

## Blu-ray Review: Criterion Unleashes Young Fury of ‘La Haine’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on May 16, 2012 - 3:34pm

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CHICAGO – With NATO protests about to descend on Chicago, “La Haine” seems to have as much power as it did on its release almost twenty years ago. It is a visceral, draining experience about class struggles, increased diversity in Paris, economic inequality, and unchanneled rage. In other words, it’s a perfect choice for a Criterion Blu-ray upgrade as the Occupy Movement prepares to descend on the Windy City.



Rating: **4.5/5.0**

The gorgeously restored high-definition transfer on the BD of “La Haine” may not seem like it’s that big a deal for a low-budget, black & white film but it adds to the prescience of the piece, making it feel more current than ever. Vincent Cassel proves he had some of the most striking screen charisma right from the very beginning of his career and director Mathieu Kassovitz offers up one of the most striking examinations of what is bubbling just below the surface in not just Paris but many major cities. As things begin to simmer again in the United States and continue to do so around the world, one gets the feeling that “La Haine” is not about to lose any of its dramatic power any time soon. It will always be relevant. Thankfully we have The Criterion Collection to keep it in the spotlight.



La Haine

*Photo credit: Courtesy of the Criterion Collection*

**Synopsis:**

Mathieu Kassovitz took the film world by storm with *La Haine*, a gritty, unsettling, and visually explosive look at racial and cultural volatility in modern-day France, specifically the low-income banlieue on Paris’s outskirts. Aimlessly passing their days in the concrete environs of their dead-end suburbia, Vinz (Vincent Cassel), Hubert (Hubert Kounde), and Saïd (Said Taghmaoui) - a Jew, an African, and Arab-give human faces to France’s immigrant populations, their bristling resentment at their marginalization slowly simmering until it reaches a climactic boiling point. A work of tough beauty, *La Haine* is a landmark of contemporary French cinema and a gripping reflection of its country’s ongoing identity crisis.

**Special Features:**

- o Audio Commentary By Kassovitz
- o Introduction By Actor Jodie Foster
- o Ten Years of *La Haine* - A Documentary That Brings Together Cast and Crew A Decade After The Film’s Landmark Release
- o Featurette On The Film’s Banlieue Setting
- o Production Footage
- o Deleted And Extended Scenes, Each With An Afterword By Kassovitz
- o Gallery of Behind The Scenes Photos
- o Trailers
- o Booklet Featuring An Essay By Film Scholar Ginette Vincendeau and a 2006 o Appreciation By Filmmaker Costa-Gavras

*“La Haine” stars Vincent Cassel, Said Taghmaoui, and Hubert Kounde. It was directed by Mathieu Kassovitz and released on Criterion Blu-ray and re-released on Criterion DVD on May 8, 2012.*



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By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [12]

Content Director

HollywoodChicago.com

[brian@hollywoodchicago.com](mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com) [11]

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