

Jean-Pierre Lemouland
presents



ZABALTEGI-TABAKALERA
FESTIVAL DE SAN SEBASTIÁN
2016

Louise by the Shore

A film by
Jean-François Laguionie



JPL FILMS & UNITÉ CENTRALE present
in association with TCHACK, ARTE FRANCE CINÉMA



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Louise by the Shore

[Louise en hiver]

A film by
Jean-François Laguionie

France-Canada – 2016 – 75 min – 1.78



FILMS DISTRIBUTION

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SYNOPSIS

On the last day of summer, Louise realizes that the last train has left without her. She ends up alone in the deserted streets of a small seaside resort town, abandoned by everyone. What happened?

The weather quickly turns for the worse, followed by the seasonal tides. Weathering the storm during these first few nights is very difficult. But soon the good weather returns to offer her an exceptional Indian summer.

Louise takes her abandonment as a challenge. She builds herself a cabin on the shore, discovering at the age of 75 a Robinson Crusoe-like life, and realizes that she is more resistant and resourceful than she could have ever imagined.

An old dog, Pepper, comes to share Louise's meals and accompany her on fishing expeditions – a true companion of misfortune!

She asks him a question: Why haven't the vacationers come back for Christmas or Easter? Even the helicopter that flies over the shore from time to time has gone missing! Is it because of the seasonal tides? Has she been punished? This idea provokes strange dreams. Childhood memories rise to the surface and seize the opportunity to join in the adventure: Louise, age eight, has been left with her grandmother! Why?

A great cliff, in the distance, seems to hold the key to her long lost memories. The trip she makes with Pepper is a new adventure that will bring more of her forgotten past back to her: Louise at eighteen with her two sweethearts and the little dramas of her teenage years.

Other questions crop up, but they matter little now. Once back at their cabin, they return to their daily lives. Pepper the dog is there to help dispel her last doubts. This entire adventure was just one of life's ordeals. The vacationers return in July; all the same, Louise has decided she won't ask herself any more questions...

SHORT SYNOPSIS

On the last day of summer, Louise, an old woman realizes that the last train has departed without her. She finds herself alone in a small seaside resort town, abandoned by everyone.

The weather quickly turns for the worse followed by the seasonal tides. Fragile and coquettish, not nearly as well-prepared as a would-be Robinson Crusoe, Louise isn't likely to make it through the winter.

Yet, Louise takes her abandonment as a challenge. She's going to survive, confronting the elements as well as her memories, which have found the perfect occasion to join in the adventure...

CHARACTERS THAT ARE MORE AKIN TO GODOT THAN ROBINSON CRUSOE

To explore the reasons for what she believes is her abandonment, Louise needs to examine her personal history. She does it sweetly. Although she tends to forget and confuses everything, characters from her past pop up and become a form of support for her. As in all survival stories, Louise is led through an adventure with herself. Although names and faces have been forgotten, there remain the joyful memories and tiny inexplicable tragedies.

But her strength may also come from what she has forgotten. Daily chores, discoveries, friendship with her companion in misfortune, all keep her busy enough to prevent her from sinking into a veritable decline into "old age" where one loses interest in living. When she understands that she hadn't been "punished," as she believed, her mirages disappear. The fable finds its moral: "Spring has arrived and it is the end of the story!" she says, returning from the cliffs. Pepper, her sidekick, is just as philosophical. He is her mirror and confidant. He tries to answer her questions, but doesn't have the answer either. The loving relationship between these two "beach bums" owes more to Godot than to Robinson Crusoe...

DOMINIQUE FROT - Louise (French version)

Dominique Frot is a movie, theater and television actress as well as a stage director. She graduated from France's National Drama Academy, the Conservatoire National d'Art Dramatique de Paris, and from the leading French music conservatory, l'École Normale Supérieure de Musique de Paris. She has worked with a number of stage directors, including Werner Schroeter, Hubert Colas, Luc Bondy, Thomas Ostermeier, Pascal Rambert, Jean-Claude Fall, Claude Regy and Peter Brook.

She directs and plays the works of numerous authors from contemporary literature such as Eric Chevillard's *Du Hérisson* [On the Hedgehog] at the MC93 Bobigny Theater in 2005.

She has participated in a number of television projects among which the Canal Plus series *La commune* [The Town] on Canal + and *Profilage* [Profiling] on TF1 (respectively in 2009 and 2008).

She has worked with numerous filmmakers such as Claude Miller in *Mortelle randonnée* [Deadly Circuit] (1983), Claude Chabrol for *La Cérémonie* (1995), Cédric Klapisch for *Peut être* [Maybe] (1999) Roland Joffé for *Vatel* (2000) and Laurent Bénégui for *Qui gagne!* [Loser takes all!] (2004).

More recently, she appeared in Mia Hansen-Løve's *Le Père de mes enfants* [Father of my children] (2008), Brigitte Sy's *Les mains libres* [Free Hands] (2009), and *The smell of Us* (2013), Larry Clark's first film made in France.

She has finished the third season of the TV series SODA, which regularly has an audience of over 2 million viewers on channel W9. She plays one of the main characters, Mrs. Vergneaux.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Louise by the Shore is probably the most intimate film I've ever made. The most minutely crafted one as well, for despite the absurdity of the situation in which Louise finds herself, her adventures at the age of 8 on top of the cliffs, and in the mysterious woods after the war, were ones I experienced too. It wasn't difficult for me to depict them. Like the seaside villas in Normandy where I spent all my vacations, they haven't changed. They still represent a type of carefree holiday, protected from the misery in the rest of the world, located in a timeless place where upper crust habits are still intact in the face of today's existential anguishes such as aging or rising sea levels.

For the character, I had to imagine a woman who corresponded with this little town's obvious fragility, which turns out, just as she does, to stand unflinchingly strong. She is timeless. Having no one to converse with except herself (before meeting Pepper), the "daily logbook" solution was both inevitable and too enticing of a choice to be ignored. It's a way of being able to compare the character's point of view with the surmised reality of what is happening. The encounter

with Dominique Frot, who hadn't seen any of the drawings before the voice recording, was decisive. She was able to find another facet to the character, one that was less conventional and more sincere, taking Louise further than I could have ever hoped.

The seashore's countless sounds and noises, along with the sea and the birds, make up part of a veritable musical score. They were meant to give credibility to the abandonment; Pierre Kellner's piano music provides a counterpoint corresponding to Louise's light-heartedness and optimism. The orchestral music of Pascal Le Pennec, who composed *The Painting [Le tableau]*, covers the deepest part of her memories and dreams. The voice recordings, as well as the music recordings, were essential for constructing the film in its "animatic" shape, in other words, for establishing the animated storyboard very early on before actually directing the film.

The graphic style came about gradually during this stage of development, even though the drawing of the two characters was quite specific in my mind (the opposition between Louise as a thickset, but still smart-looking

elderly woman and her unkempt companion), it was at the animatic stage that they came to life, as I let images come to me freely. Then the images needed to be fleshed out in order to come up with the actual characters.

All the same, my taste for early 20th century painting and graphics is found in the film, as well as my fondness for seaside painters, such as Jean-François Auburtin and Henri Rivière, who created particular seaside atmospheres on paper, mixing wash-drawing as well as pencil and pastel watercolors. These tools bring a more delicate touch than what is typically found in classic animation when it comes to the seascapes and the wind sequences (and there are a lot of them!).

I wanted this touch of freedom to really suffuse the image, as if the entire film had been made by hand. This effect was made possible thanks to Lionel Chauvin, a genuine linchpin when it came to the image, and the entire team from JPL Films.

Jean-François Laguionie
May 2016

JEAN-FRANÇOIS LAGUIONIE

Animated Short Films

- 1965 **LA DEMOISELLE ET LE VIOLONCELLISTE**
Grand Prix Winner at Annecy IAF
- 1967 **L'ARCHE DE NOÉ**
- 1969 **UNE BOMBE PAR HASARD**
- 1974 **POTR' ET LA FILLE DES EAUX**
L'ACTEUR
- 1976 **LE MASQUE DU DIABLE**
- 1978 **LA TRAVERSÉE DE L'ATLANTIQUE À LA RAME ...**
*Winner of the Cannes Palme d'Or,
the César Award and the Ottawa IAF Grand Prize.*

Animated Feature Films

- 1985 **GWEN ET LE LIVRE DE SABLE** – Critics' Prize at Annecy IAF
- 1999 **A MONKEY'S TALE [LE CHÂTEAU DES SINGES]**
Best Animation at the Hollywood Discovery Awards
- 2004 **L'ÎLE DE BLACK MOR**
Adult's Jury Award at the Chicago International Children's FF
- 2011 **THE PAINTING [LE TABLEAU]**
César Award Nominee and Magritte Award Nominee
- 2016 **LOUISE BY THE SHORE [LOUISE EN HIVER]**
- In development **LE VOYAGE DU PRINCE**

CREDITS

Original screenplay, Graphic design,
Storyboard & Set design

Director

Producers

1st Assistant Director & Art Director

3D Animation Director

2D Animation Director

Sea and 2D FX

Original Music (for piano)

Original Music (for orchestra & choir)

Played by

Compositing

Retouching Artist

Editing

Color Grading

FRENCH VOICES

Louise

Louise (young)

Tom

Pepper

Jean-François Laguionie

Jean-Pierre Lemouland

Galilé Marion-Gauvin

Lionel Chauvin

Johanna Bessière

Luc Chamberland

Tchak/Studio Train Train

Pierre Kellner

Pascal Le Pennec

L'Orchestre Symphonique de Bretagne

Matthieu Tremblay

Alexis Poligné

Kara Blake

Mélanie Fordham

Dominique Frot

Diane Dassigny

Anthony Hickling

Jean-François Laguionie

Arte France Cinéma

Canal +

Ciné +

Tébéo, Tébésud, TVR

Radio-Canada

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Axia Films (Canadian Distribution)

Films Distribution (International Sales)