

LES FILMS DU RÊVE
Presents

WHITE TUFT
THE ADVENTURES OF THE LITTLE BEAVER

A film by
PHILIPPE CALDERON

Narrated by
André Dussollier

Release date: April 30th, 2008

Non-contractual credits

SYNOPSIS

Once upon a time, in the Canadian Great North, lived a mischievous and carefree young beaver named WHITE TUFT. His family included MOTHER BEAVER and LITTLE SISTER and among his friends were LIL' LYNX and BEAR CUB.

One dreadful day, the dam that is WHITE TUFT's family shelter collapses. Dragged away by the river's strong current, WHITE TUFT ends up lost, far from his home and family. Alone and inexperienced, he discovers a hostile forest and finds himself at the mercy of frightening enemies.

Terrified and hungry, he attempts to make friends with an old and grumpy lone beaver, with whom he will brave every danger. Will our two heroes manage to get the youngster back home, to MOTHER BEAVER and LITTLE SISTER?

THE LITTLE WORLD OF WHITE TUFT

WHITE TUFT

Our young hero is only a few months old and sports a tuft of light-colored hair on his snout, which is where he gets his name. Naive and carefree, WHITE TUFT lacks neither courage nor intelligence! All his adventures will forge his character and turn him into a seasoned beaver.

MOTHER BEAVER

Like all moms, MOTHER BEAVER is attentive and keeps a keen eye on her little brood. It is out of the question for her to let animal strangers anywhere near. Fussy and industrious, she is the one in charge of all the household's domestic tasks, as well as her young's education. WHITE TUFT's disappearance will be deeply upsetting to her.

LITTLE SISTER

Less boisterous than her brother, WHITE TUFT's little sister always stays close to their mother and is very sad to lose her intrepid playmate of a brother.

OLD BEAVER

OLD BEAVER lives a hermit's existence on his island. Unbeknownst to him, the arrival of our reckless little hero, WHITE TUFT, will turn his quiet world upside down. Grumpy yet generous, he will become attached to the youngster, to the point where he will brave every danger to protect him, even becoming something of an adopted father to him.

LIL' LYNX

As adventurous as WHITE TUFT, LIL' LYNX is a thrill-seeker and his curiosity leads him to explore the beaver dam. He'll eventually learn that the little rodents make a delicious snack... but for now, they play together as real pals.

BEAR CUB

Like LIL' LYNX, he is clumsy and happy-go-lucky. His main goal in life is to gorge himself on delicious blueberries he finds in the underbrush, with all his buddies who happen to be WHITE TUFT's ENNEMIES!

THE WOLVES

One animal it's best to avoid when your name is WHITE TUFT is the WOLF! A pack of five of the most ferocious and ravenous wolves will pose a grave threat to him, chasing him down mercilessly in an attempt to devour him...

THE OTTER

Despite its elegant and supple bearing, the OTTER is sly and a fearsome warrior. A skilled swimmer, the OTTER is the only one familiar with the beaver hut's secret underwater entrance. MOTHER BEAVER is well aware that the OTTER is the one to be wary of.

The very first night he is away from his home, WHITE TUFT meets many frightening forest dwellers whose paths he would rather have never crossed... THE RACCOON, THE SKUNK, THE OWL, THE PORCUPINE and THE EAGLE OWL.

THE LIFE OF THE CANADIAN BEAVER

The beaver's entire life is centered on his pond, the home where he feels safe. Evolution has bestowed upon the beaver an anatomy that is closely linked to its environment: waterproof fur, hydro-dynamically shaped head and palmed hind paws that make the beaver an outstanding swimmer. Under water, his flat tail works as a rudder while above water, he uses it as an alarm tool to warn his companions of impending danger.

Beaver cubs are born in the springtime and remain in the hut with their parents for two years, while they learn all the techniques of lumberjacking, dam building and repair.

In the wild, a beaver's lifespan seldom exceeds five years, but it can reach up to fifteen in captivity. The first cause of mortality being the beaver's main predators: humans, otters and wolves. The second is an occupational hazard: fallen trees that have been felled by beavers.

To create his territory, the beaver builds a dam across the river. This dam is made of tree trunks that the beaver has cut down near their base, using his powerful front teeth. The beaver's teeth have the distinctive feature of never ceasing to grow, making it imperative for him to constantly rub the top row against the bottom one, like all rodents. This is Nature's way of always keeping his teeth sharp and efficient.

He can fell trees with trunks over three feet in diameter. Like a real little lumberjack, the beaver drags the logs over ground but is especially skilled at maneuvering them as they float on the surface of the water. He then chops off mid-sized branches to build his shelter, creating a concealed access beneath the water's surface. This system protects the beavers from all his land predators, which is why he never wanders further than a hundred feet from the safety of his home. In winter, when the surface of the lake is frozen, the beavers only leave their dwelling to feed on leaves that have been stored beneath the surface of the water, sometimes in a stock hut, built for that purpose.

SHOOTING IN THE HEART OF WILDERNESS: CANADA

Saguenay Fjord, five hours drive North of Montreal.

It is in this transitional area, leading to the great wild woods, near Saint-Jean Lake, that the film crew began principal photography of "White Tuft, the Adventures of the Little Beaver" in early July of 2006. The location is in the center of Quebec, bordering the Canadian Great North.

The territory is so vast that its local nickname is "The Kingdom". The river is wider than most, the lake as huge as a landlocked sea and the gorgeous fjord a wealth of stunning panoramas. Here begins a world of immense natural expanses, practically clear of human dwellings, the kingdom of maple, aspen and birch trees, traveled by caribou, wolves, and bears and flown over by wild geese. Imposing landscapes of staggering beauty are the trademark of Saguenay Park, a protected area where nature has unleashed colossal powers, to create the fjord.

A NATURAL FEAT

One of the film's great challenges was bringing together several species that are not accustomed to interacting: wolves, lynxes, bears, skunks, otters, raccoons, elks, owls, geese... Animals from different families had to be introduced and adapted to each other well in advance.

For instance, a female lynx and a cub had to live side by side for twelve weeks before they could be introduced to one another. Two adult wolves and three youngsters also had to familiarize themselves to each other for several weeks in order to appear as a united pack for the screen.

A HEARTWARMING STORY BEHIND THE SCENES

George the Bear Cub.

George was found in the forest, near his dead mother, and placed in the care of the Pageau Refuge. But in his cage, George cried and whimpered. To the point where it was decided to let him loose on a part-time basis and allow him into the Pageau home, where he seemed to enjoy the company of humans. But the cub's future posed a problem.

Because he could not stand being in captivity, George would probably let himself die if placed in a traditional zoo. Nor could he survive in the wild, as he was not brought up by his peers and therefore wouldn't know how to feed or defend himself. Around that time, the production office was searching all of Canada for a bear cub to play in the film. They discovered George, who is cast in the part. Not only did he become one of the film's main characters, but once his contract was up, he settled into his new home at the Saint Félicien Wild Zoo, not far from the film's location, where he is cared for, fed and be allowed to roam free!

Philippe Calderon was previously a documentary filmmaker. His films' themes are scientific, ecological, historical and philosophical.

CREDITS

- 2007 WHITE TUFT, THE ADVENTURES OF THE LITTLE BEAVER
- 2006 LA CITADELLE ASSIÉGÉE
- 2005 DE GAULLE ET COLOMBEY
- 2004 LA GRANDE HISTOIRE DU CERVEAU
- 2003 MICHEL FOUCAULT PAR LUI-MÊME
- 2002 RETROUVER BYZANCE
THÉMATIQUE SUR BYZANCE POUR ARTE
- 2001 L'ÂGE D'OR DE L'ISLAM
- 1999 LORSQUE LE MONDE PARLAIT ARABE
- 1998 LA CITÉ DES FOURMIS
- 1997 LA RIVIÈRE FANTÔME
- 1995 LE PREMIER SOURIRE
- 1994 CHABAN
WASHOE
- 1993 LE PARTAGE DES EAUX
FW
- 1990 LA MATIÈRE
ENTRE L'ORDRE ET LE DÉSORDRE
UNIFIER LA MATIÈRE
LA MATIÈRE VIVANTE
MATIÈRE À PENSER
LE BENTHOS

LES FILMS DU REVE – PRODUCTION COMPANY

SELECTED CREDITS

2007 WHITE TUFT, THE ADVENTURES OF THE LITTLE
 BEAVER

Feature film by Philippe CALDERON

2005 LA CITADELLE ASSIEGÉE
 Feature film by Philippe CALDERON

PASSION SAUVAGE EN GUYANE
TV documentary by Svetlana MAKOGON
and Nicolas JOUVIN

LA CIGUATERA
TV documentary by Nicolas JOUVIN

LES OURSONS, ORPHELINS DE LA TAÏGA
TV documentary by Guillaume VINCENT

PARFUMS DES ÎLES
TV documentary by Georges MARBECK

CEUX QUI MARCHENT DANS LES PAS DU TIGRE
TV documentary by Guillaume VINCENT

DE SARCELLES À BANGUI
TV documentary by Bruno POUNEWATCHY

LE FEU DE L'ART
TV documentary by Stéphane LAMBERT

LE SINGE QUI A TRAVERSÉ LA MER
TV documentary by Guillaume VINCENT

LES PETITS SOLDATS
Feature film by François MARGOLIN

LES REQUINS PÉLERINS

TV documentary by Nicolas JOUVIN

LE MAJORDOME

TV documentary by Manu BONMARIAGE

LA NATURE DES GRANDS CHEFS

TV documentary by Guillaume VINCENT

2003 LE RETOUR DE L'ESCADRON BLANC
TV documentary by Jean-Pierre ZIRN

ANDRE DUSSOLIER – NARRATOR/STORYTELLER

Coming soon

TROIS SINGES

by Claus DREXEL

LEUR MORALE ET LA NÔTRE

by Florence QUENTIN

MUSÉE HAUT, MUSÉE BAS

by Jean-Michel RIBES

2007 MÈCHE BLANCHE, LES AVENTURES DU PETIT
CASTOR
by Philippe CALDERON

CORTEX

by Nicolas BOUKHRIEF

2006 COEURS
by Alain RESNAIS

LA VÉRITÉ OU PRESQUE

by Sam KARMANN

MA PLACE AU SOLEIL
by Éric de MONTALIER

2005 NE LE DIS À PERSONNE
by Guillaume CANET

2004 MON PETIT DOIGT M'A DIT
by Pascal THOMAS

36, QUAI DES ORFÈVRE
by Olivier MARCHAL

LEMMING
by Dominik MOLL

2003 UN LONG DIMANCHE DE FIANÇAILLES
by Jean-Pierre JEUNET

AGENTS SECRETS
by Frédéric SCHOENDOERFFER

2002 EFFROYABLES JARDINS
by Jean BECKER

2001 TANGUY
by Etienne CHATILIEZ

LE FABULEUX DESTIN D'AMÉLIE POULAIN
by Jean-Pierre Jeunet (narrateur)

2000 UN CRIME AU PARADIS
by Jean BECKER

LA CHAMBRE DES OFFICIERS
by François DUPEYRON

Cesar Award for Best Supporting Actor for André DUSSOLLIER

1999 SCÈNES DE CRIME
by Frédéric SCHOENDOERFFER

1998 LES ENFANTS DU MARAIS
by Jean BECKER

1997 ON CONNAIT LA CHANSON
by Alain RESNAIS

Louis Delluc Award

Méliès Award for the Year's Best Film

7 Cesar Awards, including Best Picture and Best Actor, for André
DUSSOLLIER

1995 LE ROMAN D'UN JEUNE HOMME PAUVRE
by Ettore SCOLA

1994 LE COLONEL CHABERT
by Yves ANGELO

1993 LES MARMOTTES
by Elie CHOURAQUI

1992 LA PETITE APOCALYPSE
by Costa GAVRAS

1991 UN COEUR EN HIVER
by Claude SAUTET

Silver Lion, Gold Lion Cub for Best Picture, International Critic's Award,

Gold Ciak Award for Best Screenplay at the Venice Film Festival

Grand Prix Award from the Académie du Cinéma

Méliès Award for Best French Film

Cesar Award for Best Supporting Actor for André DUSSOLLIER

1986 MÉLO
by Alain RESNAIS

Grégory CHMARA Award for Best Actor for André DUSSOLLIER

1985 TROIS HOMMES ET UN COUFFIN
by Coline SERREAU

Académie Nationale du Cinéma Award
Cesar Award for Best Picture
Cesar Award for Best Screenplay

1984 LES ENFANTS
 by Marguerite DURAS

Special Mention at the 1985 Berlin Film Festival

1983 L'AMOUR PAR TERRE
 by Jacques RIVETTE

1982 LA VIE EST UN ROMAN
 by Alain RESNAIS

Louis Lumière Award (1984)

1973 TOUTE UNE VIE
 by Claude LELOUCH

CREW

Director
Philippe Calderon

Screenplay by
Marthe Pelletier / Hassina Belkacem

Narrator
André Dussollier

Texts written by
Guillaume Vincent

Editor
Jean-François Bergeron

LRC English translation of the French pressbook 12/12

Director of Photography
Nedjma Berder

Production Designer
Patrick Bleuzen

Animal Handler
Dale Gienow

Location
Québec, Canada

In collaboration with
Zoo Sauvage de St-Félicien

Associate Producers
François Calderon
Thierry Commissionat / Benoit Tschieret

Produced by
Les Films du Rêve / Cité-Amérique / TF1 International