METROPOLITAN FILMEXPORT, ORIGAMI FILMS and BEE MOVIES
Present

An ORIGAMI FILMS and BEE MOVIES production

A film by Lola Doillon

Fanny’s Journey
Le Voyage de Fanny

With
Leonie Souchaud

With the participation of
Cécile de France
Stéphane Groodt

From the book by Fanny Ben-Ami published by Editions du Seuil
Written by Anne Peyrège and Lola Doillon

Duration: 1 h 34

Released May 18, 2016

You can download the poster, press kit and photos for the film at:

www.metrofilms.com

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THE STORY

At the tender age of 12, Fanny is already very stubborn! But she is also a brave young girl who is looking after her two little sisters while hidden away in a children’s home far from her parents. Before hastily fleeing, Fanny takes charge of a group of eight children and sets off on a dangerous journey through occupied France to reach the Swiss border. Amongst the fear, laughter and unexpected encounters, the little group learns how to be independent and discovers teamwork and friendship ...
A COMING OF AGE STORY ON A CHILD’S LEVEL

In her first feature film ET TOI, T’ES SUR QUI? (JUST ABOUT LOVE), Lola Doillon faithfully conjured up the first blushes of love and the pain of adolescence. For her third film, she wanted to work with children and anchor her story in a historical context. It was her producer Saga Blanchard, with her since the beginning, who unearthed the book by Fanny Ben-Ami which inspired FANNY’S JOURNEY. "I wanted to tell a story of liberation but speeded up" said Lola Doillon. "As the heart of the film evokes the passage from childhood to adolescence and the emotional experiences of these young heroes: the anguish of separation, the fear of the unknown, of forgetting - which Fanny fights with her camera – and of death, but also their optimism, energy, courage and perseverance."

Although the film is set in occupied France, the filmmaker left out images of war and the arrest of the parents. Above all else, this was about adopting the children’s point of view: "What interested me," she continues, "Was to live through the events through the eyes of a group of children, to show how these children, who were not underneath the bombs but still suffered the violence of abandonment and the fear of being orphaned, lived during the war and make us experience it from their point of view."

Of course, this project was also an opportunity for Lola Doillon to tell young people about this troubled time in our history. "Many of them", she adds, "Depending on their age, still don’t know or only know a little about this period of history even though the last witnesses are getting old and gradually disappearing." The film was therefore an excellent means of passing on the memory of the Holocaust - always at a child’s level. That’s what convinced Fanny Ben-Ami to give the rights to her book to the director: "What I want is for my message to be understood so that it does not happen again," she says. "We live in a very fragile time; we hear a lot of raised voices that closely resemble those that we heard at the time. This is very dangerous, including for people who are not Jewish. Because after the Jews, they will find other targets. We are all concerned."

FROM REALITY TO FICTION

Fanny, the young, 12-year-old heroine at the head of a small group of children, is the cinematic double of the book’s author. Before settling down to write, Lola Doillon wanted to meet Fanny Ben-Ami in Tel Aviv, where she now lives, to better understand the story of her parents and sisters. "I needed to immerse myself in her past and her memories of the children’s home," she said. "She told me many things, some of which are included in the film and some not. I was also inspired by other secret stories by children that were rescued by different organisations and everyday stories. And I sought the help of archivists and historians in the interests of accuracy."

When she first read the script, Fanny Ben-Ami didn’t find her story in its entirety, which troubled her somewhat: "I wrote to Lola to say that it didn’t happen quite like that” she says. "For example, the Resistance and the underground were neither here nor there, though they were nevertheless very important to me. And then, after thinking about it and talking with friends, I realised that a film was not a book and that it was for others, not for me. And that there were aspects of my journey that
were important in my eyes but not necessarily for the film. In the end, I think Lola did well and that in her script, the essentials are there and the main points are said."

The author accepts and is glad that FANNY'S JOURNEY is a feature film of fiction and not a documentary, "because the spectators will be able to put themselves in the places of the characters, they will be able to empathise, suffer or laugh with them." Lola Doillon noticed that a work of fiction has its own rhythm and its own narrative logic: "It forced me to change the path and some contextual elements," she said. "But I obviously followed the thread of the key historical events which were the framework of this adventure and everything that i changed remains true, inspired by real events that were recounted by other people who lived through that time."

**CHILDREN ARE THE HEADLINE ACT**

The success of FANNY'S JOURNEY largely rested on the choice of young actors. Therefore, Lola Doillon met, in France and Belgium, almost a thousand children - some of whom already had acting experience - and allowed herself to take a very flexible approach. "For example, I allowed myself to modify the script to adapt it to one child or another that we thought were great," she says.

Though the director chose the children individually, she also wished to see them work as a group. "Some were perfect alone but it didn't work as well with others," she says. "There had to be a chemistry between them – I'm thinking especially about the three sisters who formed a group within the group." The filmmaker organised working groups to observe how the children were able to interact with each other: "Bit by bit they let themselves go," she said. "They had set off on the same adventure and they helped each other out."

The search for the main role lasted a very long time. Finally, it was thanks to the Belgian casting director that Lola Doillon unearthed little Leonie, 12 years old, who had no prior filming experience. "It was unsettling to see that this girl had such force, such intelligence, such daring, exactly like the character," confirms the director. "Fanny's kindness interested me less than her stubbornness. I wanted to show that her faults are as useful to her as her qualities and thanks to her impulsive temperament, positive rage and determination, Fanny refuses to give up and fights in her own way to carry out the mission that has fallen to her. That's what I was looking for in the child who would play Fanny and Leonie had a lot of that." Fanny Ben-Ami confirms that she had a rebellious temperament as a little girl: "I was rebelling because what we lived through was unfair," she says. "My parents did not return from the camps despite what was promised. Throughout this period, I was angry with adults. I said to myself - 'You will not own me and you will not own the children either!'"

In her first film, Lola Doillon showed her ability to direct teenagers: she demonstrates the same ease in working with children. Without doubt because she has kept the same "primitive" sensibility of a child, as she recognises herself. "The most complicated thing," she points out, "is that there is a way of operating, a different language to find with each of them to get them to play in the same scene. Aside from the text, we mostly had fun with the language, the situations, working on emotions and on letting go. A child who works too much on the text in advance risks losing all spontaneity. For a child, acting in a film is like a game: it's very instinctive. They play in both senses of the word!" Leonie agrees: "Lola had a very playful manner. She was patient. When we didn't get it, she explained it to us, took her time and didn't get annoyed. She took the time to redo the take until we understood".
TWO SPARKLING SUPPORTING ROLES

Though adults are not often present in FANNY’S VOYAGE, two of them still distinguished themselves for the crucial role they played in rescuing the children. Beginning with Mrs. Forman who is inspired by Nicole Weil-Salon and Lotte Schwarz, both utterly dedicated to the protection of children during the war. “From the children’s testimonies, I imagined Mrs. Forman as obviously - and necessarily - severe, out of the numerous adults who had to help them prepare for the trip,” explains the director. “At the same time, I wanted her to allow her tenderness and emotion to escape when she is forced to entrust the responsibility of the children to Fanny.” Lola Doillon, 1st assistant director on POT LUCK by Cédric Klapisch, knew Cécile de France well. "I thought of her as, to my eyes, she is the embodiment of a woman who’s strong, smart, straight-forward and generous," she said. "Her acting style allows her to subtlety go from very harsh and severe to someone who’s gentle and kind in the same scene."

It is precisely the contrast between the harshness of the character and her kindness that seduced the actress: "I loved the contrast between the viewpoint of the innocent, amazed and frightened children, and the hardness of the school headmistress – this authority that was necessary in order to teach the children to be independent, to live without parents, alone, to be able to save themselves," says Cécile de France. The screenplay also blew her away: "I read the script, I cried and I immediately called Lola," she continues. Then the character had to be built, even if she was inspired by two women who really existed: "We wanted to create a school headmistress who physically scared the children a little," says Cécile de France. "She therefore has a somewhat rigid hairdo. As she did not have time to get ready, she isn’t very well turned out. We also worked on the tone and voice to make sure it was good and harsh. There were all these little details thanks to which, after a few days, we had created a real character, very well drawn, and nothing like me."

After finding refuge in the mountains, the children are taken in by a kind farmer who is moved by their fate. The director was aware that some of her character’s dialogue could be difficult to pull off - but not with an actor like Stéphane Groodt: "When I went to see him to talk about the film, I told myself I was going to change his dialogue," she said. "But when he read it, he spoke it with such ease that everything worked, everything was just right! In the end, we barely touched anything."

Although he was only acting, Stéphane Groodt was thrilled by the project: "Lola is very sensitive and I thought to myself that she was going to tell this story with originality," he says. "What I like in meetings and projects is this originality." The change in tone from his job as a comic also appealed to him. "This is the first time I’ve done a period film and the more I continue in this business, the more I want to erase our friend Stéphane Groodt, who I know well, in favour of characters who are damaged, tortured, hidden and complex," he continues. The actor particularly enjoyed his fellow actors, adults and children. Regarding the actor playing the Nazi officer, he said: "His look made me into this farmer who puts up Jewish children. If the goal of an actor is to forgot oneself in favour of the character, the fact of forgetting can also come from someone else." He is equally enthusiastic about his young colleagues, "Sometimes it’s easier to act with children because when they are good, they are much better than adults," he enthuses. "They have a spontaneity that arouses emotions from God knows where."

A BIG RESPONSIBILITY
In the end the director, like her actors, felt a huge responsibility in bringing the journey of Fanny Ben-Ami to the screen. "I asked myself the question of my legitimacy to tell such a story and talk about Jewish children while not being Jewish myself," said Lola Doillon. "But I justified it to myself by saying it was the history of France, and the history of Europe, and as such, I had a right – even a duty - to tell it". Cécile de France shares this sense of responsibility: "It's draining and difficult to interpret these women - these heroines - who really existed," she said. "It took a lot of personal investment and I had to immerse myself in the history: to read all the testimonies, it was hard." But it's without doubt the arrival of Fanny Ben-Ami on set which reassured the filmmaker in her artistic approach: "She arrived on set with a lot of apprehension," she concludes. "She was anxious at the idea of physically plunging back into that moment. But seeing the team and all the children coming to her to ask questions about her past with interest and kindness, she was reassured. When she left two days later, she confided in us that she was calmer: she understood that we were not digging up her past but that we had the same desire to pass on and pay tribute to her story."
IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA

CECILE DE FRANCE
Mrs Forman

Selected Filmography

2015   FANNY’S JOURNEY by Lola Doillon
       SUMMERTIME by Catherine CORSINI

2014   TERM LIFE by Peter BILLINGSLEY
       IN HARMONY by Denis DERCOURT

2013   MÖBIUS by Eric ROCHANT
       CHINESE PUZZLE by Cedric KLAPISCH

2012   SUPERSTAR by Xavier GIANNOLI
       In competition at the Venice Film Festival 2012

2010   UN BAISER PAPILLON by Karine Silla
       GARDIENS DE L’ORDRE by Nicolas BOUKHRIEF
       THE KID WITH A BIKE by Jean-Pierre DARDENNE and Luc DARDENNE
       Grand Prix at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival

2009   HEREAFTER by Clint EASTWOOD
       SISTER SMILE by Stijn CONINX

2007   MESRINE : KILLER INSINCT by Jean-François Richet

2006   MON COLONEL by Laurent HERBIET
       A SECRET by Claude MILLER

2005   ORCHESTRA SEATS by Danièle THOMPSON
       THE SINGER by Xavier GIANNOLI
       BAD FAITH by Roschdy ZEM

2004   LA CONFIANCE RÈGNE by Etienne CHATILIEZ
       RUSSIAN DOLLS by Cedric KLAPISCH
       César for Best Actress in a Supporting Role 2006

2003   I, CAESAR by Richard BERRY
       HIGH VOLTAGE by Alexander AJA

2002   POT LUCK by Cedric KLAPISCH
       César for Most Promising Actress in 2003

2001   IRENE by Ivan CALBERAC
2000  L’ART (DÉLICAT) DE LA SÉDUCTION by Richard BERRY

Television series:

2015 THE YOUNG POPE Paolo Sorrentino

STEPHANE DE GROODT
Jean

Selected Filmography

2016 CORPORATE by Nicolas Silhol
2015 FANNY’S JOURNEY by Lola Doillon
2014 PARIS XILLOUGBY by Arthur Delaire
      UNE HEURE DE TRANQUILITÉ by Patrice Leconte
2013 SUPER HYPOCHONDER by Dany Boon
      GAZELLES by Mona Achache
      BARBECUE 2012 by Eric Lavaine
2011 ASTERIX AND OBELIX: GOD SAVE BRITANNIA by Laurent Tirard
2009 WITHOUT A TRACE by Grégoire Vigneron
2008 THE WHISTLER by Philippe Lefebvre
2007 BABY BLUES by Diane Bertrand
2006 ASTERIX AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES by Thomas Langmann & Frédéric Forestier
2005 SAINT-JACQUES LA MECQUE by Coline Serreau
2004 25 DEGREES IN WINTER by Stéphane Muillet
      TROIS PETITES FILLES by Jean-Loup Hubert
2002 HOP by Dominique Standaert
1994 MAUVAIS GENRES by Francis Girod
BEHIND THE CAMERA

LOLA DOILLON
Director - Writer

Lola began very young in film, initially as a camera assistant and then assistant editor on the films of Patrice Chéreau, Jean-Pierre Mocky, François Dupeyrón. She was then a casting director, notably for Jacques Doillon and Michaël Haneke, and assistant director on films by Jacques Doillon, Cédric Klapisch and Benoît Graffin. Then she directed three short films including one (MAJORETTES) that was selected in the Directors' Fortnight at Cannes. Lola directed her first feature film ET TOI T’ES SUR QUI? as part of the Un Certain Regard official selection at Cannes in 2007. For her second feature film, IN YOUR HANDS, Lola directed Kristin Scott Thomas and Pio Marmai. FANNY'S JOURNEY is her third feature film.

ANNE PEYREGNE
Screenwriter

After studying literature, Anne entered FEMIS in the directing department. On leaving school, she directed (and co-directed) a number of documentaries, including LES PASSEURS for Planète, selected for the États Généraux of Documentary Films in Lussas and for Cinéma du Réel. Always interested in fiction, she soon turned towards script writing. She writes for several series (Vénus et Apollon, Les Bleus, Odysseus...). In 2014, she wrote Lola Doillon’s third feature film. At the same time, she co-directed an "episode" in the documentary LES PASSEURS for ARTE, shot in 1995, about an undertaker’s business in Burgundy.
SAGA BLANCHARD
Producer

Saga took her first steps into the movie business on set in 1995. She occupied the posts of stage manager, production secretary and then administrator. In 1998, she joined the Cédric Klapisch and Bruno Levy company (Ce qui me meut et Move movie) with whom she worked as a production coordinator and executive producer on all of their productions for over ten years. She created the short film department there and produced five short films, including MAJORETTES by Lola Doillon, selected for the Directors’ Fortnight in Cannes in 2005. Saga and Lola Doillon continued their collaboration with Lola’s first feature, JUST ABOUT LOVE in 2007, an official selection in the Un Certain Regard section at Cannes Film Festival 2007. In 2009, she created the production company Origami Films and produced IN YOUR HANDS, Lola Doillon’s second feature film with Kristin Scott Thomas and Pio Marmai, then LOW PROFILE, Cécilia Rouaud first feature film, with Denis Ménochet and Vanessa Paradis.

MARIE DE LUSSIGNY
Producer

After having managed the admin and financial departments at France 2 Cinema, and as such managed the acquisitions and co-productions of films at France 2, in 2006 she joined Epithète Films as head of business affairs on the productions MICMACS by Jean-Pierre Jeunet, MUSÉE HAUT, MUSÉE BAS by Jean-Michel Ribes and THE YOUNG GIRL AND THE WOLVES by Gilles Legrand. In August 2009, she created Bee Films, a production company of short and feature films. She produced J’ADORE CAI, a short film in 3D by Sophie Blanvillain. Followed by AFTER, the first feature film by Géraldine Maillet with Julie Gayet and Raphaël Personnaz released in January 2013.

VICTOR HADIDA & SAMUEL HADIDA
Co-producers

Victor Hadida is the President of Metropolitan Filmexport, a distribution and production company created in the 80s by David Hadida, run by him with his brother Samuel. Over a thirty-year career, Metropolitan Filmexport has become the leading independent European distribution company, according to the annual ranking conducted in 2007 by the European Audiovisual Observatory. Among the many publicly and critically acclaimed films that have contributed to Metropolitan’s reputation, are the LORD OF THE RINGS trilogy by Peter Jackson, David Fincher’s SEVEN, THE WOLF OF WALL STREET by Martin Scorsese, the HUNGER GAMES saga and coming soon THE BFG – BIG FRIENDLY GIANT by Steven Spielberg, adapted from the book by Roald Dahl. This brilliant career introduced Victor Hadida to the most influential positions in the profession and then in July 2006, he was unanimously elected President of the National Federation of Film Distributors, which represents more than 50 companies in France. He is involved with his brother, Samuel Hadida, in all of Davis Films’ projects, a joint production company. The experience gained during the remarkable development of the Metropolitan distribution company enabled Samuel Hadida to begin very early on in the production of feature
Audaciously he gave a chance to an as yet unknown writer, Quentin Tarantino, whose first screenplay he produced, True Romance, directed by Tony Scott. Samuel Hadida currently produces or co-produces several films a year. These productions comprise the best of French cinema, European productions and co-productions, and American productions.

Multiple successes, recognised by the public and the profession, have shown him to be a shrewd producer. Out of a non-exhaustive list we can mention: David Cronenberg's SPIDER, The IMAGINARIUM OF DOCTOR PARNASSUS, written and directed by Terry Gilliam, PERFUME - STORY OF A MURDERER by Tom Tykwer, GOOD NIGHT, AND GOOD LUCK by George Clooney, THE BLACK DAHLIA by Brian De Palma and the RESIDENT EVIL saga.

Among his many productions, Samuel Hadida has developed a special relationship with Christophe Gans. He produced his first films, NECRONOMICON, CRYING FREEMAN and BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF, one of the biggest successes of 2001 and also nominated for four César. In 2006, SILENT HILL, ranked number one at the US box office after its opening weekend. Samuel Hadida also maintains an ongoing collaboration with the screenwriter and director Roger Avary, whose first film he produced, KILLING ZOE, starring Jean-Hugues Anglade and Julie Delpy.

In 2015, Victor and Samuel Hadida co-produced the film by Gilles Legrand, with Olivier Gourmet and Georgia Scalliet from la Comédie Francaise, THE SCENT OF MANDARIN as well as Un + Une by Claude Lelouch, with Jean Dujardin and Elsa Zylberstein.
CAST LIST

Fanny	Leonie SOUCHAUD
Erika	Fantine HARUDIN
Georgette	Juliane LEPoureau
Victor	Ryan BRODIE
Diane	Anais MEIRINGER
Rachel	Lou LAMBRECHT
Maurice	Igor VAN DESSEL
Marie	Malonn LEVANA
Jacques	Lucien KHOURY
Mrs. Forman	Cécile DE FRANCE
Jean	Stéphane DE GROODT
Elie	Victor MEUTELET
Helga	Elea KÖRNER
Ethel	Alice HAUWE
Mother at the Ose House	Anna TENTA
Fanny’s Mother Flashback	Pascaline CREVESCOEUR
Fanny’s Father Flashback	Julien VARGAS
Julien	Jeremiah PETRUS
Director	Pierre WALLON
Police Chief	Bruno MULLENAERTS
CREW LIST

Director
Lola Doillon

Producers
Saga BLANCHARD
Marie DE LUSSIGNY

Co-producers
Victor HADIDA
Samuel HADIDA
Geneviève LEMAL
Cédric KLAPISCH
Bruno LEVY

Screenplay
Anne Peyrègne
Lola Doillon

Cinematographer
Peter COTTEREAU

Director of Photography
Valérie DESEINE

Editor
Miguel REJAS

Chief Sound Operator
Julie BRENTEA

Mixing
Emmanuel DE BOISSIEU

Original Music Composer
Sylvain FAVRE-BULLE

In collaboration with
Gisèle-GERARD TOLINI

Head Designer
Pierre-François LIMBOSCH

Head Costume designer
Isabelle PANNETIER

Chief Make-up Artist
Marie MESSIEN

Chief Hairdresser/Makeup artist
Natalie DE HEN

Gaffer
Olivier PILORGET

Head Grips
Joseph EMIELOT

Production Manager
Vincent UCCELLO

Casting
Pierre WALLON

Ophelia GELBER

Sébastien MORADIELLOS

Script Editing
Marie DUCRET

Location Manager
Eric GRANDEAN

Arnaud AUBÉY

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