market and into the mean streets on the other side. He shares a Dumpster with a rat. He is helped by a crook he once did a favour for; the crook has friends who seem to be omnipresent.

Ah, but already I've left out a multitude of developments. Alex has been electrified by cryptic e-mail messages that could only come from Margot. Is she still alive? He needs to elude the cops long enough to make a rendezvous in a park. And *still* I've left out so much -- but I wouldn't want to reveal a single detail that would spoil the mystery.

"Tell No One" was directed and co-scripted by [Guillaume Canet](#), working with [Harlan Coben](#), the American author of the novel which inspired it. It contains a rich population of characters, but has been so carefully cast that we're never confused. There are: Alex's sister ([Marina Hands](#)); her lesbian lover ([Kristin Scott Thomas](#)); the rich senator, whose obsession is race horses ([Jean Rochefort](#)); Margot's father ([Andre Dussollier](#)); the police captain who alone believes Alex is innocent ([Francois Berleand](#)); the helpful crook ([Gilles Lellouche](#)), and the senator's son (Guillaume Canet himself). Also a soft-porn fashion photographer, a band of vicious assassins, street thugs, and on and on. And the movie gives full weight to these characters; they are necessary and handled with care.

If you give enough thought to the film, you'll begin to realize that many of the key roles are twinned, high and low. There are two cops closely on either side of retirement age. Two attractive brunettes. A cop and a crook who have similar personal styles. Two blondes who are angular professional women. Two lawyers. One of the assassins looks a little like Alex, but has a beard. Such thoughts would never occur during the film, which is too enthralling. But it shows what love and care went into the construction of the puzzle.

One of the film's pleasures is its unexpected details. The big dog Alex hauls around. The Christian Louboutin red-soled shoes that are worn on two most unlikely occasions. The steeplechase right in the middle of everything. The way flashbacks are manipulated in their framing so that the first one shows less than when it is reprised. The way solutions are dangled before us and then jerked away. The computer technique. The torturous path taken by some morgue photos. The seedy lawyer, so broke his name is scrawled on cardboard taped to the door. Alex patiently tutoring a young child. That the film clocks at only a whisper above two hours is a miracle.

And then look at the acting. Francois Cluzet is ideal as the hero: compact, handsome in a 40ish [Dustin Hoffman](#) sort of way, believable at all times (but then, we know his story is true). Marie-Josée Croze, with enough psychic weight she's present even when absent. Kristin Scott Thomas, not the outsider she might seem. Legendary Jean Rochefort, in a role legendary [John Huston](#) would have envied. Legendary Francois Berleand as a senior cop who will make you think of Inspector Maigret. And legendary Andre Dussollier sitting on the bench until the movie needs the bases cleared. Here is how a thriller should be made.