

THE YOUNG  
AND PRODIGIOUS  
**T.S. SPIVET**

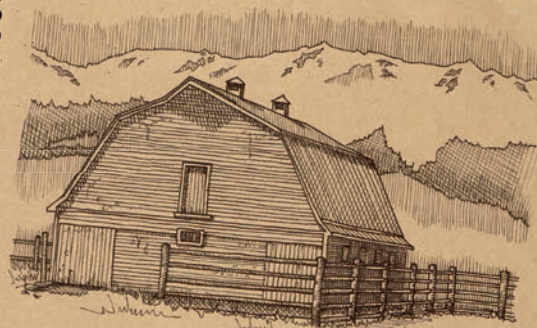
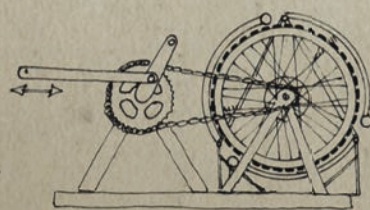
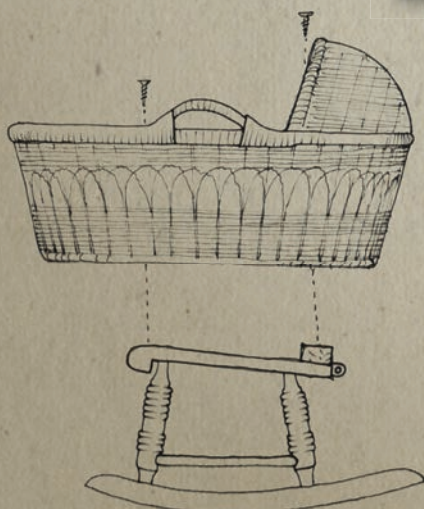
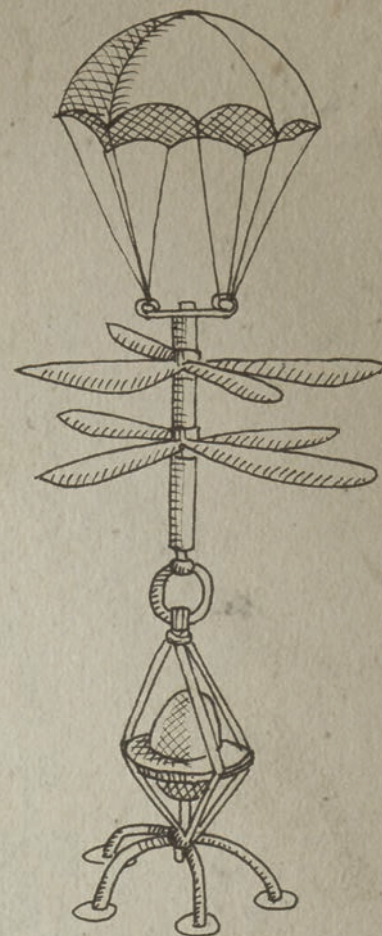
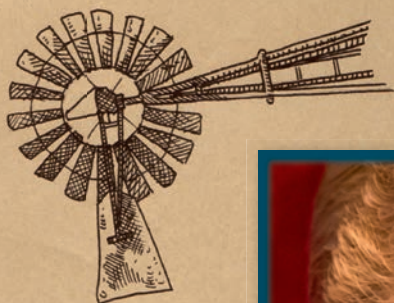
Dear Spivet family,

I have gone for a while to  
do some work. Don't worry. I'll  
be fine. I didn't want to bother  
you by telling about it ahead of  
time. Thank you for taking care  
of me. You are one of the best  
families in the world.

Love,  
TS











The first film in 3D by  
**JEAN-PIERRE JEUNET**

Screenplay and adaptation **JEAN-PIERRE JEUNET & GUILLAUME LAURANT**  
Dialogues **GUILLAUME LAURANT**

Based on the novel "The Selected Works of T.S. Spivet" by **REIF LARSEN**

A Franco-Canadian coproduction  
**EPITHETE FILMS - TAPIOCA FILMS - FILMARTO**  
in coproduction with **GAUMONT - FRANCE 2 CINEMA**  
With the participation of **OCS** and **FRANCE TELEVISIONS**  
Produced by **FRÉDÉRIC BRILLION - GILLES LEGRAND - JEAN-PIERRE JEUNET - SUZANNE GIRARD**  
Music **DENIS SANACORE**

**RELEASE DATE 16 OCTOBER 2013**

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Press site : [www.gaumontpresse.fr](http://www.gaumontpresse.fr)

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# Synopsis

T.S. Spivet lives on a remote ranch in Montana with his parents, his sister Gracie and his brother Layton. A gifted child with a passion for science, he has invented a perpetual motion machine, for which he has been awarded the prestigious Baird Prize by the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.

He leaves a note for his family and hops a freight train to make his way across the United States and receive his prize.

But no one there suspects that the lucky winner is a ten-year-old child with a very dark secret...







# INTERVIEW WITH *Jean-pierre Jeunet*

How did you first discover *The Selected Works of T.S. Spivet*, the book by Reif Larsen that seems to have been written with you in mind?

Well, after *Micmacs*, I didn't feel like writing an original subject again. I like alternating my pleasures... I asked a "reader", Julien Messemackers, to let me know about any books he thought I might find interesting. Julien had written me a résumé of *Amélie* when it was still nothing more than a project. It was a fabulous résumé that included just about everything that would happen in the film, which at that stage of the project did me a world of good! In the spring of 2010, I was in Australia shooting some commercials when he called and said: *"Listen, you've got to sit down and read this first novel by a young American author, The Selected Works of T.S. Spivet by Reif Larsen."* He sent me a copy and I took advantage of jet lag to read it in just a few nights. I was thrilled by the awesome character, by his moving story, by the wealth of detail and also by the ambience, the trains, Montana, the wide open spaces...

Have you met the author?

The first time I met Reif Larsen he told me: *"When I saw Amélie, I felt like someone had been rummaging through my head!"* And he offered me a book of photos that... I myself had just given to all my friends!

There was an immediate kind of complicity between us, despite the differences of age and background. We must be part of the same family: we have the same tastes, the same obsessions, the same enthusiasms, the same attractions. He's me 30 years ago! He followed the project all the way to the end, he came on set, and he even did some work as an extra. We've been exchanging e-mails ever since we met... I immediately wanted to adapt his book. I saw it as an opportunity to

make a movie that was part of my own universe, but at the same time very far away – if only because of the language, the wide open spaces, the American landscapes, and the use of 3 D...

So you wanted to do it in 3D right away?

Yes, because it's inherent to the project. In his book, Reif Larsen accompanies the text with small drawings in the margins: maps, sketches, city maps, portraits, notes... It was normal for them to

figure in the film and the best way to do that was obviously 3D. It was a way to make those drawings float through the theatre, to leap off the screen the way audiences love to see! But just like in *Amélie*, the special effects are there to serve the narrative. I wanted 3D to serve the story and the poetry. That's why I thought in 3D even when I was still writing it... And it was a way for me to relive my past. I had









a View Master Stereoscope when I was a kid. Its 3D images fascinated me, and that's how I started out in the moves, when I was only 8. I wrote dialogues, I cut up the reels and changed the order of the frames to make new movies, and then I screened them for my friends with a tiny projector (but then you lost the 3D effects...). I can still remember the smell it gave off when it heated up. In fact, when I'm in a car and a radiator hose heats up, I am immediately reminded of it. It's my own personal version of Proust's madeleine!

What about the story touched you most when you read it?

Other than the aspects I feel close to, and the obsessive nature of the child, I was fascinated by the sense of guilt lurking in the background. When T.S. makes his final speech, and in one sentence explains everything, you can't help feeling stunned. Reading it gave me goose bumps. That's what made up my mind. If only for that one sentence, I said to myself: *"I'm making the movie."*

You talk about emotion. This is the first time you actually confront it so head on, so directly in a movie, and in that final scene particularly ...



Reif Larsen and Kyle Catlett

That's true. I refused any emotion in Micmacs... which I thought of more as a cartoon. That was a mistake, because my frame of reference was Pixar, and with Pixar there is always emotion. Emotion is also a question of personality: some people need to bring out the violins, others don't. I'm very bashful, so my



emotions are often understated, merely hinted at. But with Spivet, where there is a whole melodrama lurking underneath, I couldn't help but confront it head on. Even if I do remain relatively timid about it. A leopard can't change its spots!

One gets the feeling that T.S. Spivet belongs to the same family as Miette, the heroine of your City of Lost Children, or Amélie as a child...

Once again, he's me! Once again, I identify with him. T.S. succeeds and wins this prestigious prize thanks



to his imagination, and when he finds himself in the spotlight, all he wants is to go home to his ranch. Just like me: I never feel comfortable in any milieu. When I was in school, I wondered what I was doing there. And don't get me started about the Army! And even later, in animated films, or in the French cinema, I never felt I was in my rightful place. Hollywood is even worse! I never feel comfortable anywhere, I always get the feeling I've landed on the wrong planet, and when I watch the news, I'm like: *"What am I doing here? This is a mistake, this has been a mistake from the start"*!

I only feel comfortable working with people who share my passion for a job well done.

You got your old sidekick Guillaume Laurant to work on the adaptation with you. What was the main thrust of your work?

The novel is enormous – it's over 400 pages! – It was practically impossible to adapt and... that's what made it so exciting! We mainly took out entire passages. We focused on T.S.'s story, removing many of the subplots that punctuate the book – his grandmother's biography, the history of a sect ... We had him win the Baird Prize for inventing a perpetual motion machine – that was an idea of Guillaume's – instead of for the virtuosity of his geographical maps, drafts and drawings, because it was more visual. We put his brother back at the center of the story, we assigned an essential role to the mother, who hardly exists at the end of the book, and we united all the various stages of T.S.' promotion into one TV extravaganza ... It was a lot of work, but at the same time it was fairly simple, because we were building on a stock of awesome material. That's always easier than starting out with a blank page. So it's a lot of work, but it's also a lot of fun. I took the book and began coloring it: I colored everything I liked a lot or thought indispensable to the story in red; I colored

what I liked moderately in yellow; and I colored what I didn't like at all in green. I cut out the pages and divided them up into folders, and on that basis, in a way I reconstructed the story, never thinking twice about mixing up the pages. Then we really sat down to write. As usual, Guillaume wrote the dialogues and I wrote the visual descriptions. We exchanged them by e-mail, we compared, we completed, we rewrote, etc. Then we had it translated into English by Fred Cassidy, who lives in Los Angeles and who had already translated my previous film, *Life of Pi*.

You say "my previous film" even though... you didn't shoot it!

Nice Freudian slip! [Laughter] But I worked on it so much - I stayed on it all the way to the definitive storyboard - that it's... almost as if I had shot it! I of course went to see Ang Lee's movie. I thought the middle part was fabulous, especially since they were able to use technology that would have been unavailable to us as recently as three years ago. The computer-generated tiger wasn't even worth dreaming about back then ... I just thought that for the beginning and the end they just cut and pasted from the book, instead of writing a real adaptation. And then, the film must have cost about 150 million dollars – thanks no doubt to aid from the authorities in Taiwan, whom Ang Lee knows so well. We were down to a budget of 80 million and Fox didn't want to go over 60...

Does it remain an open wound for you?

No, because it would have taken too long. If I had made it, I would have spent seven years on it! Every director in the world has a project close to his heart that he's never been able to make. Marcel Carné had *L'Île des Enfants perdus*, Tim Burton has *Superman*, Kubrick had *Napoleon*. For me it will be *Life of Pi*. And so there you go, end of parentheses! [Laughter]



We all know how much you love to shoot on sound stages – even if in *A Very Long Engagement*... the battlefields and Breton landscapes were very present. Shooting on location, having to pay tribute to those wide open spaces, and even more so, in the United States, and in English– which you hadn't done since *Alien*... filmed at the Fox Studios in Hollywood – was that also part of the challenge?

Yes of course, all of that at once! The movie is in English. I've made some progress since *Alien*, I don't even need an interpreter on the set anymore! But the thing to which I attach considerable importance has a name: "*freedom*"! In France, we are lucky enough to have a law that protects us and gives us the final cut. And so the idea was to shoot an American movie produced in Paris with Frédéric Brillion, my co-producer at Epithète, and with Gaumont, to whom Francis Boespflug had taken the project and who were very enthusiastic about it. The idea was to do a coproduction, not with Americans, but with Canada... to shoot in Quebec, in our language, and also in the province of Alberta, where Americans themselves go when they need to shoot sequences that are supposed to take place in Montana, like for *Brokeback Mountain*... and maintain control over our film. Ultimately I never set foot in the States – actually just once: while scouting locations I visited a location with a barbed wire fence across it. It was the border. I just stepped over to the other side! A second unit shot the Chicago and Washington exteriors we needed. In the end, the only American is the little boy, Kyle Catlett, since Helena (Bonham Carter) is English, Judy (Davis) is Australian, and the other actors are all Canadian ... At first, our dream was to find the mountains, the brook, the cabins and the ranch all in one place, and to shoot even the interiors there. Were we ever naive! We did a lot of scouting, first on Internet, then on the spot, and in Alberta we finally found the mountain, the deserted countryside with the cabin, the barn, the brook... and

we built the ranch. We shot everything that takes place on the ground floor there: you opened the door and you looked out on the countryside and the mountain, it was magnificent! But we shot the other ranch interiors, actually all the other interiors in Montreal, often in the studios... Plus, we were really lucky, because Alberta is usually very windy, and while we were shooting, in the summer of 2012, we practically never had any wind. At least we had the weather on our side. In Alberta, we drove to the sets, we drove in SUVs that raised dust, we had the music on full blast, we drove by wild animals ... It was awesome.

And nature looks magnificent in the film. It's both sensual and lyrical, as it can be in Terrence Malick's earliest films. And all the more so, since the 3D magnifies it...

The landscapes were just begging for it, and the 3D does in fact make them look more sensual, almost palpable... Even if filming nature is always a little frustrating, because there's not much there you can invent, or master either. All you do is pick the right spot and get there early enough in the morning. You don't want your lenses to be too long or too short... I like perspectives I can use to compose a frame, with short focal lenses. But I made up for that with the train scenes. It was a little like playing with toy train sets but... life size!

The big problem was to find a little boy on whom the film could hang. Well, you have to admit that Kyle Catlett is... prodigious! How did you find him?

I worked with a fabulous Quebecoise casting director who had worked with Denis Arcand, for example: Lucie Robitaille. We set up talent searches in Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, New York, Los Angeles and London. I don't know how many kids we saw, but be that as it may, none of them were













very interesting. I was starting to get worried. So I asked to see Scorsese's second and third choices for Hugo Cabret and Lucie told me... that I had already seen them and passed! Panic. And then, one day, she showed me a kid's test, He was ten times too small. He was 9 but looked 7. But still, there was something there! Something strange, compelling, unique. It was Kyle. I was like: *"This can't be, he's way too small for the role ...T.S. is supposed to be 12"*, but I couldn't get him out of my mind. We set up a meeting with him on Skype. He gave me a big spiel: *"I can cry on demand, I'm tough, I'm strong, I'm the world champion of martial arts for kids under 7!"* So there was this extraordinary kid who, suddenly, seemed just right and who understood the comic scenes perfectly... so much so that, as soon as I arrived in Canada, I left for New York to do some tests with him. I hemmed and hawed for two days, but he was so awesome that I decided he would be T.S. Spivet in spite of his height. And then they announce that just the day before he had signed to do an American series, The Following ! His agent had lied to us, telling us he had no other offers and was available. We hesitated, but he was too perfect to pass by. We took the risk and hired him. The series kicked off a little later, half way through our shoot, and... that's when the problems started!



### Why?

Because we counted on the producers of the series to facilitate our task – conflicts with actors' dates are normal in the movies, but you always wind up sorting things out. Here on the contrary they didn't lift a finger to help us. I wrote to them, and the answer I received was from their legal department who claimed that Kyle belonged to them! They really treated us like *"smelly little cheeses"*, and we went through hell because we had to modify our shooting schedule in Alberta according to his availabilities. We had him on Monday but not Tuesday, on Thursday but not Friday. We never stopped juggling. Luckily, he was shooting in New York and not Los Angeles. Kyle travelled at night, he left in a helicopter, we worked weekends... But none of that kept him from being extraordinary! Once, when he thought the series was going to prevent him from doing the film, he broke down in tears. He said: *"But I want to do T.S. I am T.S. I really want to do this movie..."*

As for me, the director, I had to work miracles when shooting without him, but now no one in the audience even notices these problems.

### How did you work with him? How did you direct him?

Before we began shooting, we spent a week working with a coach and went over the entire





screenplay. He looked bored, but he did take some notes. His mind was elsewhere. But he saved it all, from A to Z, on his hard disk! During the shoot, his coach was there to work with him and jog his memory about what T.S. was feeling, but his instincts were so sure that he didn't really need her. Later, during the second part of the shoot when he no longer had his coach, it may have meant a little more work for me, but not really: he had got to know T.S. better than I did. I remember one scene, where he runs into a guard: suddenly Kyle wasn't playing it the way I had imagined, but much more arrogantly. I thought he might want to act a little more frightened, but I could tell that Kyle was resisting, and when I saw the edit, I realized that he had been right: at that moment in time, T.S. has already gone through the whole long voyage, he has encountered other dangers, he has matured, he is no longer afraid... I also remember that during his final speech, in which Kyle is extraordinary – 7 or 8 minutes all in one go, I tell you! – he suddenly stopped speaking. The coach prompted him, but he looked at her and said: *"That's not a memory lapse, it's a pause... If I have a memory lapse, I'll jiggle my foot like this."* A real pro! But at the same time, not a little monster, just a child you needed to treat like a child.



#### And how did you find the rest of the cast?

I had wanted to work with Helena for a long time. Ever since I met her on the set of David Fincher's *Fight Club* and she told me, in French: *"I'd make a movie with you whenever you want!"* I like her inventiveness and her wackiness. So I wrote the part with her in mind, which is always a little risky, but when I sent her the screenplay, she answered *"I'm in love with your script."* So that was all very simple. Actually, she herself is very simple ... As for the other actors, I talked about it a lot with Lucie Robitaille, who showed me some fabulous Quebecois actors and introduced me to some casting directors in Toronto, Vancouver... That's how we met and picked the other actors: Callum Keith Rennie, who plays the father, who is known mostly for his roles in TV series such as *Battlestar Galactica* and *Californication*, Niamh Wilson, who plays Gracie, T.S.' sister, and Jakob Davies, who plays Layton, T.S.' brother, whom by the way we turned into T.S.' fraternal twin, because we couldn't find a younger actor shorter than Kyle.

#### And Judy Davis, who does a great job as the undersecretary of the Smithsonian Institution?

That was the most complicated role to cast. And I had done a lot of thinking about this character, who is a man in the novel. I contacted a lot of actors and





actresses before deciding. At one point we were in contact with Kathy Bates. At least we thought we were! Because after hearing her agents tell me she adored me, she adored the script, she wanted to do the movie, and after waiting two months for an answer, we found out just two weeks before the shoot that she had never even seen the script! So I wrote to her directly and sent her the screenplay. She was thrilled, she talked to me about the character with a lot of enthusiasm and she said she would do it. But then she went in for the obligatory medical exam and found out she had cancer and needed a double mastectomy! What a shock! But we had to do something, so we thought of Robin Williams, who said yes... only to say no a few days before the shoot. It was our Canadian producer Suzanne Girard who thought of Judy Davis. We contacted her and she arrived from Sydney two days before the shoot! Boy, did she ever have me in stitches ...

And of course once again Dominique Pinon...

That was inevitable! [Laughter] But we had a close call. Our shooting schedule was constantly being modified because of Kyle's availability. So he was almost unable to do the film, because he was about to do some theatre in Paris. In fact, he arrived in Montreal during the day, and we took him straight to the railroad yard



we had found in the middle of highways and shopping centers. We came up with his look on the spot. He filmed that night and, the next day, we put him back on a plane and he arrived in Paris just in time for his first night! Luckily he had already worked on his lines. And since he had learned English in the States, there were no language problems ... He was the ideal Two Clouds, a truly fabulous character.

Although we of course again find your usual collaborators among the technical crew, Aline Bonetto set design, Madeline Fontaine costumes, Nathalie Tissier makeup, etc., you did on the other hand change directors of photography...

Part of the idea of making a European film on the American continent was obviously the desire to work with my usual collaborators, my family so to speak! So I took them all along on the adventure, those you mention, but also my script girl, my first assistant, my sound engineer, my editor, etc. And I would have also wanted to work with Bruno Delbonnel, with whom I was unable to work on Micmacs..., but he had just done two American movies – Dark Shadows with Tim Burton and Inside Llewyn Davis with the Coen brothers – and couldn't sign on for a third one and spend that much time away from France and his family. So I started from





scratch. Thanks to Internet, today anything is possible! I looked at every French director of photography's demo, as if I didn't know any of them. And I chanced on some stuff by Thomas Hardmeier, whose work I had liked a lot in Richard Berry's films and in a science fiction movie, *Chrysalis*, by Julien Leclercq. We met. He's Swiss German and has a very dry, almost British sense of humor. We looked at some images together, we talked about 3D, the movie, etc. And I liked him.

Did you watch any films or look at any referential paintings together?

Yes, as usual, but we eventually forgot about the movie we were using as a reference at first. It was *The Assassination of Jesse James...* I liked those unsaturated images a lot. But we soon realized that if we went in that direction, we would give the film a historical look, which was not the case here, and plus, it wasn't suitable for 3D, because 3D needs high-contrast, colorful images. Otherwise there's less payoff.

Visually, the film is quite different from your previous films, not only in terms of color, but also in its composition...

Yes. In fact even though I wanted to remain faithful to my own aesthetic sense and love of beauty, from



the very beginning I also wanted to do something less "*Jeunet*" than usual. In other words, fewer warm, golden images and more 'normal', realistic images, since the story takes place today and is very realistic. As for my aesthetic needs, I could easily count on the beauty of the landscapes and, as usual, on the choice of sets and costumes. As for framing, I continued to use short focal lenses, but it takes so long to change a lens when you're working in 3D that I finally left the 21mm on the camera, which is my favorite lens anyway, and I shot 3/4 of the film that way. Anyhow, I'm not so sure the frames look that much different, it's just the 3D that gives them that new dimension. It's also true that I moved the camera less, and even when I did, I did it more slowly, all because of the 3D.

Exactly. *Spivet* is your first film in 3D and one can tell, as you said at the beginning of this interview, that it is an inherent part of the project per se. How did you prepare for it?

By working at it! I had looked at everything already done to understand both the demands and the limits of 3D, what you must and must not do, what pays off and what doesn't. I realized that in the States a lot of films are shot in 2D, and then converted into 3D, which results in a real massacre! I haven't really seen









that many films actually designed for 3D, just Hugo Cabret by Martin Scorsese – whose stereographer I used by the way, Demetri Portelli, who when shooting Cabret in Paris wrote me to say that he would like to work with me - and Life of Pi by Ang Lee. While writing it, I thought in 3D; while story-boarding it, I thought in 3D, shading in the characters to give an idea of the 3D; and of course while shooting, we were very careful with the 3D. The same goes for our post-production. And now it's going to be a whole new battle to make sure the film is projected in the theatres correctly. It's a constant struggle that requires a lot of time, money and energy. We are still in the experimental phase of 3D, and so we are obviously the guinea pigs of this new technology. For example, we were the first to use a new digital camera, the Alexa M by Technovision, which is tiny because it's connected to the recorder by a cable, and we were the first to use optical fibers, which allowed us to use 300 meter cables. It's just that optical fiber is very sensitive to dust, and when you've waited two hours for a nice cloud to film, and you finally get it, but they tell you there are problems with the optical fiber, you're ready to murder your camera crew!

**Did that change a lot for you in terms of shooting as such?**

Yes of course. It requires a great deal of attention, but as with any new experience, it was also very exciting. There are tons of things you can't do. For example, you always have to avoid people walking too fast in front of the camera, foregrounds that are too cluttered, reflections, shiny objects, because they're bad on the eye. So I favored very contemplative images. Then you have to position things correctly in order to amplify the impression of 3D, and that's where the props and our work with Aline Bonetto were so important. The same was true for Madeline Fontaine and her work on the



costumes: in 3D, textures and fabrics are important, some come across better than others... During the shoot, I was constantly running back and forth between the set and the tent where we had set up the 3D screens to see what effects we had got and to be sure of what we were doing. It was also very exciting to incorporate into the film the notes and drawings in the book, but we did that in post-production. People love the feeling that objects are flying out at them, that you can almost touch them. That's easy to do in a commercial, but it's harder to do in a feature length film, unless the subject is right, as it is here. Those little drawings, Spivet's inventions, look like ghosts, like dreams that leap off the pages of the book and literally jump off the screen!

Along with Thomas Hardmeier, your director of photography, you have another new collaborator: composer Denis Sanacore...

For reasons of co-production, it was a good idea to use a Canadian composer. But I didn't feel like working with the great Canadian composers Howard Shore or Mychael Danna, whose music is a bit too illustrative for my taste. I've always had a weakness for more offbeat composers: Carlos d'Alessio, Yann Tiersen, Badalamenti, Raphaël Beau... So I did the same thing I did for the director of photography, I searched the Internet! I listened to everything going on in Canada today. I must have listened to 400 musicians. I even found some who described themselves: "*Writes music and changes tires*"! Just to show you how far I went. And then I hit on the site of a musician who never cut any records and who had never worked on a movie. He had created a duo with his wife, the Duo Sanacore. He plays the guitar and his wife plays the violin. They have a very wide-ranging repertoire and they... play at weddings. On his site, there was a theme he had composed and that fit exactly with what I wanted for Spivet. A little country, a little folk, but deep and emotional. When

I arrived in Quebec, I listened to some other themes he had composed and then asked to meet with him. He was very surprised. I made the same offer to Denis Sanacore that I made to Raphaël Beau on Micmacs... : compose thirty themes with no guaranty I'll use them, and if I think they're right, you do the soundtrack. He took up the challenge, and every week he sent me some new compositions. Denis has a genius for themes you can't get out of your head. And then one day, during the shoot, Julien Lecat, who was doing the making-of and had practically made a temporary edit of the film, used some Sanacore over a scene and... it worked perfectly ! I called Denis and told him he would be doing the film. I did the same thing I did with Yann Tiersen, I asked him to compose several pieces and I used what sounded right for individual scenes or sets of images. We always found something to fit. It did happen that he wrote two or three pieces for specific images, but in general he's someone who needs his freedom. There came a time when we wanted to rerecord everything more professionally, in a recording studio, because he had done it in his living room, unhooking the phone and muzzling his dog. But then we realized that he had achieved a color we would never be able to match, so we kept his version, just as he had recorded it. I love those kinds of encounters and stories...

What was the hardest thing about making this film?

First of all, surviving all the scheduling problems we had with the child. Then solving American-style union problems, especially in Alberta, because in France, we don't realize how much freedom of movement we enjoy on set. Everything is so much more flexible and friendly. Then overcoming the difficulties related to the 3D, because at a practical level, it is actually very complicated. And then resisting the desire to murder one or two of those biggest liars on the planet, American talent agents...



**Which scene scared you most?**

T.S.' final speech. It was essential, because after all, the entire film hangs on it. On the first shooting day scheduled for it, his mother didn't feel he was up to it. So you can imagine what I was feeling like on the second day. I went to see him in his trailer and asked him if everything was okay, and... he said: "Yeah, cool!" I remember asking him if he wanted the extras there in front of him, or if he preferred not seeing them, and he answered me: "It'd be good for them to be there, it might help"! So the little guy stood there in front of 130 extras waiting for him to fall flat on his face, with his 10 pages of text. "Action!" And in two takes, we had it in the can!

**And which was your favorite to shoot?**

The same, I think! Kyle was so good in that scene, and I knew that once we had that scene, we had the

film! That was just a little while before we were told that Kyle wouldn't be available, that he was going to do the American series. I said to myself then: *"We've got the speech, we've got the most difficult scenes, we got through the hardest stuff, we can't stop now, we'll just have to sort things out."* And we sorted things out! Luckily we had already shot all those scenes in Montreal, before leaving for Alberta, because otherwise we were screwed!

**Do you know when the film will be coming out in the States?**

No, not yet. We have an American co-producer too, Cross Creek, who had put some money into Black Swan, but after Harvey Weinstein saw a few images in Cannes –they say they brought tears to his eyes – and without even waiting to see the final cut, he bought Spivet and is planning to distribute it. He's the one who distributed Amélie, so I see that as a good sign...













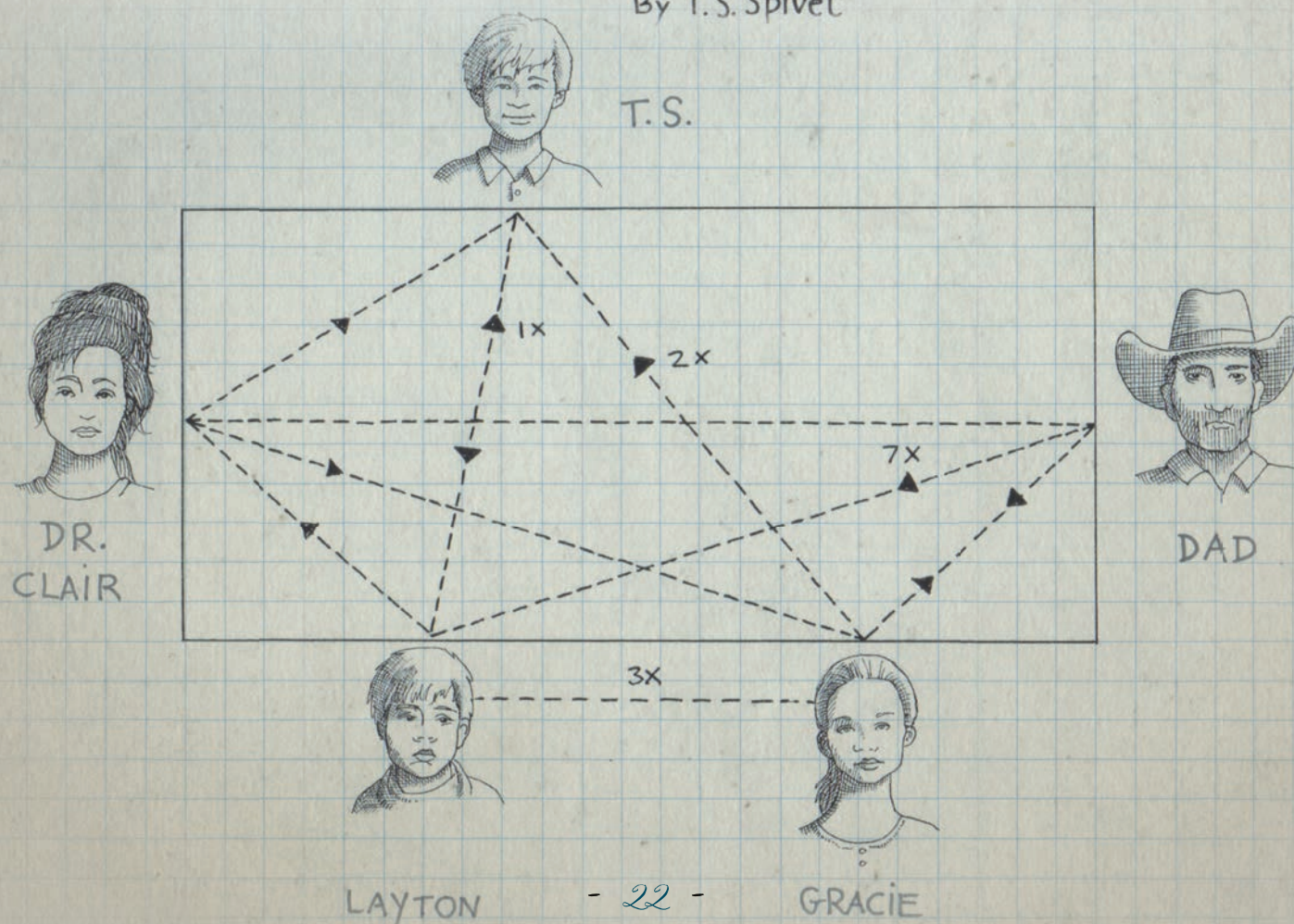
# The Characters

## THE SPIVET FAMILY

Hard to say who is most 'normal' in the Spivet family, with a son so far ahead of his age, a father born a hundred years too late, a sister obsessed with red carpets, and a mother searching the insect world for the equivalent of the unicorn. No, in fact Layton is the most normal ...



### PATTERNS OF CROSSTALK AND DIRECTIONAL EYE LINES By T.S. Spivet













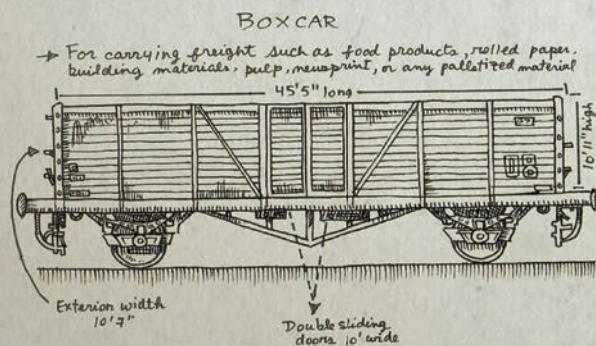






## T.S. SPIVET

He is only ten, but he already knows so much that he could easily be thirty years older. Gifted with a lively imagination, insatiable curiosity and prodigious gifts of observation, everyone is sure he is Montana's answer to Leonardo da Vinci. He feels more comfortable inventing the magnetic wheel or a perpetual movement machine than helping his father out on the ranch, or wearing matching socks. Instead of staying home and biding his time, he decides to leave for Washington, alone, to compare his intuitions and research with the scientific bigwigs'. But while on the road, pondering insoluble questions such as "How can human beings produce so many right angles, when their behavior is so illogical?", he keeps thinking of the family he left behind on a ranch in Montana...



## Kyle Catlett

according to Jean-Pierre Jeunet

"He's an incredible kid. At the age of 10, he has had more wild experiences, both positive and negative, than most people in their entire lives. He is extremely intelligent. He's a brilliant actor with a totally natural flair for comedy, a great sense of timing, and a very wide-ranging register. He is as comfortable doing comedy and light material as more serious, emotional stuff... I watched him during the shoot of course, but I realized it even more during the edit. Every day I discovered little details in his acting, particularly in group scenes where he would be off to one side doing his own thing that no one else could see, and always incredibly on the money. And in spite of his small size, he is physically quite strong: he fought to do his own stunts. I saw him cry once because he had had a frightful experience: he had lost a cricket! I never once saw him flag, either physically or morally, I never once saw him weaken. I never saw him tired or grumpy, always positive and, especially, luminous. LUMINOUS!"

*Born in 2002, American, he speaks six languages, including Russian (his mother is of Russian origin) and Mandarin Chinese. He was the Mixed Martial Arts world champion three years in a row, and in 2010 was a member of the USA Junior Wushu team. He began his acting career at the age of 7 in commercials, before soon being noticed by TV and cinema. He has played most notably in the series Mercy (2009), created by Liz Heldens, Unforgettable (2011) created by Ed Redlich and John Bellucci, and with Kevin Bacon in The Following (2013) created by Kevin Williamson. In 2013, he won the Best Actor Award at the Greenville International Film Festival for his role in The Pale of Settlement, a short subject by Jacob Sillman. The Young and Prodigious T.S. Spivet is his first role in a feature length film.*

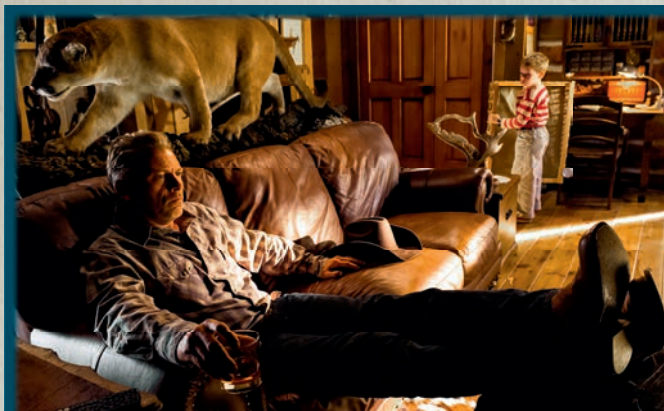












## HIS FATHER

Born a hundred years too late, he has the gait, the craggy face, and the mind and soul of a cowboy. He considers talking a necessary chore, a lot like shoeing horses. And when he does speak, he stares off into the horizon, he never looks at you. In his office, there is an altar dedicated to Billy the Kid, a stuffed puma, and a collection of horseshoes and boots. It is a genuine museum that conveys a powerful impression of nostalgia for all things Western. He loves Layton more than anything else in the world, and cannot understand how he can also be the father of T.S., a child unable to handle a rifle or a lasso, or even a hoe, and who spends his days coming up with inventions, one more crackpot than the next ... sissy stuff!



## Callum Keith Rennie

according to Jean-Pierre Jeunet

"All it took was one short screen test with Callum Keith Rennie for me to realize that, with his handsome face and great looks, he was perfect for the role of the father. Callum had worked mainly in television and was at first a little nervous, a little tense, especially because of the exacting way I have of working with actors. He even got a little aggressive. So I purposely rubbed him the wrong way, saying: "Tomorrow we're going to try such and such a scene, but I don't know if you'll be able to get it right, you're so bad, you're such a hothead, it's going to be a disaster!" At first he was totally confused, until he realized I was just joking, and then I saw him let his hair down. That's how I won him over. And then it turned into a game between us. I said: "We got a great shot there! With your beard and your glistening skin under that blue sky, it looks like something out of Sergio Leone. It's going to knock them over. Too bad your acting is such crap!" He understood that I would remain imperturbable no matter how aggressive he got. We got along very well; he turned out to be fantastic".

*Born in 1960 in Great Britain and raised in Alberta, Canada, Callum Keith Rennie began his acting career at the age of 25 in the theatres of Edmonton, before debuting in TV and the movies a few years later in Vancouver. He has appeared in quite a few series (Due South, X Files, Highlander, My Life as a Dog, 24, The Killing, The Firm) but is most famous for his roles as the Cylon villain Leobon in the science-fiction series Battlestar Galactica (2004-2009) and a rocker in Californication (2008-2013). In the movies, he debuted in two successful Canadian independent films Double Happiness by Mina Shum (1994) and Hard Core Logo (1996) by Bruce McDonald. He has also been seen since in eXistenZ, Memento, The Butterfly Effect, Blade: Trinity, Invisible, X Files 2, Case 39...*



## HIS MOTHER

Beautiful, bizarre, nice looking, she is a specialist in grasshoppers and other insects. Dr Clair has spent most of her life studying miniscule creatures under a magnifying glass, before classifying them into species and sub-species. And also ... blowing out toasters! Then one day she dropped everything to devote herself to one mission: proving to the world of science that the tiger monk beetle exists, even though it quite possibly... doesn't. Raising her children with a taxonomic dictionary in one hand, she encourages T.S.' vocation, since he has obviously inherited his imagination and scientific curiosity from her. But he feels that she has not been there much for him recently, or for that matter for anyone else either...

## Helena Bonham Carter

according to Jean-Pierre Jeunet

"I love her as an actress. She is so inventive that I sometimes had the feeling that I had a Porsche I was driving at only 20 km/h! On the other hand, those 20 km/h I was using, wow! You're not used to seeing her like that. She was a great pleasure to work with. She is light hearted and deep at the same time, capable of fantasy and emotion all at once. And she's not afraid of anything. We had a long take during which her character had to throw herself between the dolly and the tracking support, and she insisted: "I've done gymnastics, I'll do that for you!" She did it thirty-five times. Her knees were all bloodied, but she did it. Sometimes, just to entertain me, she did a shot à la Tim Burton! She's very simple. I can still picture her sitting out on a chair in the evening, in front of the hotel we were staying at in Pincher Creek, eating hamburgers across from the pick-up trucks of guys who worked in the oil wells or played the rodeos, and who were wondering, who the hell is she!"



*Born in 1966 in London into a family with a long tradition in politics, she started her acting career at the age of 16 in commercials before making her debuts in television and, later, the cinema. It was her encounter with James Ivory in Room with a View in 1986 that first put her in the limelight. She worked with him again in Maurice and Howard's End. A regular in historical films and costume dramas, she was seen in Hamlet by Franco Zeffirelli, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein by Kenneth Branagh, Twelfth Night by Trevor Nunn, but also with Woody Allen (Mighty Aphrodite) and David Fincher (Fight Club). Her role in The Wings of the Dove by Ian Softley in 1998 won her an Oscar nomination for Best Actress. With The Planet of the Apes (2001) she became the favorite actress (and partner) of Tim Burton, starring in his Big Fish, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Corpse Bride, Sweeney Todd, Alice in Wonderland and Dark Shadows. She played the evil Bellatrix Lestrange in the four last episodes of Harry Potter and was most recently seen in The King's Speech and Les Misérables by Tom Hooper, and Great Expectations by Mike Newell. She was listed by the Times as one of the ten best English actresses of all times.*



















## LAYTON, HIS BROTHER

T.S.' twin, but only his fraternal twin – each had his own embryo, each has his own style and each has his own fairy godmother: his was generous with the centimeters, T.S.' with the brains. He likes to use his Winchester to shoot at anything that moves, be it tin cans or coyotes. He's a daredevil whose exploits T.S. can only dream of. Layton obviously takes after his father, from whom he will one day take over the ranch.



## Jakob Davies

according to Jean-Pierre Jeunet

“We found him rather late in the game, because we spent a long time looking for a child smaller than Kyle... which was impossible! So we made them into fraternal twins. He's an absolutely fabulous actor. And extremely nice and polite. Everyone on the shoot adored him. He's a very serious actor, who probably works at home before coming to work and who arrives very prepared... almost too prepared, because it can be hard to get him to change tack. But at the same time, what he does do, he does so well...”

*Born in Canada, Jakob Davies made his debut as an actor in 2009 in commercials, before quickly moving on to television and cinema. He has already played in twenty productions. He is best known for his role as Lex Luther in the series Smallville (2010) and as Pinocchio in the ABC series, Once Upon A Time (2011-2013). In the movies, he appeared most notably in The Tall Man by Pascal Laugier (2012).*





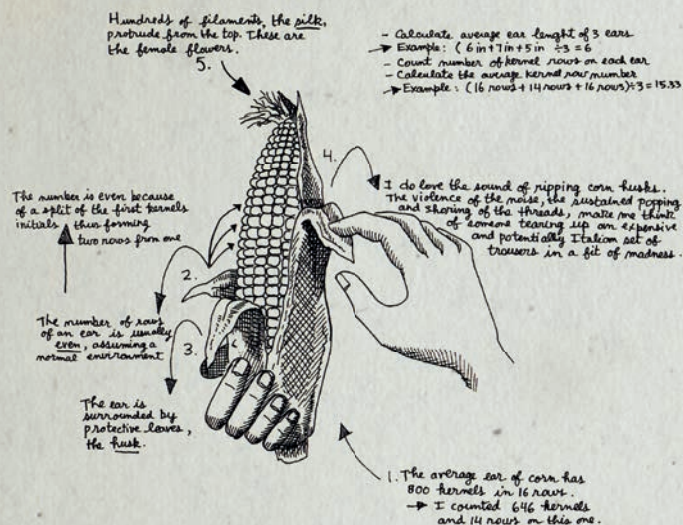






# HIS SISTER, GRACIE

She wonders how she could have been born into a family of hicks in the boondocks of Montana, when she was meant for Hollywood, red carpets and glory. Even if she plays her role as the misunderstood actress to the hilt every chance she gets, she figures that, in the end, being the sister of a celebrity is not so bad either...



## Niamh Wilson

according to Jean-Pierre Jeunet

"It was during a casting session in Toronto that we discovered Niamh. She really stood out from the rest. The danger with this role of a teenager constantly rolling her eyes is that she can soon become intolerable. Niamh was able to play that side of her without becoming obnoxious, she was even able to generate empathy for her character. She also has the great ability of playing any emotion on demand. When we shot the scene where she watches T.S. on TV, I reminded her that Gracie is no longer making fun of him, that she breaks down here. She looked at me and wham, she started to cry, one take was all it needed! Awesome!"



Born in 1997 in Oakville, Ontario, Canada, Niamh Wilson made her debut in the Warner Bros series *Chasing Alice* at the age of 5. Two years later she was the heroine of the made-for-TV film *Haunting Sarah*, which won her a Young Artist Award. In 2006, she made her movie debuts in the supernatural thriller *The Marsh* and the horror movie *Saw III* (a role she will reprise in *Saw IV* and *Saw V*), and appeared in the TV series *Runaway*. In May 2012, she played in her first comedy, *Debra*, on *The Family Channel*, for which she received the Young Artist Award for Leading Actress in a TV series.









## THE SMITHSONIAN UNDERSECRETARY, MISS JIBSEN

Miss Jibsen does in fact believe that she is the one running the prestigious institution. She is the embodiment of scientific authority – at least for T.S., since he’s only ten years old. He doesn’t try to show her up, even if the thought has occurred to him...

### Judy Davis

according to Jean-Pierre Jeunet

“Judy arrived on the shoot at the last minute. It was a Friday evening. Over the week-end, we created her look: she tried on three suits, we chose her glasses, we left her own hairdo, and there you go, Monday morning, action! Since we didn’t have much time to work, the only direction I gave her was: “Be yourself, and make me laugh!” And... she made me laugh! She is so funny, she’s a total joy to work with. She brings comic relief to

this story, which is ultimately pretty serious; especially once she comes into the story. By way of contrast, T.S.’ emotion comes across all the starker.”

*Born in 1955, in Perth, Australia, Judy Davis graduated in 1977 from the National Institute of Dramatic Arts. She was remarked two years later in My Brilliant Career by Gilliam Armstrong, which garnered her the first of many awards. Although she has appeared regularly in many films by prestigious directors, (A Passage to India by David Lean, Barton Fink by the Coen brothers, Naked Lunch by David Cronenberg, Absolute Power by Clint Eastwood, Marie-Antoinette by Sofia Coppola, The Eye Of The Storm by Fred Schepisi for which in Australia she received a Best Actress award), she has worked most often with Woody Allen since their first encounter in 1980: Husbands and Wives (1992), Deconstructing Harry (1997), Celebrity (1998) and To Rome With Love (2012). She also often appears on stage and television. Her interpretation of Judy Garland in Life with Judy Garland, Me and My Shadows in 2002 won her a second Golden Globe for Best Actress in a TV film.*





# CAST

DR CLAIR ..... Helena BONHAM CARTER  
 JIBSEN ..... Judy DAVIS  
 THE FATHER ..... Callum Keith RENNIE  
 T.S. SPIVET ..... Kyle CATLETT  
 GRACIE ..... Niamh WILSON  
 LAYTON ..... Jakob DAVIES  
 ROY ..... Rick MERCER  
 TWO CLOUDS ..... Dominique PINON

RICKY ..... Julian RICHINGS  
 MR STENPOCK ..... Richard JUTRAS  
 SPEAKER ..... Mairtin O'CARRIGAN  
 GUARD ..... Michel PERRON  
 WAITRESS ..... Dawn FORD  
 RAILWAY COP ..... Harry STANDJOFSKI  
 CATHY ..... Susan GLOVER  
 THE PRESIDENT OF THE SMITHSONIAN ..... James BRADFORD

# CREW

Director ..... Jean-Pierre JEUNET  
 Screenplay and adaptation ..... Jean-Pierre JEUNET  
 ..... Guillaume LAURANT  
 Dialogues ..... Guillaume LAURANT  
 Based on the novel ..... "The Selected Works of T.S. Spivet"  
 ..... by Reif LARSEN  
 Executive producers ..... Frédéric BRILLION  
 ..... Jean-Pierre JEUNET  
 ..... Suzanne GIRARD  
 1st assistant director ..... Christophe VASSORT  
 Continuity ..... Anne WERMELINGER  
 Casting ..... Lucie ROBITAILLE  
 Story-board ..... Maxime REBIERE  
 Production Managers ..... Jean-Marc DESCHAMPS  
 ..... José LACELLE  
 Location Scout ..... Pierre BLONDIN  
 Floor Manager ..... Daniel ROSS  
 Director of photography ..... Thomas HARDMEIER – A.F.C.  
 Director of photography 2nd unit ..... Pierre GILL  
 Cameramen ..... Daniel SAUVE  
 ..... Dany RACINE  
 3D Stereography ..... Demetri PORTELLI  
 3D Engineer ..... Ben GERVAIS  
 Color grading ..... Fabrice BLIN  
 Still photographer ..... Jan THIJS  
 ..... Pierre DURY  
 Making-of ..... Julien LECAT

Sound engineer ..... Jean UMANSKY  
 Costume designer ..... Madeline FONTAINE – A.F.C.C.A.  
 Makeup ..... Nathalie TISSIER  
 Hair ..... Réjean GODERRE  
 Set designer ..... Aline BONETTO – A.D.C.  
 Set construction ..... Jean-André CARRIERE  
 Editor ..... Hervé SCHNEID – A.C.E.  
 1st assistant editor ..... Flora ZAGHINI  
 Sound editor ..... Gérard HARDY  
 Sound design ..... Selim AZZAZI  
 Sound mixer ..... Vincent ARNARDI – C.A.S.  
 Sound effects ..... Jean-Pierre LELONG  
 Key grip ..... Sylvain BERNIER  
 Gaffer ..... David DINEL  
 Stunt coordinator ..... Jean FRENETTE  
 Post-production manager ..... Sidonie WASERMAN  
 Digital visual effects ..... La Compagnie Générale des Effets visuels  
 ..... Alain CARSOUX  
 Graphic design ..... BATMANU  
 Composer ..... Denis SANACORE  
 Music consultant ..... Edouard DUBOIS  
 Text editor ..... Igor THOMAS-GERARD  
 Music editor ..... Hervé SCHNEID – A.C.E.  
 Sound mixer ..... Julien PEREZ  
 Musical supervision ..... Elise LUGERN  
 Translator ..... Fred CASSIDY  
 Trainer ..... Josée JUTEAU

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