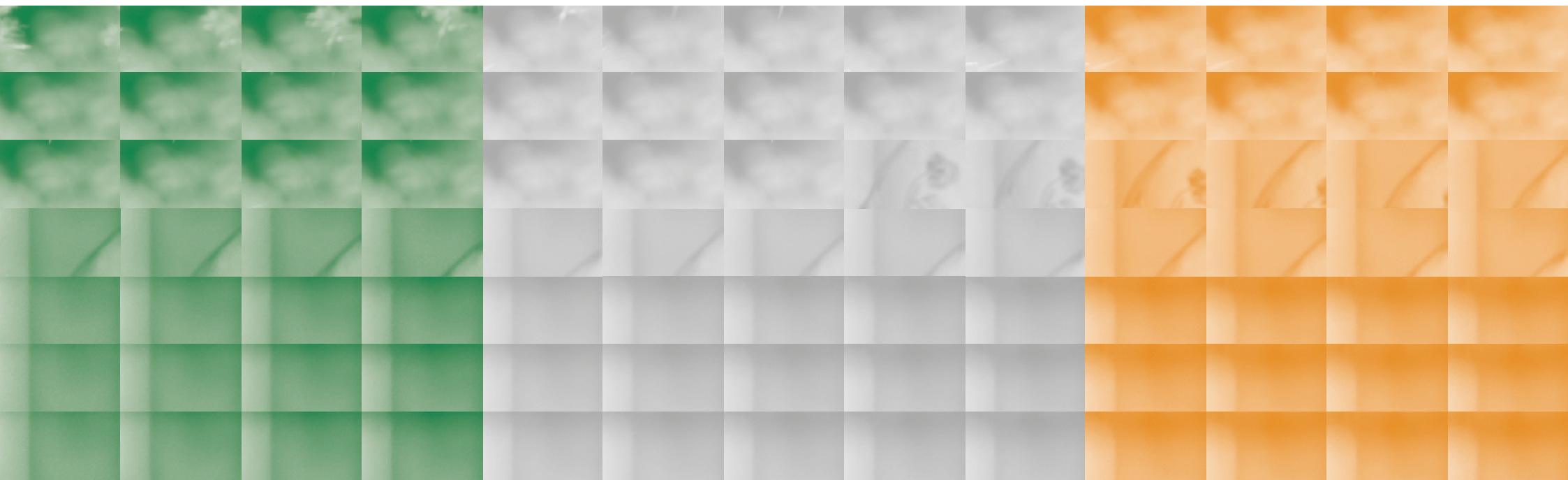


Atelier de coproduction • France - Irlande
Co-production Workshop • France - Ireland

Vendredi 19 mai 2023,
Cannes



Fís Éireann/Screen Ireland (Screen Ireland) and Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée (CNC) have been discussing the terms of a stronger partnership for several years. The first step of this renewed cooperation was the signing of the first Co-production Agreement in the field of film between France and Ireland. On 12 December 2022, Ms Rima Abdul Malak, the French minister of Culture and Mr Niall Burgess, Ambassador of Ireland in France signed a Coproduction Agreement in Paris.

To celebrate the establishment of a modernised framework for coproduction between France and Ireland, Screen Ireland and CNC will organise a workshop during which talented filmmakers from Ireland and France would meet possible partners and explore how they could work together. Ten teams (five Irish and five French) representing feature film projects will be available for individual meetings of 25 minutes each, on the morning of 19 May 2023, on the Film France CNC pavilion in Cannes.

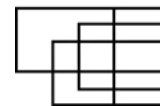
In order to arrange meetings with the projects
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Fís Éireann
Screen Ireland



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BECKETT AND THE LITTLE GIANT

Caitriona McLaughlin

Genre

Fiction / Drama

Budget

3.500.000 €

Project's state of progress

Late stage development

Contact

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Synopsis

Beckett and the Little Giant is a fantasy inspired by fact: the Irish playwright Samuel Beckett knew the future wrestling star André the Giant when both lived in a small village about 60 km from Paris. That's all we know for certain, and the source of this story – André himself – was probably unreliable as to details.

Instead, we have a “what if?” story: Beckett, after many years of poverty, has suddenly become well-known because of *En Attendant Godot / Waiting For Godot*. With his life partner, Suzanne, he has moved to Ussy, a speck on the map. He meets a local builder, whose 12 year-old son André is preternaturally tall (191 cm). André is haunted by his mother's death in childbirth. He is bullied at school and treated as a freak. Sam is haunted by his mother's expectations for him and his failure to become “a great man”.

The two meet when Sam begins to drive André to school. Sam is laconic and steeped in irony. André is ingenuous and open. The two have little in common but grow close. Sam is protective, concerned about André's health. André doesn't really understand what Sam does, but still wants to model himself on him. Sam finds the cause of André's freakish size – acromegaly, which will kill him early – and introduces him to a world outside Ussy; drinking, playing billiards and gently flirting. André is cast by a pseudointellectual drama teacher in the role of Frankenstein's monster. André hates the part, but when forced to perform, goes off script and recites a scene written for him by Sam, which is both wildly wrong for the occasion and deeply true for André.

At this crossroads in both their lives, André turns, at Sam's suggestion, to wrestling, while Sam takes up the pen again.

Beckett and the Little Giant is both very funny and sad, a meditation on the challenges of life and the ways in which we navigate them. Two characters, haunted by death, and each with death before them, whose means of appreciating life are improved by their improbable meeting.

Director's note

The creative vision of the project is really set out in the attached screenplay. Marty Rea, as Beckett, is arguably Ireland's finest stage actor and admirably equipped to play the demanding leading part. Caitriona McLaughlin is one of the very best stage directors in the country with a clear, focused vision of what she wants us to see and an outstanding gift for working with actors. Jimmy McAleavey is an outstanding writer who has produced a quite exceptional screenplay. Jimmy and Marty have both worked frequently with Caitriona, forging a highly talented team that speaks the same creative language. The producers are adding two important creative elements: first, we're dealing with special effects experts to use artificial intelligence technology to help us work with a real young actor who will look like a giant; secondly, we will assemble an outstanding crew, including (but not limited to) a strong cinematographer, first assistant director and editor to assist Caitriona in making the transition from stage to screen.

It goes without saying that this is the most natural Irish-French coproduction imaginable. The Irish and French elements of the screenplay are all drawn from real life – we haven't had to create anything to make the two national elements work together. Beckett was Irish, but lived in France for the best part of 60 years. Suzanne was French, André was French, and the landscapes of the film, other than some flashbacks to Ireland and some dream sequences, are all in the vicinity of Ussy-sur-Marne, with a brief diversion to Paris.

Beckett's work has proven international appeal, but it has a special attraction in France. A French co-producer will be indispensable to the realisation of this story.

BECKETT AND THE LITTLE GIANT

Producer's note

We intend to commence principal photography in the spring/summer of 2024, when we hope that the weather will be good. We will shoot exteriors in the flat rural landscape stretching from the Marne to Luxembourg and use appropriate studios to build sets ideally near the same location(s). Postproduction has yet to be set, but may be in Ireland to accommodate the director. Once we have cast the right actor to play Suzanne, we will appoint a sales agent to presell to broadcasters and distributors as appropriate. Our aim is for an international theatrical and/or streamer release in 2025, ideally driven by festival exposure that year (Berlin, Cannes, Venice, Telluride, Toronto ...)

Director's biography

Caitriona was born in Donegal and studied science at the University of Ulster before moving into theatre. She has been Artistic Director of the Abbey since 2020, and was Associate Director prior to that.

Production company's filmography

Ciaran founded New Decade TV and Film in 1992 at the age of 21. Over the next 10 years, the company became a leading news story provider in Ireland working with BBC news, ITN, UTV, SKY and CNN. Since then, the company has garnered a reputation for making quality TV programmes and Films. Today, along with business partner Nuala Cunningham the company is producing titles with a range of international partners and talents.

Ciaran's programming making experience stretches back 28 years. He started filming and directing original documentaries for Irish TV such as *The Secret Peacemaker*, *Lives on the line*, *Tales from the Big House*, *Mars Rocks*, *Heritage Days*, *Way to Go*, *So This is Dyoublong*, *Jobs Uncovered* and *Mssrs Tylak & Rooney*. The company also produced several seasons of *The Science Squad*, *The Investigators*, *Ten Things to know about you*. In short film, he wrote and directed award winning shorts *Kung-Gu Finance* and *Ostan na croithe briste* for TG4 and the Irsih Film Board. He co-created the animated character Schrodinger's cat, a children's series that aired on RTE, funded by SFI and Royal Irish Academy. Ciaran's debut feature film *Trafficked* was awarded a prize for best first pfeature at the Galway Film Festival (2005) and it was nominated for four IFTA awards the following year. It marked the debut of Oscar nominated actress Ruth negga. It was distributed theatricallu in the Uk and Ireland.

Ciaran continues to work actively across a wide of personal projects. He directed «The Runinning Man» a short documentary on the life of pensioner and marathon runner Chris Devoy, which screened at the Galway Film Fleadh and the Boston Irish Film Festival. He has recently completed *My Name was Paulaé*, the story of a mother and baby home in County Tipperrary. He has directed/produced *Comin Home*, *Dublin Welcomes The Magdalenes* and *Thinking Outside the Box*, *Schrodinger 75 years on*, both produced for RTE Television. In 2020 Ciaran produced *Expulsioné* as part of the Short Focus Scheme for Screen Ireland, which screened internationally.

Recently he was series producer/director on 6 partney *My Uni Life* for RTE TV and *Change Makers* currently airing on RTE1. He recently was a participant in *Screen Leaders* a Screen Ireland project that selects four Irish companies a year to develop its business structure. Ciaran is also attached as Exec Producer on projects in development by up and coming writers and directors.

Bill Grantham founded Obelisk Media Ireland in 2015. He has been active in the film and television industries since the 1980s, and has been credited on more than 25 feature films, including *One Way*, *Zone 414*, *The Limit Of*, *Hotel Mumbai*, *Jane Got A Gun*, *A Walk Among The Tombstones*, *Cell* and *Devil's Knot*. He has more than 25 years' experience as an entertainment lawyer in Los Angeles, and has also worked as a writer, management consultant, journalist and academic. Currently based in his native Ireland, he previously lived and worked in the USA, Australia, France and the United Kingdom.

Ciaran O'Connor



Bill Grantham



LUCIA

Aisling Walsh

Genre

Period Drama

Budget

7.150.000 €

Links of previous work

✦ **Writer**

✦ **Director**

Project's state of progress

Advanced

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Synopsis

Lucia Joyce, talented but troubled daughter of author James Joyce, struggles to fulfil her own hopes and dreams while performing her role as her father's muse and confidant.

At the outbreak of World War Two, with Paris facing imminent Nazi bombardment, Lucia Joyce (30), only daughter of James Joyce, lover of Samuel Beckett, is confined to a Parisian mental hospital. She receives a package from her father containing the first copy of his unfathomable new book, *Finnegan's Wake*. Handing it over, Joyce claims that they are "both free of it now".

Receiving the book forces Lucia to confront the pivotal events in her life that lead to her current plight as an asylum patient who is unable, or unwilling, to speak.

From the decisive moment when Sam Beckett re-entered her life on her 21st birthday and their subsequent relationship, through her work as a visionary young dancer and choreographer at the forefront of the modern dance movement, and her role as chief muse for Joyce's seemingly crazed final work, Lucia strives to find her voice as an artist and identity as a young woman ahead of her time.

However, she is living in the chaos of the dysfunctional Joyce household and in the shadow of her famous father. Lucia's struggles to fulfil her own dreams in life and love, while simultaneously being a muse to Joyce, ultimately leading to a mental breakdown and to the great betrayal of her life when she is committed to an asylum by her own brother, Giorgio.

As the bombs fall in Paris and the asylum patients are evacuated to the safety of Brittany, Lucia finally learns to come to terms with her past, rediscovers her voice and ultimately finds the courage to forgive her family before they are separated forever.

Director's note

I want to make a film about a woman who spent her life existing in the shadows. Despite being one of the finest modernist dancers of her time Lucia Joyce was never good enough. She was never special enough. She was known most of her life as the daughter of James Joyce and, despite trying to escape his fame and be a successful artist in her own right, she was never really able to and that is the tragedy at the core of this story. It's interesting right now to look back and see how a brilliantly talented young woman struggled to find her place creatively. The landscape of that world has changed by telling stories like these. We need to continue to tell these stories. The story of James Joyce is well known. The most celebrated writer of the 20th century. A writer who changed literature forever more. But what do we know of Lucia Joyce; his brilliant daughter?

A daughter who desperately tried to escape the notoriety of her father and exist independently. A daughter who wanted nothing more than to be her own person. To be free to express herself. Live her life and be the artist she wanted to be. Her journey is her struggle to do that.

Michael Kinirons has written a script that searches into the soul of a young woman across the span of two decades. He delves into her relationship with her father. A deep co-dependent relationship that drove both people insane despite their love for one another. They spoke their own intimate language. They understood one another creatively. They mirrored one another. Was it ever possible for either one of them to survive without the other? It is also the story of Lucia's relationship with her mother Nora. Two women so very different in an era where women are finding freedom to express themselves for the very first time. Freedom to indulge in love affairs. Have sex. Enjoy it. The real tension in the story comes from the relationship Lucia had with Nora. In the claustrophobic atmosphere of their apartment this plays out. Anger. Jealousy. Fear.

And somewhere deep down a real love for one another that perhaps neither of them ever understood.

I have always been fascinated with the story of artistic creativity and the fragile mind. People on the edge tuning into their most inner being to create. The toll that takes on the individual. The absolute need to create because if not one is destroyed. Our story is a portrait of that.

It is also a portrait of a family. A desperately dysfunctional family. A family where little goes unsaid. A family where each individual is trying to hold onto their place in it.

There is a huge sense of longing throughout Michael's screenplay. Longing to belong. Longing to love. Lucia's love affair with Beckett is her desperation to belong as he replaces her as her father's transcriber. She's relegated to the carer. The nurse. She finds it difficult to watch that relationship bond and develop. This young brilliant man who comes into the claustrophobic world of the apartment. Upsets the rhythm. Takes over. Lucia finds herself back in the shadows again.

Lucia's descent into free fall after she loses the dance competition is inevitable. Her future will now be lived out within the walls of the asylum. Her future sealed. A solitary figure left to live her life alone.

Producer's note

This film's international potential is inherent in its story, its cast of characters and the time and place in which it takes place: an Irish family (or of Irish descent in the case of the children) in exile in pre-War France of the 20s and 30s, in part because of the incendiary nature of the patriarch's work. This iconic period in the history of Paris is central to the events as they play out in the script insofar as the influence the place and time has on our characters, in particular in the creative expressions of James and Lucia.

Our director, Aisling Walsh, is one of Ireland's leading filmmakers and is recognised internationally for her films *Song for a Raggy Boy* (2003), *Maudie* (2016) and *Elizabeth is Missing* (2019). Her films have an instinctively feminist perspective making her the ideal choice to bring Lucia Joyce's story to life. She also has considerable experience bringing the inner life of artists and writers to the screen: *Maudie*, which premiered at Telluride, told the story of Canadian folk artist Maud Lewis while *A Poet in New York* detailed the final years of Welsh poet Dylan Thomas.

Our writer, Michael Kinirons, is one of Ireland's most promising emerging talents. His first produced script *Strangerland* had its international premiere at the Sundance Film Festival while his debut as writer/director *Sparrow* won Best Irish Feature at the 2022 Galway Film Fleadh.

Our intended cast has strong international ambition. Aisling's preference to play James Joyce is Ethan Hawke (who she cast in her film *Maudie*) while Gary Oldman, Jude Law and Mark Rylance are also on her shortlist. For the role of Lucia, Aisling's preference is for New Zealander Thomasin McKenzie while the casting of Ethan Hawke as Joyce could suggest the intriguing option of casting his own daughter Maya in the role. Paul Mescal, Jack Lowden and Johnny Flynn are shortlisted for Beckett.

As you might expect from such an international setting, the film has bi-lingual elements (English and French in the main) and will employ subtitling where appropriate. The success of films like Irish language *The Quiet Girl* and Bong Joon Ho's *Parasite* (winner of Best Picture at the 2020 Oscars), show that this is increasingly less of a barrier for mainstream audiences.

We will look to comparable titles that have achieved international festival and commercial success. In particular, titles that depict women stifled and constricted by the society in which they are born such as *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* (2019, Celine Sciamma), *Little Women* (2019, Greta Gerwig) and *Happening* (2022, Audrey Diwan).

Director's biography

Aisling Walsh is a multi-award winning director and writer. She is a graduate of both The National Film And Television School in Beaconsfield, England and The Dun Laoghaire School of Art. She wrote and directed her first feature film *Joyriders* in 1988 and followed this with a number of highly acclaimed television films. Her 2003 film *Song for A Raggy Boy* won over 30 international awards.

She has won both BAFTA, Royal Television Society Awards and an Emmy for her television films *Room at the Top*, *A Poet in New York*, *Wallander* and *Elizabeth is Missing*. In 2019 she directed the legendary 84 year old Glenda Jackson on her return to film after a 27 year absence in *Elizabeth is Missing* for BBC. Glenda won both a best actress Emmy and a BAFTA award.

Her last film *Maudie* starring Sally Hawkins and Ethan Hawke became the largest grossing Canadian film ever on its release in 2018 and went on to have a hugely successful release in both the US and across Europe it won 7 Canadian Screen Awards and also won Aisling her first ever Best Director IFTA award.

She has worked with actors such as Ethan Hawke, Kenneth Branagh, Aidan Quinn, Iain Glen, Sally Hawkins, Glenda Jackson, Elaine Cassidy, Maxine Peake to name a few.



David Power

Aisling is a member of both BAFTA and the American Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

Producer's biography

David Power is a producer specialising in drama and documentary. Working with John Kelleher Media, his credits include *Broken Rings*, *Charlie Bird: Loud & Clear* and *A Disconnected Rhythm on the documentary* side and dramas *The Guarantee* and *The Bailout*. His most recent production, *The Artist & The Wall of Death*, is nominated for Best Feature Documentary at the 2023 IFTA Awards. David Power is currently working with EZ Films on an exciting and diverse slate of feature projects.

John Kelleher has produced numerous award-winning feature films, television drama series and documentaries, including co-productions with France, Germany, the UK, Australia, Canada and the U.S. A former Controller of Programmes, RTE1, he was a founder shareholder of the Windmill Lane consortium that established TV3. As Director of Film Classification, he played a major role in modernising IFCO, the Irish Film Classification Office. He has been a director of the Irish Film Board, Troy Studios and Ardmore Studios. He is Festival Director of the Fastnet Film Festival (aka the World's Friendliest Film Festival).

OUI CANNES

Mark O'Connor

Genre

Comedy Drama

Budget

1.700.000 €

Links of previous work

✦ Screenwriter

✦ Director

Project's state of progress

Late-Stage

Contact

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Synopsis

Leopold, an introverted and indecisive screenwriter, gets fired and joins his extrovert actor friend Kingsley and agent Molly on a trip to Cannes. They aim to pitch Leopold's screenplay to Jennifer Black, head of content at Talkie Stream. They stay with a French couple, Gaspard and Luna, who want to use Leopold's screenplay as their comeback vehicle. Leopold meets his hero, Françoise Baudelaire, and has a spark of romantic interest with Chloe, an art gallery owner. They make several disastrous pitches at the festival and attend a black-tie event on the Talkie Stream yacht. Leopold is offered to sell his screenplay but lose creative control and walks away from the opportunity, leading to an argument that results in him getting thrown overboard. Kingsley saves him, and they have a frank exchange of views. Leopold reconciles with Chloe, Kingsley hooks up with Molly, and Leopold writes a comedy screenplay for Kingsley called *Oui Cannes* beginning a new life in France.

Director's note

I would like this film to feel modern but with a sixties influence, an homage to the golden age of European Art cinema. Using various camera techniques and grading, I hope is to evoke a sixties *Get Carter*, classy but contemporary feel to the film.

The contrast of the gloomy grey Irish skies and the Cote D'Azur setting, with its winding coastal cliff roads and shimmering azure seas, affords us the opportunity to capture a rich visual tapestry. Wide angle prime lenses will be utilized in capturing this cinematic landscape, but this will be mixed with intimate close-up steady camerawork focusing on our character's faces, helping immerse us in the story. The Cannes Film Festival has a vibrant energy to it, and I hope to capture that. We may slip into a higher frame rate during a montage sequence, fall in and out of focus in a moment of romantic

intimacy or move to a dynamic walking shot for a cocktail party.

I envision a combination of smooth Steadicam tracking shots, which emphasize the prowess of our characters, combined with more intimate handheld moments to capture the emotion and feeling within scenes. Our exterior lighting should be naturalistic, vibrant and atmospheric. For our interior scenes, we'll work to create a lighting profile that is inviting, warm, moody, and consistent with the sunny South of France. Creating depth and texture will be an alluring invitation to dive deeper into our character's lives. *Oui Cannes* will have its own unique colour palette with vivid and iconic imagery in both the film and the marketing materials. My intention on the direction of the script is to stick closely to the dialogue which we have crafted over years, but also to have moments of free-flowing improvisation at the beginning and end of takes where the actors are given some space to show moments of vulnerability, authentic reactions and genuine laughter and emotion. I feel that to create an authentic heart-felt comedy drama, the script needs this breathing space, otherwise it can become too formulaic. The plan is to build a very strong cast of actors who all suited to their roles. I plan to workshop with the actors and spend many hours guiding them in the formation of their characters so that when we step onto the set it's all about execution and they are completely comfortable in their characters shoes. My relationship with the actors and crew is key in creating a pleasant working environment. For me, trust is key as actors open up and will give a more truthful performance, so my plan is for us all to work in a very collaborative environment, all helping each other, with the goal of making a great film which feels both artistic and classy but also mainstream and commercial for an international audience.

Producer's note

Oui Cannes is a heartfelt story that explores the ups and downs of creative pursuits and personal relationships. The story follows Leopold, an introverted and indecisive screenwriter who, after losing his job and girlfriend, travels to the Cannes Film Festival with his actor friend Kingsley and agent Molly to pitch his screenplay. *Oui Cannes* aims to convey themes of friendship, love, creative passion, seizing the moment and never giving up on your dreams. While our cast will be mostly a mixture of Irish and French actors, we are confident our story will resonate with a wide international audience because many people can relate to relationship loss and career setbacks.

This is a comedy drama, which if executed to a high artistic standard will not only be highly cinematic and thought provoking but also funny, dramatic, and enjoyable to watch. In terms of style and tone our film draws inspiration from cinematic works such as *Lost in Translation*, *Sideways*, *The Odd Couple* and *The Big Chill*.

We believe that a co-production strategy is the best way to approach this project, because by collaborating with partners who share our artistic vision and values, we can maximise the potential of the film and ensure its success. We are looking for partners who can contribute creatively, financially, and operationally to the project.

Our team has a track record of success in the film industry, with several works that have received critical acclaim and festival recognition. Our goal for *Oui Cannes* is to be selected for a top tier film festival such as Cannes, Sundance, or Tribeca and then afterwards to receive an international cinema release, before eventually finding a home on a streaming platform such as Netflix or Amazon. We are excited about the idea of a co production between Ireland and France and the potential of *Oui Cannes* to touch the hearts of audiences worldwide. We look forward to working with like-minded partners in France to make this film a commercial success.

Aisling O'Connor



Director's biography

Mark O' Connor's debut feature film *Between the Canals*, was highly acclaimed with Film Ireland calling it 'The best Irish film in a long long time'. It started the career of actor Barry Keoghan and it was released in cinemas. Mark's second feature film *King of the Travellers* received a UK and Irish cinema and DVD release. *Stalker* was Mark's third feature film, starring Barry Keoghan and John Connors in lead roles. It won the Underground Film Festival and runner up at the Galway Film festival.

Mark's fourth feature film *Cardboard Gangsters* was the highest grossing Irish film of the year and received five-star reviews. It won six awards at the Manchester Film Festival including best film. It won best film at the Newport Beach Film

festival in Los Angeles and worldwide rights to the film were bought by Netflix global.

Mark's latest project was a six-part crime drama for Virgin Media UK/Ireland called *Darklands*. It received critical acclaim and an average of 500,000 viewers per episode. It recently sold to Australian television. 'Oui Cannes' will be Mark's fifth feature film.

Mark O'Connor



THE FOUNDLING

David Turpin

Genre

Surreal drama

Budget

3.000.000 €

Links of previous work

(screenwriter)

🏆 *The Winter Lake* (2020)

🏆 *The Lodgers* (2017)

Links of previous work (director)

The Foundling' will be David Turpin's directorial feature debut.

Project's state of progress

Early financing

Contact

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Tailored Films

Synopsis

In an alternate present day, withdrawn, dreamy Anthony (17) finds a young man – *The Foundling* – in the forest. Exhausted and unconscious, the Foundling is naked, head shaven, and his body is marked up for cuts of meat. Anthony brings the Foundling home in a wheelbarrow, to the large country house he shares with his wealthy, widowed mother Julia (40s).

Anthony cleans the Foundling and instals him in a stable. He initially conceals his find from Julia, who disapproves of 'pets' – especially the coterie of unspeaking, decorative men kept by her decadent cousin B. However, once Anthony returns to boarding school, Julia begins to bond with the Foundling. While Anthony misses his pet, Julia begins to blur the lines between pet and companion as she dresses the Foundling in her deceased husband's uniform. *The Foundling* begins to make an impression on the house, as he learns words and begins to command authority.

When Anthony returns from school, he is disgusted to discover that the Foundling and his mother have had sex. Anthony shames his mother into giving the Foundling up, by gifting him to Cousin B. It soon becomes apparent that the Foundling used to belong to Cousin B – who has every intention of cutting the Foundling into strips of meat. Anthony and Julia save the Foundling and all three return home, where the Foundling becomes master of the house, with Julia as his bride and Anthony as his pet.

Director's note

The Foundling is an absurdist fable that destabilises the boundary between the human and the animal. By removing the physical difference between human and animal bodies, the film asks us to look afresh at how we define what we are, and what we are not. Undergirded by a serious philosophical inquiry, it is a delicate tonal balance of black humour, romance, eroticism, and family drama. Resisting rationalisation, its mission is to amuse, to arouse, to unsettle, and most of all to provoke.

Stylistically, *The Foundling* draws upon classic Sirkian domestic melodrama, and on the European filmmakers – Fassbinder, Pasolini, et al – who subverted its conventions to their own ends. Key cinematic influences are late Buñuel – in which bourgeois 'normalcy' is punctured by surrealist interventions that reveal its intrinsic strangeness – and early François Ozon, in which queer subjectivity reworks traditional conventions of satire, suspense and eroticism. *The Foundling* has the conceptual unity of Peter Strickland or Yorgos Lanthimos, where enclosed and specific worlds are bounded by surreal 'absolutes' – in this case the substitution of human bodies for animal bodies – but it has an open-hearted, romantic quality quite distinct from these filmmakers.

Moreover, *The Foundling* is an emphatically 'queer' film – sharing with Ozon an interest in how ostensibly 'heterosexual' material can be made strange through a queer subjectivity, thereby upending the conventions of the heteronormative gaze. Stylistically and formally, *The Foundling* echoes the journey of its characters – it finds completeness by allowing the 'other' in. Although the central romance is between a female and a male, its transgressive character and its rerouting of traditional hierarchies of power and conceptions of identity mark is as 'queer' in an authentic sense, where the 'queer' is a site of mutability, not just a facile misnomer for 'gay'.

Although its conceptual scope is broad, *The Foundling* has a fable-like compression – dealing almost entirely with a single family, and an outsider who forces them into confrontation with themselves and each other. As a cinematic object, its success will rest upon the unity of its construction – photography, production and costume design, music – as well as on the performances. The actors are being asked to enter into a delicate balance between the stylised and the naturalistic. In the case of *The Foundling* himself, this is not simply a matter of 'acting like an animal', but of finding a directness of gesture and physical expression that sustains the film's provocative ambiguities, and forms a credible fulcrum of the central love triangle. The characters of Julia and Antony – who have the 'benefit' of language, but are constrained in other ways – must be 'of a piece' with the constructed world of the film, but also connected to the currents of desire, shame, estrangement and need that make their familial relationship recognisable to all audiences, irrespective of the film's 'bizarre' surface.

The Foundling has been conceived specifically as a first feature, expressing a specific sensibility and conception of cinema that cannot be bound by the script alone. It rejects the conventional opposition of appeals to the 'head' (thought) and 'heart' (emotion) by proposing a 'cinema of ideas' that is also a cinema of feeling. It creates a space in which the ideological and the poetic co-exist – self and other, simultaneously.

THE FOUNDLING

Producer's note

Tailored Films are keen to explore ways of working with French partners on *the Foundling*, as we feel the project has a French sensibility and is very much European cinema - we think it is a natural match. It has a high concept, style, social commentary, humour, and a warped view of bourgeois society. This film will be made, it will have an impact, and it will benefit greatly from a creative alignment with the right french partner.

Tailored Films have a long history of successful co-production, from our recent feature film *Bring them Down*, starring Oscar nominee Barry Keoghan, Chris Abbott and Colm Meaney (Ireland - UK - Belgium), to our work on the Irish shot series *Der Irland Krimi* (Ireland - Germany) and the *Winter Lake* (Ireland - Canada), we have delivered quality, creative projects.

The Foundling has attracted a strong inter-European following in the industry as a direct result of our networking. We regularly receive contact from companies around the continent looking for updates on the film's progress and believe the film will perform exceptionally in European countries that rank high in the World Index of Moral Freedom i.e. Netherlands, Spain, Germany, Denmark and Portugal, due to its sexually liberated content and adherence to the rich heritage of surrealist European cinema. The film will be a darkly comic, romantic fable that plays out in a distorted mirror of our world – a 'bourgeois' society in which all domestic animals are human beings. Through an unorthodox but ultimately healing love triangle, *The Foundling* posits that we find completeness when we find the animal in ourselves, and ourselves in the animal. Over the course of the story, the false border between the 'human' and the 'animal' dissolves. *The Foundling* has an extreme specificity of world and tone, yet also a universality of meaning in that it speaks to anyone who has formed a relationship across the barrier of species.

The project required strong directorial vision early on. A strong script to begin with, much of the development so far has been in clarifying the identity of the project rather than any major overhauls to the storyline. After a discussion with the team at Screen Ireland, it was suggested that finding the perfect directorial marriage was in large part owing to David's strong creative vision, and that he would be strong enough to direct the project himself. Screen Ireland gave their blessing for this and we are now officially embarking on a short proof of concept piece that will both offer insight to the world of *The Foundling* and establish the specific aesthetic and style David aims to bring to *The Foundling*.

To conclude, we feel *the Foundling* is a project with a strong creative vision, and themes that will work across Europe. We particularly feel that 'the Foundling' needs strong co-production partners, and that our experience of European Co-Production puts us in a great position to create a creative synergy with a french partner, for this project, and projects in the future.

Director's biography

David Turpin is an Irish-born film artist.

David's first feature as screenwriter, the Gothic mystery *The Lodgers* – directed by Brian O'Malley and produced by Tailored Films – was premiered in the Contemporary World Cinema strand of the Toronto International Film Festival in 2017, and was subsequently acquired for worldwide distribution via Netflix. His second feature, the contemporary drama *The Winter Lake*, was released in 2022. David currently has multiple projects in development for film and television with the support of Fís Éireann / Screen Ireland, and with production companies including Blinder Films, Samson Films, Still Films, Tailored Films and Treasure Entertainment. His work in development includes his first feature as writer-director, the absurdist allegory *The Foundling*, and a Creative Europe-funded short film as writer-director, *My Favourite Time of Day is Night* (due to shoot later this year). Simultaneously, David worked as an academic, lecturing in Cinema Studies and English Literature.

David's film work is informed by a preoccupation with the experience of the socially and sexually 'other', and the idea of simultaneous of parallel 'realities' or states of being. He is interested particularly in the idea of queer identity as a site of resistance, and the ways in which queer non-conformity interacts with ideas of the 'uncanny'.

THE FOUNDLING

Producer's biography

Tailored Films is an award-winning film and TV company co-founded by National Film School graduates Ruth Treacy and Julianne Forde. As one of Ireland's leading female-led production companies, Tailored has enjoyed a productive and successful decade, having produced 5 feature films and 9 TV series for international audiences.

Tailored recently completed production on the Mubi / Screen Ireland / BFI funded feature film *Bring Them Down with Wild Swim* (UK) and Frakas Productions (Belgium), which is directed by 'Screen Star of Tomorrow' Chris Andrews and stars recent BAFTA winner and Oscar nominee Barry Keoghan alongside Christopher Abbott, Colm Meaney, Nora Jane Noone and Paul Ready.

Their fourth feature film, the IFTA-nominated *Let the Wrong One In*, was released in 50 cinemas domestically earlier this year. The vampire comedy stars Buffy the Vampire Slayer alum Anthony Head and won Best VFX at *Screamfest LA*. Their dark drama *The Winter Lake*, starring Emma Mackey ('*Sex Education*') and Anson Boon ('*Pistols*'), was released in 2020, picking up a number of awards. In 2017, Tailored Films produced gothic ghost story *The Lodgers* which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and won many international awards before securing a large deal with Netflix. In 2012, their award-winning debut feature *Stitches* screened at many festivals internationally, later going on to secure cult status.

David Turpin



In addition to their work in film, Tailored is also one of Ireland's leading providers of live-action drama content for young audiences for Irish national broadcaster RTÉ. The company has since grown their television slate to cater for older audiences, soon commencing production on an international co-production *Louise Lives Large*, a children's drama series with Verité Films (Canada) and Storyhouse (Belgium). The company also works as a co-producer on service productions, including the high end international drama series *Der Irland Krimi* in 2021 and 2022 respectively. Recently, Tailored was awarded the prestigious Creative Europe Slate Funding and Strategic Slate development funding from Screen Ireland to aid their current slate of 5 features and 6 TV series undergoing development work.

The company's vision is to be renowned for producing smart genre projects, underpinned by strong societal resonance. Tailored Films are looking to forge co-production partnerships with international producers who have the same interests and goals to develop high impact, commercially focused feature films that entertain, excite and engage audiences. There are a staff of 7 working at the busy Tailored offices in the centre of Dublin city. Tailored is an active member of the European Film Academy and European Producers Club. For more info please visit www.tailoredfilms.ie

Julianne Forde



WE SAW THE SEA

Martin Mahon

Genre

Tragicomedy

Budget

3.000.000 €

Links of previous work (director)

🏆 *Happy Birthday to Me*, In Competition, 1998 Cannes Film Festival

🏆 *Another Day*

🏆 *Straight to Video*, TV Series

Project's state of progress

Script

Contact

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Synopsis

The average human life span falls into nine stages from Birth to Death. *We Saw The Sea* does not explore the average life. It shatters it. In the tradition of the Coen Brothers' Oscar-nominated *The Ballad of Buster Scruggs* and the BAFTA-winning films *Amores Perros* and *Wild Things*, *We Saw The Sea* is a movie about life, death, ice-cream, and everything in between. Set against the backdrop of the most transient of places - a rundown seaside town, it tells the story of human life in the nine diverse, funny, weird, sad, and tragic-comic tales. All nine stories are unified and interwoven with an ice-cream truck and its inhabitant is the only witness. Each story reveals another truth about the absurd random nature of life.

Our first character, with his impending sexual birth and his life before him, launches *We Saw The Sea* and from there the film, like a fairground rollercoaster, weaves and jolts us through our journey. With the speed of the descent and the creaks and stutters of the ascent we attempt to dissect the meaning of life.

Our characters may appear from one story in another story, but they do not know each other. The audience will be dropped into a new story already under way or jolted out of a story not quite completed. But they will never be lost. The sea will ebb and flow until finally our truth will reveal itself.

The film is set at a beach car park of a seaside town. A selection of characters, all of whom harbour a secret, arrive willingly or are forced by chance to the carpark. What unfolds with each new arrival will amuse, question and shock our audience. These nine stories are an intense exposé of people's lives, caught in a moment of time without any context.

Our judgement will be questioned, our loyalty will waver, our hearts will melt, and our bellies will laugh.

Director's note

Over a recurring scroll of a family photo album and transitioning from a freeze-frame of the picture in the album into the action, *We Saw The Sea* will tell nine stories of various key moments in people's lives - their births, deaths, families, pets, marriages, rows and break-ups... The nine stories, each having a completely different storyline and set of characters, will nonetheless come together as a complete all-in-one package detailing many of the key moments in a person's life and convey a small sense of what a life might be.

As with the individual storylines, the composition of each sequence will be told in a different and compelling way designed to highlight the emotional needs of the scene. For instance, Story 1, *The Birth*, will be edited in a fast and occasionally frenzied manner to reflect the character's inner turmoil and anxiety about both the upcoming meeting and his new friend, while Story 3, *The Fog*, will almost entirely consist of a single take with the characters occupying a 4 x 3 frame at the centre of the car to highlight the enclosed aspect of their lives and the stymying nature of their existence. Story 5, *The Song*, will meanwhile rely on longish hand-held shots to show the fragility of the characters and their innate delicacy and Story 8, *The Daughter*, will deploy lots of tracks to move back and forward between the characters (utilising the full extent of the frame) and highlight their diverse viewpoints. Story 2, *The Accident* will mostly be done in a seductive close-up to get under the skin of the clowns' make-up and see their humanity beneath. Once the make-up has been removed, we can then go into a wider two-shot of the pair. Story 4, *The Lunch Break* and Story 6, *The Marriage*, the most technical of the two, will have slower, more conventional approach as both stories are on the "slightly insane" side and need a less showy approach to let the lunacy of the storylines come through. Story 9, *The End*, will return to Story 1's fast and frantic approach as we cut between the fast talking three characters who

crash in and out of each other's comments with a ferocity born of long friendship.

In terms of acting, the old 'less-is-more' rule will apply (the stories have more than enough drama going on) and the impetus will be to let the reality of the sequences shine through as the action and dialogue will speak multitudes in relation the actor's needs.

The photography will be simple, striking and glowing - we will utilise the magic hour light that will add a haunting dimension to the proceedings as much as is humanly possible. Cutaways will be kept to a minimum - there will be ABSOLUTELY NO shots of waves landing on a beach. The aim will be to capture in some small way the multitude of moments, moods, emotions, and lightning strikes that contribute to a person's existence.

Why make this now? Because it's the story of today, of a life, a country and of a person that could be you, me or anyone.

I personally love the idea of a group of different people and incidents coming together to create a mad, slightly perverse, but complete story. The events in the nine sequences are things that could happen to any person passing by the wrong place at the right time, but like any good story, it is in the telling that's the magic...

My deepest wish is that people will leave the cinema feeling they've never seen anything like it before - but nonetheless will smile with some deep sense of recognition.

WE SAW THE SEA

Producer's note

We Saw The Sea is an incredibly special script with international appeal. We know we have an incredible writer and director attached: you cannot have been working in film in Ireland and not known Martin Mahon. His first short received a Palme d'Or Best Short Film nomination at Cannes - the first Irish short film ever to receive this accolade. Most importantly, finding a unique and clear voice in film is no mean feat. However, that is what we believe we have with Martin Mahon, both as a writer and a director. Manoel de Oliveria started making films at 19, but it took him five decades before finally breaking through. This is Martin's time.

From all the experience he has garnered producing, coupled with his innate talent and welded together by his life's experience, *We Saw The Sea* will be his tour de force, his Past and Present. At Macalla, we are excited about partnering with this very special creative Irish talent as he develops his next chapter. This is an international story. A beautiful, tragically funny film with genuine global appeal that will travel across cultural divides as its narrative wraps itself around the backdrop of 'the sea'. To speak further on location and with a French Co-Production in mind, this is a film that could be beautifully shot on the beaches of Brittany as it could on the West coast of Ireland. The power is in the stories and it is the sea that beautifully and wistfully ties them all together. We know that with the vision of our Director, coupled with the right cinematographer, that we can make something so powerful both editorially and cinematically. We have recently applied to Screen Ireland seeking development funding to take *We Saw The Sea* to next stage script development and into further in-depth casting. We have made some inroads with early casting and have three high profile actors who are interested in the lead roles in different stories, including 'The Dog', and the 'The Song,' as the actor's names are currently confidential. It is an ensemble piece, so the range of on-screen talent covers the full gamut. We will also engage a strong script editor to work alongside

our writer Martin for this second crucial draft. Coupled with the right location and the correct DOP, these are critical elements that need to be engaged to fully enhance this film's visual impact. Our film, *We Saw The Sea*, is for a 35+ Market - and when you delve deeper, it's for the very lucrative 50+ female market. There is without doubt a potency in this perennially ill-served audience, that was also demonstrated at the box office for hugely successful films like *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*. We now know that the older audience is famously dilatory when it comes to checking out films at the cinema and one that we feel *We Saw The Sea* would continue to attract. This film represents the kind of market we should be addressing from a scale point of view and an audience point of view.

Sharon Newman Cúán Mac Conghail



Sharon Newman

WE SAW THE SEA

Director's biography

Martin Mahon graduated from Trinity College Dublin in 1984. He then worked as film critic and journalist with The Sunday Tribune, The Irish Times and In Dublin magazine amongst others. In 1986, he founded Yellow Asylum Films with Alan Gilsenan and has produced all Yellow Asylum's creative documentaries to date: *The road to god knows where, prophet songs, between heaven and woolworths and stories from the silence*. Martin was the Programme Director of the Dublin Film Festival from 1992 to 1997, during which time he brought to Dublin film-makers such as Krzysztof Kieslowski, Theo Angelopoulos, Oliver Stone, Bertrand Tavernier, Terry Gilliam, Aki Kaurismaki, Abel Ferrara and Chuck Jones. He made his writing and directing debut in 1996 with the short drama *The Condom*, described as "witty and well-sustained" by The Irish Times and "brilliantly executed" by Film Ireland, and since then has directed three other 35mm short films; *The Big Match*, *Another Day* and *Happy Birthday To Me*, the latter selected for Official Competition in the 1998 Cannes Film Festival - the first Irish film to ever receive this accolade. He also wrote the screenplay for a Feature Film, *Hill 16* (developed with the support of Screen Ireland) and has since completed the screenplays *Parnell Street*, *ffs* and most recently, *We Saw The Sea*.

Producers' biographies

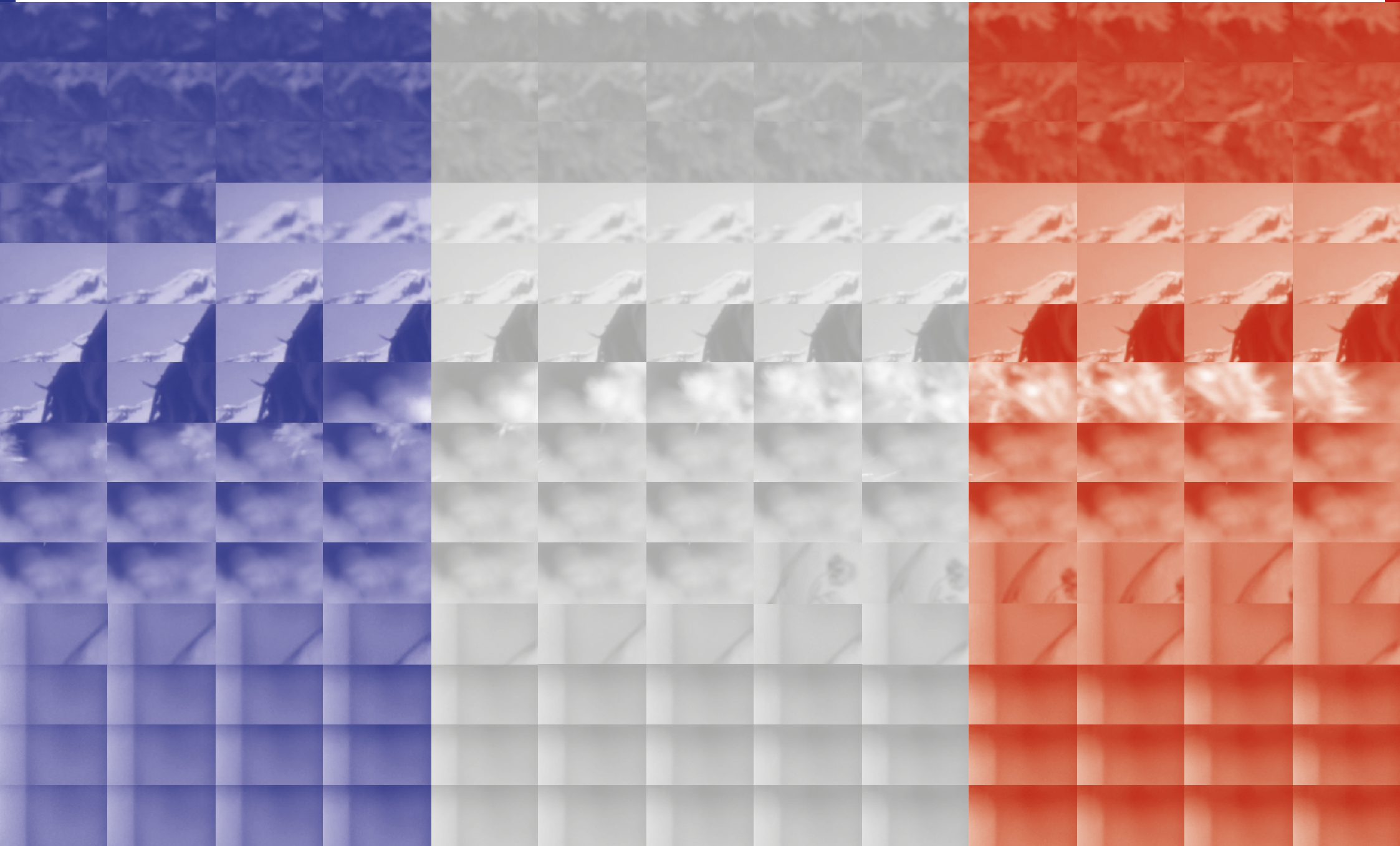
Cúán Mac Conghail graduated in 1986 from Ballyfermot Senior College with a Diploma in Radio and Television Production. He joined the B.B.C. as an Editor in London in 1988 where he worked on numerous programs from 'Bergerac' to 'Horizon'. He returned to Ireland in 1995 where he worked as a freelance Editor, sometime Producer, and an occasional Director before founding his own company, Macalla Teoranta. Cúán was Producer/Editor for the feature film *Studs* (2005) and several short films including *Tupperware*, *Before I Sleep* and the IFTA award-winning *Lipservice*. Most recently, he developed and produced two internationally acclaimed movies that have won at the biggest international film festivals - notably *Arracht*, which was awarded Best Film at the Dublin International Film Festival (DIFF) 2020 and is the first Irish language film to be nominated on the longlist for the Oscar Awards in 2021 for Best International Feature Film. Funding was secured through the Cine4 Scheme which is supported by TG4, Screen Ireland, and the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI). He has received international recognition receiving awards for Best Film, Best Director, Best Cinematographer, Best Child Actress and Best Lead Actor in the American Gold Picture International Film Festival, Best Film at the Kimolos International Film Festival, Critics Choice Award at the British and Irish Film Festival Luxembourg, Best Film and Aer Lingus Discover Award at the Dublin International Film Festival, Audience Award at the Glasgow Film Festival and was nominated for 11 IFTAS going on to win two for Best Sound and Best Original Score. Cúán also produced Macalla's latest film, *Róise & Frank*, filmed & set in the coastal Gaeltacht of An Rinn, and opened in September 2022 in Irish cinemas. The film was funded & supported by TG4, Screen Ireland the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) and the Cine4 scheme. Juno Films has picked up the North American distribution rights to the film and opens in cinemas in the States in March 2023. *Róise & Frank* has been a huge hit around the world, winning Audience Awards at Sonoma

International Film Festival, Film Fest Tuscon, Port Townsend Film Festival, Santa Barbara International Film Festival and Best Comedy Feature at San Diego Film Festival. His other works includes Television Production credits on both National and International shows. He was nominated for the Grierson Documentary award for his directing work on *Tails From America* and a Peabody award from his producing work on *On The Block*. His extensive editing credits range from *The Road to Moneygall* (2012) to *Meetings with Ivor* (2017) and as such is uniquely positioned to really oversee the story from start to finish, from pre-production all the way through production to the post-production period.

Sharon Newman is a Producer and Writer with over 20 years of experience in the fields of broadcasting, print media and TV & Film development. In that time, she has produced some of Ireland's biggest series across various broadcasters - RTÉ, Virgin Media and Irish language broadcaster TG4. A former journalist, she has developed, secured funding and produced a number of different factual, entertainment and documentary series. She spent seven years working as a print journalist with regional newspapers and magazines, before moving into TV Production in 2010. Since then, Sharon has produced some of the country's most loved unscripted TV Series for RTÉ One, RTÉ Two and TG4, from *First Dates*, maternity series *The Rotunda*, and *DIYSOS: The Big Build*. She has also produced children's TV series in both English and Irish. Writing has always been Sharon's first love, and she has leveraged those skills into working in development on Film & TV projects. She is currently in development on a number of film projects and drama series for Macalla, as well as unscripted TV content.

Projets Français

French Projects



MY DREAM OF YOU

Valentine Varela

Genre

Fiction

Budget

3.500.000 € estimate

Links of previous work (director)

🚩 *La Générale*

Project's state of progress

Writing

Contact

Nour Films Production

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Synopsis

Kathleen lives alone in a basement flat in London. Born in Ireland, she fled her native land for England at age 18. Now 49, she works as writer for a travel agency. She sleeps with anyone who seems to want her, ever in search of a pleasure that proves elusive. When her best friend Jimmy dies of a heart attack, everything is thrown into question. She has no one left, nothing keeping her in place. Recognizing that she is sinking fast, she decides to return to Ireland to write about the Famine-era scandal of Marianne Talbot, an English aristocrat who was tried and executed for sleeping with an Irish servant. After 30 years of exile, Kathleen returns to the isle of her birth. Crisscrossing the countryside in search of information about Talbot, she meets a cast of characters who open their doors to her and serve as guides. The warmth of these new bonds let her connect, little by little, with her own past. And then she meets Shay, a fellow immigrant returned from England. Just when she thought that chapter of life had closed, Kathleen feels the stirrings of something like love. After a night with Shay, Kathleen finds the courage to visit her brother, who still lives in their childhood home and whom she hasn't seen since she left for England.

Together, they begin to revisit the trauma that defines their lives: 30 years ago, their pregnant mother was found lying in a pool of her own blood. She was diagnosed with uterine cancer, but the doctors refused to treat her because the chemotherapy could kill the fetus. Powerless in the face of this drama, Kathleen ran away, abandoning not only her mother but also her 16-year-old brother. In deeply conservative, anti-abortion Ireland, the tragedy of all Irish women played itself out in their family. Forging a new connection with the land that shaped her, Kathleen rediscovers an interior landscape where sensation becomes possible again. Through the people she encounters, specially her relationship with Shay, and through a confrontation with her family and

cultural history, Kathleen's journey transforms into a reckoning with exile, oppression, loneliness, and the illusions of love. In putting the puzzle back together, Kathleen might stop running away at last, and finally come home.

Director's note

When I first read *My Dream of You* 20 years ago, I was struck by Nuala O'Faolain's sensitivity, her humor and sense of story, her directness. Drawing on a career in journalism, she never shies away from engaging the intimate. I contacted her French publisher to ask about the film rights and was invited to a dinner in honor of O'Faolain, who happened to be in Paris. I spent an incredible evening with the little woman herself, so ladylike and droll, yet so hopeless. We spoke of how difficult it is to love, of her immense solitude, and of her dogs, whose companionship "kept her soul alive." To my dream of adapting her novel as a film, she replied, "Do it, my friend!" She inscribed my copy of the book: "To my new friend, with love." Nuala O'Faolain died in 2008. In 2022, after a divorce and the death of my parents, I came across that copy of *My Dream of You* and fell into the pages of a new book—one that spoke of an Ireland still suffering profoundly from its past traumas, of misogyny and how patriarchy imprisons the bodies of women, of exile's ache and the quest for identity and connection in the loneliness of aging.

I sensed, on encountering a story both personal and sweeping, how one can be born homesick and with a dislocated heart. One can live a lifetime without belonging to a place or to oneself. In my own heritage of Eastern European Jewish women searching for a place where they might know peace, this feeling of being uprooted was formative. My five documentary films all explore the possibility of rebuilding after losing everything. As O'Faolain asks in her later writings, can we ever come back from

genocide? I feel more than a resonance with her novel; my desire to bring it to the screen has taken on the urgency of personal and societal necessity.

Kathleen's initiatory journey is a voyage into her past, and in a maze of rural Irish roads and houses we lose ourselves in her memories. The essential formal element, without which the film's temporal knots would be impossible to untangle, is how to handle narrative time. In the span of a single shot, past and present coexist, but Kathleen is always 49 years old.

Her investigation of the Talbot story will be developed through the court proceedings and other archives she explores, without reenactments. Directing historic documentaries has familiarized me with this territory, and I love the mystery that surrounds archival materials and the questions they provoke.

I'd like to mention two sources of visual inspiration. First, Martin Parr, who has photographed Ireland from the 1970s to the present day. Straddling documentation of history and social commentary, his work is immensely rich. And then there's cinematographer Dick Pope (notably, Mike Leigh's *Naked*, *Secrets and Lies*, and *Another Year*). Coming from the documentary milieu, Pope has a very hands-on and fluid approach, manning the camera himself to capture what enters the frame without fear of the accidental—real scenes with natural lighting that draw the spectator wholly into the lives being filmed. In contrast to the flat, dull atmosphere of the early scenes in London, from the moment we arrive on Irish soil the raw light rends the image and the sky invades the screen. We must feel the clouds' passage, the arrival of the rain, and the reemergence of the sun.

The cinematographic challenge is to translate the extent to which nature, reconnecting Kathleen to the realm of the senses and to her own self, lies at the heart of this story.

MY DREAM OF YOU

Producer's note

We are very happy to submit the feature film project in development *My Dream of You* by Valentine Varela to the call for projects for the France-Ireland coproduction workshop. After an impressive career as an actress in cinema, theater and television, Valentine Varela started making documentary films in 2009. *My Dream of You* will be her first feature film. We had the pleasure to release her last film, *La Générale*, in French theaters in November 2022. We are therefore familiar with her work, vitality and talent as a filmmaker. When hearing about her project to adapt Nuala O'Faolain's novel *My Dream of You*, we were immediately convinced that she was ready to write the script and direct her first feature film. Valentine has had the project of adapting this novel by Nuala O'Faolain for several years. *My Dream of You* is not only a literary piece, it plunges us in a compelling story that encourages us to reconsider our lives. This is the process Valentine experienced when reading the novel, with passion and subtlety. The book and her encounter with Nuala forged between them a mutual recognition, a feeling of sisterhood, as well as a cry of protest: that of women who pursue their quest for freedom and their necessary liberation from the representations constructed by patriarchy.

Nuala O'Faolain explains she started this quest "in an attempt to understand why her life seemed to be going nowhere despite great promises". That is the novel's starting point, and it will also be Valentine's starting point for the film. A story about a middle-aged woman, whose reflection on love, grief and loneliness brings her to realize how difficult it is to live in Ireland or elsewhere when you are a woman. This difficulty is grounded in early childhood and in little girls' hearts, and the wound remains open even at the age of 50. Our role as producers is to surround Valentine with a team of great professionals, amongst the best in Irish and French cinema, but also with people attentive to her way of working, to be fully dedicated to the film's artistic ambition. Valentine, true to her high

standards, wishes to work with the best technicians in Irish cinema, starting with the director of photography whose experience will help shape the film's very Irish atmosphere.

While the first version of the project is being written, we are also looking for an Irish co-producer, as a co-production seems essential for this film with a strong Irish identity which is fundamental for Valentine. With the Irish production, we will need to cast the best Irish actresses and actors, and gather numerous film crew members since 90% of the scenes shot will be shot in Ireland. We feel however it is necessary to find the right balance and integrate a part of French team on the set. We are thinking of having the entire post-production take place in France with carefully chosen technicians and partners, such as Raphaël Sohier for the sound editing or Yov Moor for the color grading, who are both the best amongst their generation. The film's budget has been estimated to 3.5 million euros. We hope it can be financed by the agreement between France and Ireland, l'Aide aux cinémas du Monde, The Ile de France region, Canal +, Fís Éireann, and an Irish TV network. We are convinced that this adaptation of *My Dream of You* will have an international outreach, in Europe, but also in Japan, in Korea, in English-speaking countries and particularly in the United States where the novel is a best-seller. We hope this project will be selected for the French-Irish coproduction workshop and send you our best regards.
Patrick Sibourd & Sébastien Hussenot. Nour Films Production

Biography's author

Valentine Varela is a French actress and film director. She played Madame de Montespan in *The King's Alley* directed by Nina Companeez, or the Duchesse de Guermantes in an adaptation of Marcel Proust's novel *In Search of Lost Time* for the French TV networks Arte and France Televisions. She also played in feature films directed by Etienne Chatiliez or Peter Kassovitz.

In the theater, she explored important roles of the repertoire, such as Juliette, Chimène in Corneille's play *Le Cid*, Andromaque in Racine's play by the same name under the direction of Nicolas Briançon or Ysé in Paul Claudel's *Le Partage de midi* (*The Break of Noon*) directed by Gérard Desarthe. Since 2010 she has been making documentary films, often inspired by

her family history like *Children from the Casa*, about the orphanage her sister-in-law comes from in Columbia, or *Nansen, a passport for stateless people* broadcast on Arte, about the passport that enabled her family in exile to regain an identity. *La Générale* is her fifth film.

Valentine Varela



MY DREAM OF YOU

Production company profile

Since 2020, Patrick Sibourd and Sébastien Hussenot have joined their efforts and embarked on a new adventure, that of producing ambitious feature films for the French and international market. While Sébastien Hussenot has gained solid experience through Luna Productions producing of over a hundred short films awarded in international festivals as well as a dozen feature films, Patrick Sibourd is trusted by many authors whose first works he helped bring to the French cinema market : Germinal Roaux (*Fortuna* in 2018), Abbas Fahdel (*Homeland : Iraq Year Zero* in 2016), Ioanis Nuguet (*Spartacus & Cassandra* in 2015), Margaux Bonhomme (*Head above Water* in 2018), Marcela Said (*Mariana* in 2018), Anne-Dauphine Julliand (*Everyday Heroes* in 2017) or Gessica Généus (*Freda* in 2021). He is also trusted by many international sales companies and experienced producers which has allowed him to distribute the films of Werner Herzog, Claire Simon, Pino Solanas or Alejandro Jodorowsky. In 2018, Nour Films distribution co-produced with MACT Films (Antoine de Clermont-Tonnerre) and Cité Films (Raphaël Berdugo) the film *5 is the Perfect Number* directed by Igort, with Toni Servillo and Valeria Golino. The film was released in France in October 2019 and opened the *Giornatta degli autori* in Venice in 2019.

That same year, the international co-production of Germinal Roaux's next film *Cosmos* was also launched, together with Switzerland and Swiss production company Close-up Films managed by Joëlle Bertossa and with Mexican producer Sandino Saravia Vinay and his company Cinevay. The film was shot between March and May 2022 with a 2.7 million Euro budget. The film was granted a subsidy from l'Aide aux cinémas du Monde, the fund managed by the CNC and the Institut français dedicated to international co-productions. In 2020, following the success of *The Tie*, directors Mathias Théry and Etienne Chaillou called upon us to produce their next feature film provisionally entitled *Fernando*. The script is currently in development with the participation of a third author, Julie Pagis. Patrick Sibourd and Sébastien Hussenot decided to create a common

production company, Nour Films Production, to take advantage of the positive notoriety built on the work carried out by Nour Films distribution, as well as the experience of Sébastien Hussenot as producer, and to keep separate distribution and production activities while maintaining a close link with Nour Films distribution to bring films to the French and international market. After *Fernando*, director Alejandro Jodorowsky asked us to produce his next film, *Essential Journey* (third part of the trilogy *The Danse of Reality* and *Endless Poetry*), for which 30% of the budget has already been gathered. "Essential Journey" will be shot in the spring 2023 mainly in France, then in Spain. Patrick Sibourd has previously worked in publishing in the general literature department of the Hachette-Livres group (Fayard, Grasset, Calmann-Lévy, Stock, Albin Michel etc.) He has been teaching a film distribution class in the Production Master programs of the Grenoble Stendhal University and the Lussas Documentary School for several years. Between 2019 and 2021, he was the vice-president of the Aide aux Cinémas du Monde committee presided by Charles Tesson

Patrick Sibourd



MY TRAITOR

Santiago Amigorena

Genre

Fiction

Budget

6.000.000 € estimate

Links of previous work (director)

🚩 **Another Silence**

password: salinasgrande

Project's state of progress

Writing and casting

Contact

Urban Factory

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Synopsis

Mid-2000, Antoine, a luthier, receives a call that leaves him shattered. He leaves for Belfast to try to understand. Fifteen years before in Ireland, Antoine meets Tyrone in a pub and discovers that Tyrone is a local hero from the independence's war. After that night, a father-son like bond will form between them. Tyrone will invite Antoine to stay at his house with his wife Sheila. 1979, Tyrone serves a sentence at Long Kesh prison, where the living conditions are inhumane.

Tyrone continues his fight from prison by participating in the Dirty Protest with his cellmate Aidan. The guards torture and humiliate the IRA members, except one guard: Popeye. He offers Tyrone to let him see Jack, his son, and helps them reunite. One night, Tyrone confesses to Aidan that he is not such a hero. His friend Danny, who died in battle, was not killed by the English but by Tyrone himself who, in panic, stumbled and shot him. After 15 months, Tyrone is released but the next day he gets arrested again. Stephen Petrie and two other British agents threaten him. Tyrone must give the British police confidential information about the IRA's actions or his secret will be exposed. 2000s, Belfast. The war is over but Tyrone is still living in hiding. While Jack considers his father dead the day he betrayed him, Antoine wants to know why he decided to become a real traitor by preventing the assassination organized by the IRA of Popeye, the prison guard who had helped him. In Killybegs, Tyrone and Antoine have a talk, but the truth is hard for Antoine to hear. Tyrone betrayed for many reasons: eaten away by shame and lies, disillusioned by the war, transformed by prison's abuses... Antoine leaves. In the evening, two men wait for Tyrone in his living room. They shoot. Tyrone is dead.

City cemetery. Tyrone's coffin is put in the ground. Antoine is playing the violin. Once he finishes, he joins Sheila and Jack. Each of them takes one of his hands. Antoine stares at the coffin of his Traitor.

Director's note

I always thought it would be better to adapt a book you didn't like very much rather than a book that had given us a real literary pleasure. This sometimes allowed me to write scripts that deeply betray the works from which they were inspired.

Today, however, considering a film based on Sorj Chalandon's *My Traitor* and *Return to Killybegs* forces me to face a new challenge: making a film worthy of the beauty of these two texts. A new challenge, or rather a series of new challenges, the first of which, I would say, is to succeed in making an Irish film. I doubted for a long time before convincing myself that I could make a film about the IRA. Finally, if I allow myself to do so, it is largely in memory of my South American childhood a childhood that, unfortunately, was no stranger to military violence nor armed struggle. I don't know exactly why I feel authorized to make this film, but I do know that I have already felt this singular possibility of slipping into the skin of an author who could talk about a universe that was not his own. This was in the 1990s, at a time in my life when chance made me write several films for African directors. I felt that they were choosing me to write stories that took place in cultures that were foreign to me (Malagasy, Burkinabe, South African) because I was a foreigner myself.

Today I feel something similar: I believe I can make *My Traitor* because I am Argentinean. Or rather: because I am exiled. I imagine a film with a dirty image and scenery, with the violence of the big waves as if they were directly hitting the pavements of the streets of Belfast. I imagine a film torn between these contrasts, which you can inevitably feel in the emotions of the characters described in the two books: too good and too bad at the same time. And always, in all their excesses, terribly human. I imagine a film where everything will be violent – except violence itself. The sound, like the music, will also have something violent and a bit

dirty: disturbance noises, archival rumours, musical snatches of songs that one might have wished to hear in their entirety, but which are suddenly cut off, to make room for the silence of an empty street at dawn or the flight of a bird in a dark sky. It will be, whatever happens, a windy film: a film carried away by acting and a camera that never stop, running after something that inevitably escapes them.

There is something fateful in the story of *My Traitor* that I think can only be captured by following the pace of great bursts, without the aesthetic breaks that I have allowed myself in my other films. It will be necessary to invent a dazzling and effective beauty: a beauty that never stops so that one contemplates it in peace and which, at the same time, tells a story without taking into account anything other than the rhythm imposed by its progression. After having written around forty films for the pleasure of directors, after having directed three films for my own pleasure, it is now for me a matter of making a first film for the pleasure of the audience.
Santiago Amigorena

MY TRAITOR

Producers' statement of intent:

Summer 2015, on a country road, I listen to the radio. On France Inter, Sorj Chalandon – whose existence I did not know at the time – talks about his two novels, *My Traitor* and *Return to Killybegs*, his experience as a Journalist in Ireland for the newspaper Libération, and his friendship with Denis Donaldson, this admired figure of the IRA and Sinn Féin, Bobby Sands' prison companion, who we discover, collaborated with the English secret service for almost 15 years. This magnificent traitor, this war in the heart of Europe, this mixture of pride, panache and lies, the great History that meets the personal drama, all these elements together appeared to me as the basis of a fascinating epic film. What struck me as even more powerful, perhaps, was the author's recognition of a certain kind of naivety, even romanticism, in believing that his betrayed friendship was a greater tragedy than the cause, values, and country that Donaldson was selling to the enemy. For me, this was the way to deal with a subject as vast and sensitive as the Irish-British conflict without pretending, as a French person, to tell a piece of the war between the Ireland and the United Kingdom. When I was finally able to meet the author, we had a long discussion that was all the more moving because Sorj is not stingy with his emotions. Wanting to know why two books? Sorj explains to me the context that prevailed in the writing of *Killybegs*. The two men never saw each other again after the trial. Donaldson is more than a friend, he is a father figure for Sorj (his novel «Profession du père», which has just been adapted for the cinema by Jean-Pierre Amérys, tells us a lot about this abusive figure). They decide to meet again, but a few days before boarding the plane, Denis Donaldson is murdered. *Return to Killybegs* is the story of this meeting that will never take place. For me, it is the starting point of this film. After falling in love with the books, I tried to obtain the rights to adapt it from Grasset. Unfortunately, an option was already running, until the day – several years later –

when the rights became available again. Isabelle Fauvel, from Initiative Film, accompanied us at the beginning of this adventure. With this option, after a long negotiation, I had of course moved forward, but I was confronted with another problem: usually, there is an author and a director at the beginning of the project. Here there are two bestsellers and a producer. Moreover, adapting two best-sellers which take place over 20 years, which show scenes of war, prison, torture, and moreover in Ireland, it is not an obvious work. So, I proposed the adaptation to an experienced author, Santiago Amigorena, who I know for a long time and who also had a crush on this project. He worked with Marion Quantin on a script of which this is the second version. During our discussions with Santiago and Marion, and as the writing phase progressed, it became obvious and natural to propose the direction of the film to Santiago, who accepted it with enthusiasm. *My Traitor* is an ambitious project that needs the support of quality people and institutions. We have received already the support from Procirep and Angoa and a development grant from the CNC (French national cinematographic centre).
Frédéric Corvez, Producer

Directors bio

Born in Buenos Aires, Santiago Amigorena came to France in 1973. He has worked as a scriptwriter on more than 30 feature films with directors such as Cédric Klapisch (*Le péril jeune*, *Peut-être*, *Ce qui nous lie*, *Deux moi*, *En corps*), Laurence Ferreira Barbosa (*Les gens normaux n'ont rien d'exceptionnel*), Brigitte Rouan (*Post Coitum Animal Triste*), Jean-Pierre Limosin (*Tokyo Eyes*), Agnès Merlet (*Le fils du requin*), Idrissa Ouedraogo (*Samba Traore*, *Kini et Adams*) or Juan Solanas (*Upside Down*). He also wrote 11 novels, translated in about 15 languages. His first film as a director, *A Few Days in September*, starring Juliette Binoche, Nick Nolte and John Turturro was showed in the Official Selection of the Venice Film Festival and the Toronto Film Festival, and distributed in more than 20 countries. His second film, *Another Silence*, starring Marie-José Croze, was also at the Venice Film Festival, in 2011 (Venice Days). His third film, *Les Enfants Rouges*, was showed in Rio and Beirut.

MY TRAITOR

Producer's bio

Frédéric Corvez started his career at Equinoxe (Sony Pictures Intl and Canal +) where he was in charge of the international development. A member of the reading group at Studio Canal, he contributed to the creation of Kanpaï Distribution. Then, he joined successively MK2 and Celluloid Dreams where he directed and developed the TV department. He taught Economy of cinema at La Sorbonne Nouvelle and is an Expert for the European Commission. In 2004, he founded URBAN DISTRIBUTION INTL, a World Sales Company. In 2009, Frédéric Corvez founded URBAN FACTORY, an independent company dedicated to domestic production and international coproductions. In 2011, Frédéric Corvez has also extended its activities to theatrical distribution in France with a new company: URBAN DISTRIBUTION. In 2020, Wide House joins URBAN GROUP and becomes RESERVOIR DOCS. The company headed by Anais Clanet is dedicated to documentary world sales. He is a member of Unifrance Board and executive committee, Treasurer of l'Adef – The Union of French World Sales – and Vice President of Europa International.

After studying audio-visual production and drama, Maeva started her career in Paris in 2011 at Kidam as Production Assistant where she worked on the production of the documentary series *New York Jazzed Out* directed by Jeremiah and the medium-length film *The Atomic Age* by Helena Klotz. She then moved to Los Angeles for a few months where she did script coverages at Voltage Pictures, before flying to Shanghai where she spent 7 years of her life. In Shanghai, after a year of learning Mandarin, she first joined a documentary production house, Wuma Production, in 2013, where she produced short and feature documentaries for French TV channels (France 3, Canal +, Arte, M6, TF1) and then worked at Jitu Studio where she produced commercials and animation / motion graphic design videos created for high-end events. She also worked as an Independent Producer and

developed a webseries comedy *Maidan* 买单 (The Addition), which she co-wrote and produced, about Shanghai lifestyle and its quirky moments. In 2018, she worked as Line Producer on the feature film *Minuscles 2, Mandibles from far away* directed by Hélène Giraud and Thomas Szabo, which was partly shot in Beijing. In 2019, after she came back to France, she joined Urban Factory where she now produces feature films such as: *Plan 75* by Chie Hayakawa (Japan, France, Philippines – Fiction, dystopia – Official Selection Festival de Cannes 2022, Caméra d'Or Special Mention – TIFF 2022 Contemporary World Cinema – Release in France on September 7th 2022), *Francesca l'amor* by Alba Sotorra (Spain, France – Documentary – Festival de Malaga 2022), *Il nous reste la colère* (France – Documentary – Release in France on December 7th 2022 by Jamila Jendari and Nicolas Beirnaert), *Sailing off the edge* by Virginia Tangvald (Canada, France – Documentary – in production), *The shameless* by Konstantin Bojanov (Switzerland, Bulgaria, France – Drama) which will be shot early 2023 in Nepal Sima's song by Roya Sadat (Spain, Netherlands, France – Drama) which will be shot in Greece in Fall 2022 *If only I could hibernate* by Zoljargal Purevdash (Mongolia, France – Drama), which has been entirely shot in Mongolia and which will be post produced in France in Fall 2022. She also works on the development following feature films: *If only I could hibernate* by Zoljargal Purevdash (Mongolia, France – Drama), which has been entirely shot in Mongolia and which will be post produced in France in Fall 2022 *My Traitor* by Santiago Amigorena, co-written by Marian Quantin (Historical drama), *Let us not be strangers* by Julien Trauman co-written with Sebastian Echegorri (Historical drama), *La chienne* by Paul Vecchiali (Drama)

Frédéric Corvez



Maëva Savinien



SCHOPENHAUER'S TELESCOPE

Kamen Kalev

Genre

Fiction

Budget

3.000.000 € estimate

Links of previous work (director)

🚩 February

password: KK-February-11012021

Project's state of progress

1st version of the script

Contact

Koro Films

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Synopsis

In an unnamed village, in the middle of a civil war, one man digs a hole while another watches over him. One, an awkward loner—referred to as «the baker»—is digging a hole, while the other, an educated, overbearing man—referred to as «the teacher»—watches him. The men's philosophical ruminations circle around historical instances of evil—from the Mongol hordes led by Genghis Khan to World War II—as well as the baker's secret past, which is somehow linked to recent events in the ravaged town. The town baker and the teacher talk, and their philosophical conversation becomes an odd Beckett-like dark comedy of the absurd set against the abject horror of the situation they find themselves in. The war is conveyed through stylized imagery (in the background are brooding soldiers and a mass of people delivered in trucks) that could belong to any conflict of the last century in Europe. Over the course of the day a hole the size of a mass grave has been dug and we learn a little more, through a trial in which each protagonist in turn takes on the role of executioner and victim, their respective involvement in the sinister events in their country that have led to this point ...

Director's note

I finished my previous feature film, *February*, in 2020, a European coproduction between France (KORO FILMS), and Bulgaria (Waterfront). We were very happy the film found a place in the Cannes official competition, and was featured in other festivals around the world. Working with KORO FILMS was a rich and satisfying experience, so we were looking for another project allowing us to continue to collaborate. Since I'd written the screenplays of my four previous feature films on my own, this time I wanted to try adapting an original work. With the assistance of a few major French publishers, KORO FILMS and I set out to find the perfect text. I discovered Schopenhauer's *Telescope*, which transcended everything else. I immediately connected with the subject matter: the sensibility, humor, theme, structure...

My head was filled with images, I thought the dialogues were great: funny and intelligent. The author's human approach spoke to me, the intelligence with which he explored the vast zone between black and white. I was worried about adapting the dialogue-heavy text to the screen. I tried putting it aside. I tried working on other projects, but Donovan's novel kept pulling me back in. In the end, I got to work, and this only increased my enthusiasm. After searching for two years, I knew I'd found the perfect text to embark on my new odyssey. My adaptation work will consist of synthesizing the text and creating a rhythm suitable for the cinematic idiom. I see a film whose major strength comes from its unexpected, rich and original form. What motivates me more than anything is the potential for experimentation and the possibility, with this adaptation, of using unconventional means of expression. With every new film, I need to set off for the unknown, and sometimes this even takes me in the opposite direction from the previous film. My last film, *February*, was a contemplative narrative with

limited dialogues, while this new one will be driven by an abundance of words. And while dialogues take up a lot of space, they are never didactic or informational. Speech is used solely at the service of characterization and humor. However, beyond its theatrical appearance, the text offers incredible cinematic potential: for example, in the main set, the arrival of the trucks allows the spectator to «take a break» from speech, analyze and engage in an inner dialogue. I feel like having total freedom to create a comical, absurd, and hallucinatory world. The spectator will be, from beginning to end, plunged into a «sensory» voyage, cadenced by the story's dramatic twists. The further we get into the film, the more the situations complexify and enrich our protagonists, and a central question gradually emerges: should we adapt to survive, or die while preserving our dignity?

In the film, I would like to show two worlds that reveal themselves little by little: two opposite models, specific to each one of the two main characters. Each model describes a defined «system» that features its own logic and values. The spectator collides with both extremities, and the search for his or her own personal choice generates meaning and inner dialogue. By the end of the book, the characters have been clearly defined, each with their own convictions. What remains to be seen is who will survive and at what price. And as there's no «conclusion» at the end of the novel, there won't be any in the film either. Life never gives us predefined answers, but confronts us with reality in such a way that pushes us to arrive at our own ideas.

Kamen Kalev

SCHOPENHAUER'S TELESCOPE

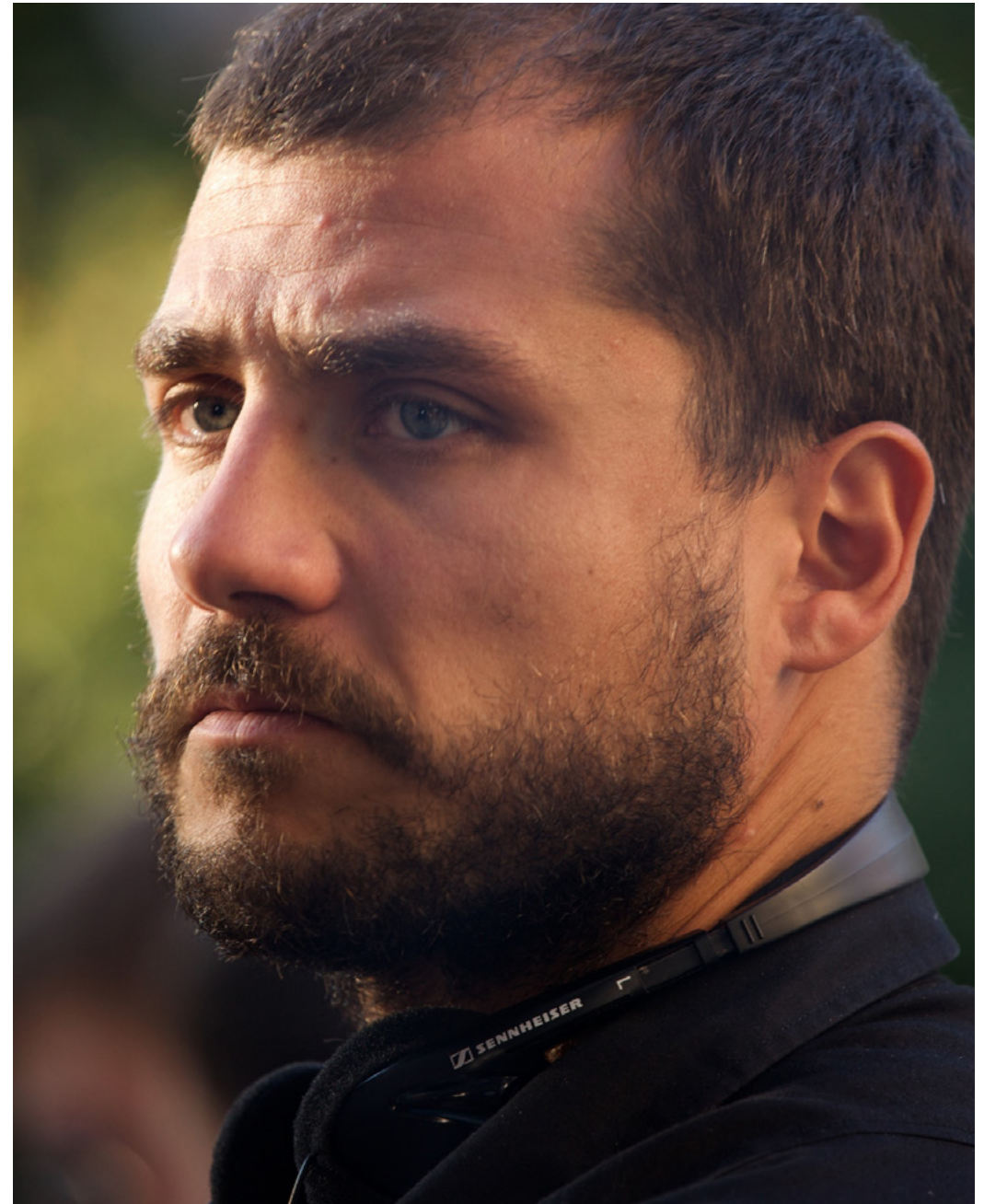
Producer's note

After *February*, we continue our collaboration with Kamen Kalev, with an adaptation of Gerard Donovan's novel: *Schopenhauer's Telescope*. This is the first internationally acclaimed Irish writer's novel. *Schopenhauer's Telescope* was a great inspiration for Kamen and ourselves, and most importantly, we quickly had a clear vision of the film that we could make together. This will be the director's fifth feature film and we feel that this film will be a turning point in his career. A more mature, broader, and yet more universal film, on which we can get two very well-known international actors. We are thinking in particular about Colin Farrell and Kerry Condon for the main cast. The film that we have in mind would be at the junction of Lars von Trier's *Dogville* and more recent Martin McDonagh's *The Banshees of Inisherin*. We totally trust Kamen to make this "Beckettian" novel, a powerful film, which will hopefully lead him to a new Official Selection in Cannes and to participate in numerous international festivals, as it was the case for *February*. Our goal is to set up a European co-production with 3 or 4 countries (France, Ireland, Germany, and Bulgaria) for a budget around 3M€. To this day we have signed an option to acquire the rights of the novel. We would like to take part in this Atelier because we want to meet Irish coproducers (we never did any coproduction with Ireland before) and pitch our project in order to build the coproduction, which could make sense, according to us, from the stage of development, as Gerard Donovan is an Irish writer. A first draft of the script will be ready very soon and we will be able to share it with the coproducers that we will have met during this event.
Céline Chapdaniel & Diane Jassem Producers
– Koro Films

Director's biography

Kamen Kalev is a Bulgarian director and screenwriter born on June 8, 1975 in Bourgas. His debut feature film *Eastern Plays* (2009) was selected at the 41st Directors' Fortnight in Cannes and brought Kalev the Best Film and Best Director prize at the 22nd Tokyo International Film Festival, as well as the Grand Prix du Jury of the 22nd Angers Festival, among many other international awards. His second film *The Island* (2011 – starring Thure Lindhardt and Laetitia Casta) again premiered at the Directors' Fortnight and established Kalev as a daring young filmmaker pushing his own boundaries to the point of no return.

His My Dear Night (2014) became the opening short of *The Bridges of Sarajevo* omnibus (Official Selection of the Cannes Film Festival, 2014) and was among 12 other European films directed by Jean-Luc Godard, Sergei Loznitsa, Ursula Meier, Cristi Puiu, etc. Kalev's third feature film *Face Down* (2015) is his most socially engaged project reflecting on Bulgaria's protracted transition from totalitarian regime to democracy. His last film *February* was again part of the Official Selection of the Cannes Film Festival, 2020.



Kamen Kalev

SCHOPENHAUER'S TELESCOPE

Koro Films filmography

After meeting at the Atelier Ludwigsburg-Paris of the French film school Fémis, Céline Chapdaniel and Diane Jassem created Koro Films in 2010. Since 2016, they have dedicated themselves entirely to their projects. To this day, they have produced *100 kilos d'étoiles* (Star by the pound) by Marie-Sophie Chambon (Cannes

screens junior 2019, COLCOA 2019 BIFAN 2019...), *La Nuit Venue* (Night ride) by Frédéric Farrucci (César 2021 for Best Original Score, soundtrack by Rone - Nomination for Best Male Actor for Guang Huo) and *Février* (February) by Kamen Kalev (Official Selection Cannes 2020).

Diane Jassem



Celine Chapdaniel



TARV

Antoine Le Bos, Fañch Le Bos

Genre

Fiction

Budget

2.246.000 €

(127.000 acquired)

Links of previous work

(Antoine Le Bos)

✂ Ex-Voto

✂ Parties

Links of previous work

(Fañch Le Bos)

✂ Demi-deuil

✂ Léonard - la trilogie

✂ Érotisme

Project's state of progress

Advanced development

Contact

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Synopsis

Deep in inland Brittany, a cattle farm filled with nervous red-haired beasts like horses. Mud, straw, manure, rain, metal barriers and glare from harsh lights. And anchored there: Noemy, a tall blonde from Ireland and Gilles, a hunched colossus she is crazy about. Their life is harsh and humid but stuck to the elements, intense and free.

In the middle of this agricultural Eden, Zoé, Gilles' little sister, comes to find refuge with them, in a worrying mental state. She has been abused, it seems, and she knows that Gilles knows. His own family begins to invade them. Unkind men, toxic perhaps. Gilles cowers, and Noemy doesn't understand why. Gilles is suddenly silent, cuts himself off from her, to the point of no longer touching her, and disappearing one morning.

A few days later, Gilles returns with a phenomenal bull. In a kind of incomprehensible moult, he sits up, he speaks, looks Noemy straight in the eye, and she finds herself embarked on an insane sensual and sexual experience. As if the blood of the animal circulated in them, as if the clouds and the wind agreed to fill them with a sap beyond the human. Until one morning, she finds her man trampled by the beast. His brothers decide to execute the animal as soon as possible, without caring what Noemy thinks. But the air of the farm is still filled with the incredible magic caused by the bull. As if Gilles and the bull were now ONE. Noemy therefore decides to get in the way of the enemy males: she prevents anyone from bringing the bull to the slaughterhouse. Very quickly, she must take up arms to protect the beast, joined by her 13-year-old daughter and Gilles' sister, who finds a new rage to dare to stand up. Three women facing the macho and warlike melee!

Director's note

Mud and muck, molten skies, a physical experience, visceral and profoundly bestial nourished by imperceptible, seeping, secret currents, our aim is to engage the audience in a heightened vibratory journey conveying tellurian and brutish undertones. In these modern times, with digital disconnection and augmented reality, our film is an invitation to reconnect with the pulsations of our animal life-blood and vital fluids which drive the life forces within us. Like a tenuous but omnipresent chant, it's these forces that cause rivers to swell, skies to breathe and our flesh to throb, echoing our wounds. We wish to engage the audience through a direct confrontation with this fundamental dimension, to immerse the viewer in another phenomenon, one that opposes life. As humans we are all, to varying degrees, concerned by such a phenomenon: a living being in all its despicable arrogance, a narcissistic pervert, a dangerous psychopath, and in this case, a rapist within his own family. The film's force of gravity takes off with the arrival of the bull, «tarv» in Breton: the beast. To fully capture the essence of this animal, we need get right up close, to feel its breath, perceive its subtle movements in the presence of humans. And opposing the animal, a different kind of beast, the embodiment of incestuous perversion, man's brainchild which nothing in the animal world could devise. It is devoid of fear, incapable of feeling, and primed to act on terrifyingly destructive impulses. We (Antoine and Fañch) have both been confronted with such a monster for years, a deadly parasite that has latched onto our family unit. We have endured countless nightmares and a suffocating web of lies and manipulation. The bull, serving as an adversary and symbolic driving force, will be used to stage a confrontation between the drive for life and the drive for annihilation. From this scrutinization of the human beast, emerges the evidence that the animal beast is incapable of the destructive force rooted in human perversion. The scope of

this film extends beyond the confines of a family feud. It is a battle that reflects the state of our world today, where power lies in the hands of individuals like Trump or Putin. To enhance close auscultation, the film is set in a rural and family-oriented context, but its echo reverberates throughout our society. The main victims are often women, which is why we stand firmly beside Noemy, Zoé, and Julia, three resolute women united against the monster, three resolute women who spare no effort to defend life's vital force. The film claims some definite affinity with the raw and gritty aesthetic often associated with Flemish cinema, as seen in films like *Bullhead*. This is why, working closely with our producer, Gwenaëlle Clauwaert, we aim to establish a collaboration between Brittany and Belgium through Diana Elbaum, an exceptional Belgian producer who has provided invaluable insight during the writing phase. TARV's connection with the elements, the environment and its musical components rooted in the Celtic culture prompts us to seek a strong collaboration with Ireland. A co-production with Irish partners will allow part of the making of the film in Ireland, involving filming, the post-production process and the casting of the main character.

Producer's note

Gwenaëlle Clauwaert, founder of TEN2TEN Films, has over 20 years of experience producing fiction films, both short and feature-length, for companies such as Sérénade Productions, TSProductions, and Aeternam Films. In 2011, she created TEN2TEN Films and, in 2019, relocated to Brittany, where she began to focus on projects with strong ecological themes and also those addressing emancipation issues on women, the speaking out on commonplace abuse, be it adults on children, men on women, the powerful on the vulnerable. It was during a presentation of Breton writers' projects that I met Gaëlle Douel, a documentary director and scriptwriter who had presented a feature film project she was working on. I was immediately moved by the humanity of Gaëlle's story the way it revealed the characters' vulnerabilities. Discovering Gaëlle's project, I felt her power as a woman, a mother and a professional in a predominantly male environment where women have been fighting for so long for their place in society. For me, the identification with Gaëlle's heroine was strong and promised a way forward making her deepest desires heard. Gaëlle approached Antoine Le Bos proposing he take on the project as writer-director. She was already familiar with Antoine's work as a short film director before he undertook the Groupe Ouest project (www.legroupeouest.com), and she also understood his natural inclination for projects exploring our more animal instincts. The fact of co-writing and co-directing projects with his son Fanch Le Bos has brought an additional freshness. I watched as a very singular project took shape and decided to embark with Antoine and Fanch on this journey engaging something profoundly sensual and feminine while at the same time honouring masculinity when it is not predatory or destructive. A raw and unequivocal view of human monstrosity preying on innocence highlighting the impact of sexual abuse, meticulously analyzing the trauma and the dramatic consequences of being unable to speak out. Antoine, Fanch and I are sold on the

possibility of turning our need to physically enact against the despicability of the display of psycho-logical and sexual abuse into a film. Because the system of justice demands irrefutable evidence, abusers often go unpunished. The co-existence with the abuser therefore becomes stiflingly oppressive. This film will allow us to stage a triumphant destruction of the despicable, bringing to the screen what is forbidden in real life. Last winter, I started exchanging regularly with Diana Elbaum (Beluga Tree - European Film Award for Best Co-Producer) as we worked on Antoine and Fanch's adaptation. Given my connection with Belgium (my country of origin), and our shared desire to find an aesthetic affiliation between TARV and Flemish films such as *Bullhead*, Belgium is a natural co-production partner. But closer still to the film's core, Ireland appears as something of a twin, given the roots of the film, in some of Brittany's wildest landscapes. We feel the lead actress should be Irish (speaking French with an accent) and the prospect of shooting part of the film in Ireland is highly appealing. We are also interested in several Irish cinematographers as we are keen for an Irish composer to bring a Celtic note to the film. We are in the development phase of the film, and more specifically in search of our main actors, the locations, financial partners as well as technical and artistic collaborators. We would love to participate in the France-Ireland co-production workshop so as to meet future production partners and to gain a better understanding of what are the most natural grounds of collaboration between a Breton project and a partner from a territory similar in so many respects.

Gwenaëlle Clauwaert

Biography of the Directors

Antoine Le Bos Scriptwriter, script consultant and director

After starting out as a sailor, passionate about mathematics, with a DEA in philosophy from the Sorbonne, Antoine Le Bos joined the CEEA (Conservatoire Européen d'écriture Audiovisuelle) in Paris in 1995. From 1995 to 2005, he contributed to the writing of 25 feature film scripts, serving as a scriptwriter or co-writer, working alongside talented filmmakers such as Atiq Rahimi and Lucile Hadzihalilovic. Alongside his screenwriting work, he directed several acclaimed short films, *Ex-Voto*, *Parts*, *Mr Hubert*, and *Compulsion*, three of which were co-produced by Arte, and all of which received accolades at international film festivals. He also explored theatrical and operatic creations as a dramaturge and director, working on projects such as *Un tango pour Verlaine* by C. Le Hazif and *Les Illuminations* by Breton in Paris and Prague. In 2005, he was awarded the Gan Foundation Award for the screenplay of *La Vague noire*. Subsequently, he began to serve as a consultant, providing guidance and support to writers in their creative processes acting as «midwife» in the script birthing process in international contexts: TorinoFilmLab for ten years, Doha Film Institute, NFDC Lab in India (Film Bazaar) or the Biennale College of the Venice Film Festival. For fifteen years, he has worked as a long-term consultant for feature film scripts from more than fifty countries, including films by László Nemes (Grand Prix Cannes 2015) and Ralitzia Petrova (Golden Leopard Locarno 2016), Michael Pearce's *Beast* (winner of the English BAFTAs in 2018), Haifaa Al Mansour's *Wadjda* (Saudi Arabia's first feature film, selected for the Oscars), and more recently, Iranian director Massoud Bahkshi's *Yalda* (Sundance Grand Prix 2020). He founded the Groupe Ouest in Brittany in 2006, which has become a reference in Europe for supporting film and fiction writers in residence, and he also

created the StoryTANK, supported by Media, the first European think-tank on functional narrative. Since 2015, he started to accept again assignments as a screenwriter: for the Iraqi director Koutaiba Al Janabi for *Daoud's Winter*, which won the Grand Prize at TorinoFilmLab. He is also co-writer of the Ukrainian director Marysia Nikitchuk's second feature film (Berlinale selection 2018), and of Austrian Owen Prümmer's feature film produced by Bonne Pioche and Canal (2020). During the COVID period, he ventured into more intimate writing and directing projects, collaborating with his son Fanch, a visual artist and photographer who has graduated from Brest school of visual Arts. They share a unique bond and a truly creative harmony

Fanch Le Bos Videographer, director, editor

Trained at the Beaux-Arts de Brest (EESAB), Fanch set out on his artistic path at the age of 13, directing, filming and editing videos of choreographed concerts by the contemporary music composer Jonathan Bell (IRCAM). Throughout his high school he continued to nurture his creativity by producing mini-fictional short films, as well as the video clips for emerging artists such as the electro musician DJ CPTiK, or the rapper Chiloo. Fanch's artistic journey has led him to focus on photography and experimental video installations, exploring the spatialization of the image, the relationship between photographer and subject and the creation of the absurd, challenging conventional boundaries. In parallel to his training as a visual artist, he regularly works as an editor for Gwenaëlle Clauwaert/Ten2Ten Films for the series *Raconte-moi* on France 3 or for the short film *Jour* (*en solitaire*) by Ananda Safo, 2021 which has received numerous awards. Fanch is also a 800m «Espoir» runner. In his work as a visual artist, this physical component has become constitutive. His early experience as a

TARV

young actor for theatre and cinema has inclined him towards directing and shooting fiction, which he now considers to be the ideal language for his artistic expression which he explores also through his photographic research. With his father, Antoine, he has been collaborating since his teenage years (trailers for the Groupe Ouest, Haïku videos for social networks, constant visual experiments as a duo) delighting in their complicity which knows no form of hierarchy or subordination.

Ten2ten filmography

TEN2TEN was created in 2011 by Gwenaëlle Clauwaert, who worked for 20 years with numerous independent film production companies as both producer (Sérénade Production, TS Productions, Les Films de la Capucine, etc.), executive producer of international films (Porchlight Films, Ten Cent Pictures Ltd, Close Up Films...) or production manager (Slot Machine, House on Fire, Maia Films...).

TEN2TEN produces films in co-production with other French or foreign companies. It favors projects that take a fresh look at the evolutions of our societies. Feeding new visions on our way of life, generating new perspectives on femininity or on the rising generations.

In its choice of fictions and documentaries, TEN2TEN is committed in working with authors with strong environmental visions, ranging from Sylvère Petit to Philippe Allante for an ARTE documentary series shot all over the world, *Le Bonheur est dans l'Assiette*, or societal commitment with Zaïda Ghorab and *Pistache chocolat*, short film for ARTE, "Sex relish (a solo orgasm)", animated documentary short film on the female pleasure by Ananda Safo or Séverine Vermersch with *La Bande du 2-9*, documentary 52' for a new Collection named *Jeunesse (In) visible* for France 3.

In partnership with Le Groupe Ouest, TEN2TEN has produced the series *Raconte-Moi* in 2020 (for

a citizen voice in times of Covid) with France 3 Bretagne.

Since its arrival in Brittany in 2018, TEN2TEN has reinforced its commitment to VR: *Le Voyeur* by Fabrice Dugast, a journey into the psyche of a paranoid schizophrenic and *369* by Ananda Safo, an immersive animated experience at the heart of female orgasm.

In 2023, TEN2TEN is developing and investing in new feature film projects, notably *Tarv* by Antoine and Fanch Le Bos, original script by Gaëlle Douel.

TEN2TEN is an Ecoprod company, member of Films en Bretagne, PXN and SPI.

Antoine Le Bos



Gwenaëlle Clauwaert



THE MUSE

Sophie Barthes

Genre

Fiction

Budget

6.500.000 €

(50.000 acquired)

Links of previous work (director)

🎬 [The Muse \(shortfilm, 2012\)](#)

password : hopper

Project's state of progress

Writing

Contact

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Synopsis

Set in the 1940s, *The Muse* is a surrealist comedy about an artist triangle: Jo & Edward Hopper and his Muse, who happens to be Jo. After a series of successful art shows, Ed suffers from a terrible painter's block: too many distractions, a tiny studio on Washington Square and the constant fights with his wife, Jo, a painter herself but also Ed's model for all his work, have left Ed utterly dry. Together, they retreat to their Cape Cod cottage, so Ed can get his creative juices flowing again.

But things get out of control when the woman in one of Ed's painting, The Muse, manifests herself and drags Ed into his own paintings. The line between reality and fantasy blurs. It turns out that the Muse is not satisfied with her confinement and the lonely settings Ed is always painting her in. All she wants is to live and explore reality.

But as the Muse looks physically identical to Jo (Ed has always only painted his wife), when she starts living outside of the paintings, Ed will be torn between his wife and his Muse's wild desires, bringing a breath of fresh air in Ed & Jo's couple and their creativity.

Director's note

A few years ago, I was commissioned by Didier Jacob to make a short film for ARTE inspired by an Edward Hopper painting for his first historical retrospective at the Grand Palais in Paris. I chose *Nighthawks* and cast Michael Sthulbarg (you will find the short's link below in the biography section). I became so passionate about Hopper that I expanded the short into a feature script. *The Muse* is by no means a conventional biopic, although I was lucky to be granted access to the Hopper archives at the Whitney Museum and had the privilege to read Jo Hopper's diaries, which were donated to the Provincetown Art Association & Museum in 2018. They were found by a handyman in Hopper's attic in Truro a couple of years ago. Through her diaries, I developed a deeper understanding of Jo & Ed's relationship, their marriage ups and downs and most importantly Jo's psychology at the most intimate level. Jo & Ed were always painting and always fighting. Jo was short, gregarious, open, social, liberal. Ed was tall, secretive, shy, introspective, conservative. The fights were vicious and comical. He didn't care much for her work. He wished his wife would do less painting and more cooking... and no driving. Ed was outrageously misogynist. The Hoppers embodied the cliché of the tempestuous artistic couple. Although a surrealist comedy at its core, the film aims to dive deep into an artist's mind and desires, the back and forth between reality and fantasy which is essential to the act of creation. It also examines the condition of female artists in the 1940s through Jo's journey alongside her famous husband. There is something incredibly powerful about being an artist's muse. Like many muses, Jo was an artist in her own right. Jo was torn between supporting Ed's career and seeking recognition for herself as an artist. She admired Ed's extraordinary talent but was also resentful. This was their dynamic. It was heartbreaking and hilarious, never dull. Jo was Ed's only model. She would not allow

him to paint other women. She created characters for his work, transformed herself into women alone, idle, waiting: a woman in a train, a woman in an office at night, an usherette at an old movie theatre, a woman in the sun. It had to be her. In *The Muse*, the same actress will play Jo and the Muse. And they will eventually meet. The tone is inspired from *The Purple Rose Of Cairo*, *Midnight in Paris*, *Barton Fink*, *Marriage story meets Turner*, *At Eternity's Gate* and *Pollock*. One of the challenges of this film is recreating Hopper's painting's atmospheres. Andrij Parekh, with whom I worked on my previous films, including the short *The Muse*, will lead the cinematography. Andrij was included as one of Variety magazine's "10 Cinematographers to Watch" and won recently an Emmy for his work on the series *Succession*. With *The Muse*, we aim to recreate the same type of atmospheres proper to Hopper's paintings, from its American quiet nights to its bright landscapes. Think about Saul Leiter's photography of New York and Joel Meyerowitz's Cape Cod collection. If our story is an homage to these places, Dublin brick-buildings and pubs as well as virgin bays, could recreate part of our backdrops.

Another challenge for THE MUSE is to convey the bittersweet and offbeat tone that I love to play with in most of my work, from *Cold Souls* to *The Pod Generation*. I will need to find actors at ease with this tone. Also Jo being from Irish descent, we will be ideally looking for an Irish actress or an American actress with Irish descent, like Saoirse Ronan, Anne Hathaway, Kristen Bell, Greta Gerwig.

For this new project, I've decided to team-up with Emilie Georges and Naima Abed from Paradise City, as they are used to working in an international setting, in Europe as well as in North America. Our collaboration for the initial stage has been wonderfully fruitful and I am currently writing the script which should be ready in May.

The Muse is a comedy and an intimate portrait

THE MUSE

of a couple with a conceptual hook: the ability to come in and out of Hopper's paintings. It pays tribute to this iconic painter and his little known but indispensable Muse, who have not been portrayed yet in a feature film.

Producer's note

We've known Sophie Barthes ever since *Memento* released her first feature *Cold Souls* in 2009. What was obvious with this film and her subsequent features was her capacity to create worlds that felt familiar, inviting but with a wonderfully offbeat spin to them, charming, fun and always surprising. We've been meaning to work together ever since and even more so with our newly launched production company Paradise City. Sophie told us about her desire to expand the short she directed for ARTE and we started discussing the wonderful world for her to create and a beautiful exploration of what fuels inspiration and ultimately art. Sophie has found the perfect device to do so within the context of the paradoxical, yet loving, couple that was Jo & Ed Hopper. As much as Edward Hopper's has become a household name, the role of Jo, who was Franco-Irish, has been far less told. She's been at the centre of his creation: three lonely women in his paintings are all based on her, she even decided to step somewhat away from her art to support her husband's quest. But this being a Sophie Barthes movie, the twist this time is that there's another incarnation of the muse, a woman, feeling lonely in the paintings who wants to go out, see the world, escape these empty rooms that Edward Hopper has painted her in. As Edward enters his own paintings and the Muse takes over, deciding her own journey - out into the real life - throwing off the status quo between Jo and Ed and helping them reinvent their love for art and for themselves. Sophie is currently working on a first draft of the script to capture the characters and their evolution, as well honing on the tone, light but meaningful. Woody Allen's *Midnight in Paris* and the films of Michel Gondry are clear references. Given

Sophie's previous knowledge of the Hoppers and her passion for the material (Sophie had access to all of Jo's journals), we expect a first draft in May and a shooting script by the end of the year. To give life to this universe, we'll have to find playful visual inventions as we enter behind the paintings of Hopper without relying too heavily on CGI. The visual world will be inspired by Sophie's short but perfected. The effect should remain simple and we'll need to start discussions early with SFX studios (most likely in France, which has some wonderful and innovative partners for these types of effects) to integrate them in the story and execute them seamlessly during shooting and post. In terms of coproduction, we want to make this film an European one. Sophie is French-American and she is used to working in mixed cultural settings. On her previous films, *The Pod Generation* and *Madame Bovary*, she teamed up with French, Belgium teams as well as British ones. She's therefore well versed in partnering with a diverse team according to the coproduction structure and needs. As half of *The Muse* is set in a coastal town with virgin shores and old cottages, we believe the Irish coast would be one of the best European options to imitate it. *Maudie*, a painter's biopic by Aislyn Walsh, managed to make Irish landscapes look like the Canadian East coast which shares similarities with Cape Cod. We therefore intend to shoot most of the film in Ireland and with a third partner, most likely Luxembourg, where we would shoot the inside of the paintings in studios.

Together we'll submit the film to Eurimages in 2024. Sophie will be working with her regular DOP, Andrij Parekh, and is open to other collaborators in other departments. We'll want to have some post in France, and include a couple of HODs for post like head of post-production, editor and composer. Our initial budget forecast for the film is around 6.5M euros. Given the film's tone and the importance of Hopper's paintings in it, we believe the film will find its way to international audiences easily and anticipate the possibility of pre-selling the film before production. With the recent Franco-Irish coproduction treaty, Ireland

is a natural partner for this project. We'd love to find an Irish producer that sees the playfulness behind the project and is accustomed to this type of coproduction.

Emilie Georges & Naima Abed

Emilie Georges



Director's Biography

A Columbia University graduate, Sophie is a French-American filmmaker. Her directorial feature debut *Cold Souls* starring Paul Giamatti & Emily Watson played in competition at the Sundance Film Festival, MOMA's New Directors New Films, London & Deauville, and more than 30 festivals around the world. It received Independent Spirit Awards & Gotham Awards nominations and was theatrically released worldwide. Her second feature, *Madame Bovary* with Mia Wasikowska, Paul Giamatti & Ezra Miller was released in 2015 after premiering at Telluride & Toronto Film Festivals. She also directed a segment of *Hopper Stories*, for the retrospective on Edward Hopper at the Grand Palais in Paris. She is a recipient of the Annenberg Foundation Film Fellowship, and a Sundance Screenwriters & Directors Lab Alumna. Her last feature *The Pod Generation*, a European coproduction between Belgium, France and the UK, with Emilia Clarke, Rosalie Craig and Chiwetel Ejiofor, opened at the last Sundance Film Festival in the Premieres section. The film explores A.I., commodification, motherhood and our relationship to both technology and nature, as well as critiquing progress, consumerism.

Production company's biography

Based in Paris and London, Paradise City is a talent-driven production company and management firm with a vision that comes from Emilie Georges and Naima Abed's collective experience within Memento International and La Cinéfacture, and our combined track record in acquiring, selling and producing award winning films including Luca Guadagnino's *Call Me By Your Name*, Justin Kurzel's *True History Of The Kelly Gang*, Nicolas Pesce's *Piercing*, Anthony Chen's *Drift*.

We produce premium content from strong international voices for the global audience across a multitude of platforms for TV, Film, and branded content, as well as representing a select roster of filmmakers and storytellers. With over 20 years' experience and through strategic partnerships, our content and clients have garnered international success and accolades from all the major festivals around the world from Cannes, Berlin, Sundance, Venice, and Toronto, as well as secured nominations and wins for the Academy Award, Golden Globes, César, and BAFTA.

Sophie Barthes

