

## Document Citation

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## Le Pacte des loups

### The Brotherhood of the Wolf

Christophe Gans

FRANCE, 2001

142 minutes ■ Colour/35mm

Production Company: **Davis Films/StudioCanal/Eskwad**

Producer: **Samuel Hadida, Richard Grandpierre**

Screenplay: **Stephane Cabel**

Cinematographer: **Dan Lausten**

Editor: **Sebastien Prangere, David Wu**

Production Designer: **Guy Claude-François**

Sound: **Jean-Paul Mugel**

Music: **Joseph Lo Duca**

Principal Cast: **Samuel Le Bihan, Vincent Cassel, Emilie Dequenne, Monica Bellucci, Jérémie Rénier, Marc Dacatos**

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Production: **Davis Films, 1 rue Lord Byron, 75008 Paris, France. T (33-1) 5659-2320 F (33-1) 5659-2310**

Christophe Gans returns to Midnight Madness with an impressive follow up to his cult success *Crying Freeman*. As usual, he refuses to pull any punches in his fascinating period-piece horror film *Le Pacte des loups*. In fact, Gans – who is heavily influenced by European and Hong Kong masters including Chang Cheh, Lau Kar Leung, John Woo, Mario Bava and Dario Argento – has pumped the film full of masterfully orchestrated martial arts scenes. The all-star cast features blockbuster performances from Samuel Le Bihan, Marc Dacatos, Jérémie Rénier, Emilie Dequenne, Monica Bellucci and the brooding Vincent Cassel.

A gigantic success in France, *Le Pacte des loups* adapts the myth of *La Bête du Gévaudan*, an allegedly true tale about a beast that terrorized the mountainous region of France from 1764 to 1767, reportedly killing more than a hundred people. Grégoire de Fronsac (the classically chivalrous Le Bihan) is a naturalist and decorated ex-soldier from the war in New France (Québec). He has been sent by Louis XV to study the beast, which most believe is a huge wolf, and to dispel the rumours of its supernatural origin. Fronsac arrives with a stoic, mysterious companion: Mani (played with ardour by Dacatos) is his Mohawk-Iroquois blood-brother whom he met in the war.

While taking part in mass hunts, examining the evidence and trying to solve the mystery, Fronsac finds himself drawn into the deadly intrigues and rivalries of the court and village. He is also caught between

two women – the stunning noblewoman Marianne de Morangias (Dequenne) and the disarmingly seductive Sylvia (Bellucci), who appeals to his dark side.

Gans's enthralling plot ultimately reveals the answer to a clever hypothesis: Could the whole thing be an insidious conspiracy or is the beast truly a medieval monster that Renaissance science cannot explain? *Le Pacte* is edited by David Wu, the man responsible for all of John Woo's Hong Kong films, as well as *Crying Freeman* and Ronny Yu's quintessential *The Bride with White Hair*. With head-spinning cinematography and rule-breaking fight scenes, Gans's genre-bending take on Renaissance-era France thrills, frightens and surprises from beginning to end.

– Colin Geddes

**Christophe Gans** studied at the Paris film school and his graduation project, *Silver Slime*, was a sensation at the 1982 Paris Fantasy film festival. In addition to directing and screenwriting, he has helped to launch two magazines devoted to film, "Starfix" and "HK Cinema Extreme" and worked in television as a reporter and programme supervisor. Filmography: *Necronomicon: Book of the Dead* (co-director) (94), *Crying Freeman* (95) and *Le Pacte des loups* (01).

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