

## THE GREAT ARCH

By Stéphane Demoustier

Exclusive release at Ciné Lumière from 11 March 2026



Acclaimed French drama *The Great Arch* (*l'Inconnu de la Grande Arche*), written and directed by Stéphane Demoustier, is released exclusively at Ciné Lumière from 11 March 2026.

Stéphane Demoustier (*The Girl with a Bracelet*) and lead actor Claes Bang (*The Square, Dracula*) will be at Ciné Lumière on 11 & 12 March to present the film.

Based on a true story, and freely adapted from Laurence Cossé's book, *La Grande Arche*, the film stars Claes Bang, alongside Sidse Babett Knudsen, Xavier Dolan, Swann Arlaud and Michel Fau.

In this depiction of the pharaonic construction of one of Paris' most bold and iconic buildings, the Grande Arche de la Défense, Stéphane Demoustier masterfully weaves together the vision of an architect with conflicting politics.

Part of the **Un Certain Regard Official Selection** in the Cannes Film Festival 2025, *The Great Arch* opened the **French Film Festival London** at Ciné Lumière last November and is a strong contender for the **French César Awards with 8 nominations, including Best Director for Stéphane Demoustier, Best Actor for Claes Bang, Best Supporting Actor for Xavier Dolan, Swann Arlaud and Michel Fau, Best Adaptation for Stéphane Demoustier, Best Decors for Catherine Cosme and Best Visual Effects for Lise Fischer.**

### Director's statement

"Laurence Cossé's book covers the entire history of La Défense, from the 1970s to today, but what interested me most was the architect, Johan Otto von Spreckelsen – a near blind spot in the book, as so little is known about him. I wanted to get closer to that mystery and pay tribute to him."

"I wanted to show how much the inspiration of a creator can clash with the constraints of reality. (...) How far can we go in making compromises? At what point do they become compromises? It's this tension that interested me; it lies at the heart of every creative process".

“The scale and ambition of La Défense construction site reflected both the era’s powerful public authority and Mitterrand’s broader vision. (...) Spreckelsen, for his part, earnestly declared that he intended his Arch ‘for humanity’”.

## **Synopsis**

1982. French President François Mitterrand decides to launch an international architectural competition for the flagship project of his mandate: the Great Arch of La Défense, aligned with the Louvre and the Arc de Triomphe. Against all odds, Otto von Spreckelsen, a Danish architect, wins the competition. Overnight, this 53-year-old man, unknown in France, arrives in Paris where he is propelled to the helm of this pharaonic project. While the architect intends to build the Great Arch exactly as he envisioned, his ideas quickly clash with realistic constraints and the vicissitudes of politics.

**Stéphane Demoustier and Claes Bang will be available for interviews.**

**[Press Book](#) | [Trailer](#) | [Screenings](#) | [Stills](#) | [exclusive interview with Claes Bang](#)**

**Venue: Ciné Lumière at the Institut français, 17 Queensberry Place, London SW7 2DT**

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