

**Ce film n'est pas du style  
policier.**

**L'auteur s'efforce d'exprimer,  
par des images et des sons,  
le cauchemar d'un jeune  
homme poussé par sa  
faiblesse dans une aventure  
de vol à la tire pour laquelle  
il n'était pas fait.**

Opening credits of "Pickpocket" by Robert Bresson: "This film is not a thriller. Using images and sound, the filmmaker strives to express the nightmare of a young man whose weaknesses lead him to commit acts of theft for which nothing destined him".

### Director's statement

THE FALL is also not a thriller/drama. My film doesn't talk about relationships nor about the psychological/dramatic impact of the events that are happening in this film. Instead, this film is a poetic expression about certain themes I wanted to explore.

Much more in the tradition of Robert Bresson, I wanted to avoid anything psychological. There are no psychological explanations or relationship/character development in this film. The goal, I hoped I have achieved, is to get closer to human truth (which is not psychological). This film is not reality. The reality in this film is deformed, like an expressionistic painting or a piece of music. I believe that through an expressionistic poetic approach of reality you can get closer to this truth. Instead of just recreating/representing reality. Reality doesn't teach us anything. Only through the deformation of reality we can reach some kind of truth. "Art is falsehood", to use the words of Degas.

With THE FALL I have, for myself, pushed the limits of cinematographic expression. Meaning, I have handled a very dramatic psychological realistic plot (which is only a vehicle to talk about other themes) and approached it in a contemplative way. The result is a poetic expression, a philosophical parable. The Fall is certainly not a realistic psychological drama.

Therefore I have made certain choices that don't seem evident to conventional viewers. As Bresson also made some "weird" choices in his films, for example: the model actors that lack all emotional reaction, putting the camera more on feet and hands, than on faces. And, this is my favorite, the extreme blood gushing in "Lancelot du Lac" each time a knight is decapitated. These are creative choices of the director in order to reach a human truth. Bresson clearly didn't want to represent reality, because on a sociological and psychological level his films don't work. Instead, his films are great achievements (essays, as Bresson calls his films) that reach for human truth and handle profound themes.

Well, I also tried to do this with THE FALL. My film does not work on a realistic level, reality is not my project. I'm not interested to recreate reality. Film is more like a painting or piece of music: you feel, you think, it is another world, a poetic approach in order to talk about other things. Everyday reality needs to be distorted in order to reach a human truth. I am in the business of cinema, not reality.

To give you some examples: a lot of the action takes place off-screen. The only reason I did this is to avoid anything psychological or dramatic, because that is not what the film is about. I wanted to focus more on the situation itself and the themes that come out of that. Another example is the dialogue: it doesn't explain anything, it doesn't explore or talk about these characters or their relation to each other. I have only focused myself on the most essential thing: exploring the themes.

I also use very long takes, instead of seeing the action-reaction of the characters, I just observe these characters without cutting. The goal is to achieve contemplation. I push the viewer in an observing position. The long takes give the viewer time to feel and think for themselves. He is not involved, like the characters are involved. There is a distance between the viewer and the events that take place. The viewer is involved in another way, as observer. The viewer does not participate in the action.

This film also makes no moral judgment. As a filmmaker I think it is wrong to judge. I don't want to say to the viewer what they must think and feel. My job as a filmmaker is handling the world around me, put some order into it, and try to understand it. By doing this, certain themes appear. But it is completely up to the viewer himself to think, to feel, to judge,... That is the job of the viewer.

As a filmmaker I made some extreme choices. This film balances between the "psychological theme film" and a "contemplative cinematographic expression of certain philosophical themes". Clearly I wanted to explore the fall of man in the first place. I tried to eliminate the first level as much as possible. The psychological dramatic level is just the vehicle.

My previous short KAIN is clearly a contemplative film. With THE FALL I wanted to push the limits by using a psychological dramatic plot and approach it in a contemplative way. The future will tell if I have achieved this. Certainly I am very proud of this film.

Kristof Hoornaert

