

RADAR FILMS AND STUDIOCANAL
PRESENT

FRANÇOIS CLUZET
JEAN SCANDEL ÉRIC ELMOSENINO
FRANÇOIS BERLÉAND VALÉRIE KARSENTI

SCHOOL OF LIFE

DIRECTED BY
NICOLAS VANIER

WITH THE FRIENDLY PARTICIPATION OF
LAURENT GERRA

SCRIPT ADAPTATION AND DIALOGUES BY JÉRÔME TONNERRE AND NICOLAS VANIER

ORIGINAL MUSIC BY ARMAND AMAR. EDITING MANAGER RAPHAËLE URTIN. DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY OLIVIER HODIAT. COSTUMES DESIGNER ADÉLAÏDE GOSSELIN. SOUND EMMANUEL HACHETTE. THOMAS DESBONNETTES. FRANCIS JOSEPH HIRS.
PRODUCTION MANAGER PHILIPPE GAUTIER. POST-PRODUCTION MANAGER SIDONIE WASERMAN. A RADAR FILMS STUDIOCANAL FRANCE 2 CINÉMA CO-PRODUCTION WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF CANAL+ CINE+ FRANCE TÉLÉVISIONS LA PRODUCTION A PLUS DÉVELOPPEMENT A PLUS IMAGÉ DÉVELOPPEMENT B
WITH THE SUPPORT OF LA RÉGION CENTRE-VAL-DE-LOIRE AND OF CICLIC-REGION CENTRE-VAL DE LOIRE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CNC AND THE CREATIVE EUROPE PROGRAMME MEDIA OF THE EUROPEAN UNION PRODUCED BY CLÉMENT MISEBEZ, MATTHIEU WARTER

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**RADAR FILMS ET STUDIOCANAL
PRÉSENTENT**

**FRANÇOIS CLUZET
JEAN SCANDEL ÉRIC ELMOSNINO
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SCHOOL OF LIFE

**WITH THE FRIENDLY PARTICIPATION OF LAURENT GERRA
ADAPTED SCREENPLAY & DIALOGUES JÉRÔME TONNERRE ET NICOLAS VANIER**

RUNNING TIME 116 MIN

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· SYNOPSIS ·

Paris 1930. Paul always had only one and the same horizon: the high walls of the orphanage, a severe building on the outskirts of Paris. Entrusted to a cheerful lady of the countryside, Celestine and her husband, Borel, the somewhat rigid gamekeeper of a vast estate in Sologne, the child of the cities, recalcitrant and stubborn, arrives in a mysterious and worrying world, that of a sovereign and wild region. The immense forest, the misty ponds, the moors and the fields, everything here belongs to the Count of the Comte de La Salle. Fresnaye, a taciturn widower who lives alone in his mansion. The Count tolerates poachers on the estate, but Borel is relentlessly hunting them down and hounding the most cunning and elusive of them, Totoche. In the heart of the fairytale Sologne, next to the poacher, a great nature lover, Paul will learn about life but also the forest and its secrets. An even heavier secret weighs on the estate, because Paul did not come here by chance...

· NICOLAS VANIER ·

Biographical references

An adventurer, writer, photographer and director, but also a great defender of nature in all its diversity, Nicolas Vanier, this insatiable traveler of the cold has been following an extraordinary journey for over 30 years. With more than fifty published books, twenty or so expeditions and as many films, Nicolas has brought together a faithful public, sensitive to his passion for the great outdoors and to the values he conveys, where respect for nature and humankind prevails.

Born in Dakar, Senegal in 1963, Nicolas was only a few days old when he joined Sologne in the family farm. He then studied at the Lycée Agricole of Montargis, followed by a master's degree in agriculture and agriculture international trade. Passionate at an early age about what he called the "top countries", he began his expeditions by walking through Lapland and then canoeing the Quebec-Labrador Peninsula. At the age of 20, he made his first dog sledding expedition in Canada. Three years later, he crossed the western hemisphere for a year and a half from the Rocky Mountains to Bering Strait in Alaska. In 1990, Nicolas Vanier travelled all the way through Siberia from Lake Baikal to the Arctic Ocean for almost two years. In 1993, he shared the life of a nomadic reindeer herding people in the heart of the Verkoyansk mountains in Siberia. It is this deep friendship with Nicolaï, the chief of the clan, that inspired him to write the novel and film WOLF. A year later, he was found in Canada, in the heart of the Rocky Mountains with his wife and his little girl Montaine, nicknamed "the child of the snow", then one and a half years old. In 1996, Nicolas Vanier built his own team and took part in the most difficult sled dog race: the Yukon Quest, which covered more than 1600 kilometers in the great north of Canada and Alaska (he will line up at the start of this race again in 2002 and 2015). At the dawn of the new century, the White Odyssey allowed him to perform with his dogs: crossing Canada, from Alaska to Quebec City in less than a hundred days, or 8600 kilometers from one end of the continent to the other! In 2004, together with Dominique Grandjean and Henry Kam, he organized the first edition of the Grande Odyssée in the Alps, a 1,000 km European dog sled race. The following year, Nicolas Vanier continued what he had begun with the White Odyssey. This time, the Siberian Odyssey took its departure on the shores of Lake Baikal for an 8000 km finish later on Red Square in Moscow! An insatiable adventurer, Nicolas came back in 2013 with the last volume of his trilogy: the Wild Odyssey by travelling with his 10 dogs through the wildest territories of the Pacific coast of Siberia, up to the frozen shores of Lake Baikal, passing through China and Mongolia, or nearly 6000 km in less than 3 months! After several participations in the Yukon Quest where he shone in 2015 when he arrived 9th, Nicolas Vanier began on March 4th, 2017 his last great adventure with dogs by starting the Iditarod which crosses all of Alaska. From now on, he wishes to devote himself fully to one of his other passions, the cinema. Indeed, the image has always been a privileged partner of Nicolas Vanier, a taste that will lead him to film his expeditions for short films and documentaries. Nicolas Vanier's success was soon to be seen on television and in video, so he naturally passed the big screen to tell his expeditions and to share his human stories. After directing several short films and documentaries between 1985 and 1989 (COUREUR DES BOIS, CARAVANE, RIVIÈRES OPVERTES, PARTAGE DES EAUX), he directed in 1995 his first feature-length documentary for cinema, L' ENFANT DES NEIGES, inspired by his trip with his granddaughter Montaine. After a return to documentary in 1999 with L' ODYSSEE BLANCHE, Nicolas Vanier returned to the big screen in 2004 with LE DERNIER TRAPPEUR, with more than 2.2 million admissions in France. The film tells the story of a year of Norman Winther's life, one of the last trappers from the Canadian Yukon.

Five years later, he moved for the first time to pure fiction with WOLF, which tells the story of the friendship between a young reindeer breeder and a wolf. Back to fiction in 2013, when Gaumont

suggests that he stages an adaptation of BELLE ET SÉBASTIEN, Cécile Aubry's greatest work. Released during the festivities of Christmas, the film is a huge success with more than 3 million admissions. A year later, 6 million viewers watch The Wild Odyssey on M6 (audience record for a film since 2012).

Since then, cinema has taken an increasingly important place in Nicolas's life who writes SCHOOL OF LIFE, inspired by his youth and filmed in the Sologne where he spent his childhood and where he now lives. Nicolas Vanier is also a very prolific author since he has signed no less than 50 works: stories of his expeditions, books of pictures and even comic strips. He also wrote more thematic books including the most recent one, LES PIEDS SUR TERRE, an encyclopedia in which the author celebrates nature day by day through information on the planet, wildlife and the environment flora. He is also the author of several fiction novels (WHITE SOLITUDES, GOLD UNDER THE SNOW, or WOLF), in particular LE GRAND BRÂME from which he was inspired to write the script of SCHOOL OF LIFE.

"I am neither a scientist nor a politician. I'm a witness. An ambassador of the nature that I pretend to know well because I have crisscrossed the wilderness immensity of the Great North for 30 years. What I saw gave me the desire to act. Today, I kind of want to give back to nature what it gave me. It is the reason why I am making films, travels and books. The solution comes from every one of us. We can do it". Thus says Nicolas Vanier, who actively participates in the environmental protection on all fronts, among schoolchildren (several schools carry his name), by advising companies or by participating in conferences, etc. In 2000 he set up the association *Les Fauteuils glissants*, which is designed to make accessible the practice of dog sleigh rides to people with motor disabilities all around the world. In 2009, Nicolas Vanier launched *L'école agit* with the National Education Department. This program aims to integrate projects related to environment and sustainable development in the school curricula. This operation has been exported to other countries such as Lebanon, China or Japan. In 2010, the SNCF launched a competition called *les Trophées du tourisme*, which rewards tourism companies that respect the environment and people. This initiative is an other active support to Nicolas Vanier's activities.

Other active support, the responsible tourism, a competition organized by the SNCF since 2010, which has been awarding an award to tourism companies that are respectful of the environment. environment and people. Finally, several of his expeditions were accompanied by educational packages in order to inform schools about sustainable development in collaboration with the Department of National Education.

· NICOLAS VANIER ·

Interview

To understand you Nicolas Vanier, it is necessary to return to your origins. And even if you were born in Senegal, it is Sologne which appears to be your native land...

I only spent a few days in Senegal where my father did his military service. Who knows ? It's possible that I had a heatstroke and so I prefer great cold but it was the Sologne that made me who I am: a nature and wildlife lover...

And also large open spaces since the region is full of them...

I indeed pay tribute to this enchanting wild region in SCHOOL OF LIFE as I did in THE LAST TRAPPEUR for the Rocky Mountains of Canada, Siberia for WOLF or the mountain for BELLE ET SÉBASTIEN. It was natural for me to return home for this film, on this territory that I love and where I developed, in my grandfather's footsteps, my taste for nature and my knowledge of the forest and animals.

But in your films, nature is always related to humans...

I think that there is nothing sadder than a territory deserted by men. A nature without men is for me an empty, sad nature. By the way, I have watched it again a few months ago when I crossed Canada. I saw many places and villages, once inhabited by trappers and Indians who are now ruins and deserts.

Does little Paul from SCHOOL OF LIFE look like the Nicolas you were?

Even though I am not a child of the city and even though I was born with boots on my feet and a fishing rod in my hand, there are memories of my childhood in Paul's wonder when he discovers nature and people from the Sologne. They are sometimes a bit harsh, but you quickly discover that they are generous. More generally, my sources of inspiration are multiple. They come from the novel I wrote on the Sologne, LE GRAND BRAME, from the work of Maurice Genevoix (RABOLIOT, LA DERNIERE HARDE), but also from Alain Fournier's magnificent GRAND MEAULNES.

Did you have this project in mind for a long time?

Yes, but unconsciously. The writing of LE GRAND BRAME was a detonator. After that, it was also a question of being available, a film often leading to another. I certainly had the urge to come home. This was done in a natural and progressive way.

why did you choose the 1930s?

It is a firstly aesthetic choice. I was looking for this perfect mix between colours, textures and nature, at a time that could be described as flamboyant in the Sologne. I clearly prefer the look of the hunters of the time to that of today with their high-tech and fluorescent clothes! And let's not talk about the behaviour of many of them who have nothing to do with the people I talk about in the film: men who know and respect nature.

François Cluzet describes SCHOOL OF LIFE as "a spectacular auteur film". Do you agree with him?

I think he is quite right because nature is one of the main actors in the film that we had to deal with. But nature was very accommodating on the set, we had perfect weather and light conditions. My idea was to let nature express itself according to the story we wanted to tell. And for that, the Sologne has been generous. It knows I love it and gives it back to me...

How did you choose the shooting locations?

The Sologne offered many possibilities but we also have to respect the time of the story. For example, for the market place stage that we see in the film, we searched in vain for villages that had not been too distorted. It was a difficult task. That's why we decided to reconstitute one in an abandoned hamlet then restored by a passionate person... For the rest, we shot in existing scenery, like schools and, of course, the castle of the film. And of course, the extras are all solognots. We launched appeals in various town halls and we had enthusiastic returns. There were queues of several hours to register!

How did you avoid the pitfalls of the reconstruction, namely decors that "make" too late in the 1930s?

It is not an easy task and with my chief decorator we have been very vigilant. One of the pitfalls when you film the 1930s is the use of preserved props or costumes, especially by museums. But in the 1930s, there were also new bicycles for example! I therefore asked my decoration team to work on the patina of the accessories, taking care to keep the style of the 1930s but without falling into old and aged objects.

Jean Scandel, who makes his screen debut, as Paul is a newcomer. How did you find him?

We embarked on a great national casting where more than 2000 young boys presented themselves. I selected about thirty of them and then we did some tests with 6 young actors. Jean finally distinguished himself by his intelligence and playfulness. It must be said that he had to give François Cluzet, who came in person for these tests, a reply from the very beginning. He is a naturally gifted young boy, but I also found in him a kind of crack, something inner, very touching, which made him credible as a little orphan. I have never regretted this choice, I find him wonderful.

How to shoot with a child?

You must love him. As a director is a bit in love with his actress when he sublimates her, I must have empathy for Jean. I had felt the same closeness with Felix on the filming of BELLE ET SÉBASTIEN. From there, you have to work with them, make them enjoy playing, comfort them and point them in the right direction.

What is the hardest thing after all? Shooting with famous actors, children or animals?

In the cinema, it is often said that the most difficult thing to do is to shoot with animals, with children or outdoors. We have accumulated all three! It may repel some people, but that's what fascinates me. When an animal is reluctant to make the desired movement, I never lose patience. I'm just trying to find a way to get him to do what we need. Working with trainers and animals is a challenge to which I am accustomed. But above all, it is a team effort. That is essential. I have great confidence in the people who work with me, chief operator, first assistant, chief decorator, costumes... I've made a lot of films with them, we have seen extreme dramas and shoots. The trust I have placed in them has allowed me to focus on directing actors.

Precisely they are other actors to tame. Let's start with François Cluzet. How was your meeting?

François was immediately won over by the scenario, then our meeting turned into a privileged relationship. We found ourselves in the Sologne, we fished, went for walks in the forest, we approached wild boar and deer. Then came the time for the shooting, which I was a little apprehensive about. François is an actor whose career speaks for itself. I was nervous, but he was reassuring. From the first few shots, I forgot that I was filming François Cluzet. He was Totoche, that's all! And from the

very first evening, he came to me to tell me how happy he was to work with me on this character. For a director to be able to work with such actors, it's like playing on a Stradivarius!

Did you discover Valerie Karsenti on television?

Yes, I watched what she did before and was amazed at the magnitude of her acting. She is amazing in this film, sensitive, funny and moving. When I think that some people are reluctant to work with television actors, nice lesson.

What about Eric Elmosnino and François Berléand?

Once again, I was interested in these actors. I didn't see anyone but Eric to play "my" Borel. It was him! He has naturally imposed himself with his ability to constantly play on comic and dramatic registers. He has this touching naivety. The same goes for Francis, to whom the Count's role went like a glove. There was an astonishing benevolence between them all. Everyone was always trying to raise the other. In this benevolent and constructive atmosphere, I really took off in my role as a director to find out what was needed for our story by going to their incredible game registers and their proposals.

One of the themes of SCHOOL OF LIFE is also the return to some lost values...

If this film can convince the youngest to leave their video games to go fishing, it will be a good thing! Nature allows the transmission of values that once passed through the learning of these practices. There was a sort of intergenerational torchbearer that we don't know today. When we shot the market scene in this reconstructed setting in the village square, many local extras came to see me and said: "My God, it was a time of dialogue and sharing for hours while today, we're going to push our shopping cart into a supermarket". I'm not retrograde for a penny, but I find the current era staggering. Time has accelerated like never before in the last 50 years. I believe that we must now think about a more humane society; to bring some values back into fashion by modernising and adapting them. The world as it is today is no longer livable, if only for environmental issues. We consume more than what the earth can produce, and we emit more carbon dioxide than what the earth can absorb. We are therefore bankrupt, and we must change course. I am glad that these themes are starting to appeal to the public. SCHOOL OF LIFE is a fiction that does not pretend to change things or carry a message. But this is my way of provoking a debate.

Are you an environmentalist?

I do not like this designation because political ecology has not necessarily shown its best face in recent years. While the term is overworked, it is nonetheless essential. I'm one of those people who wants to protect a planet that is in bad shape. Even if it means taking complicated positions as I did when I signed up for wolf control. I think there are bridges to be built, for example between hunters and environmental advocates. One can be complementary to the other. We must rebuild together.

What triggered your adventure in the cinema?

It's really a logical sequel. I have always filmed my expeditions and I quickly realized that the big screen was better able to magnify the power of images. That's what I did with THE LAST TRAPPEUR, after working a lot on documentaries for television. Then the film's success allowed me to continue, as I didn't know anyone in the world of cinema. Without this success, I certainly wouldn't have had a second chance. Then the second shift took place with my desire to stage and direct actors. As an author, I had already experienced this journey, gradually moving from adventure narratives to pure fiction, with success. In fact, when I published LE CHANT DU GRAND NORD, I suddenly felt an incredible

freedom. I was finally able to create my own characters, to escape, me who was becoming a bit trapped in my own stories at that time.

And will you continue to escape?

I hung up the gloves because for various reasons, this year I carried out my last great expedition with my sled dogs. Today I have a great desire for cinema. I work on several projects, including a comedy.

· THE GENESE OF SCHOOL OF LIFE ·

CLÉMENT MISEREZ & MATTHIEU WARTER
PRODUCERS - RADAR FILMS

THE ORIGINE OF RADAR FILMS

Clément Miserez

Both of us have always wanted to make films when we did not come from the seraglio. For me, I was predestined for medical studies but my passion for film was stronger. When I was 14 years old, I was reading *Le Film Français* and I was having fun predicting admission figures. I started with TV production and short film and then Matthieu joined me in the company. I rather work with talent and on projects, while Matthieu manages the administrative and financial aspects since he already held this position at STUDIOCANAL.

Matthieu Warter

When I was 16, I was already going to the cinema a lot and I remember reading an article by Philippe Martin that introduced me to the many facets of being a producer. When you produce a film, you go from phase to phase: creative, technical, financial and marketing. I then realized that no other profession in the world allowed such richness. At Radar Films, we can switch from Fabrice du Welz's ALLÉLUIA, a genre film banned for under-16s, to a family tale like Nicolas Vanier's BELLE ET SÉBASTIEN.

Clément Miserez

And besides, why limit yourself to one genre? I'm a big Ridley Scott fan because he knows how to do ALIEN, GLADIATOR and ONE GOOD YEAR. We like that each film is a new experience, to pass from Nicolas's film with an imposing technical team of 80 people to the more confidential one of Fabrice, with 12 people. Finally, loyalty is important to us. Nicolas and Fabrice are two of the directors we follow in the films. You must work closely with a director. The producer is not a mere financier: he must put himself at the service of a common ambition.

THE MEETING WITH NICOLAS VANIER

Clément Miserez

We developed the idea of BELLE ET SÉBASTIEN with the co-scriptwriters of the film, Julien Suarez and Juliette Salles. It was a real collaboration because we see production as a constant exchange. Reflecting on a director, we thought of Nicolas Vanier since THE LAST TRAPPEUR or WOLF already showed his talent for open spaces, adventure and people. He read the script and less than 48 hours later, he called to tell us that he was excited about the project. Nicolas had all the professional and human qualities to make this film. He is kind of like the Jack London of directors.

Matthieu Warter

Nicolas has a real producer's approach in his way of making a film. He invests himself from the first day of writing to the last day of the year. He has got such an energy that takes everybody with him. For us it is very motivating and reassuring. The film was a great success with more than 3 million admissions, but Nicolas didn't want to make the sequel, which allowed us to anchor the trilogy on a more Anglo-Saxon production register: for each episode a different director, a different leg with Christian Duguay and soon Clovis Cornillac.

THE ORIGINS OF SCHOOL OF LIFE

Clément Miserez

The project was born from a common idea of Nicolas Vanier and Vivien Aslanian, who worked for Pathé at that time. They were thinking about a film about the French countryside and especially the Sologne, drawing inspiration from the universe of books like Raboliot. We then approached Jérôme Tonnerre so that he could collaborate with Nicolas on a screenplay that, incidentally, was written relatively quickly. BELLE ET SÉBASTIEN had been supported by Gaumont's director of distribution, François Clerc. François quickly considered the project SCHOOL OF LIFE as a matter of course. The film could therefore have been made by Gaumont but he followed François when he left for STUDIOCANAL. We managed to raise the 8.5 million euros, with a budget that was finally quite moderate for an period film, requiring special resources for sets and costumes. France 2 then entered the round table, as did Canal+ and STUDIOCANAL, who bet a lot on the project.

Matthieu Warter

We have also been very much followed by local and regional authorities, thanks notably to Nicolas Vanier. The Centre-Val-de-Loire region has invested a great deal of effort in highlighting the Sologne by providing support for image education, tourism promotion and communication.

Clement Miserez

And all the team really devoted themselves body and soul to making this film within budget and in less than 9 weeks. They were asked a lot and they were present throughout the production.

THE CASTING

Clément Miserez

François Cluzet arrived very quickly on the project. In a way, he was the one who bet on us because he had to take on an original role for him, that of a poacher in the French countryside of the 1930s. From the very first costumes tests, we realized that he was perfect for the role of Totoche.

Matthieu Warter

Nicolas Vanier had the intelligence to choose popular actors, who remain rather atypical in their genre. With François Clerc, we also wanted to avoid locking the film too much in a "terroir" register. In this way, casting was essential. Choosing Valérie Karsenti was also important because she is the red thread of SCHOOL OF LIFE and accompanies the film. They all come out of what the public knows about them: the television series for Valérie, the more urban roles for François, and the debonair seducers for Eric. As for François Berléand, he is a character of his own... We are proud of this casting.

Clément Miserez

I remember a dinner that we all organized together the day before the shoot in a tavern. By looking at them and listening to them talk, I finally understood that I am doing this job specially to live these moments.

Choosing Jean Scandel was also decisive. Once again, Nicolas showed us his instinct when it came to choose the one who would incarnate Paul. With Jean, as it had already been the case for the young Félix in BELLE ET SÉBASTIEN, he felt something that we do not necessarily see during the casting. making a movie with a child is not as hard as you might think. The child is in the moment, he has no ego. Once the final cast was complete, Nicolas did a real preparatory work with the actors before the shooting. They all went to Sologne to work together to prepare the film and get to know each other better. It was important for cohesion.

THE SHOOTING

Matthieu Warter

The shooting lasted 44 days, from 19 September to 24 November 2016, exclusively in the Sologne and the Centre region. The worktop was mainly composed of outdoor scenes on sets to which very few elements related to the period were sometimes added. Nicolas was "blessed by the gods" because, as it had already been the case on BELLE ET SÉBASTIEN, the weather was mild. We didn't shoot in the studio, the scenes from the beginning of the film in Paris having been made in Orléans. However, the challenge was logistical. As the Sologne spans three departments, we had to streamline the organisation of filming to facilitate access to the stages and hotels. Once again, the spotting work done by Nicolas and his production manager helped us a lot.

Clément Miserez

Nicolas Vanier has a team that follows him very closely from film to film. It was already pretty much the same on BELLE ET SÉBASTIEN. They are people who know how Nicolas works. They know what a -40-degree shoot is. Nicolas remains very attentive and open to dialogue on the set; he repeats a lot, prepares a lot but is always ready to listen and to share. He also facilitated filming by opening access to the Château de Chambord, for example; because there is no hunting, so wildlife is largely preserved. That's why we sometimes found ourselves living what the film's heroes lived through, surrounded by animals on the set. It was kind of a strange meeting between city rats and field rats!

POST-PRODUCTION AND RELEASE OF THE FILM

Clément Miserez

We have absolute confidence in Nicolas. He delivered a first montage of the film before leaving in March 2017 for his last expedition. This allowed us to let the film rest and have a fresh look when he returned for the finish of SCHOOL OF LIFE. Nicolas is always listening. He just wants the finished film to live up to his original dream. It is now up to all of us to accompany the film to movie theatres with its actors and director.

Matthieu Warter

SCHOOL OF LIFE is a film in Nicolas Vanier's complete DNA. At the same time, you will find wide open spaces, human relations, adventure, everything that has made his films so successful.

Clément Miserez

And we are already working with him on a new project. We still want to take him to a different field. During the filming of BELLE ET SÉBASTIEN, Nicolas told us about an idea that we are developing. It will be a film set in the Far North.

·THE ACTORS ·

FRANÇOIS CLUZET

Totoche

From INTOUCHABLES to NE LE DIS À PERSONNE, via Chabrol's cinema, François Cluzet has become one of the major actors in French cinema, with his cheeky and assertive character. It is by seeing Jacques Brel in L' HOMME DE LA MANCHA that the young François Cluzet has the trigger of the comedy. This young Parisian then joined the Florent course and followed the teaching of Jean-Laurent Cochet and Jean Périmony.

His first steps were made at the theatre (*Le gros oiseau* by Jean-Michel Ribes, *La double inconstance* de Marivaux) and in several TV movies and series on the small screen. Diane Kurys was the one who gave him his first two film roles in 1977 in DIABOLO MENTHE and COCKTAIL MOLOTOV. Three years later, he met Claude Chabrol on LE CHEVAL D' ORGUEIL, Chabrol who became one of his favourite directors. They will shoot five times together (The FANTOMES DU CHAPELIER, UNE AFFAIRE DE FEMMES, L' ENFER, RIEN NE VA PLUS).

In the 80's, he appeared in L' ÉTÉ MEURTRIER by Jean Becker, AUTOUR DE MINUIT by Bertrand Tavernier, RUE DU DEPART by Tony Gatlif, CHOCOLAT by Claire Denis, FORCE MAJEURE by Pierre Jolivet or TROP BELLE POUR TOI by Bertrand Blier. Touching everything, he also toured with Claude Zidi (ASSOCIATION DE MALFAITEURS and DEUX).

François Cluzet multiplied his experiences in the 90s, touring with Robert Altman in PRÊT-À-PORTER, with Jean-Paul Rappeneau in LE HUSSARD SUR LE ROIT but also on television and stages at the Théâtre de Chaillot or the Festival d' Avignon. The following decade he chained films together such as LES LIENS DU SANG by Jacques Maillot, Xavier Giannoli's À L' ORIGINE and Cedric Klapisch's PARIS.

Nominated a dozen times at the César, he won the Best Actor trophy in 2007 for NE LE DIS À PERSONNE by Guillaume Canet, a big public success when it was released a few months earlier. Four years later, he found it again in LES PETITS MOUCHOIRS with 5 million entries. But an important turning point came in 2011 with the international triumph of INTOUCHABLES by Eric Toledano and Olivier Nakache alongside Omar Sy. The film exceeded 19 million admissions in France and became the second biggest success of French cinema. Lately, we could see him in UN MOMENT D'EGAREMENT by Jean-François Richet, LE MEDECIN DE CAMPAGNE of Thomas Lilti and LA MECANIQUE DE L'OMBRE by Thomas Kruithof.

JEAN SCANDEL

Paul

Jean Scandel was born in Grasse in 2004 and currently lives in Le Cannet in the Alpes-Maritimes. In 2006 he started to appear in advertisements and then, until 2010, he was a child model for children's fashion photos.

In 2014 and 2016, Jean obtained figurative roles for the Monte Carlo Opera in "Rigoletto" and "Norma". In 2014 and 2015, he shot in television and internet commercials. Student in 4th grade in the theatre section of his college, he decided to try the experience of feature film and applied for the casting of SCHOOL OF LIFE. After meeting Nicolas Vanier and François Cluzet, he was chosen to play the role of Paul in the film. A sportsman, Jean has been swimming, karate and fencing for some time now.

ÉRIC ELMOSNINO

Borel

"I seldom went to school that making school of life was for me the days when I decided to go to school! And as I sometimes arrived late, teachers wouldn't accept me... The whole class then begged him to accept me to spend some time with me... Truthful!"

Éric Elmosnino studied at the National Superior Conservatory of Art Drama of Paris, and for a long time toured the stages of the greatest French theatres, performing the greatest authors. Since 1988, he has been playing William Shakespeare (*As You Like it*, *Love's Labour's Lost* and *The Life and Death of King John*) but also Alfred de Musset (*On ne badine pas avec l' amour* and *Il ne faut jurer de rien*, both directed by Jean-Pierre Vincent) or Molière (*Dom Juan* in 2001 and *Le médecin malgré lui* in 2007) and Bertolt Brecht (*Tambours dans la nuit*, *La noce chez les petits bourgeois* et *Fanfares*).

In 2001, he was awarded consecutively the prize for best actor of the syndicate of the critics for *Monsieur Armand dit Garrincha*, then Molière of theatrical revelation in 2002 (*Léonce and Léna*). He then worked with great directors such as Alain Françon and Yasmina Reza.

In 1985, he started acting in films, including in *À NOUS LES GARÇONS* by Michel Lang and *ÉTATS D' ÂME* by Jacques Fansten (where he met François Cluzet), he shot several times under the direction of Bruno Podalydès (*BANCS PUBLICS*, *VERSAILLES RIVE DROITE*, *LIBERTÉ OLÉRON*), Olivier Assayas (*FIN AOÛT*, *DÉBUT SEPTEMBRE*, and *L'HEURE D'ETE*) but also under the direction of Albert Dupontel (*BERNIE*, *DESIRE*).

2010 marks an essential turning point in Eric Elmosnino's career as his interpretation of Serge Gainsbourg in *GAINSBOURG*, *VIE HEROIQUE* by Joann Sfar, since he earned public success and critical acclaim. He is awarded the César of the Best Actor for this role in 2011. From then on, he multiplied his cinema experiences with Julie Delpy (*LE SKYLAB*), Yann Samuel (*LA GUERRE DES BOUTONS*) or Michel Leclerc (*TÉLÉ GAUCHO*). In 2013, he took back the position left vacant by Gérard Darmon in *LE COEUR DES HOMMES* by Marc Esposito before appearing in Eric Lartigau's *FAMILY BÉLIER*, which earned him a nomination for the César of the Best Actor in a Second Role. He was recently seen in *SI J'ÉTAIS UN HOMME* by Audrey Dana.

FRANÇOIS BERLÉAND

The Count de la Fresnaye

After a brief stint in business studies, François Berléand turned to comedy as a pupil of Tania Balachova and Daniel Bénoin. In 1980, he started on the screen under the direction of Alain Cavalier in MARTIN ET LÉA. He played roles in nearly 200 films, some thirty plays and almost as many TV movies in a rich and diverse career.

He went through the 80's and 90's appearing in numerous films (LA BALANCE, MARCHE À L' OMBRE) and developed some more successful collaborations, notably with the director Pierre Jolivet with whom he made several films including LE COMPLEXE DU KANGOUROU (1986), FRED (1997), EN PLEIN COEUR (1999) and MA PETITE ENTREPRISE in 1999 for which he obtained the Cesar of the Best Actor in a Second Role.

Since then, François Berléand has multiplied the number of shootings: PLACE VENDÔME and L' ADVERSAIRE by Nicole Garcia, LES ACTEURS by Bertrand Blier, COMMENT J'AI TUE MON PERE by Anne Fontaine and even, in another register, the series TRANSPORTEUR launched by Louis Leterrier... He also found one of his starring roles at the headline in MON IDOLE by Guillaume Canet, which he will find again a few years later in NE LE DIS A PERSONNE.

In 2004, François Berléand enjoyed his first major public triumph in 2004, touring in Christophe Barratier's LES CHORISTES, alongside Gérard Jugnot before returning to Chabrol's works (L' IVRESSE DU POUVOIR, LA FILLE COUPÉE EN DE DEUX) and to Jolivet. In this very rich filmography, we can also quote LE CONCERT by Radu Mihaileanu, LE SIFFLEUR by Philippe Lefèbvre, LA VIE D' UNE AUTRE by Sylvie Testud, ENTRE AMIS by Oliver Baroux. He recently played his own role in the TV series *Dix per cent*.

VALÉRIE KARSENTI

Célestine

"I never dared play hooky and I regret it! I guess it's like falling in love when it's forbidden, we know there will be damage, that we'll be blamed for it, but the feeling of freedom that invades us is so strong that we still escape with the heart that's going to explode!"

Coming from L' École Nationale Supérieure des Arts et Techniques du Théâtre, Valérie Karsenti has had two careers on stage and on television, before cinema discovered this actress with a very diverse palette. Since 1990, she has worked extensively in theatre. Among the plays in which she appeared were *Camus, Sartre and others* with Stéphane Hillel, *Colombe* with Geneviève Page and Jean-Paul Roussillon, *Accalmies passagères* which received the Molière for the best comedy show in 1997. She met José Paul and Marc Fayet on this last production, with whom she then played *Un fil à la patte* and *Un petit jeu sans conséquence*, five times rewarded in 2003 at Les Molières. Her following shows (*Comme en 14*, directed by Yves Pignot, *Le Prince travesti* by Nicolas Briançon, *Le roi se meurt avec Michel Bouquet* and *Adultères* with Pascale Arbillot) are also rewarded.

At the same time, Valérie Karsenti is touring for television, under the direction of Nina Companeez, Élisabeth Rappeneau and Laurent Heynemann. She appeared at the beginning of the 2000s in numerous series (Fabien Cosma, Engrenages, P. J., Reporters and Les hommes de l' ombre). But two major productions revealed her to the general public: *Maison close* by Mabrouk el Mechri in 2010 on Canal+ and especially *Scènes de ménages* on M6 in which she has been playing the colourful character of Liliane for 7 years.

In the cinema, she has been seen in LOL by Lisa Azuelos, TELLEMENT PROCHES by the duo Nakache/Tolédano, BABYSITTING 2 by Nicolas Benamou and Philippe Lachau or MA FAMILLE T' ADORE DÉJÀ by Jérôme Commandeur.

· CAST ·

Totoche François CLUZET
Paul Jean SCANDEL
Borel Éric ELMOSNINO
The Count of Fresnaye François BERLÉAND
Célestine Valérie KARSENTI
Bertrand Thomas DURAND
Bella Ilona CABRERA
Dédé Frédéric SAUREL
Lucien Urbain CANCELIER
Montaine Murielle HUET DES AUNAY
Armand Thierry ROBARD
Florence Caroline JURSZAK
The chief of the gypsies Afif BEN BADRA
The gypsy grandmoher Claudine BASCHET
Madeleine Christine JOLY
The policeman Laurent GERRA

· CREW ·

Director Nicolas VANIER
Screenplay, adaptation, dialogues Jérôme TONNERRE et Nicolas VANIER
Produced by Radar Films-Clément MISEREZ & Matthieu WARTER, STUDIOCANAL, France 2 Cinéma
Director of photography Éric GUICHARD – AFC
Director of animals photography Laurent CHARBONNIER
Cameraman Mathieu LE BOTHLAN
Senior assistant director Olivier HORLAIT
Chief decorator Sébastien BIRCHLER
Scriptwriter Valentine TRACLET
Original music Armand AMAR
Editing Raphaëlle URTIN
Production manager Philippe GAUTIER
General Manager Benoît CHARRIÉ
Casting Sylvie BROCHERÉ
Gwendale SCHMITZ
Sound engineer Emmanuel HACHETTE
Chief Sound Editor Thomas DESJONQUÈRES
Mixeur François-Joseph HORS
Costume designer Adelaïde GOSSELIN
Make-up artist Thi Thanh Tu NGUYEN
Chief hairdresser Gérald PORTENART
Animal Trainer Muriel BEC
Sandra KIESSER
Cameraman Steadicamer Loïc SAVOURÉ
Post-production Director Sidonie WASERMAN
Visual Effects Alain CARSOUX
Bruiteur Pascal CHAUVIN