

A FILM BY  
FRANÇOIS DELISLE



CASH  
NEXUS

ALEXANDRE CASTONGUAY  
FRANÇOIS PAPINEAU

EVELYNE BROCHU  
LARA KRAMER

CHRISTIANE PASQUIER  
GUY THAUETTE

**When Jimmy, a drug addict, goes back to his family, old wounds are dredged up and threaten to wreak havoc on the lives of every member of the clan.**

FRAGMENTS DISTRIBUTION PRESENTS  
A FILMS 53/12 PRODUCTION

# CASH NEXUS

A FILM WRITTEN, PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY  
FRANÇOIS DELISLE

WITH  
ALEXANDRE CASTONGUAY  
FRANÇOIS PAPINEAU  
EVELYNE BROCHU

GUY THAUETTE  
CHRISTIANE PASQUIER  
LARA KRAMER

RUNNING TIME  
135 MINUTES

PRODUCTION  
FILMS 53/12  
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**Jimmy is trapped in a spiral of street drug addiction and withdrawal. He's a wounded creature, chasing after his delusions with a vengeance.**

**One day, Jimmy is forced to get back in contact with his family. The pariah's return to the pack reawakens old demons in his elder brother Nathan.**

**The two brothers' fates begin to intertwine, steered by lack of affection, brotherly rivalry and wasted lives. The emotional powder keg explodes in a brutal confrontation that projects them through the looking glass. A journey that will leave no one unscathed.**

WATCHING *THE METEOR*, *CHORUS* AND *CA\$H NEXU\$* IN SEQUENCE, IT FEELS LIKE FROM ONE FILM TO ANOTHER YOU ALWAYS APPEAR WHERE WE'RE NOT EXPECTING YOU, BOTH THEMATICALLY AND AESTHETICALLY, MEANING THAT EACH FILM SEEMS TO BREAK WITH THE PREVIOUS ONE.

It's true that I made *THE METEOR* at a time when I was looking to free myself from the shooting and production methods I'd used up till then. I remember when I was making it, I wondered how it would all come together; I was dealing with sparse material, a collection of fragments that I had to whip into some kind of coherent shape. I was heading into almost experimental territory in terms of storytelling. My reaction was to follow up with a black-and-white film with a highly structured, flowing story with a more standard narrative. After the simplicity inherent in *CHORUS*, I wanted to make a film that was more off-the-wall and out-of-control, outside my comfort zone. That led to *CA\$H NEXU\$*, which unfolds in an unprecedented way, if only for its editing, length and ambition. I wanted to take risks once again, but in a different way.

WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF *CA\$H NEXU\$* ?

There's a thread in *CHORUS* about the connection between the film's characters and social reality. That amounted to a single image on television showing the situation in Syria... I wanted my next film to be more engaged with the state of the world we live in. Oddly enough, as I was thinking about it, I went back to Pasolini, who is a major inspiration for me in terms of an artist's engagement. So I settled on the concept of brotherhood, which led me to think about how the gaping social inequalities of today's world exist among people living on the same planet and in the same country, but also in the same family. I wondered how human consciousness could contemplate social inequality when two brothers could be at opposite ends of the economic spectrum. I saw the family as a universal context in which to talk about inequality.

SINCE YOU MENTION THE FAMILY CONTEXT, I'D LIKE TO DISCUSS SOMETHING THAT YOUR LAST THREE FILMS HAVE IN COMMON: THE PRESENCE OF PARENTS. THE MAIN CHARACTERS OF ALL THREE FILMS ARE DEALING WITH THEIR FATHER OR MOTHER. IS THAT RECURRENCE FROM ONE FILM TO ANOTHER AN ACCIDENT OR IS IT A CONCERN OF YOURS?

I have to admit it's a concern of mine. The generation before mine, the baby-boomers, wanted to change the world. And now we've ended up with an environmental crisis, omnipresent religion, Trump, etc. That amounts to a failure. So I'm raising the question of legacy. It seems to me that we live in a world in perpetual breakdown, where nothing is really handed down; all we see are interruptions and violent reversals. That concerns me very greatly and is no doubt embodied in my films in the way parents and children try to form a connection.

IN THIS FILM, YOU PORTRAY PEOPLE WHO BELONG TO A CLASS—THE BOURGEOISIE—THAT IS USUALLY JUDGED VERY HARSHLY BY QUEBEC FILMMAKERS. WHEN YOU WERE WRITING THE SCREENPLAY, DID YOU HAVE A CLEAR AIM TO TALK ABOUT THAT PARTICULAR CLASS?

It wasn't a preconceived theme for me. I didn't want to talk about the relationship that people in Quebec have with the bourgeoisie, for example. However, since the idea of legacy—in the broad sense, meaning what we receive from those who come before us—was a concern of mine, I felt that the big, bourgeois house, isolated from the world, became a symbol of that legacy. Actually, everything in this film is symbolic!

And in that sense, *CASH NEXUS* is closer to *THE METEOR* than to *CHORUS*. The writing emerged from a long process of reflection, and there are many aspects of that research that were inserted into the screenplay almost unconsciously. There are still things in the film that I can't quite explain, where the meaning is being revealed to me now and that came out of my preparation. It's as though the writing process liberated a monster bigger than me and I let myself be dragged along with it.

**I'D LIKE YOU TO TALK ABOUT THE CAST. ALEXANDRE CASTONGUAY IS AN ASTONISHING ACTOR, WHAT WE COULD CALL A NATURAL. IN THE FILM, HE WORKS ALONGSIDE ACTORS WITH A LOT OF EXPERIENCE, AS WELL AS LARA KRAMER, WHO'S A CHOREOGRAPHER RATHER THAN A PROFESSIONAL ACTRESS. SO THERE'S A CONTRAST IN THE FILM BETWEEN THE OPPOSITE PATHS OF THE TWO BROTHERS, BUT ALSO IN TERMS OF ACTING STYLE, BETWEEN THE APPROACH OF ALEXANDRE CASTONGUAY AND THAT OF FRANÇOIS PAPINEAU.**

**For the role of Jimmy, I picked Alexandre Castonguay in the most traditional way possible, through an audition. I'd seen him in *LA CHASSE AU GODARD D'ABBITTIBBI*, and his audition quickly reinforced my desire to work with him. During rehearsals, I realized that he had an intense energy that was part of his personality and that I had to contain. It quickly became obvious that Alexandre had to go his own way. Since his character had fallen out with his family, he could benefit from a certain isolation. So he very humbly agreed to play along and voluntarily separated himself from the main set. When Lara Kramer arrived, she naturally joined Alexandre in accordance with her character. Without him, the film would not have that strength. Let's say he is not a "petit-bourgeois" actor.**

**HOW DO YOU APPROACH DIRECTING ACTORS?**

**On set, I don't have a monitor, I'm always with the actors, the first to arrive, the first one ready... There's necessarily a closeness that happens. A physical connection grows out of that where words lose their importance. We feel things and understand things with a glance.**

**DO YOU HAVE A LOT OF DISCUSSIONS WITH THE ACTORS OR JUST LET THEM DO THEIR THING?**

**I write a lot and incorporate a lot of details and clarifications into my screenplays. The actors can take inspiration from that to come up with ideas. We rehearse using that as a base and make adjustments as we go along. When we get on set I'm very prepared, and I think the actors feel prepared as well. They feel taken over by a vision, so we shoot really fast in a flood of energy.**

**YOU DON'T USE A TROUPE IN YOUR WORK. FROM ONE FILM TO ANOTHER, YOU CHANGE ACTORS.**

**The troupe is probably more behind the camera; I have people I've worked with for several films. But I don't write for actors, I write characters that fit into the drama of the film itself. I choose actors based on the characters rather than the other way around. I like meeting new actors. I don't want to repeat myself, and I think I like the insecurity instilled in me by meeting a new actor.**

**UP UNTIL *TWICE A WOMAN*, YOU WORKED WITH A DOP. SINCE *THE METEOR*, YOU'VE HANDLED THAT ROLE YOURSELF. DOES THAT CHANGE THE WAY YOU RELATE TO THE ACTORS AND TO THE STAGING?**

**I used to do the camera work for my films, but I didn't deal with the lighting. *TWICE A WOMAN* is the only film where I didn't touch the camera. So when I decided to act as DOP, it wasn't such a big step. Since then, I've felt like I can go faster and further by doing the photography myself. I don't have a DOP career to advance, so there's no ego or calculation involved. Actually, I realized that it changed the team's perception of me in the sense that I was no longer a kind of outside authority, but rather a member of the crew.**

**SINCE *THE METEOR*, YOU'VE ALSO TAKEN ON THE JOB OF EDITING AND ALL OF THE VISUAL POST-PRODUCTION. IT SEEMS PARADOXICAL BECAUSE YOU SAY YOU NEED THE CREATIVE INPUT OF THE PEOPLE YOU WORK WITH BUT YOU HAVE MORE CONTROL THAN ANYONE OVER ALL THE STAGES OF PRODUCTION. YOU'VE BECOME A CREW MEMBER EVEN THOUGH AT THE SAME TIME YOUR FILMS HAVE BIGGER AND BIGGER BUDGETS.**

**Yes, that gives me a huge amount of freedom and latitude because I do the editing, colour correction and even the credits. I'm an independent who's made efforts to surround himself with the right people. That model will probably continue evolving, but it's the production method that's become my own and that suits me the best.**

LET'S GET BACK TO *CASH NEXU\$*, TO THE CHOICE OF TITLE AND THE TYPOGRAPHY. IT'S ALMOST LIKE A LOGO.

I actually chose the title because I liked the graphic possibilities that it offered. Same thing with *CHORUS*. I find that *CASH NEXU\$* sounds punk. The title was there from the beginning of the project, even before the characters and the screenplay. So the film was built up around the title. It's the cornerstone of the film.

IN *CASH NEXU\$*, JIMMY IS ON ONE END OF THE SPECTRUM AND NATHAN (FRANÇOIS PAPINEAU) ON THE OTHER. BETWEEN THE TWO, THERE SEEM TO BE TWO PASSAGeways: THEIR FATHER (GUY THAUETTE) AND NATHAN'S WIFE JULIETTE (EVELYNE BROCHU). BOTH THE FATHER AND JULIETTE EVOLVE IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH JIMMY. WHAT DO YOU FEEL THE WOMAN REPRESENTS?

She's a character I like because she blossoms over the course of the film, she's discreet, she has a quiet strength and over time she's humanized.

*THAT'S KIND OF THE CASE WITH ALL THE FILM'S CHARACTERS: THEY TAKE ON NEW DIMENSIONS AND THEIR HUMANITY GROWS AS THE FILM PROGRESSES.*

That was one of the challenges: starting with archetypal characters and making them grow in complexity and expand. At first, in *CASH NEXU\$*, things settled into place in a pretty Brechtian way, with characters solidly anchored in the representation of figures drawn from the collective unconscious. My intention was to have the film shake all that up and loosen that rigid structure.

In that context, Juliette is a witness in the sense that she observes the two brothers, she watches them, but also in the sense that she represents that framework. She's the proof of what the film is, of the transformation that happens over time.

In the long dinner scene that lasts several minutes, she speaks only one sentence. In another scene, she's with Nathan during his long confession. That apparent passivity was pretty unsettling for Evelyne Brochu because she wanted to take part in the dialogue. I remember telling her that her gaze was what mattered.

**I'D LIKE TO TALK ABOUT THE ENDING, WHICH IS PRETTY SURPRISING. IN THE FILM, WE FOLLOW THE PATHS REPRESENTED BY EACH OF THE CHARACTERS, BUT THEY LEAD TO A SYMBOLIC OUTCOME RATHER THAN A SOCIOLOGICAL STATEMENT. HOW DID YOU DECIDE ON THAT ENDING?**

**It happened very early on in the process, at the beginning, actually. I knew it would end in that way. Not necessarily in that place, because at first I fantasized about shooting in a ruined landscape, in the vestiges of a vanished civilization that died of narcissism. That brings us back to the notion of legacy that we were talking about earlier.**

**That idea became transformed from the Apocalypse to Genesis, meaning that from the end of the world I came back to the beginning, the origin, virgin territory. In a way, it's close to the legend of Cain and Abel. But beyond that, I'll just add that the ending belongs to the viewers. They're free to buy into it or not.**

**Narrative cinema, as opposed to visual art, music, contemporary dance and other art forms, relies very little on the senses and tends to explain everything. We need to know what something means and why things happen the way they do. There's little room for letting the work percolate through viewers' minds. I wanted to leave viewers with an emotion, a feeling, rather than an explanation.**

**— INTERVIEW CONDUCTED  
BY MARCEL JEAN**

Now that we are out of ideas to guide us and rein in the power of money, we are mute witnesses to the apotheosis of economics, to extreme individualism, overconsumption, environmental ravages and the abandonment of any solidarity among humans. By reducing the conversation about wealth accumulation to a simple matter of effectiveness, implying that people are poor only through their own fault, we wash our hands of the whole thing, allowing a caste system to emerge that affects every society in the world without exception.

I think that our lack of collective imagination creates a destructive existential void, leaving the way clear to a highly effective system that prevents us from imagining that we could live our lives differently. So the original impulse for *CASH NEXU\$* came from a desire to fight back against that kind of trickery and take on the world bare-fisted through a story framed as an allegory.

My exploration focused on the themes of injustice and privation, which immediately led me to think about brotherhood. Starting from the idea that we are all united in the way we cling to myths, stories and symbols that shape us as brothers and sisters, the story of Jimmy and Nathan gradually built up around a narrative filigree borrowed from the legend of Cain and Abel.

That said, I took care to avoid stating outright what is good and what is evil, resolving all contradictions and reaching any kind of consensus. It's important to me that my film be more like a poem than a thesis because *CASH NEXU\$* is, above all, a work of flesh and blood.

– FRANÇOIS DELISLE

FILMOGRAPHY

2018 CA\$H NEXU\$  
 2015 CHORUS  
 2013 THE METEOR  
 2010 TWICE A WOMAN  
 2007 YOU  
 2004 HAPPINESS IS A SAD SONG  
 1994 RUTH

Between 1987 and 1990, François Delisle directed several experimental short films. Some of them were selected for various international festivals.

In 1994, *Ruth*, François Delisle's first feature film, was named best feature of the year and best screenplay at the Rendez-Vous du cinéma québécois. *Ruth* drew critical acclaim and was screened in Canada and Europe.

In 2002, François Delisle founded the company Films 53/12 to direct and produce his second feature; *Happiness is a Sad Song*. After winning the award for best feature at the Festival international du cinéma francophone en Acadie and named the best film of the year award from the Association québécoise des critiques de cinéma, *Happiness is a Sad Song* went on to international recognition when it toured the world to over twenty festivals and film events.

In 2007, François Delisle released his third feature film, *You*. In international competition at the Montreal World Film Festival, *You* was a shock for both audiences and critics. Fragile yet uncompromising, *You* has done the rounds nationally and internationally.

In 2010, after appearing at festivals around the world, *Twice a Woman*, his fourth film, opened on Quebec screens. A critical and audience favorite here and around the world, the film appeared simultaneously in theaters and through video on demand, a first in Canada.

His fifth feature film, *The Meteor*, hit Quebec screens in March 2013 after its world premiere at the Sundance Festival and the 63rd Berlin Festival. The film was a hit with critics and audiences in Canada and around the world. *The Meteor* won the Association québécoise des critiques de cinéma for best film of the year.

In 2015, *Chorus*, his sixth feature, drew unprecedented international recognition. The film, which was in competition at the Sundance Festival and screened at the 65th Berlin Festival, prompted critical raves when it was released. Its success led to it being selected for film festivals, numerous awards, and given a theatrical release in many countries around the world, contributing to its major international impact.

## ARTISTIC INFORMATION

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| WITH  | JIMMY<br>NATHAN<br>JULIETTE<br>EMMANUEL<br>EVE<br>ANGIE<br>MICHEL   | ALEXANDRE CASTONGUAY<br>FRANÇOIS PAPINEAU<br>EVELYNE BROCHU<br>GUY THAUVETTE<br>CHRISTIANE PASQUIER<br>LARA KRAMER<br>YVES JACQUES |
| DIRECTOR / SCREENWRITER /<br>CINEMATOGRAPHER / EDITOR | FRANÇOIS DELISLE  |  |
| ARTISTIC DIRECTOR                                     | GENEVIÈVE LIZOTTE   |  |
| COSTUME DESIGNER                                      | CAROLINE POIRIER  |  |
| CASTING   | PIERRE PAGEAU<br>DANIEL POISSON   |  |
| MUSICAL DIRECTOR                                      | ROBERT MARCEL LEPAGE  |  |
| MUSIC   | <i>ALFRED SCHNITTKE STRING QUARTETS 1 TO 4 PERFORMED BY THE MOLINARI QUARTET<br/>OVER JORDAN / PAPA M</i> |  |
| SOUND   | FRANÇOIS GRENON<br>SIMON GERVAIS<br>STÉPHANE BERGERON   |  |
| PRODUCERS   | FRANÇOIS DELISLE<br>MAXIME BERNARD  |  |

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

|                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| ORIGINAL TITLE        | CA\$H NEXU\$       |
| ENGLISH TITLE         | CA\$H NEXU\$       |
| SHOOTING FORMAT       | 4K                 |
| PROJECTION FORMAT     | DCP                |
| RUN TIME              | 135 MINUTES        |
| ORIGINAL VERSION      | FRENCH AND ENGLISH |
| SUBTITLES             | ENGLISH AND FRENCH |
| FRAME                 | 2.40:1             |
| COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION | CANADA             |
| YEAR                  | 2018               |

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POUR PRODUCTION CINÉMATOGRAPHIQUE DU CANADA

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CASH NEXUS

**Concept invented by 19th-century Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle that can be summed up as economic exchange. The term Cash Nexus was later employed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in their *Manifesto of the Communist Party* to mean an ideology that categorizes and appraises everything and everybody based on monetary value.**

