

JULIETTE ARMANET

BASTIEN BOUILLON

LEAVE ONE DAY



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
2025 OFFICIAL SELECTION
OPENING FILM

A DEBUT FEATURE FILM DIRECTED BY
AMÉLIE BONNIN

Topshot Films and Les films du Worsø
present



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96' - 2025 - 4K DCP - France - French - English subtitles - 5.1 - 1.85

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SYNOPSIS

Cécile (Juliette Armanet) is about to open her own gourmet restaurant, finally making her dream come true, when her father suffers a heart attack. She is called back to her small hometown, far from the bustling life of Paris. There, she unexpectedly reconnects with her teenage crush (Bastien Bouillon). As memories resurface, her certainties begin to unravel...

BIOGRAPHY AMÉLIE BONNIN *DIRECTOR*

After studying graphic design in Paris and Montreal, Amélie Bonnin trained as a screenwriter at La Fémis in Paris. Depending on the project, she uses the tools of writing, video filming and drawing to create stories. She has directed two documentaries, *La Mélodie du Boucher* (ARTE) and *La Bande des Français* (France 3, co-directed with Aurélie Charon). In 2021 she wrote and directed *Partir Un Jour*, her first short fiction film, a musical, starring Bastien Bouillon and Juliette Armanet among others, winner of a Cesar Award in 2023 for Best Short film, as well as several festival awards. In parallel with her projects as screenwriter-director, she continues her work as Head Graphic Designer, notably responsible for the layout of the magazine, *La Déferlante*.

Q&A

AMÉLIE BONNIN

DIRECTOR

PARTIR UN JOUR WAS THE TITLE OF YOUR FIRST NARRATIVE SHORT, WHICH GARNERED A CÉSAR AWARD IN 2023. DID THE IDEA OF EXPANDING IT INTO A FEATURE COME TO YOU ORGANICALLY, AS A NATURAL EXTENSION OF YOUR FIRST DIRECTING EFFORT?

No, it was far from obvious to me at first. I believe that every story has its own natural length, and I was afraid of stretching a short into a feature just for the sake of it. It was actually my producers – Bastien Daret, Arthur Goisset, and Robin Robles from Topshot Films, joined on this project by Sylvie Pialat and Benoît Quainon from Les Films du Worso – who first brought up the idea, right around the editing process of the short. They thought there was enough material for a feature. It's true that I'd meant to delve deeper into the theme of family, but I was hesitant. Then one day, Dimitri Lucas, my co-writer, dropped



a book on my desk about highway truck stops and said, “Here’s your setting!” I respond very strongly to images... And that’s how I started writing the feature with him.

ONE OF THE MOST STRIKING THINGS ABOUT THIS TRANSITION FROM SHORT TO FEATURE-LENGTH IS HOW YOUR NARRATIVE HAS BECOME MORE FEMININE. THIS TIME AROUND, IT’S NO LONGER THE CHARMING RAPHAËL RETURNING TO HIS SMALL HOMETOWN AND BUMPING INTO CÉCILE, HIS CHILDHOOD SWEETHEART WHO NEVER LEFT – IT’S THE OTHER WAY AROUND. WHAT PROMPTED THE ROLE REVERSAL?

When I wrote the short film, I didn’t even think twice – the main character was, quite naturally, a man. It was only when someone pointed it out afterwards that I was floored. I’m a woman, I work for a feminist magazine (La Déferlante), and yet I instinctively gave the lead role to a man, even though the story didn’t call for it at all. That, in itself, says a lot about how deeply patriarchy is embedded in our brains! So, when it came to the feature, I really wanted to give Juliette Armanet – who already played the lead in the short – a much more substantial role. Truth is, what I wanted to explore could only be told from a woman’s perspective.

PRECISELY, PORTRAYING A HEROINE LIKE CÉCILE – A 40-YEAR-OLD CHILDLESS WOMAN, CAREER-DRIVEN, AMBITIOUS, AND DEEPLY AWARE OF TIME SLIPPING BY – IS STILL QUITE UNUSUAL ON SCREEN. CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHAT DREW YOU TO THIS CHARACTER?

What I found interesting about Cécile was capturing her at that very specific moment in life, because at 40, there's a kind of gravitas that you simply don't have at 20 or even 30. Getting pregnant at 40, as it happens to Cécile, isn't the same as at 30. In a way, everything becomes more dramatic, more charged. And it's the same career-wise – technically, 40 is an age where you're supposed to be more grounded, more stable than in your thirties. But when doubt creeps in, there's so much more at stake. And

“YES, IT’S A STOPOVER RUN BY PEOPLE WHO NEVER LEAVE. I FIND SOMETHING DEEPLY POETIC IN THAT TENSION.”

physically – I find it beautiful, being 40. I wanted to film a woman at that age because it's such a moving time. You've left youth behind, and yet there's still so much to figure out.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO MAKE HER A CHEF – AND NOT JUST ANY CHEF, BUT A FORMER WINNER OF TOP CHEF, THE CULINARY REALITY SHOW?

The idea of making her a chef actually came from the setting – the roadside diner where Cécile grew up, alongside her father, who worked as a cook, and her mother, who waited tables. It's a lively, noisy place, and it reminded me of spots I knew as a child – long communal tables, raised voices... a far cry from the hushed

atmosphere of Parisian restaurants. My co-writer and I also liked the idea of the father and daughter doing the same job – it's the core of both their lives but approached in different ways. And to be honest, Dimitri and I both love cooking. I still remember the very first season of Top Chef, fifteen years ago – I was hooked right away. Including that element was also a way of reflecting the society I live in and relate to, the world I want my characters to live in. People watch TV. We watch TV. I don't see why that should be left out of movies. And from a dramatic perspective, the fact that Cécile has gained public recognition through Top Chef really deepens the generational rift with her father – it creates tension between them.

CÉCILE IS ACTUALLY WHAT MANY WOULD CALL A “CLASS RENEGADE”. IS THAT WHY THE THEME OF RETURNING HOME, THAT YOUR FILM IS BASED ON, IS SO DEEPLY TINGED WITH GUILT THROUGHOUT?

That's interesting, because guilt wasn't something I consciously thought about at first. And yet, it's a theme I strongly relate to, which just goes to show how revealing cinema can be, on every level. Truth is, I'm constantly torn between the desire to forge my own path and the need to stay true to the values I was raised with. In short, to not betray where I come from... even though no one's ever actually accused me of that. I grew up in Châteauroux. My parents worked in a bank; it was a fairly middle-class life, but



on the scale of a small town. Besides, on my mother's side, all the men were butchers. So really, I was miles away from anything to do with filmmaking. I only went to Paris after I graduated from high school because I followed my best friend, who was bent on getting into Sciences Po. I ended up going to art school myself, and some time later I joined the screenwriting workshop at Fémis Film School. And I can feel that guilt is still very much there – in fact, I think it runs deep.

THE SETTING OF YOUR STORY ALSO SPEAKS VOLUMES. TAKE CÉCILE'S PARENTS' ROADSIDE DINER, FOR INSTANCE – IT'S THE HEART OF THE FILM. IT'S A WARM, BUSTLING PLACE, AS YOU'VE SAID, BUT ALSO A PLACE PEOPLE ARE ONLY EVER PASSING THROUGH.

Yes, it's a stopover run by people who never leave. I find something deeply poetic in that tension. But it's also a powerful place because there's something incredibly meaningful about feeding people who work. Especially when you consider that these diners are often run by couples who live on site. You can imagine how much that shapes someone like Cécile, growing up in a place like that...

IT HAS A STRIKING PRESENCE ON SCREEN, EVEN IN THE NIGHT SCENES – BATHED IN NEON LIGHT, ALMOST DREAMLIKE AT TIMES...

It's probably because the diner in our film is a real roadside stop. It's located in the Grand Est region and had just been taken over by a couple when we scouted it. In fact, it was the very first

location we visited, and we immediately felt a connection to it. We ended up spending three weeks there during the shoot. We just renamed it “L’Escale,” after a well-known diner in Châteauroux. It was my way of nodding to my real roots, right in the middle of the fiction.

THE SOUND DESIGN IN YOUR FILM IS PARTICULARLY STRIKING. LET’S START WITH THE CONSTANT HUM OF THE ROAD THAT SURROUNDS THE DINER – IT REALLY ENHANCES THAT SENSE OF TRANSCIENCE AND IN-BETWEENNESS, DOESN’T IT?

The diner is literally right next to a four-lane highway, so there’s traffic non-stop. It was key to me to keep that sound constantly present. Growing up in a place like that, it’s something that hits all your senses. There’s never any real silence – so yes, it definitely adds another layer of tension.

AND THEN THERE’S THE MUSICAL DIMENSION OF PARTIR UN JOUR, AN UNDENIABLY KEY ELEMENT. WHY MAKE SUCH A BOLD CHOICE, ESPECIALLY FOR A DEBUT FEATURE? ARE YOU A DIE-HARD FAN OF THE GENRE?

Yes, I love songs in general, and musicals in particular. But that’s not necessarily why I turned to it in the first place. What really struck me is how present music is in our daily lives – all the time. It’s a kind of shared foundation, even a bridge between people of the same generation. No matter how different they are, chances are they share at least one song. That’s also why I wanted to use songs from the existing repertoire, because they tap into something collective. Popular songs carry memories. When you hear them, they take you back to something personal – a moment,

a place, a person. Sometimes all it takes is one track to unlock a whole wave of emotion. And that’s interesting, because when you make a film, you’re often trying to express something without necessarily putting it into words. In that sense, music and songs are the perfect vehicle!

WHY DID YOU USE THIS PARTICULAR MIX OF SONGS, FROM DALIDA TO CLAUDE NOUGARO, TO THE HITS OF 2BE3 AND YANNICK?

Most of the choices were pretty obvious. On the one hand, the songs had to be well-known, and on the other, they had to be personally meaningful to us. Nougaro, for example, comes from my father – he’s a huge fan. But overall, the lyrics had to serve the narrative. Though there were moments when we used them purely for their iconic status, like in the ice-skating scene. Let’s just say we wanted to have fun with the genre and with the different generations. That’s why I worked with several composers to handle the arrangements and orchestrations. I didn’t want a single musical style for these covers.

WHEN THE ACTORS ARE SINGING, THEY SOUND VERY NATURAL. IT FEELS LIKE YOU FAVORED SIMPLICITY AND LIGHTNESS IN THEIR PERFORMANCES. IS THAT TRUE?

Yes, we focused on the joy of singing! Actually, we recorded each song live on set. To be accurate, we filmed the singing scene as many times as needed to capture the right performance. Then we recorded the singing again live, but this time without acting,

just focusing on pitch and precision, to make sure we'd pulled it off. Also, the sound work in post, especially during the editing process, was done to the smallest detail.

WHAT WERE YOUR FILMMAKING CHOICES FOR THESE MUSICAL SEQUENCES? WERE THEY CHOREOGRAPHED? AND HOW DID THEY FIT INTO THE REST OF THE FILM?

The vast majority of the sequences were choreographed, including those where the characters are actually dancing, like the nightclub scene or the ice rink scene, but also those where they perform more everyday tasks, like peeling potatoes or cooking. With Thierry Thieû Niang, the choreographer on the film, we weren't aiming for «dance» per se, but rather for the way each body would move through space, in line with the character's personality – what would be the right pace, the right gestures to blend seamlessly into the film, making sure these sequences weren't separate tableaux but fully integrated into the narrative, fitting perfectly into the naturalism of the other scenes. The purpose was for the actors to not have to search for their movements during the shoot. We wanted them to focus on their performances and acting. Choreography also comes into play between the actors' bodies and the camera. In the potato-peeling scene I already mentioned, the camera circles around the father's character. At the ice rink, it spins 360 degrees, and in the nightclub, it's like a dazzling flash that never leaves the characters' sides, playing with them. But in the first musical scene, for instance, it's the bodies that guide the movement – we aim to match the fluidity of the acting to capture the chemistry between the couple. In filmmaking, maybe

everything is about choreography, after all...

CÉCILE MARKS JULIETTE ARMANET'S FIRST MAJOR ROLE IN A FEATURE FILM. WAS IT BECAUSE SHE'S AN ESTABLISHED SINGER-SONGWRITER THAT YOU THOUGHT OF HER IN THE FIRST PLACE?

Actually, no – not at all. I met Juliette during a live performance where she was making music, and I was doing live drawing. I was struck by her presence, the way she spoke, her bird-like profile too – and I immediately wanted to film her. I don't think she had ever really played a character role before that. But I knew she had the desire to act, even before she started making music. And on set, I found her to be precise, natural, generous. She managed to relate to a character who is nothing like her in real life, and she truly let go. She's a real actress – and even in the musical sequences, I always wanted the acting to come first.

BASTIEN BOUILLON, WHO PLAYS RAPHAËL – CÉCILE'S MIDDLE SCHOOL SWEETHEART – BRINGS A WONDERFUL MIX OF GENTLENESS AND EXQUISITE HUMOR TO THE ROLE.

We'd already worked together on my short film, but this time around, on the feature, we had immediate creative chemistry! Bastien is such an impressive actor – he's a great listener, he's accurate and always comes up with ideas. I think, or at least I hope, he had a blast playing this role! He fully committed to the character – a bit cheeky, charming, always ready with a joke, but with a look in his eyes that, at times, hints at life's struggles or a



sudden wave of doubt. Bastien has this incredible ability to bring all those nuances to the surface, and that's the magic of great acting – being able to convey everything that isn't said or shown, but still deeply felt.

THE REST OF THE CAST BRINGS UNIQUE ACTORS IN FRENCH CINEMA. CAN YOU SPEAK ABOUT FRANÇOIS ROLLIN, WHO PLAYS CÉCILE'S FATHER, AND DOMINIQUE BLANC, WHO PORTRAYS HER MOTHER?

The father's role was expanded when moving from the short film to the feature, because I feel like we don't see enough father-daughter relationships in film. This was an opportunity to explore that generation of men who were never taught how to communicate, so we see these somewhat complicated, awkward, even wounded father-daughter dynamics – even though there's a lot of love between them. But it's really François Rollin, who

plays him, that took the role to the next level. We don't see him much in films, but he's fantastic. As for Dominique Blanc, she's so vibrant and moving in the role of Fanfan, giving her such incredible elegance. Honestly, I'm so grateful to her for agreeing to take on a supporting role in a first feature, and a musical one at that. She did it without a second thought – such class!

“TO LEAVE ONE DAY, WITHOUT RETURN,” SINGS THE 2BE3 SONG THAT LENDS ITS TITLE TO THE FILM... BUT IS THAT REALLY THE STORY YOU AIMED TO TELL?

Actually, my film is about the connections we have with people, things, and places that we can't truly escape from, no matter how many miles separate us. There's a line in the short film that people often mention: “It's not enough to walk away from things for them to stop holding on to us.” That's the overarching theme we keep coming back to.



BIOGRAPHY

JULIETTE ARMANET

Juliette Armanet is a French singer, songwriter, and pianist celebrated for bringing a fresh, emotional depth to French pop music. With her poetic lyrics, retro-chic style, and powerful stage presence, she has become one of the defining voices of modern chanson. Her critically acclaimed debut album *Petite amie* won her a Victoire de la Musique and established her as a standout artist in the European music scene.

Her follow-up album, *Brûler le feu*, topped the charts in France and solidified her place as a major figure in contemporary French music, blending disco, piano ballads, and lyrical intensity.

In 2024, Armanet captivated a global audience with a moving performance of John Lennon's "Imagine" on a Seine River at the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games. That same year, she delivered a stunning rendition of Michel Legrand's *Les Moulins de mon cœur* at the Cannes Film Festival, earning praise for her graceful homage to French cinematic and musical heritage.

Alongside her music career, Armanet has begun exploring film, starring in the César-winning short *Partir un jour*.

Partir un jour marks her first leading role in a feature film.

Q&A WITH JULIETTE ARMANET

YOU'RE ONE OF THE LEADING SINGERS OF THE FRENCH NEW MUSIC SCENE AND ARE INCREASINGLY APPEARING IN FILMS. WOULD YOU SAY THAT STARRING IN A MUSICAL ON THE BIG SCREEN FELT LIKE A NATURAL PROGRESSION, IF NOT A DREAM COME TRUE?

I'd say that musicals... they're pretty much the Holy Grail for me! Because it's that moment when music bursts into the real world – when everything suddenly turns poetic, when you're singing to buy your salami, your baguette, your morning paper. Like a slightly dreamlike version of reality. For me, music actually reaches its highest point when it becomes tangible, when it seeps into the everyday. You don't feel like you're walking down the same street whether you're listening to Barbara's *L'Aigle noir* or Ophélie Winter's *Dieu m'a donné la foi*. The entire street changes. And then there's the sheer power of the dynamic between music and film – it pushes the visuals to the next level.



Jaws set to Schubert would've been a whole different movie – no doubt about it! That said, Amélie (Bonnin) kept reminding us on set: *Partir un jour* is NOT a musical, it's a MUSICAL FILM! It actually became a running joke! But she did see her film more like Resnais's *Same Old Song* than Chazelle's *La La Land*. She really pushed me to step away from my identity as a singer. So, every musical scene was recorded live on set – it's first and foremost an actor's emotion she was trying to capture. And that completely pushed me out of my comfort zone as singing in a truck, in one single take, with an earpiece and the engine running – that's a far cry from the comfort of a studio where

you can re-record as much as you want. All the flaws, the body movements, the human cracks – they're part of the song now. Totally woven into it.

IT'S A FIRST FEATURE, AND IT'S ALSO YOUR FIRST TIME PLAYING A LEAD ROLE – HOW DID YOU PREP FOR THE ROLE?

The whole film revolves around Cécile – she's really the emotional core of the story. So, taking on the lead role felt like a huge responsibility. I'm in every single scene, including the ones where all I do is open a door! I had to face a lot of fears and, most of all, learn how to let go, to really open myself up and

“AT ITS CORE, THE FILM ASKS ABOUT SELF-FULFILLMENT, EVEN ABOUT MEETING YOURSELF”

allow the character to take hold of me. Changing my hairstyle, my look, even my sense of identity – it was like hitting reset on everything I thought I knew about myself. That said, I worked a lot early on with a coach, both on the dialogue and the songs. Little by little, I started to feel liberated. The shoot lasted two months and was super intense, but I gradually grew into it. I began to get the hang of things, to navigate the technical challenges more smoothly – and I started to really have fun. It felt like a rite of passage for both Amélie and me. Her first short film was also my first time on a movie set, and we’ve grown a lot together since then. It’s kind of beautiful – we’ve gone through all these milestones hand in hand. And I really like the way she behaves on a set. She has this amazing team spirit – she brings people together. She’s very intentional about creating an inclusive environment, and I think that’s such a vital and contemporary way of making films.

SPEAKING OF PREPARATION, CÉCILE, YOUR CHARACTER, IS A CHEF. A “TOP CHEF”, AT THAT! IT FEELS LIKE YOU’RE VERY COMFORTABLE IN THOSE SCENES, BUT IS IT REALLY THAT EASY TO GO FROM THE PIANO... TO THE KITCHEN BEATERS?

Less than it may seem, hopefully, because it was a real acting challenge! My signature dish in real life is more like a packet of olives on a snack platter, so we had a long way to go! But Amélie didn’t want a stand-in for the scenes where I’m seen preparing dishes. No way to cheat, as she shot those moments in a single take! So, I took classes with a chef, Tatiana Levha, who also

came on set to supervise the cooking basics and make sure we got things right. The apron, the costume, they helped a lot too. I loved learning that craft, that exact science of flavors. I think about it every time I prepare a snack platter now...

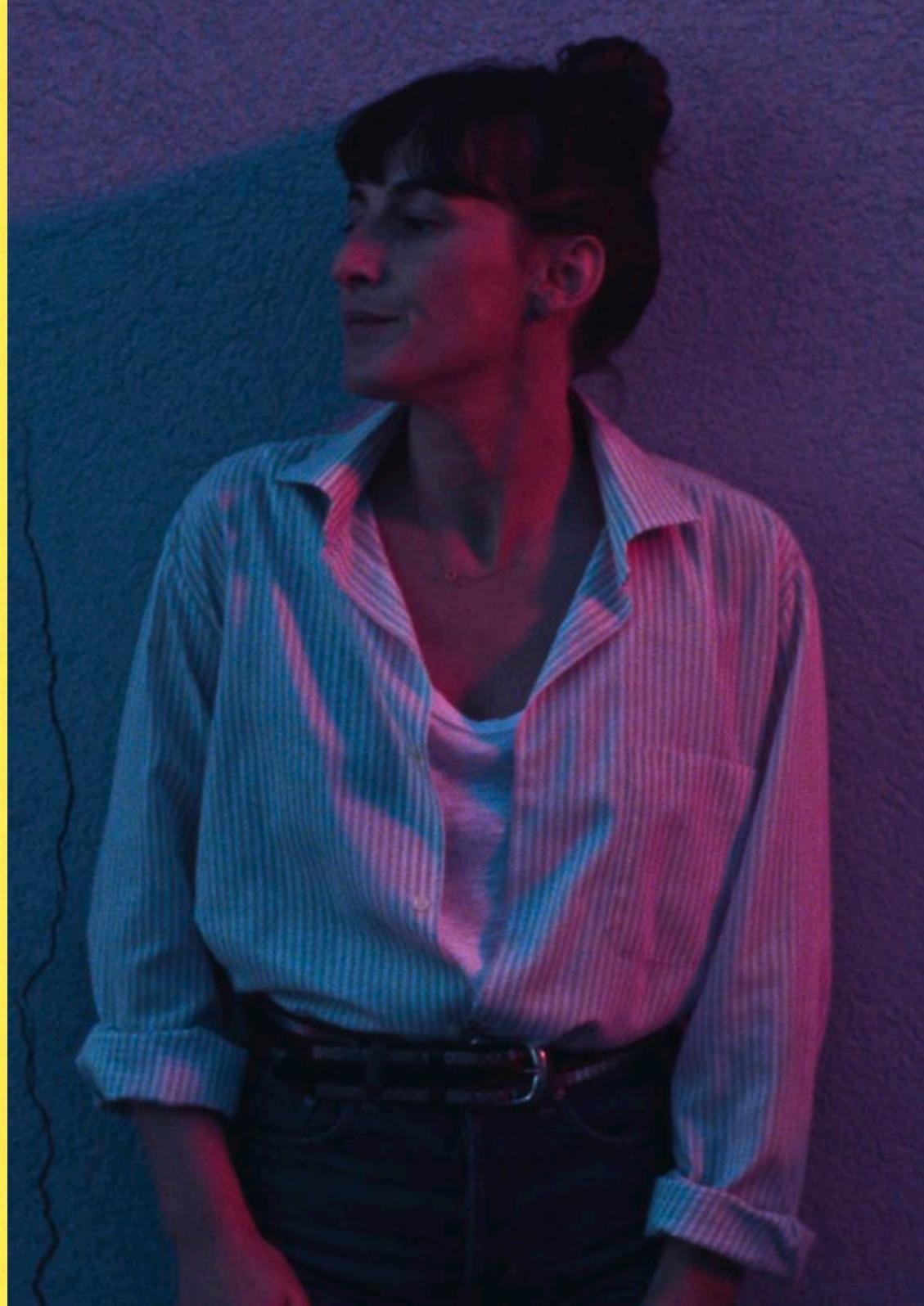
THAT SAID, CÉCILE, A DETERMINED WOMAN IN HER EARLY FORTIES, IS AT A CROSSROADS IN MANY AREAS OF HER LIFE, BEYOND JUST HER CAREER. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE HER?

When I think of Cécile, I think of Amélie’s words when she received her César for Best Fiction Short Film in 2023. It was a truly powerful speech in which she explained that you can be a woman, in your 40s, with two children, and grey hair, and still feel like you’re just at the beginning of things. That idea of the “beginning of things” really moved me. As if life were made up of several rebirths. Cécile is also at the brink of something. She finds herself at a crucial turning point in her life. At forty, precisely. Yes, she’s a strong-willed, free-spirited woman, who built her career through sheer hard work. She’s a hard worker, focused, and very independent. But something is stirring inside her. Deep down, she’s an incredibly sensitive person who hides it well in order to move forward. A sentimental person, angry at times... She feels a visceral need to revisit her family history and her first loves in order to finally break free from them. These are universal questions: What do we carry with us from our upbringing, our adolescence? What do we do with what’s been handed down to us? How do we become our true selves?

Why must we “leave one day”? At its core, the film asks about self-fulfillment, even about meeting yourself, gently reminding us that nothing is ever truly resolved, at any age. Like Cécile, we all may still have things to untangle with our parents, even when we are already at an age when we ourselves are parents. Being “an adult” doesn’t resolve anything. Quite the opposite...

THERE’S AN INSTANT CHEMISTRY BETWEEN YOU AND BASTIEN BOUILLON, WHO PLAYS CÉCILE’S TEENAGE SWEETHEART. YOU’D ALREADY WORKED TOGETHER ON AMÉLIE’S SHORT FILM – WHAT KIND OF SCENE PARTNER IS HE?

I was incredibly lucky to have Bastien as a partner. But honestly, I couldn’t imagine doing the film without him – we’ve grown together in a way, since we actually met on Amélie’s very first short. Bastien is one of a kind. He’s an instinctive, sensitive, precise actor – wild and cerebral at the same time. And he was so generous with me. He’s got a ton of experience, and he really helped me settle into the role and go to the next level. We became close friends. As for Raphaël, his character – he’s charming, funny, magnetic, a bit of a show-off. Bastien is not often cast in roles like this, and honestly, he just steals the show. That’s probably why their dynamic feels so believable. Yes, I was really lucky to have such a generous, brilliant partner. He’s the real deal!



AND WHAT ABOUT DOMINIQUE BLANC, WHO PORTRAYS CÉCILE'S MOTHER WITH SUCH TENDERNESS AND NUANCE?

There were scenes where I'd just find myself watching Dominique act – completely mesmerized. She pours out her heart into every moment. It was honestly breathtaking, the precision, the emotion, the depth she brought to every gesture, every line. Her character is so rich, so layered. In many ways, it's really Fanfan who holds everything together – the family, the restaurant, everyone's dreams. And on set, Dominique was just wonderful with everyone. Always available. She really has that true ensemble spirit.

ANOTHER KEY THEME IN THE FILM, BESIDES THE IDEA OF RETURNING, IS THE FATHER-DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIP. IT'S A BOND FILLED WITH UNSPOKEN WORDS, RESENTMENT, AND AWKWARD LOVE, WHICH YOU SHARE WITH FRANÇOIS ROLLIN.

Indeed, this relationship is one of the film's central threads. Even though Cécile is a chef in a Parisian restaurant and her father runs a truck stop in the provinces, and despite his constant accusations that she looks down on her origins, there's no denying that she inherited his passion. She sees herself in him, and he sees himself in her – this resonates with me deeply because my own father is a musician. Though he never made it his profession, he recently released his first album at the age of 73! It's a mirror dynamic I relate to intimately, though in my case, my father was never upset by my career choice;

quite the opposite, in fact. The truth is, we're all shaped by the frustrations and desires of our parents. That's part of Cécile's journey too. She's trying to come to terms with her heritage while also making it her own. In essence, she's searching for a way to be herself without turning her back on where she comes from. As for François Rollin, he was also part of Amélie's short film. I think he's brilliant – accurate, resilient, touching. In a word, impressive.

LET'S TALK ABOUT THE SONGS THAT PUNCTUATE THIS MUSICAL FILM. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THIS TRICKY EXERCISE OF SEAMLESSLY SHIFTING FROM SPOKEN WORD TO SONG, AS IF NOTHING HAS CHANGED?

I feel like it's something we could actually do in real life, don't you think? If only we dared... But then again, speaking is already a bit like singing. There are so many inflections in our everyday voices. Yes, our spoken voices are already very musical, actually! Here, we're just pushing the dial a little further. Besides, I truly believe that many songs speak for us. What I mean is, a lot of them express much better than we can what we really want to say! So why not say what's in our hearts through song? It's probably the most meaningful kind of dialogue.

ESPECIALLY SINCE AMÉLIE BONNIN CHOSE TO FEATURE NOT ORIGINAL SONGS, BUT RATHER ICONIC HITS THAT WILL RESONATE WITH EVERYONE...

Exactly! Amélie's film draws from the treasure trove of iconic popular songs – the ones that have defined our summers,

our vacations, our commutes, our mornings, our kisses, our moments of solitude... our most precious life moments. But even though the characters tell their stories through these famous French hits, they do so in their own unique way. For instance, François Rollin sings Mourir sur scène, Dalida's classic, while peeling potatoes, because that's his scene – the kitchen. And it's heartbreaking. Ultimately, what makes this film resonate so deeply with me is that it's a tribute to popular music, to the poetry of daily life, to the fact that these songs are the soundtracks of our lives and speak to us intimately. This idea is powerful, and it's a deeply-held belief about the power of songs that I share with Amélie. Yes, it's what I seek most in my own music, and what moves me in the music of others.

IS THAT WHY THE SUNG VOICES SOUND SO NATURAL, SO SPONTANEOUS, BOTH YOURS AND YOUR PARTNERS'?

It's a direct contrast to the Hollywood perfection of Singin' in the Rain! We must remember that Amélie comes from the documentary world. She focuses on the magic of the real, she's not trying to make it magical... There's a subtle difference! So, she works with the magic of human flaws. That's why there's breath, imperfections, awkwardness. Because that's the most precious thing to hear. Nothing is erased. I find it beautiful when François or Dominique sing, because you catch a glimpse of their life experience through the song. Of course, it's a tricky

exercise: I'm thinking of the scene where I'm singing while skating backwards! I did a lot of ice skating as a teenager, but doing it while singing a duet is a whole other story...

The sound of the skates on the ice, the speed, the music in a tiny earpiece – I could hardly control anything vocally! I had to trust the present moment... and for the sound engineers, it was a real technical challenge. But this rawness is also what brings the film its power. Amélie captured what we couldn't control – it's incredibly powerful.

AS A MUSICIAN, DIDN'T YOU FEEL THE URGE, EVEN JUST A LITTLE, TO PUT YOUR OWN SPIN ON THE MUSICAL ASPECT OF THE FILM?

A little bit, I must say! But I quickly realized that if I went down that path, I'd be changing roles. I really wanted to focus entirely on playing Cécile and not approach the film as a musician. Besides, Amélie had a very clear vision of what she wanted. I just suggested she work with Chilly Gonzalès for the arrangements of Partir un jour. She liked the idea, and he truly found the right angle to elevate the song – elegant, subtle, sincere. For the rest, Amélie wanted the music to be composed by several people, so it became a collective creation. There are several distinct styles, which is a great thing, including contributions from the brilliant P.R2B and Thomas Krameyer (who also worked on Amélie's short). All in all, it's a collaborative soundtrack, which is quite unusual in filmmaking!



SELECTIVE FILMOGRAPHY

BASTIEN BOUILLON

Connemara (2025) – Directed by Alex Lutz
Cannes Film Festival – Cannes Première

The Count of Monte-Cristo (2024) – Directed by Matthieu Delaporte & Alexandre de La Patellière
Cannes Film Festival - Opening Film
Best Supporting Actor Nominee - Cesar

Aznavour (2024) – Directed by Grand Corps Malade, Mehdi Idi

The Night of the 12th (2022) – Directed by Dominik Moll
Cannes Film Festival
Most Promising Actor Award - Cesar

Jumbo (2020) – Directed by Zoé Wittock
Sundance Film Festival
Berlin Film Festival

Q&A WITH BASTIEN BOUILLON

SEEING YOU IN PARTIR UN JOUR ISN'T EXACTLY A SURPRISE, SINCE YOU HAD ALREADY COLLABORATED WITH AMÉLIE BONNIN ON HER SHORT FILM BACK IN 2021. HOW DID THIS LONG-TERM JOURNEY BEGIN?

In 2020, I directed a short film, *Moha*, with Topshot Films, the same company behind Amélie's short and then her feature. Bastien Daret, Arthur Goisset, and Robin Robles, who started the company, are from our generation. I actually met Robin when I was in my first year at the conservatory, and he was at La Fémis. That's how they thought of me when they read Amélie's short film script. They saw a connection between us. And not just because I was born in Châteauroux and Amélie grew up there. No, that's just a happy coincidence!



OR COULD IT BE A SHARED PASSION FOR CHALLENGE? SEEING YOU IN A MUSICAL FILM ISN'T NECESSARILY WHAT YOU'D EXPECT...

My profession is one of the biggest parts of my life, alongside love and my children. I love to enrich it, for example, by taking riding or fencing lessons for *The Count of Monte Cristo*, or singing lessons for *Partir un jour*. Simply put, I love working! But I didn't take this on just for the challenge of doing a musical. The script really appealed to me, especially for what it has to say about emotions and romance. We really connected with

Amélie. In fact, right after the short film, she immediately told me she wanted to work with me again.

THE FACT IS, WE'RE SEEING YOU IN A NEW LIGHT IN THE ROLE OF RAPHAËL, THE CHILDHOOD FRIEND OF CÉCILE, THE HEROINE OF THE FILM. YOU SEEM TO HAVE HAD FUN PLAYING THIS PEROXIDE-BLOND FAMILY MAN, A BIT OF A SMOOTH TALKER, BOTH TEASING AND ENDEARING, RIGHT?

Amélie really wanted to lean into the flashy/loser side of Raphaël. Well, he's not someone who's down on his luck, not at

“THERE’S A LIGHT, VERY GENTLE MELANCHOLY THAT RUNS THROUGH THE FILM”

all, but he has this big child vibe, still stuck in his hometown. A bit like a grown-up teenager, if you will. She was the one who decided to change my hair color. She wanted something vibrant. In fact, as an actor, you’re often greatly helped by costumes or hair styling. That said, I didn’t need to go over the top that much to play Raphaël. The reason is simple: Amélie and Dimitri, her co-writer, have a very sharp sense of dialogue. It’s really well written, we don’t need to push too hard. And it’s precisely because the script is so high quality that we’re allowed some leeway. Plus, Amélie is extremely open to suggestions. She knows where she’s going, but she also knows how to give space to the actors.

THE FILM HAS THIS UNIQUE QUALITY OF CONSTANTLY BALANCING BETWEEN HUMOR AND MELANCHOLY. IT CREATES THIS HYBRID MOOD THAT PERFECTLY CAPTURES THE FEELING OF BEING IN YOUR FORTIES, THE AGE OF THE CHARACTERS, AND SOON YOURS AS WELL, RIGHT?

40 is indeed an in-between age. But it’s also an age where everything can still change. For instance, I’m just starting to realize that I’m an adult... even though I have a son who’s about

to turn 18! What I’m trying to say is that the film isn’t about saying «I’m 40 and unhappy with where I am,» but about facing where I could have been and moving forward. While the film does touch on an unfulfilled love between Cécile and Raphaël – and in so doing, it looks back at their past and the fact that their youth is behind them – it’s not sad. Amélie really nails that. There’s a light, very gentle melancholy that runs through the film, the kind that allows you to bounce back and leaves room for joy, smiles, and the future. You can see that at the end... Sure, Cécile and Raphaël missed their chance with each other, but at one point they connect with each other, when Cécile returns to her hometown and meets him again – they get to sing together and heal something, each one ready to move forward on their own. It’s beautiful.

SPEAKING ABOUT SINGING, YOURS SOUNDS VERY NATURAL. YET, THIS IS YOUR FIRST TIME! HOW DID YOU GO ABOUT IT?

I approach each film as if I’m starting from scratch. Of course, I took some singing classes at the conservatory – it was actually my favorite class. Later on, I also took a few private lessons. Singing opens you up, teaches you how to breathe. But for

this film, the production hired a coach to help me rehearse, so I basically started from the beginning again. After that, I felt much more at ease. That said, Amélie didn't want a polished studio version for the singing parts. That was a relief for me... Otherwise, I would've had to take many more lessons!

A BEAUTIFUL CHEMISTRY, AND NOT JUST VOCALLY, SHINES THROUGH THE PAIR YOU FORM WITH JULIETTE ARMANET, WHO PLAYS CÉCILE. HOW DID THESE REUNIONS GO, CONSIDERING SHE WAS ALSO PART OF AMÉLIE'S SHORT FILM?

Juliette and I really belong to the same generation. We have quite a few mutual friends, but what really connects us is this kind of artistic understanding. I really admire her, and I think she feels the same way. In a way, the dynamic we share in the film mirrors what we have off-screen. She was incredibly supportive when it came to singing, but she also teased me... Just as I teased her at other moments. It's easier to give advice through humor. We made great teammates, in the end! And to

top it off, she truly impressed me. This was her first leading role, and it's not every day you get to have your first lead, play it so well, and have the film be a success... but that's exactly what happened here!

PARTIR UN JOUR, WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY A WOMAN, ADDRESSES THEMES LIKE MOTHERHOOD, FATHER-DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIPS, AND THE PROFESSIONAL AMBITION OF WOMEN. IS IT IMPORTANT, EVEN STIMULATING, AS A MAN AND ACTOR, TO BE PART OF A PROJECT LIKE THIS – ONE THAT COULD BE CONSIDERED FEMALE, OR EVEN FEMINIST?

I don't feel like I'm making a political statement by being part of *Partir un jour*. It's not a film with a big agenda, it's not overtly demonstrative. Obviously, it's very much a feminine film, in the sense that a woman is at the heart of the story, but I don't feel Amélie's approach is pushing any agenda. It's subtler than that. Also, it's not something I've calculated by choosing to be in a film like this, or in Dominik Moll's *The Night of the 12th*. I'm not trying to ride the feminist wave. Once again, I'm first and foremost trusting in the power of the writing...



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CAST

Cécile	Juliette Armanet
Raphaël	Bastien Bouillon
Gérard	François Rollin
Sofiane	Tewfik Jallab
Fanfan	Dominique Blanc de la Comédie Française
Heddy	Mhamed Arezki
Richard	Pierre-Antoine Billon
Nathalie	Amandine Dewasmes

LIST CREW

A film by	Amélie Bonnin
Screenplay	Amélie Bonnin et Dimitri Lucas
Producteurs	Bastien Daret, Arthur Goisset Mohamed, Robin Robles, Sylvie Pialat, Benoît Quainon
Co-producer	Ardavan Safaee
Cinematography	David Cailley
Set design	Chloé Cambournac
Editing	Héloïse Pelloquet
1st assistant director	Laura Glynn Smith
Script supervisor	Manon Verdeil
Casting	Sophie Lainé-Diodovic
Costumes	Julie Miel
Makeup/Hair	Virginie Seffar
Sound	Rémi Chanaud, Jeanne Delplancq, Fanny Martin, Niels Barletta
Original music	P.R2B, Keren Ann, Zeidel, Thomas Krameyer, Germain Izydorczyk, Emma Prat & Theo Kaiser, Chilly Gonzales
Musical supervision	Matthieu Sibony (Shmooze)
Production manager	Marc Cohen
A coproduction	Topshot Films, Les Films du Worso, Pathé, France 3 Cinéma, Logical Ventures
With the support of	Canal +
With the participation of	Cine+ OCS, France Télévisions
With the support of	La Région Grand Est, de l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg et de Colmar Agglomération
In partnership with	Le CNC
In association with	Cinémage 19, Cofinova 21, Indéfilms 13, Cinéaxe 6, Palatine Étoile 22
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