



Time Out London
Get listed
iPhone app
NEW Time Out Live

Buy tickets

Film

Restaurants

Bars & Pubs

Hotels

Around Town

Museums & Attractions

Kids

Music

Festivals

Classical & Opera

Art

Theatre

Comedy

Cabaret

Dance

Books & Poetry

Clubs

Alternative Nightlife

Gay & Lesbian

Sport & Fitness

Shopping

Travel

Audio

Offers

Competitions

Dating

Careers

Property

Flatshares & Flats

Time Out Magazine

Time Out Guides

Work for Time Out

Time Out Shop

Give us your feedback

RSS feeds

Film

What's on at the cinema plus reviews of the latest movie and DVD releases

[Home](#) [Box Office](#) [Listings](#) [Trailers](#) [Features](#) [DVD Rental](#) [Spotlight](#) [Bookmark this page](#)

Edition:

UPDATES: [RT @davecalhoun Best cinema food and drink in London town? The Curzon Soho...](#)

Search

[Browse films now playing](#) [Browse cinemas A-Z](#)

Outside the Law (2010)

Director: [Rachid Bouchareb](#)

Time Out rating **Average user rating**
No reviews

Movie review

From Time Out Online

Reviewed at the 2010 Cannes Film Festival

Rachid Bouchareb's 'Outside the Law' ('Hors-La-Loi') is a fierce historical tale with Jean-Pierre Melville's 1969 resistance film 'Army of the Shadows' written all over it. Even more sweeping and provocative than his 2006 film 'Days of Glory', which honoured the contribution of North African troops to the liberation of France in 1944, Bouchareb's latest film is a fictionalisation of the origins and campaign of Algeria's National Liberation Front (FLN), the movement that waged a campaign of violence in France and Algeria in the run-up to the country's independence in 1962. It's a big and bold film and one whose reserved passion and stately style sweeps you along with it.

The background of 'Outside the Law' may be historical - we move from 1925 to 1962 over the film's two-and-a-bit hours - but Bouchareb adopts a strident perspective by inventing the characters of three Algerian brothers, who we first meet as they're thrown off their land as children in the 1920s. We jump to May 1945, when on the same day as France was celebrating the end of war, a conflict broke out between police and protestors in the Algerian town of Sétif, leading thousands of deaths. Bouchareb's argument is that this was a colonial massacre - we watch as scores of men are gunned down in the streets - although this episode has caused the most amount of debate prior to film's Cannes screening, with some arguing that Bouchareb has laid the blame for deaths too squarely on the French authorities. Whether or not Bouchareb's emphasis is skewed, surely the point is that it was events such as these in Sétif that politicised young men who would later become armed underground fighters? If the perception was of a massacre rather than something more nuanced, that's a valid perspective for the film to take in describing the development of its characters.

Among the chaos at Sétif, we again meet Saïd ([Jamel Debbouze](#)), Messaoud (Roschdy Zem) and Abdelkader (Sami Bouajila), now adults and living in the town with their mother. Time moves on again and the family is fractured: Saïd moves to Paris with his mother, moving into a shanty town in Nanterre and earning a living on the shady streets of Pigalle; Abdelkader is arrested in Algeria and ends up in a French jail; and Messaoud goes off to fight for France in Indochina.

The film takes flight and fully enters Melville territory in the late 1950s, when we settle into a period when Abdelkader becomes a leader in the Paris branch of the FLN, Messaoud joins his brother in the resistance movement and the less political Saïd graduates from running prostitutes to running his own cabaret club and promoting boxing fights. It's the cold lack of glamour of Melville's 1969 film about the French resistance that Bouchareb successfully co-opts as Abdelkader becomes a steely underground operator, prepared to turn on other Algerians - and perhaps even his family - if it's for the good of the movement. The tone is sweeping and epic. The effect is to tie these brothers' experiences into the wider French-Algerian experience of men co-opted by colonialism but treated as an underclass both in Algeria and France and pushed to violent extremes at a time when traditional politics was failing them.



Cast & crew

Director: [Rachid Bouchareb](#)
Cast: [Jamel Debbouze](#), [Sabrina Seyvecou](#), [Assaad Bouab](#) [full cast](#)
Duration: 137 mins

Related articles

Cannes 2010 [◆](#) The final word *May 24 2010*
Blog: Cannes 2010 [◆](#) The wrap-up *May 12 2010*

RENT THIS DVD and more on [Lovefilm](#)

Most popular on this site

[bluebeard](#) [get him to the greek](#) [heartbreaker](#)
[inception](#) [leaving predators](#) [rapt shrek forever](#)
[after the twilight saga: eclipse](#) [toy story 3](#) [went the day well?](#) [white material](#)

Search our database of 30,000 reviews

Top Stories



Cinema food: the ultimate survey
Find out everything you always wanted to know about cinema food, but were afraid to ask.



The week's new films reviewed and rated
Two '80s re-imaginings are this week's big cinema releases, but don't miss Gruff Rhys's travels in Patagonia



Gruff Rhys on

envoyez de l'argent sur [westernunion.fr](#)

à partir de **4.90€***

[cliquez ici](#)

* Outre les frais de transfert, Western Union génère également des revenus à partir du change de devises.

WESTERN UNION | **yes!**

SMIRNOFF and
Time Out London
iPhone app



or our free weekly newsletter to get the best of delivered to your inbox

newsletter

email address Sign up now

arts and entertainment events
restaurant, café and bar openings
live gigs
competitions and contests

Useful Time Out
links: Hotels in
London | London
Theatre Tickets |
Clubs in London |

London Bars & Pubs | Music in London

Reviews | City Guides | London Restaurants | London Events | Art in London |
Christmas Gifts

Hotspots: The London Eye | The Terracotta Army | Tutankhamun O2

About the site | Contact Us | Privacy policy | Jobs at Time Out | Advertising

© 2010 Time Out Group Ltd. All rights reserved. All material on this site is © Time Out.

Penguins, Patagonia



Cinema's 50 greatest flops, follies and failures

Time Out presents our list of cinema's most spectacular follies, most saddening flops and most unbearable failures



The Illusionist: trailer preview

Watch the trailer for Sylvain Chomet's long-awaited follow-up to 'Belleville' 'Rendez-vous'



Why make a film about Serge Gainsbourg?

Nina Caplan remembers the bawdy life and times of France's great pop icon and human chimney, Serge Gainsbourg, ahead of new biopic 'Gainsbourg'



Hard talk with Oliver Stone

The director of 'JFK' and 'Wall Street' talks to Wally Hammond about the US elite, Chávez, Bush and Nixon



Why Christopher Nolan is not the new Stanley Kubrick

Tom Hiddleston explains why the director of 'Inception' hasn't yet scaled the great heights of Kubrick