

# Lily sometimes

A film by Fabienne Berthaud

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**QUINZAINE**  
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**LE BUREAU**

Presents

**Lily sometimes**  
*(Pieds nus sur les limaces)*

A film directed by

**Fabienne Berthaud**

With

**Diane Kruger & Ludivine Sagnier**



# Synopsis



**Lily** (*Ludivine Sagnier*) is like no other girl. Uninhibited and free-spirited, she lives in the moment and allows no one to tell her what to do. She has her own world in which she lives in harmony with Nature.

Her elder sister, **Clara** (*Diane Kruger*), had left home a long time ago to get married and live her life in a big city.

When their mother dies, Clara has to come back home to manage the inheritance and her little sister Lily, who is unable to take care of herself.



Bucolic scenery, liberating fantasies and sisterly love  
will help these very different characters  
find their path to happiness...



***Selective filmography includes:***

- 2010 **Unkown White Male** by Jaume Collet-Serra
- Lily Sometimes** by Fabienne Berthaud
- Mr. Nobody** by Jaco Von Dormael
- Venice Film Festival 2009 - Competition*
- 2009 **Inglourious Basterds** by Quentin Tarantino
- Festival de Cannes 2009 - Official Selection*
- Nomination for SAG Best Supporting Actress*
- 2008 **Anything for Her** by Fred Cavayé
- 2007 **National Treasure 2: Book of Secrets**  
by Jon Turteltaub
- 2006 **Frankie** by Fabienne Berthaud
- 2004 **Troy** by Wolfgang Petersen
- National treasure** by Jon Turteltaub
- 2002 **Whatever You Say** by Guillaume Canet



**Diane Kruger**  
is Clara





## Interview with Fabienne Berthaud

### ***When did you get the idea for Lily Sometimes?***

I wrote the book while I was shooting my first feature film, *Frankie*. The young girl who inspired Lily's character spent some time in the clinic where I was filming. So it came as a logical conclusion to my work. The whimsical nature of spirit, reaching one's outer limits, looking at peoples' vulnerability and their differences are all recurrent themes in my work.

### ***What touched you about this young girl?***

Her freedom. Her capacity to live in the moment. I like people who don't fit into a mold. They have a strong sensibility and it keeps them from accepting the rules of society that seem arbitrary. Lily's character pushes the envelope of normality and makes us question how we live, while offering other possibilities for those who don't fit into the "format". Lily won't compromise. She is free in body and spirit and she won't negotiate. She shakes people up and makes them question reality. The story breaks into our personal world and forces us question the fine line between what is normal and what is off-beat. Isn't the cacophony of our education and the values instilled in us (i.e., money, professional success, material comfort, marriages of convenience) often the cause of our unhappiness?

### ***Is it easy to adapt your own novel?***

It is essential to take distance. I don't remember who said, one must look at the literary "œuvre" with a filmmaker's eye and not look to reproduce it. With my co-screenwriter, Pascal Arnold, we felt entirely free. We were very playful while writing some of the dialogues. Lily, with her frankness and her ability to tell people what she thinks without any restriction, allowed us to use some off-beat humor. I think this is a great strength in the film. In fact, in the final analysis, if the book is very dark, the film is very sunny and veers towards hope. That is precisely what interested me when I started this project. Taking the same characters and having them experience other situations.

### ***How would you define your film?***

It's a story about a family. Two sisters, vulnerable due to the sudden death of their mother, find each other. Both of them are out of balance, each in her own way. Their lives are in turmoil and they will mutually learn from each other and grow. I tried to tell a story of humanity, generosity, love and freedom. It's about understanding the other with their differences.

### ***What made you think of casting Diane Kruger, your heroine in Frankie, for the role of Clara, Lily's older sister?***

I didn't think about it. It just happened. It became an obvious fact. A desire. It was out of the question that I make my second feature film without her. She read the book. I asked her, "Would you like to play Clara?" She said yes, and that was it. She followed the various versions of the script. We wanted to work with each other again. She is part of my universe, my life, my family. I love looking at her through my lens. She inspires me. She is vulnerable and strong at once. I love that duality. She is capable of expressing things in silence with a lot of subtlety. We've known each other for several years now, and we started together because *Frankie* was like a first film for both of us.

She knows the way I work and we don't need to talk very much to understand each other. She knows what I expect from her and I know what she expects from me. We have a mutual respect for one another. Clara is a difficult role, restrained, subtle and delicate. She is a character battling an inner storm that she cannot express. Until one day when...

### ***Why did you choose Ludivine Sagnier to play the role of Lily?***

Lily's character is extremely complex. She could never appear ridiculous. She flirts with insanity, but it is not about turning her into a "rain woman". It was essential to find an actress whose child-like quality was still palpable, someone who projects pureness, truth while being generous all at once. She is a multi-faceted character. There's no compromising when you accept a role like that. You must give your all. It's a role that demands considerable work without it showing.

Ludivine was an obvious choice. I felt she was capable. When I saw her for the audition, the moment I opened the door, I knew she would be perfect. She has a woman-child quality, an authentic aura. I don't know how to explain it. I function instinctively. I don't intellectualize anything. I only sense things. And she also really wanted to play the character which came across to me as well. She had the urge and so did I.

I had her meet Diane. I needed to see them together to feel if they would get along, love each other. There was an instant connection and it turned out having them play two sisters, physically, really worked. During the shoot, there was a strong complicity between them. They were really like two sisters and very attentive to one another.

Ludivine is an actress who gives her all without any restrictions. She works without a safety net. She doesn't act, she is. She never cheats and is very generous. She has the ability to forget herself and take on another persona to the point of physically changing. It is a joy to work with her, and I am sure that Lily will surprise many people. I feel like I've always known her. She is like a little sister to me. I don't know... like Diane. I feel the same attachment. My family is growing.

### ***How did your experience of working on Frankie help you in filming Lily Sometimes and how do you work?***

I feel that each film has its own language. I think that *Lily Sometimes* is my second first feature. In fact, during the shoot, Diane kidded me and said, "Fabienne, we're making a real film with crew." It's true, on *Frankie*, the crew was made up of an assistant who held the microphone, and me, with a digital camera that I used like a pen. That was all. And that reflected the film's budget.

Here, things were different. I had all the cinematographic tools at my disposal and a crew that I kept light so as not to be too burdened technically. I need freedom to work. I don't cut, freeze or frame. If I'm not in the eye of the camera, I cannot feel the scene that I am shooting. It all goes through it. The film is made in the moment. When I begin shooting a scene, I am in state of high alert. I am uncomfortable and feeling in danger.

I search for the unexpected, the miracle, the moment of grace. I prepare nothing, but I know perfectly well where I am going and what I want to obtain because I have mulled it over in advance.

I also have the annoying tendency to talk during the takes. I direct them in this manner and we virtually never rehearse beforehand. And I always say, *"Tell your story as if you're making a documentary about people."* I had to find people who agreed to work in this manner, people capable of setting aside their reflexes and habits so they could use mine. I put together my crew in the same way as I did my actors. Intuitively, I let my instincts guide me. The people with whom I decide to work must have human qualities. It is as essential as their talent. I cannot work with difficult personalities, no matter how wonderful they may be. I need to create with pleasure, and I am very uncomfortable with tension.

Finally my work is about bringing together talent that adds to the whole, while letting each person express their skills to make the most beautiful film possible whether it be sound, image, set, editing, calibration, mixing... It all counts.

### ***How did things go with your director of photography, Nathalie Durand?***

I was very frightened to work with a cinematographer. I was afraid there would be too many projectors, too much machinery, too many constraints that would keep us from changing the point of view when I wanted it. And we filmed with two cameras, which isn't necessarily simple. When I met Nathalie, I told her, *"I don't want light."* It seems a rather paradoxical request for a cinematographer. But she understood what I wanted, and she set herself up to work in the manner I requested. The camera crew was made up of three people. We used a hand-held camera which provided a lot of flexibility. We filmed the exterior shots working with the sun. For the interiors, she produced light without questioning my manner of working. And I am grateful to her. We worked in symbiosis to such a point that each evening when we would look at the rushes, we could hardly tell which one of us set up the shot. When it gets to that point, the working conditions are exceptional. Having the same vision for the shots is something else!

### ***Another essential element of the film is linked to Lily's world. How did you construct it?***

When I was writing it, I met the artist, Valérie Delis, whose artistic creations corresponded to Lily's world. She is very close to animals and nature. Without even knowing if the film was going to be made, we decided to work together. She opened her artist's studio to me and I let myself drink in her whimsical world, rewriting certain scenes for the script after seeing what she had to show me. We thought about Lily's vision of the world together... the way she dressed, created. We made work books. Valérie quickly made Lily's aprons, her slippers. She drew her garden and lent her works for the girls' rooms.

I suggested she do installations in the forest. She decorated trees, constructed, invented, enriched Lily's world and many shots the moment the film came out of the pre-production stage. Once the film was financed, I asked her to be artistic director. She accepted. She had never worked in cinema before.

### ***Are there certain films or filmmakers that have been a reference for you when you started working on Lily Sometimes?***

Mostly photography. I depend a great deal on this tool to find my film. Scenes, framing. I make notebooks of images that I flip through before shooting each scene. But before each film, I must admit I see John Cassavetes movies again. I feel as though someone is whispering in my ear, "Go on, go for it. Feel free. No rules are holding them back." It has that affect on me. It keeps me from being frightened.

### ***One of the most powerful moments in the film is the love scene where Lily and a gang of young boys makes love on the bus. How did you envisage and shoot the scene so that it would remain sufficiently raw and compelling while keeping the child-like tone and sunny disposition of the film?***

Lily is in a situation of generosity. And there's nothing unhealthy in her eyes about giving pleasure to boys. It's as simple as that for her. However, we don't see the scene through her eyes, which is why we have this uneasy sensation. To achieve

this, I spoke to the three boys and gave them each directions and intentions. Then I left them to freely act and let the cameras roll for 22 minutes with Ludivine-Lily leading the show. I spoke during the sequence to give some direction. I loved filming like that, and I remember having a hard time saying cut!

***Did the way you filmed your actors change on this second feature-length film?***

I do not like the word directing. I don't think I direct. I feel that when the actors are in their right place, there's nothing more to be done. It's just a matter of reaping the harvest. I don't think a film can have bad actors. It's more that the director has made poor choices. He's the one who's made the mistake, not the actor.

As we're filming, I talk with the actors about their characters backgrounds. They ask me questions. We search together for their characterizations. But once we're on the set, they are free to do as they wish and not what I am expecting.

And most importantly, I do everything I can so that the real spark of life comes together with fiction. For instance, Denis Ménochet, who plays Pierre, had never filmed several days in a row with us. Never in continuity. I did everything in my power so he wouldn't find his place on the set... in the same way that his character is incapable of finding his place between Clara and Lily.

***What was your relationship with Bertrand Faivre, your producer?***

He is a genuine partner. Together we work to make the same film. I wrote an unfinished version of the film when I had met him. After reading it, Bertrand sent me a long email detailing exactly what he found was positive and negative. He defended his points clearly. And he finished by saying, "What is really very good is that this is a film that resembles you. Now if you agree with my critiques, we can work together." From that point, things started to move very quickly.

We had a meeting with Bertrand and Pascal Arnold, my co-screenwriter. Four months later, the script was complete. Bertrand had launched the financing. He gave his green light for the preparation of the film without having the budget completed. I found that courageous on his part and we started shooting the film as he was completing the financing.

When I spoke to him about Valérie Delis who was going to supervise all the sets and told him she had never worked in cinema, he simply said, "I trust you." He gave me the tools and free reign. I never took advantage because I never went over budget! He is a producer who dares to step beyond boundaries, and this is rare.

***Do you rewrite much of the film during the post production and editing?***

I write it differently. I forget about the script. At this point, it no longer serves any purpose. The only thing that counts are the characters, their emotions, their internal journeys, what they experience and the rhythm. Editing is difficult because one has to mourn certain moments that one loved, certain dialogues, certain sets... and considering the way I film, I end up with a lot of rushes. I have a lot of scenes I must bury. However, during a certain point of the editing, the film speaks for itself. At this point, cutting scenes no longer hurts. Instead it feels good, very good, because the film is finding its rhythm, its storyline, its emotion. It's finding its coherence, harmony and "music".

***There is definitely a mélange in Lily Sometimes between emotion, laughter and malaise... which in fact keeps us from putting the film in a specific genre.***

If this film is like Lily and doesn't fit into pigeonhole, I am delighted. Whether it be Anglo-Saxon, German or French, as long as it has its humanity, coherence, makes you want to live and speaks to people, that's the only thing that counts.

***In your film Frankie, you introduced us to the group Coco Rosie. How did you come up with music for Lily Sometimes?***

During the editing, I began to think about the music, but I didn't know exactly where to begin. There was just one thing I was sure of. I wanted to use a Thomas Dybdahl song for the end of the film. He is a young Norwegian musician with a lot



of talent. And then, through a friend, I met Michael Stevens, who did the music for the last three Eastwood film: *Letters From Iwo Jima*, *Gran Torino* and *Invictus*. He told me he was moving to Paris. I spoke to him about the film. He asked me to show him some images. I felt his curiosity. One day, he came to the editing room with his guitar, a synthesizer... He sat in front of the screen and started to play. His instruments never left the room after that.

Michael set up a studio in the cellar of the production office and the editing studio became a music studio as well. He composed some songs little by little that he then recorded in Budapest. It was a fantastic experience. Some of his friends joined in, people like Manu Katché, Kyle Eastwood, Crofton Orr and Scott Barnhill...

***Do you prefer literature or cinema?***

I like them both! I need one to make the other. They echo each other. I find my film subjects in my novels and ideas for novels in my films.

*Interviewed by* **Thierry Chèze**





# Ludivine Sagnier is Lily

**Selective filmography includes:**

- 2010 **Lily Sometimes** by Fabienne Berthaud
- 2008 **Mesrine: Part 2 - Public Enemy n°1** by Jean François Richet  
**Mesrine: Part 1 - Death Instinct** by Jean François Richet
- 2007 **The Girl Cut in Two** by Claude Chabrol  
**Love Songs** by Christophe Honoré  
**A Secret** by Claude Miller  
*Nomination for Best Supporting Actress at the César Awards*
- 2006 **Paris, I Love You** by Olivier Assayas
- 2003 **Little Lili** by Claude Miller  
*Silver Hugo for Best Female Performance at the Chicago Int. Film Festival*  
**Swimming Pool** by François Ozon  
*Nomination for César Award for Best Supporting Actress*  
*Nomination for Best Actress for the Audience Award at the European Film Awards*
- 2002 **8 Women** by François Ozon  
*European Film Awards - Best ensemble cast*  
*Berlin Film Festival - Silver Bear for Outstanding Artistic Achievement*  
*César Awards - Nomination for Most Promising Actress*





## Fabienne Berthaud

(Director)

After the critically acclaimed *Frankie*, Fabienne Berthaud comes back with her new, graceful movie, led by the intense Diane Kruger and the iconic Ludivine Sagnier.

With her two characters and an original score by Michael Stevens (*Invictus*, *Gran Torino...*), the director touches here on the fragile delineation between normal and offbeat, classical and fanciful, that is present in each of us...

An ultimate lesson of happiness, understanding and love.

2009 **Lily Sometimes**  
2005 **Frankie**



## Bertrand Faivre

(Producer)

Bertrand started as Head of Acquisitions at UGC France before joining Les Productions Lazennec (*La Haine*, *Scent of Green Papaya*, and *Cyclo*) in 1992 until 2001.

In 2000, he set up independently a UK production company, THE BUREAU & a French one, LE BUREAU in October 2001 to develop long-term relationships with some of the best European directors of their generation.

In the past 10 years, Bertrand has been producing or co-producing over 15 feature films in France, England, Ireland, Romania, Norway, Mexico, India and the US.

### Selective filmography includes:

- 2011 **Late Bloomers** by Julie Gavras (*Blame it on Fidel!*)  
Cast: William Hurt, Isabella Rossellini
- 2010 **Lily Sometimes** by Fabienne Berthaud (*Frankie*)  
Cast: Diane Kruger, Ludivine Sagnier, Denis Menochet (*Inglourious Basterds*)
- 2009 **Farewell** by Christian Carion  
(Academy Award nominated *MERRY CHRISTMAS*)  
Cast: Guillaume Canet, Emir Kusturica, Willem Dafoe, David Soul
- London River [COPRODUCTION]** by Rachid Bouchareb  
(Academy Award nominated *DAYS OF GLORY*)  
Cast: Brenda Blethyn, Sotigui Kouyate  
*Berlin 2009 (Best Actor), Toronto, London - Official Competition*
- Welcome [COPRODUCTION]** by Philippe Lioret  
Cast: Vincent Lindon - *Berlin 2009 - Fipresci Award; 10 nominations Césars 2010*
- 2008 **Julia** by Erick Zonca  
Cast: Tilda Swinton - *Berlin 2008 - Official Competition*
- 2005 **Merry Christmas [COPRODUCTION]** by Christian Carion  
Cast: Guillaume Canet, Gary Lewis, Diane Kruger, Daniel Bruhl  
*Cannes Official Selection - Nominated for Academy Awards, BAFTA, Golden Globes 2005*
- 2001 **The Warrior** by Asif Kapadia  
Cast: Irfan Khan - *Winner BAFTA for Best British Film and Best Newcomer 2002*
- 2000 **Ratcatcher [COPRODUCTION]** by Lynne Ramsay  
*Winner BAFTA for Best Newcomer 2001 - Nominated Best British Film*

# Cast

Clara  
Lily  
Pierre  
Odile  
Paul  
Jonas  
Mireille  
Seb

**Diane Kruger**  
**Ludivine Sagnier**  
**Denis Menochet**  
**Brigitte Catillon**  
**Jacques Spiesser**  
**Jean-Pierre Martins**  
**Anne Benoit**  
**Reda Kateb**

LE BUREAU presents  
a film by FABIENNE BERTHAUD

with DIANE KRUGER LUDIVINE SAGNIER DENIS MENOCHET  
JACQUES SPIESSER BRIGITTE CATILLON

Script & Dialogues FABIENNE BERTHAUD & PASCAL ARNOLD

Based on the novel by Fabienne Berthaud published by Les Editions POINT

Producer BERTRAND FAIVRE

Cinematography NATHALIE DURAND Sound FREDERIC DE RAVIGNAN

Set designer VALERIE DELIS

Original music MICHAEL STEVENS Editing PIERRE HABERER

Line producer JEAN-CHRISTOPHE COLSON

Sound designer PATRICE GRISOLET Sound mixing CHRISTOPHE VINGTRINIER

1<sup>st</sup> assistant director CAROLE REINHARD

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In partnership with CNC

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with the support of PROCIREP & ANGOA-AGICOA & from MEDIA PROGRAMME

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