WHY NOT PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

FESTIVAL DE CANNES
OFFICIAL SELECTION
COMPETITION

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A CHRISTMAS TALE
A FILM BY
ARNAUD DESPLECHIN
FESTIVAL DE CANNES
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A CHRISTMAS TALE
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ARNAUD DESPLECHIN

a Why Not Productions - France 2 Cinéma - Wild Bunch - Bac Films coproduction

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In the beginning, Abel and Junon had two children, Joseph and Elizabeth. Victim of a rare genetic condition, Joseph’s only hope was a bone marrow transplant. As they and Elizabeth were incompatible, his parents conceived a third child in the hope of saving their son. But little Henri too was unable to help his brother, and Joseph died, aged 7. After the birth of a fourth child, Ivan, the Vuillard family gradually began to recover from the death of the firstborn.

Years later, Elizabeth is now a playwright living in Paris. Henri goes from successful business deal to fraudulent bankruptcy and Ivan, the adolescent on the edge of the abyss, has become the almost sane father of two strange boys.

One fateful day, worn down by his excesses, Elizabeth solemnly ‘banished’ her feckless brother. No one else knows exactly what happened, nor why Henri disappeared, and today the family seems to have come apart. Only Junon’s nephew Simon, taken in by his aunt after the death of his parents, struggles to maintain the semblance of a link between the provincial parents, the virtuous sister and the two brothers, one uncertain, the other disgraced...

A CHRISTMAS TALE begins with the reappearance of the disease that took Joseph: Junon learns that she has leukaemia, and that chemotherapy will not work. Her only hope is to find a bone marrow donor amongst the members of her family. Her children and grandchildren are all tested. And Paul, Elizabeth’s son, the oldest of the grandchildren and a tortured adolescent, allows himself to become overwhelmed by anguish.

Christmas approaches. The whole family gathers at the splendid parental home at Roubaix. Even Henri accepts Paul’s invitation and turns up with his latest conquest, Faunia. Elizabeth’s husband Claude will join them later...

It’s time for the settling of scores. But little by little, the storm calms.

Ivan’s wife Silvia discovers the feelings Simon has had for her for years. Has she truly lived her life, or just its pale shadow?

Will Junon accept a dangerous transplant to cure an illness that may never develop further?

Will Paul’s father Claude allow his son to become his grandmother’s donor, and thus risk the responsibility for her death?

As for Elizabeth and Henri, what can be done when a dispute moves beyond all reason?
CAST

Junon
Abel, Junon’s husband
Elizabeth, their oldest child
Henri, their middle child
Ivan, their youngest child
Claude, Elizabeth’s husband
Faunia, Henri’s lover
Sylvia, Ivan’s wife
Simon, Junon’s nephew, the painter cousin
Paul, Elizabeth and Claude’s son
Basile and Baptiste, Ivan and Sylvia’s sons
Rosaimée, Abel’s mother’s girlfriend
Spatafora, the family friend at Roubaix
Doctor Zraïdi, the oncologist

CREW

Directed by
Arnaud Desplechin
Screenplay
Arnaud Desplechin
Emmanuel Bourdieu
DP
Eric Gautier a.f.c.
Editor
Laurence Briaud
Music
Grégoire Hetzel
Casting
Stéphane Touitou
Sound
Nicolas Cantin
Sylvain Malbrant
Jean-Pierre Laforce (mix)
Production designer
Dan Bevan
Costume designer
Nathalie Raoul
Assistant director
Gabriële Roux
Make-up
Sylvie Aïd
Hair
Mina Matsumura
Script
Eric Monteil
Location manager
Cristobal Mathéron
Production manager
Benoît Pilot
Line producer
Martine Cassinelli