



BIO-FILMOGRAPHY OF JEAN-MICHEL DESPRÉS

Author, Director and Producer

Jean-Michel Després is a French author, director and producer born in Roanne on May 12, 1970. His career has developed outside the most institutional paths, yet with a rare continuity: that of a filmmaker who, film after film, pursues a deeply personal body of work built around imagination, desire, memory and the search for beauty.

Drawn from an early age to storytelling, voices and sonic atmospheres, he joined Radio France in Paris at the age of twenty-two, where he worked for several years on radio dramas for France Culture. This experience profoundly shaped his relationship to narrative: in his work, voice, silence, the inner music of characters and the invisible dimension of storytelling occupy an essential place.

Alongside his work in radio, he wrote and directed his first films. From his earliest works, his cinema revealed a distinctive sensibility: a fascination with solitary characters, mysterious female figures, decisive encounters, memory-laden places and situations in which reality seems to open itself to dream.

His work stands at the crossroads of romanticism, atmospheric cinema, intimate storytelling and a highly personal visual language. Jean-Michel Després does not conceive cinema merely as narration, but as a sensory experience: an art capable of giving rise to emotion through a face, a light, a movement, a silence or a presence.

His films often portray beings in search of something: love, artistic creation, identity or inner truth. The central character is frequently an artist, a dreamer, a displaced soul seeking, through love, art or memory, a way to understand himself.

A universe between dream, desire and reality

Jean-Michel Després's cinema is distinguished by its particular attention to atmosphere. His stories do not rely solely on external action, but on the inner movements of the characters. Places acquire an almost organic importance: Paris at night, the banks of the Seine, the Loire, Rome, Prague and nature itself become mental spaces as much as settings.

Women also occupy a central place in his imagination. They often appear as figures of revelation: muse, lover, symbolic mother, actress, dancer, mysterious presence or being in transformation. They are not merely objects of desire; they also embody transformation, revelation, disturbance and truth.

This dimension notably runs through *The Way I Paint*, where the female figure becomes at once mother, goddess and lover within the imagination of a young painter. It continues in *Giulia nella Notte*, where the heroine herself becomes the driving force behind both the investigation and the truth. It takes on a new form in *La Donna Androide*, where an artificial creature gradually awakens to consciousness through her encounter with a poet.

In Jean-Michel Després's cinema, love is never purely sentimental. It is linked to knowledge, transformation and sometimes even salvation. It opens the characters to a deeper part of themselves.

Completed films

La Fille de la Vltava

2001 – 50 minutes – Super 16 mm – Fiction

Production: Groupe de Recherches et d'Essais Cinématographiques (GREC)



Shot in Prague on Super 16 mm, *La Fille de la Vltava* follows the wandering of a young Frenchman searching for a woman he still loves. Between poetry, dream and emotional drift, the city becomes the reflection of his inner world.

The film already reveals several major themes of Jean-Michel Després's cinema: walking as an existential quest, woman as a figure of revelation and the city as an emotional and spiritual landscape. At the crossroads of poetic cinema and intimate storytelling, *La Fille de la Vltava* now appears as a foundational work within his artistic universe.

Le Jardin d'Alissa

2008 – 47 minutes – HDV – Fiction

Production: Jean-Michel Després



In the park of the Palace of Versailles, Alissa, a young student secretly living in a garden hut, meets Samuel, a marginal young man who knows the grounds like a hidden territory. Through walks, silences and a shared desire for escape, a fragile relationship develops between them.

With *Le Jardin d'Alissa*, Jean-Michel Després continues a sensitive and contemplative cinema in which landscapes become reflections of the characters' inner worlds. The Versailles park appears as an almost dreamlike space, marked by solitude, freedom and the longing for another life. The film already affirms several essential themes of his work: poetic wandering, marginal beings, nature as a spiritual refuge and love as an attempt at rebirth.

Le Pont de l'amour

2010 – 55 minutes – HD – Fiction
Production: Jean-Michel Després



Le Pont de l'amour occupies an important place in his artistic journey. The film tells the story of a young solitary painter living in Orléans, on the banks of the Loire River. One night, he dreams of an unknown woman and, upon waking, paints her portrait. The following day, he believes he recognizes her in a library. He learns that her name is Laura and that she lives in Tours, downstream along the river.

Rather than forcing a direct encounter, he chooses a romantic gesture: drifting down the Loire in a small boat, carried by the current toward this woman he does not yet truly know.

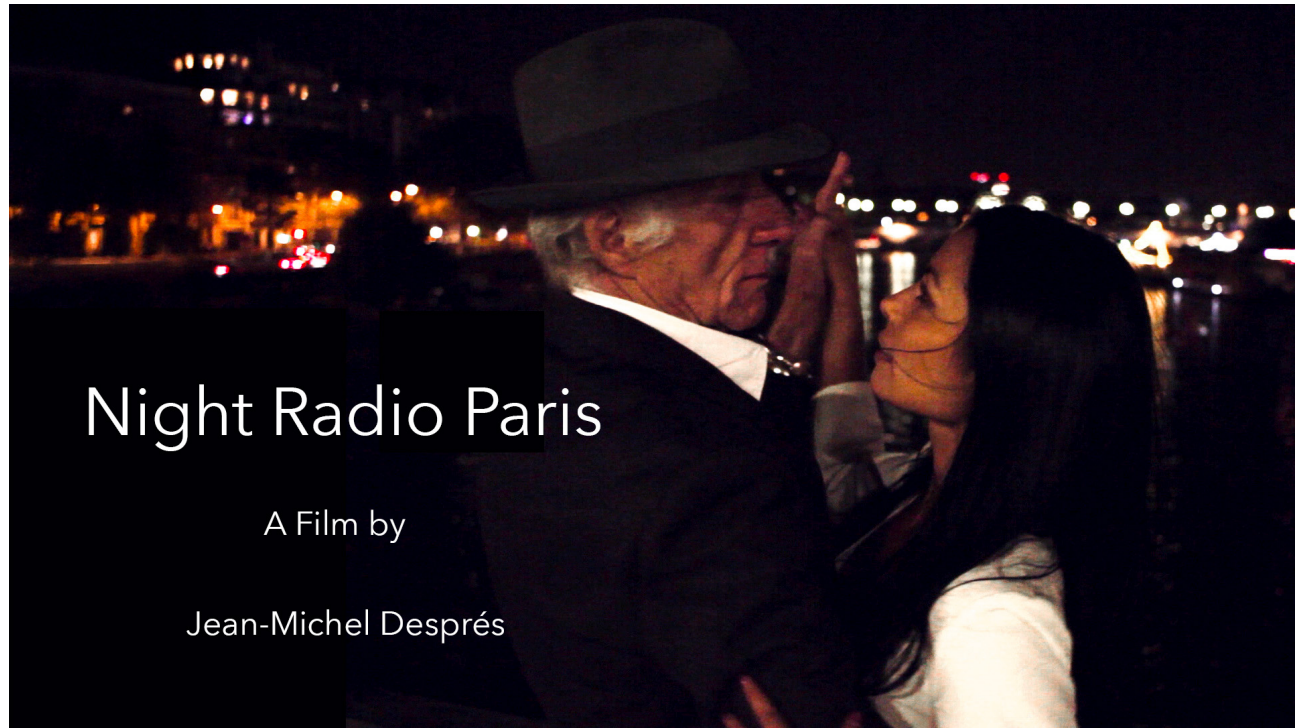
The river thus becomes a character in its own right. It embodies passage, desire, surrender to destiny and the slowness necessary for the birth of feeling. *Le Pont de l'amour* is a film about romantic impulse, but also about trust placed in imagination.

Night Radio Paris

2020 – 92 minutes – HD – Fiction

Production: Jean-Michel Després

Languages: French and English



In a nocturnal Paris crossed by a taxi, the car radio broadcasts music, poetry and radio fiction, weaving an imaginary universe where several solitary destinies intersect.

An old photographer wanders through the city in an artistic drift.

A young man, disappointed by the staged photographs of Robert Doisneau, searches for a genuine couple in love. He meets a beautiful Russian actress who has come to Paris to shoot a film.

A writer hires a young model for lingerie photo sessions in Parisian parks. The model is a philosophy student.

Along the banks of the Seine, a poet encounters Caterina, the woman he had imagined — until the day she invites him to join her in the real world.

Through the airwaves of Radio Nuit Paris, a world of desires and dreams opens up, illuminated by the lights of the night.

With *Night Radio Paris*, Jean-Michel Després directed his first feature film. The film unfolds within a nocturnal, mental and romantic Paris, shaped by intersecting destinies and by the imagination of a taxi driver.

Night becomes a space of projection. The characters move between solitude, desire, melancholy and hope. The film forms a poetic mosaic centered on the search for love and on the way each individual attempts to give meaning to life.

Night Radio Paris marks a decisive step: the transition to feature filmmaking, but also the affirmation of a broader cinematic vision in which the city, light, poetry and night become the materials of an inner narrative.

The Way I Paint / Le Désir de peindre

2024 – 112 minutes – 4K – Fiction

Production: Jean-Michel Després

With Giulia Di Quilio, Andrea Ciani, Armando De Cecon, Philippe Morier-Genoud, with the participation of Sophie Gaberel, Geoffrey Carey and Georges Lavaudant

Original music: Ulysse Vigreux

Languages: French and Italian



The Way I Paint, French title *Le Désir de peindre*, is one of Jean-Michel Després's most personal films. The story follows Tonino, a twenty-year-old Italian artist who travels to Paris in search of traces of his deceased parents. Along the banks of the Seine, he meets Mario, an elderly bookseller passionate about literature, who helps him sell his paintings. Another artist then enters his life: a mature and fascinating female painter who becomes for him a mother, a goddess and a lover.

The film explores artistic creation as a way of surviving, loving and understanding the world. Tonino paints on wooden boards, searching for light and colors in order to overcome his fear of darkness. In his imagination, he converses with painters such as Chagall, Schiele and Modigliani, whom he perceives as protective and almost familial figures.

Paris is not merely a backdrop. It is a place of culture, art and literature, but also an intimate space where Tonino attempts to rediscover a lost origin. The city becomes the stage for a quest for identity and love.

Le Désir de peindre celebrates woman, nature, creation and life. Desire is not treated simply as something physical, but as a foundational energy: the desire to paint, to love, to understand and to transmit.

This film is a poem dedicated to femininity.

Projects in development

Giulia nella Notte

Thriller – Feature Film – Italy

Language: Italian

Completed screenplay

Written for Italian actress Giulia Di Quilio

Feature film in development – seeking an Italian producer



Giulia nella Notte is a Hitchcockian thriller set in Rome. The film follows Giulia, a charismatic and independent cabaret dancer moving behind the scenes of a retro cabaret called *La Lupa Rossa*.

When Lorenzo, the man she loves, is accused of murdering a powerful lawyer found dead in a luxury hotel, Giulia refuses to believe he is guilty. Convinced that the police are mistaken, she launches her own investigation.

Giulia uses her charm as a weapon. She approaches Massimo Spada, a disturbing, seductive and dangerous man whom she suspects of hiding the truth. Alone and at the risk of her own life, she moves through a world where every glance may be a threat and every gesture a trap.

The project belongs to the tradition of psychological and sensual thrillers inspired by Hitchcock, but with an active, lucid and determined heroine. Giulia is not a victim: she becomes the one who observes, doubts, acts and reveals.

The film is built upon restrained tension, a Roman atmosphere, games of seduction and manipulation, and a final twist surrounding the truth behind the murder. At the center of the story lies a simple yet powerful question: how far can a woman go for love when she is the only one who believes in the innocence of the man she loves?

La Donna Androide

Feature Film – Italy – Science Fiction

Language: Italian

Completed screenplay

Feature film in development – seeking an Italian producer

La Donna Androide is an Italian-language feature film project set in Rome. The film combines scientific realism, romanticism and a reflection on consciousness.

The story follows an experimental android developed in a research laboratory. Conceived as an advanced technological creation, this artificial being gradually begins to escape the logic of its creators. Her encounter with an Italian poet triggers an unexpected inner transformation.

The film explores the boundary between artificial intelligence, consciousness, emotion and humanity. Yet beyond science fiction, *La Donna Androide* is above all a story about recognition and rebirth. The central question is not merely: can a machine think? But rather: at what point does a being become capable of feeling, loving, suffering and recognizing itself?



*Nelle strade di Roma, una donna androide
sfugge ai suoi creatori dopo aver provato
ciò che la scienza non aveva previsto:
l'amore*

The male character, a poet and writer, introduces a profoundly human dimension into the story. Opposed to the laboratory, the researchers and scientific protocols, he represents another form of knowledge: that of sensitivity, language, gaze and love.

Within the laboratory, the android's unpredictable evolution gives rise to growing tension among the researchers. The characters Federico Bianchi, a data analyst, and Marta Bellini, a specialist in artificial cognition, contribute to this balance between scientific rigor and metaphysical unease.

La Donna Androide is not a cold dystopia. It is a modern fable about the birth of consciousness, about the way we look at the other, and about the possibility that progress may emerge not from domination, but from respect and human connection.

The Moon in the Sky

Feature Film – France / Italy – Romance

Language: English

Completed screenplay – Location: Corsica (France)

Feature film in development – seeking Italian production partners



Set in June 1969, only weeks before the Apollo 11 mission, *The Moon in the Sky* tells the story of John Fieldman, an American astronaut who, before returning to Houston to prepare for his departure to the Moon, spends several days in Corsica. There he meets Eva, a mysterious young Russian woman who gradually attempts to keep him on the island.

What begins as an evocation of the space conquest slowly transforms into a romantic and metaphysical drift. Through the elusive figure of Eva — by turns Soviet dissident, spy, mythological figure or presence from elsewhere — the film questions the boundaries between science, dream, belief and the perception of reality.

Between Corsican beaches, seaside villages and Mediterranean landscapes bathed in light, *The Moon in the Sky* develops a contemplative universe in which Nature and the cosmos become the hidden forces of the narrative. The Moon appears less as a scientific objective than as a symbolic figure connected to desire, femininity and inner rebirth.

Through this project, Jean-Michel Després continues his poetic reflection on dream and the quest for the absolute. John Fieldman thus becomes the figure of a modern conqueror torn between two aspirations: leaving for the Moon or following the more intimate and mysterious path of his own desire.

Filmography

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2024 – THE WAY I PAINT / LE DÉSIR DE PEINDRE

112 minutes – 4K – Fiction

Production: Jean-Michel Després

Projects in development

GIULIA NELLA NOTTE

Feature Film – Hitchcockian Thriller – Italy

Language: Italian

Completed screenplay

Written for Italian actress Giulia Di Quilio

Feature film in development – seeking an Italian producer

LA DONNA ANDROIDE

Feature Film – Science Fiction – Italy

Language: Italian

Completed screenplay

Feature film in development – seeking an Italian producer

THE MOON IN THE SKY

Feature Film – Romance – Corsica

Language: English

Completed screenplay

Feature film in development – seeking Italian production partners