

# WE SHOULD NOT EXIST

a film by  
**HPG**

CANNES 2006

**Quinzaine**  
des Réalisateurs

DIRECTORS' FORTNIGHT

with  
**HPG & LZA**

and the participation of  
**Marilou Berry**  
**Rachida Brakni**  
**Bertrand Bonello**





**Cannes 2006 - Directors' Fortnight**  
in Competition for Caméra d'Or

**PANGEA FILMS INTERNATIONAL**  
presents

**HPG - LZA**  
in

# **WE SHOULD NOT EXIST**

a film by HPG

and the participation of  
**Marilou Berry - Rachida Brakni - Bertrand Bonello**

Produced by  
**HPG PRODUCTION** in association with **GAME PRODUCTIONS**  
**HPG / Laurent Bagnard-Viotti / Patrick Giordano**

France - 2006 - 1H30

**OFFICIAL SCREENINGS**  
**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> of May - 2 PM / 10 PM - Noga Hilton**  
**HPG et LZA are in Cannes from 17<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> of May**

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# SYNOPSIS



Hervé, 37, is a star in the porn industry. Exhausted from living on the edge, he decides to take off the costume of Condoman and to radically change his life towards mainstream cinema.

As he enters this totally new world, he faces rejection from all directions. However, his strong will to understand the rules of the game will lead him to LZA ...

# HPG MEETS BERTRAND BONELLO

**BB : Why this title « WE SHOULD NOT EXIST » ?**

**HPG :** I had the feeling that this title would be radical and clear to describe how our society is considering people who don't follow the mainstream standards and rules. People that have a different way of life, a different vision of life or different way of surviving, really feel that our society would prefer that they should not exist...

Take the young actors learning in theatre and cinema academies for example, Hervé is telling them in the film that they act badly ! How can a guy like Hervé, who looks ridiculous on the stage, who never attended any lessons and does not represent any institution, could be so proud and criticize them. It makes them react to him on one way but also it disturbs them. This is obviously Hervé, character in the film, who is speaking.

**BB : The film seems to mix autobiography and fiction, what do you think ?**

**HPG :** People may believe it is an autobiography, imagining that I brought together people close to my universe and ask them to improvise completely. But it's not the way I work, all scenes were precisely written beforehand. The scene with you in the Cinémathèque Française is a good example. You play your own role but you finally interpret a text I have written for you. It is perfect fiction; people think that you give your own point of view as a director like in a documentary, but it is all a story. I ask you, as an actor, to say something which could be very far from your convictions. When you try to be sincere, to escape some artistic constraints, you go back to yourself and it could become autofiction. However, I want to avoid this kind of easy trap. I could not work if the dialogs are not completely written.

**BB : However at the same time my character is called Bertrand. He made "THE PORNOGRAPHER". There is a connection to real life. Your film could not be compared to any other film. However, there is a hint to Italian cinema; in between Ferreri for the excess and the first movies of Nanni Moretti.**

**HPG :** I am not really aware of any references to other films. I'm in a certain way disconnected to society which leads me to a "non-culture" and almost no films references. Nevertheless if the tragi-comedy side of the film, which is very important to me, will remind people the Italian cinema, I would be happy.



**BB : Who is the character of Hervé ? Why does nobody want to listen to him ?**

**HPG :** He is a prisoner of his own reflexes, due to 20 years of excess, which made him totally unable to have relationships with people even though he has a deep desire to understand them and to change his life in moderation. He has a very clumsy way to speak with people and to reveal himself to them. With such an attitude, he becomes moving to others. People tell him : "If you behave in a smarter way, with more elegance, without yelling all the time, people would listen to you more easily."

**BB : You do not want to tell your life story, but you want to raise questions. The film questions all the time.**

**HPG :** I have the feeling that, as an actor, you learn more by experiencing in real life than going to cinema academies...

**BB : You came to ask me to play in your film saying: "You take me for your film and I'll take you for my film".**

**HPG :** Yes, and you made me masturbate in front of a donkey in a small corner of the screen. I hoped to get bigger in the classic cinema, but in the end, I got smaller. I said to myself : "Hervé, nobody waits for you in the noble 7th Art."

**BB : Is it better to film an actor playing a role and faking his character in a fiction film or is it better to film a real person who is sincere and straight. There are two ways of filming.**

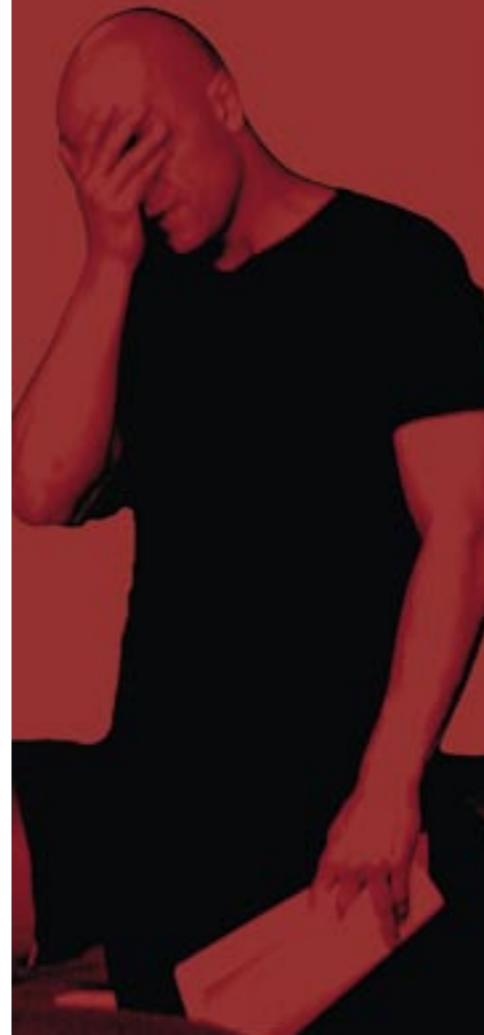
**HPG :** It all depends on what the director is looking for. Does he want to show a reality which doesn't exist ? A dream he wants to make real ? In any case, a film, is not like the evening news on TV.

**BB : Do you really want to change your life radically ?**

**HPG :** Change radically my life ? The character says this. But for me, I absolutely do not want to. I accept my life completely. It is fantastic, I love Cinema as I practise it in various ways.

**BB : For you, there is no difference between a porn movie and a traditional movie ?**

**HPG :** only in terms of showing sexuality... The point of playing good or bad, to say something or not to say, is the same. One main difference is the quality, the interest and the passion you put into the different projects. The bad taste doesn't scare me. The story is important, but the most important is the way you direct people on a set because all stories have already been told ... During the shooting, the way I was in front of the camera, free and without any constraint, was scaring the others. I received lots of advices from people who explained me how to behave on the set.



People were telling me about artistic freedom, but honestly the only thing that really scared them is to see someone escaping rules in front of a camera.

**BB : There is one scene with Rachida Brakni and Marilou Berry. This scene is more than improvisation, it looked that everything was out of control.**

**HPG :** I asked everyone on the set to help me, I was like a little boy, I wanted the scene to be felt as if it is complete failure. When my production manager told me that the scene was really bad, I fired her.

**BB : I don't know what happened, but some takes took up to 30min.**

**HPG :** But it is courageous not to know where you go. I wanted to be free of constraints with you, I asked you to do your best and you really tried to help me. Why does it scare you when I am in front of a camera ? I was just talking about someone who is unable to communicate with people and who can not share emotions with others.

**BB : The female main role is played by LZA, your wife in life. Tell us about her character !**

**HPG :** LZA causes an emotion inside Hervé which he has never felt before. Is it love, affection, tenderness, we do not know exactly what. What we do know is that this kind of feeling is totally new to him and is almost impossible in his excessive daily life, which only gives space to artificiality, between prostitution and addiction. Love comes as a remedy against the excess... or rather as a way to listen to an expressed truth and make Hervé realize, thanks to LZA, how he can improve himself and feel better.

**BB : We never talk about it but there is this incredible scene with LZA at the end of the film. I would like to know how you shoot it.**

**HPG :** I wanted to go further with the freedom we already share in our private life, to try new experiences with this woman in front of the camera because she is the one I love. She played very well, if it was not the case, I would have broken up with her. I love LZA because I admire her talent and her work. The big challenge was to give her self confidence, to tell her that she has to be different from the others, escape constraints and be free in front of the camera. I didn't force her into anything.

**BB : So you believe in artificiality?**

**HPG :** Yes, I believe we have to show that it is an existing thing, that we can play with it, but we should never hide ourselves behind it.



# HPG LZA

1966. Birth.

In 1984, he failed his electromechanical studies brilliantly but got full marks in sport. He will choose a physical career.

In 1988, conscious of his endurance, he took part in a casting for an erotic theatre. It will be the only conclusive one in his life.

In 1990, he played his first role in a porn movie and quickly becomes the most prolific and singular actor of the international sex industry. He never stops working with Stakhanovism, cumulating today more than 1000 films.

In 1995, he shot and acted in *Porn actor, at your service*, a self-produced short length film combining cinema auteur and comedy, an obvious step towards classic cinema. Many famous French directors showed interest in his work while others were dismayed.

In 1996, he obtained a role in Cedric Klapisch's short length movie *The Room* directed for 3000 scripts against a virus. He then played in *Romance* by Catherine Breillat, *Baise moi* by Virginie Despentes, *The Pornographer* by Bertrand Bonello. While considering his participation in these films, he understood that classic cinema will not call him for great roles. So he started to write the script of his first full-length film.

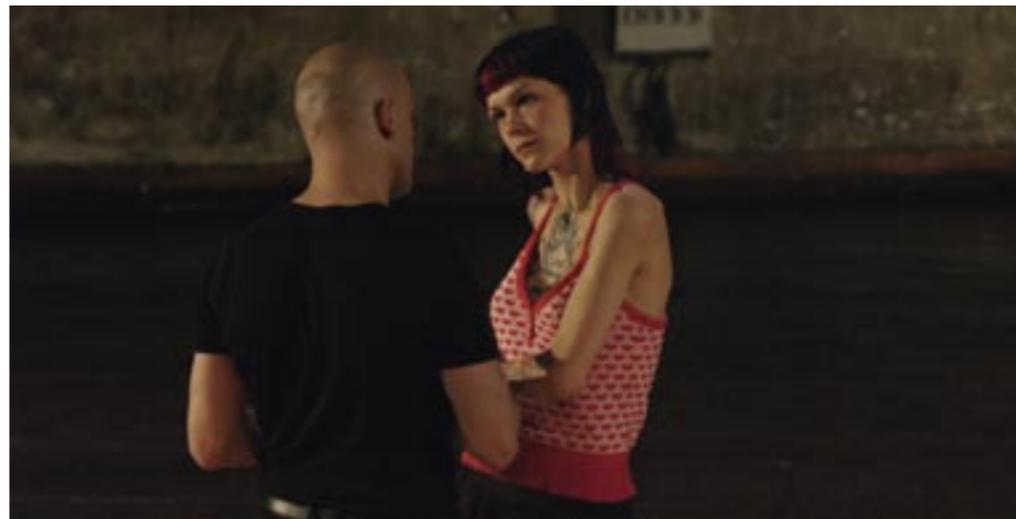
In 2001, he made the short film *Hopital Psychiatrique de Garnison* and wrote HPG, *Autobiography of a Porn Actor*, published by Hachette Littératures.

In 2002, his 52 min documentary *HPG, son vit, son oeuvre*, a surprising self-portrait inspired by Bukowski's style is shown on TV in its short version. After a scandal began, the broadcast of the full version was finally cancelled. The documentary was selected in many film festivals all over the world and Cinémathèque Française organized a special night screening dedicated to all HPG short films. HPG finally got recognition in both porn industry and classic cinema.

In october 2005, Olivier Py asks HPG and his wife, the actress and model LZA, to play in a sulphurous adaptation of the Opera *Tannhäuser*, in the Grand Theatre of Geneva. *We Should Not Exist* is his first full-length film, it is selected in Cannes 2006 Directors' Fortnight and in competition for Caméra d'Or.

LZA, 24 years old, is inspiring fashion designers like Jean Paul Gaultier. With her passion for body art, photographs and drawings, she reconciles sex and pin-up but also breaks all taboos. When she was 14 years old, she thought about designing her body. 4 years after she really fulfilled her dream with body artists who tattooed her, pierced her and made her first implants. Thanks to them, she's now looking like her teenage drawings. Beyond her artist and model experiences, she also acted in a few Cedric Klapisch movies and got her first leading roles in the movies *Bushido-Boogie* by Quarxx and *Reptile Zone* by Jérôme de Mizoltz for ARTE. She also played in video clips for Indochine and Moby. She continued to explore the world of art, like in the Opera *Tannhäuser* by Olivier Py where she played the nymph Europe with her husband HPG as Zeus.

She plays the female leading role in *We Should Not Exist*.



## FILMOGRAPHY

- 1995 *Porn Actor for your service* (10 mn)
- 1999 *HPG, son vit, son oeuvre* (52 mn)
- 2001 *Hôpital psychiatrique de garnison* (5 mn)
- 2004 *21 x 5* (8 mn)
- Hypergolic* (15 mn)
- 2006 *I love Censorship* (10 mn)
- Mise en abîme* (15 mn)
- We should not exist* (90 mn)

## CAST

HERVÉ ..... HPG  
LZA ..... Elsa STEYAERT  
BENOIT ..... Benoît FOURNIER  
JULIUS ..... Jean-Claude JOERGER  
MARIE-T ..... Marie-T PICOU  
MARGARET ..... Margaret ZENOU  
with the participation of Marilou BERRY, Rachida BRAKNI  
et Bertrand BONELLO

## CREW

DIRECTOR / SCREENPLAY ..... HPG  
PRODUCTION MANAGER ..... Fabrice GILBERT  
1ST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ..... Alexandre POULICHOT  
2ND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ..... Florent MICHAUX  
EDITOR ..... Nicolas ROBIN  
SCRIPT SUPERVISOR ..... Benoît SALVI  
UNIT PRODUCTION MANAGER ..... Laetitia GALOUCHKO  
..... Hakim CHERIKH  
CINEMATOGRAPHER ..... Reza SERKANIAN  
PLANE & CINEMATHEQUE SCENES ..... Laurent DUGUET  
STILL PHOTOGRAPHER ..... Eric MITTARD  
SOUND ..... Frédéric BURES  
..... Arnaud JULIEN  
BOOM OPERATOR ..... Fabien GACHON  
..... Loïc POMMIES  
ORIGINAL MUSIC ..... Manu LANVIN  
SPECIAL THANKS TO ..... STUDIOS RECORDER, LOCA IMAGES  
and BR FILM  
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GRAPHIC DESIGN ..... Eux c'est bien, nous c'est mieux™

## MODERATION ?

“ **Bertrand :**

If you want to understand moderation, it is going to be hard for you... because you are someone excessive when you are not in control of things !

When you get a girl, you agitate yourself for hours, just to prove her that you want her, that she's desirable and that you will satisfy her.

That's exactly what an actor does when he can't perform his job well. He gets over agitated just to show me he can do it, though I asked for nothing. The actor is the one who wants to play in the film, he should show me he can perform as good as his desire to do so. Not just desire it !

**Hervé :**

So why can't they just fake it ?

**Bertrand :**

Because they just can't ! We don't hire them because they can act but because we want them for who they really are. That's why they disappear after several years, people get tired of them because they have nothing else to offer.

Don't forget that an actor is someone who knows how to lie, and that's the beauty of it !

When you take drugs, you lie to yourself. When you act, you like to others. And because you consider yourself as a whore, that should make you think.  
And that's my answer. ”

