

Microlumen Films Presents
a film by Arnaud Romet

The Unicorn's Bleat







Information

	————	Feature film, 1h22, 16/9
format	————	Fantastic film
genre	————	French, with English, Spanish and German subtitles
languages	————	South France / Occitanie / Haute-Garonne / Toulouse / Comminges
locations	————	Arnaud Romet
directed by	————	Arnaud Romet
written by	————	Arnaud Romet
casting	————	Arnaud Romet
music	————	Microlumen films
producers	————	The Feder GAL Comminges Pyrénées, the Occitanie region, the
with the support of		Departmental Council of Haute-Garonne, the Community of
		Communes Cagire Garonne Salat, the Community of Communes
		Coeur et Coteaux de Comminges, the Community of Communes of
		the Pyrénées Haut-Garonnaises, the village of Arnaud-Guilhem (31), the
		audiovisual BTS of Arènes in Toulouse

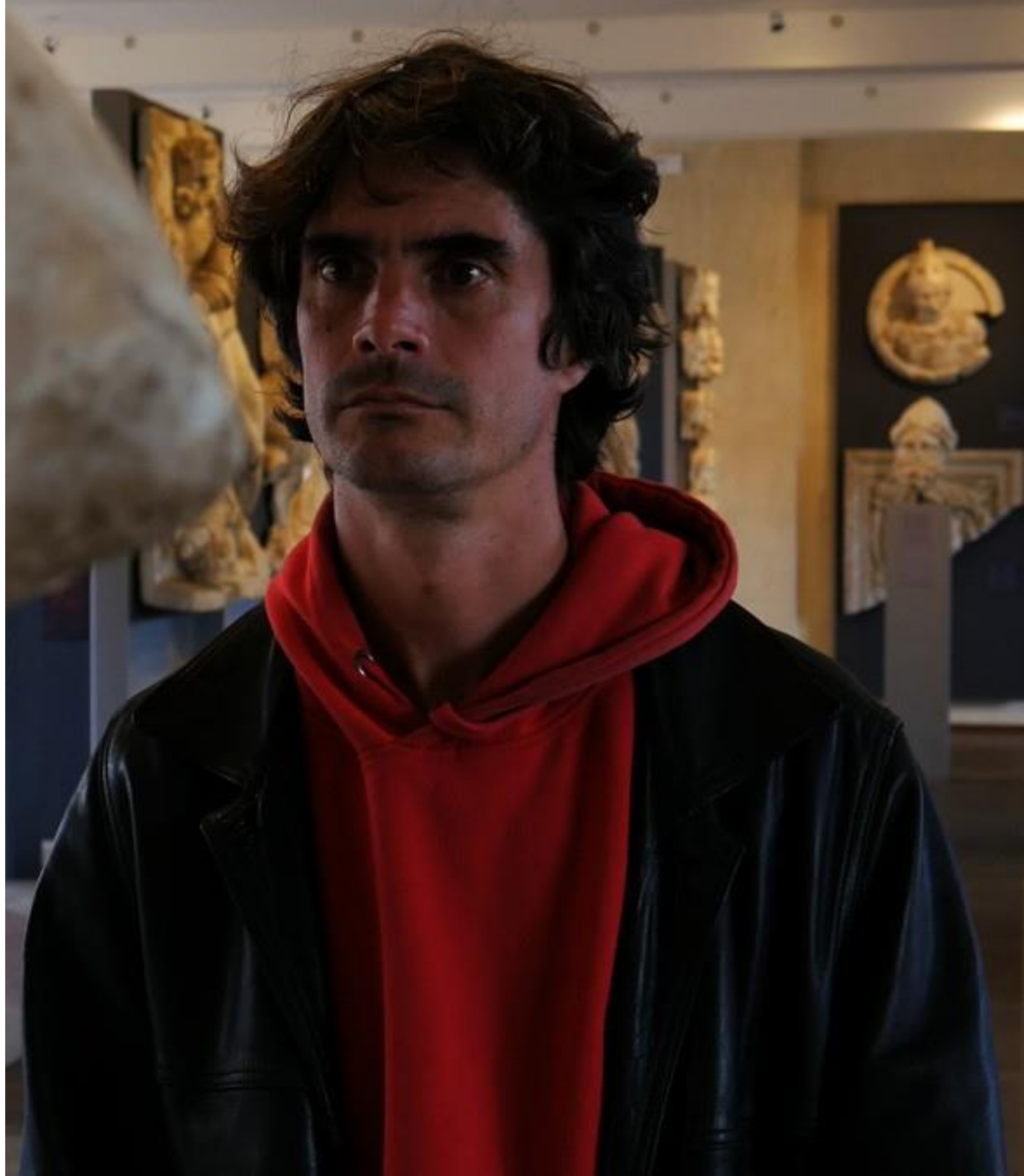
Synopsis

Guillaume is stupefied to learn that two sulphurous characters from Antiquity, natives of Galilee, were exiled and ended their lives in Saint-Bertrand de Comminges, a small quiet town in the Pyrenean foothills, just a stone's throw from his home.

Herodias and Antipas are mentioned in the Bible as being the assassins of Saint John the Baptist, to say the least !

While he is in the process of a mid-life crisis, between his problems of money, separation and lack of inspiration, this discovery sets him back in motion. He reads, gets information, travels around the countryside, meets new people...

Slowly these two characters haunt him. He then decides to go through the mirror to bring them to the frozen lake...



Film presentation

The Unicorn's Bleat is a feature film that swings between fantastic poetry and a very real connection to the life of the main character, who is a bit lost in his mid-life crisis.

Two disturbing characters from Roman antiquity suddenly appear in Guillaume's life, and slowly take him away in their phantasmagoria that will shake him up and lead him to renew himself.

Therefore, there is a documentary side and a very fantasy side in this film, a poetic stance at the edge of reality and imagination ; somewhere in a third way, a middle way between Robert Bresson and Star Wars, which allows a lot of distance, a free and shifted look at History, a sharp look at the situation of this contemporary man, isolated in his countryside and who goes to rebuild his ties. This open-minded approach is enhanced by a sophisticated plastic and sound work where the places (and in particular the Comminges countryside in the Pyrenean foothills), the atmospheres, the lights and the sounds are also used as characters.

This film enhances the capacity of imagination that everyone has in oneself, it activates this faculty that everyone has to project himself in bewitching thoughts, to give free rein to emotions that exceed or obsess us : love, fears, attractions, anxiety, dreams, intuitions...

The Unicorn's Bleat is aimed at a wide audience : adults and children (from 8 years old), lovers of poetic films, fantastic sagas, « original » or « offbeat » artistic films.





The director

Arnaud Romet has been involved in cinema for about ten years, after working in experimental cinema in the 90s and experimenting with video for the theater since the 2000s.

The Unicorn's Bleat is his first feature film, avec 4 shorts films made between 2013 and 2019. It represents for him a real commitment to cinema.

Trained as an electroacoustic music composer, he has been working for more than 20 years in the theater in sound creations for the stage. He has created about thirty shows, installations, events, in dreamlike theatrical forms, and one can feel in this film all this accumulated experience, now gathered for the camera.

The Unicorn's Bleat film comes from a long way : the previous short film, The Apparitions, in 2019, was created as a prototype/pilot for this feature film, and the one before that, Strange Curve, in 2017 already features the two historical and fantastic characters of Herodias and Herod Antipas. It was in 2017 that Arnaud Romet began writing the screenplay for the film, in a training course of several months dedicated to writing and dramaturgy.

The cinema is a synthesis between all his knowledge, all his artistic practices : between poetic writing, classical narration, materialist work on sounds, lights, images... to arrive at a cinema of wandering experience of sensations.

He writes : « I wish, with the creation of The Unicorn's Bleat, to synthesize all my taste for intertwined stories, between fantasy and reality, capable of leading us to the edge of the unconscious, to the edge between enchantment, strangeness and reality. »

filmography

The Unicorn's Bleat - 2023 – feature film

The Apparitions - 2019 – short film

Strange Curve - 2017 - short film

10 times nothing or the Morning Dissipations - 2016 - short film

The Rubbant - 2014 - short film



Interview

Q : How was the film born ?

Arnaud Romet : It is a film that is slightly autobiographical. I live in this rural area of the Comminges, in the Pyrenean foothills, in a small village about 80km from Toulouse, a bit isolated, and I learned by chance about the existence of these two historical characters, Herodias and Antipas, who are very well known because they are cited in the Gospels as being the assassins of St. John the Baptist. He is an eminent figure in Christianity : he is a bit the “twin of Christ”, he is the “inventor” of baptism, we all know the feast of St. John, the holy water fonts, etc. Well, all of this is his legacy... Now these two characters of Herodias and Antipas were exiled and ended their lives 30km from my home, in St-Bertrand de Comminges, even though they were originally from Judea, it blew my mind, I was amazed, especially since very few people know this story in the area. I said to myself : “but how is it that they ended their life here, 4000km away ? It’s incredible !”.

Q : Why the fiction ? What does it tell ?

Arnaud Romet : There is a certain documental notion in this film, because it also tells us about everyday things, a character in his daily life, Guillaume, with a little autobiographical side because in the end it is filmed in my house, he is an artist who is having a mid-life crisis, which is what I experienced, etc. Fortunately, I shift all this to go beyond the autobiographical story and enter fiction : in the sense that I have not been on a frozen lake full of ice in the middle of winter with Herodias and Antipas ! (smile) The construction of the film allows two universes to collide, so this quite realistic universe with this character living nowadays in his house, with his stories of everyday life, and then these two fantasy characters, who appear in his life. The fact that Guillaume sees them in his imagination creates a drama around these characters, which will end up obsessing him, haunting him and in front of which he will have to find a “solution”. There is a collision between his life and the legend of these two characters. In the end, it is a fantasy fiction, which goes completely out of the everyday life, and which becomes extraordinary.

Q : What does the title of the film mean ?

Arnaud Romet : I don’t know myself what it means. I think it’s important to leave the meaning open, to leave some mystery. There is of course something fantastic about this unicorn, this magnificent and legendary animal. The bleating of the deer, on the other hand, is an unpleasant sound, that we hear in the Comminges woods in the fall, it is for me the hostile and strange nature that manifests itself and that comes to us. So, I built a kind of oxymoron, a collage that does not exist, a poetic collage, with the lightness of the unicorn and the heaviness of the deer that bleat. I talked about the bleating deer in Comminges, but there is also a reference to the unicorn in the history of the region, because Saint-Bertrand, the famous bishop who built the cathedral in Saint-Bertrand de Comminges, in the Middle Ages, had according to the legend a stick made of unicorn horn. It can be seen exposed in the cathedral. This corroborates the fact that unicorns exist.

Q : Can you tell me more about the characters of Herodias and Antipas ?

Arnaud Romet : Herodias and Antipas are powerful characters, monarchs, whom I imagined in a completely free way, because we know nothing of their exile, of the way they lived when there were exiled. At the time, Saint Bertrand, called Lugdunum Convenarum, was a very developed Roman city, quite luxurious, with games, baths, a theater... Even if they were sent to the other side of the empire by the emperor Caligula, probably to punish them for too much ambition, we think that they probably kept their status of eminent figures, living in luxury, with their suite, their servants... Under house arrest, not being able to escape. Now as there is nothing that attests of how they lived in Lugdunum Convenarum, I gave myself total freedom on these two characters, so I imagined them in my own way, in a legendary, theatrical way : we see them locked up in a small, somewhat miserable prison, a sort of cardboard barn, with a very unreal, fairy-tale side, their roles are treated in a theatrical, slightly comic way. They are disturbing and very naive at the same time, they talk to each other, we learn things about their past life, their situation, and so it creates characters of pure tale, between greatness and misery, a little bit comical too.

Q : Can you explain how you came to define the film's register ?

Arnaud Romet : It is a film that gradually established itself as a fantastic film. Based in a realistic, almost documentary ground at the beginning with the character in his daily life, it gradually shifts, by small touches, into a surrealist dimension. The film sometimes becomes experimental in its plastic and sound aspects when the story shifts following Herodias and Antipas. It is halfway between many different themes. That's what I like, because it allows me to be in a field that I wanted to explore, that we are not used to see, a kind of poetic fantasy. Finally, the term that corresponds best is probably the one of "magic realism".

Q : Can you tell me more about the role of music and sound design in your film ?

Arnaud Romet : I wanted to do the music myself, because that's my first profession : musician and electro-acoustic composer. Then I didn't want the music to be too abstract, too contemporary. And that's why I used instruments that I don't use very often. For me, it's a comeback to something between pure electro-acoustic and rock.

So, it's music that could be defined as pop-indus. There's energy and synths that are a bit rocky, with a certain roughness in the sound. There are moments that are a little more abstract because we're on more suspended moments like the scenes on the lake. So that's what I wanted, to keep the film from becoming too strange.

Q : How did you approach the film's artistic direction and aesthetic choices ?

Arnaud Romet : I was drawn by a form of experimental theater that I developed over the last 20 years, especially with the Cie iatus. In these creations, the fantastic dimension is developed around a universe of electroacoustic sound and scenographic video. This experience can be found in the film, in the scenes with Herodias and Antipas, fantastic characters by excellence, and in the scenes where Guillaume, the main character, follows them into the imaginary and the imaginary and the fantastic. I wasn't behind the camera, so I tried to convey my plastic vision to the team as best as I could. And then there was all the work of editing, special effects and color grading, which reinforced this fantastic dimension. It's in this back-and-forth between the realistic and the fantastic, between the moments of everyday life and the tipping point into the imaginary, that the film was built.



Casting



Julien Charrier

Julien Charrier is a theater actor, clown and clown teacher. He regularly collaborates with the companies Histoire commune, Théâtre 2 l'Acte, Les Objets Trouvés, Cie Latus, Kairos Mênis compagnie...



Diane Launay

Diane is a theater actress, lyric and jazz singer, and director of the Träuma company.



Romain Blanchard

As a theater actor, he has performed with Christophe Rouxel, Charlie Windelschmidt and Valéry Warnotte of the Derezo collective, Clyde Chabot, Thomas Gonzalez and Yann Métivier, Eric Sanjou of the Arène Théâtre, la Fura dels Baus, Groland...



Délia Sartor

Dramatic artist, Delia Sartor is a member of the Cité l'Atelier des Songses, she produces and performs in shows around modern art and surrealist poetry.



Samuel Mathieu

Comedian of theater and cinema, he has played with many companies, and appears regularly in cinema. He has played for Mathieu Amalric (Serre Moi Fort), Pierre Coré, Stéphane Cazes, Benoît Maestre, Jacques Mitsch...



Philippe Dupeyron

Actor associated with the Théâtre 2 l'Acte in Toulouse for several years, Philippe continues his career as a storyteller, notably in museums and public spaces.

Casting

Anouk Sorin



Dylan Simon



The director



1 KA

Performer musician. Electro
industrial music, performances,
butho machines...

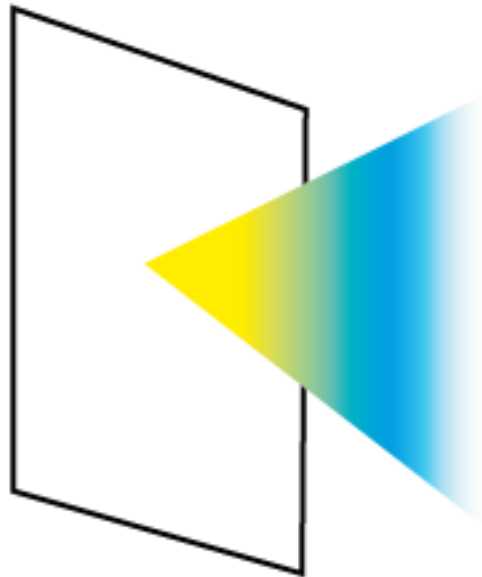
Partners

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