



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
SHORT FILM
2022 OFFICIAL SELECTION

FIRE AT THE LAKE

Pierre Menahem | Barberousse Films | France | 15 min | 2022

Original language : French | English subtitles | Color / 1.85 / 5.1 | DCP & HD FILES



Synopsis

A high mountain hamlet, early summer. Félix comes down from the pastures where he's guarding his cows and finds his old mother lying lifeless on her bed. Shaken, he runs off. He drives a few miles in the valley to the house of a young man who just contacted him on a dating app.

Director & Screenwriter



PIERRE MENAHEM

After studying Literature and Anthropology and several positions in international sales and festivals programming, Pierre Menahem co-founds Still Moving in 2015, handling co-production and sales of feature films from all over the world.

Fire at the Lake is his first film as a director.

Director's note

At the beginning, there is a landscape, and my desire to film it. A landscape in the broadest sense: a mountain range, a valley, its inhabitants, their activities, their character... A country that I know well - the Romanche valley in the Oisans - since I have spent all my summers there since I was born. Years of observing and listening to this landscape and the lives that inhabit it have nourished my inspiration to anchor this story with three characters, which combines in a very short time powerful and seemingly opposite emotions: the pain of the loss of a loved one and the excitement of a new encounter.

I bet that the spectator accepts without hasty moral judgment a fact well known to psychologists: when the death of a loved one is announced, one can fall into a state of flabbergastedness that can provoke a denial of reality. By postponing the time of awareness of the drama that is being played out, we can lose our mind, obeying uncontrolled impulses to push back an unbearable emotion. In a state of shock, we rarely behave as we should, or as society forces us to, and it is then possible to have a moment of great freedom, where the search for intensity prevails, to ward off death. This can take the form of a desperate flight, or a hopeful elopement. Of course it is not a question of illustrating this psychological phenomenon, but of giving it to be felt, like a parenthesis, a suspension. A blow of sledgehammer and a caress.



What particularly moves me is to inscribe such an emotional shock in this setting of high mountains, which by definition overflow the frame. For the harsh and rugged beauty of the landscape has a profound impact on the lives of the characters. The mountain, immense, silent, imperturbable, watches over the villages and the inhabitants of the valley, as it can oppress them. Life is harsh, constraining, very traditional and yet modernity also finds its place. Several worlds cohabit in the valley: the farmers of course, the locals, and the tourists and secondary residents. These worlds rub shoulders but do not frequent each other much. Dating applications sometimes allow to overcome class differences, shyness, prejudices, they have become an essential engine in the social life of homosexuals in rural areas. The meeting between Felix and Mathieu, which takes place through the difficult, awkward word and sexual appetite, is only the beginning, but it is perhaps the possibility of a new breath, at the precise moment when that of old Rose is dying out, and with it an older, more archaic form of peasant life. Around this central scene, the film is inhabited by silence and solitude. A silence rich in a thousand sounds, if one is willing to listen, like a score that embodies the physical and mental landscape of this film.

Festivals



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WORLD PREMIERE

Cannes Film Festival - Official Competition

France | 2022

Champs Elysées Film Festival - Official Competition

France | 2022



Crew

PRODUCER	Mathilde Delaunay
ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS	Enguerrand Déterville, François Martin Saint Léon
PRODUCTION COMPANY	Barberousse Films
DIRECTOR, SCREENWRITER	Pierre Menahem
DOP	Aurélien Py
EDITOR	Marylou Vergez
SOUND OPERATOR	Valentine Gelin
SET	Cécile Leclercq
SOUND EDITOR	N'Dembo Ziavoula
MIX	Pierre George
1st ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	Carla Hennequart
COLOR GRADING	Lucie Bruneteau
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Marie Béringue



Cast

Hervé Lassince
Pierre Moure
Isabelle Rama

Contact

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Private screeners can be provided upon request



SHORT
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