

MOBY DICK FILMS & ARP  
Present  
68<sup>e</sup> Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
Panorama

“I live

by day,

full of

courage

and  
faith,

and  
by night

die in

holy fire.”

# A Paris education

A film by  
JEAN PAUL GIVEYRAC

Audrican MANET Conception VAN BERVESSELES Corentin FLA Diane ROUXEL Jemma THIAM Sophie VERBEECK and Nicolas BOUCHAUD Charlotte VAN BERVESSELES Valerina CATZELUS  
Written and directed by Jean Paul GIVEYRAC Casting Constance DEMONTOY Assistant Director Torrance AVEKIAN Director of Photography Pierre-Hubert MARTIN Production Designers Brigitte BRASSARD  
Costume Designer Claire DUBIEN Sound François MEREU Linea Manager Flore CAMUS Editor Louise NARBONI Mixer Philippe GRIVEL Produced by Frédéric NIEDERMAYER Michèle & Laurent PETIN



arte

A coproduction MOBY DICK FILMS/ARP in association with ARTE COFINOVA 13 with the participation of CNC International Sales LES FILMS DU LOSANGE



les films du losange  
international sales

Moby Dick Films & ARP  
Present



# A Paris education

a film by  
Jean Paul Civeyrac

Running time: 136'

**Bérénice Vincent**

**Head of Sales**

b.vincent@filmsdulosange.fr

+33 6 63 74 69 10

**Laure Parleani**

**Sales**

l.parleani@filmsdulosange.fr

+33 6 84 21 74 53

**International Press**

**Chloé Lorenzi**

**Makna Presse**

festival@makna-presse.com

+ 33 6 08 16 60 26

**Lise Zipci**

**Festivals & Servicing**

l.zipci@filmsdulosange.fr

+33 6 75 13 05 75

**Jean-Benoît Henry**

**Administration & Finance**

jb.henry@filmsdulosange.fr

+33 6 69 90 32 44

**German Press**

**Edith Kleibel**

**Media Office**

info@media-office-presse.com

+49 30 88 71 44 0

## Synopsis

Etienne comes to Paris to study filmmaking at the Sorbonne. He meets Mathias and Jean-Noël who share his passion for films. But as they spend the year studying, they have to face friendship and love challenges as well as choosing their artistic battles.

## Interview with Jean Paul Civeyrac

Writer-director

### What made you want to make this film now?

This film is intimately linked to my encounter with Frédéric Niedermayer, my producer. We wanted to make a relatively inexpensive film that could be done rapidly. I wrote the script in two months and, four months later, we were shooting! It all took place in a context of complete trust and unstinting energy, as if in a dream, the way everything came together in almost miraculous fashion. At every stage of production, we encountered people who were excited by the project (distributors, actors, crew, etc).

As for the screenplay, about a group of film students, it draws on various sources that suddenly crystallized. First of all, personal experience: having studied at La Fémis, then headed up the directing department there, and teaching now at Paris VIII University, I have spent thirty years in constant contact with film students. So that's a subject I know well. There are also the *Blow Up* shorts that I made for Arte's website, which feature characters talking about cinema, such as *An Hour with Alice*, starring Adèle Haenel and Grégoire Leprince-Ringuet, based on Milos Forman's *Loves of a Blonde*. And discovering Marlen Khutsiev's *Ilyich's Gate* was also decisive. That film, which blew me away, is the story of the friendship between three young men starting out in life. I saw it in June 2016. I started to write in July. With the story underpinned by a sentimental education, I wanted to talk about cinema, friendship, love and also politics, and to make a movie with the urgency of a first feature, even though it could

not have become what it is, of course, without the experience of my previous movies.

### **Is the students' fervor for cinema an inextinguishable flame?**

Yes, of course, but of all the students, only a minority truly possess it. At that age, many of them are trying to find themselves or flirting with the film business and, if they carve out a place in it, they don't direct. The fervor for cinema that features in *A Paris Education* is the one that drives anybody for whom making a film is an existential quest. They have to be worthy of the vision they have of their artform and themselves. Naturally, life takes care of teaching them exactly where they are at.

### **You were once a young man leaving the provinces for film school in Paris.**

Yes, I grew up near St. Etienne, and arriving in Paris was a major upheaval. Seen from Firminy, Paris, where I knew no one, might as well have been Tokyo. It was a huge adventure! But at least half my classmates at La Fémis came from the provinces. In our little gang of four or five, it brought us closer together. We met up at the Cinémathèque, chatted with Parisian critics we had read and with filmmakers we liked. The world of cinema, previously experienced from the teenage solitude of our bedrooms, suddenly took shape. During all those years, someone like Jean-Claude Durant, for example, was hugely

important to me. And more concretely, coming to Paris also meant resolving housing issues, money difficulties... Fortunately, like many students at La Fémis, I had a scholarship. To some extent, filming Paris in black & white was an attempt to bestow on it a romantic aspect, to render that sense of adventure felt by every person from the provinces who discovers it. In other words, deep down to give it a quite singular beauty.

### **Another theme of the film is the passage from dream to reality.**

Alone in the provinces, you feel gifted, invincible, but when you arrive in Paris, you measure up to others. It engenders a kind of rivalry that is not always healthy. You're often forced to contemplate what you're doing and what you can do, and what you thought you could do becomes a hazy dream. It's brutal, painful, and occasionally you fall into abominable holes. The scene where Etienne has to be dragged from bed because he doesn't want to shoot really happened to me. I was so sure that what I was doing was terrible that I refused to show my face. So, in the film, Etienne gradually takes the measure of himself and others, and comes to terms with his own limits.

### **The French title, *Mes Provinciales*, seems to operate on various levels.**

On the one hand, it evokes the young women with whom Etienne has relationships – which made

me think of Rimbaud's *Mes petites amoureuses*. On the other hand, of course, it refers to Pascal and particularly to what he said about imposture and the purity of intentions being in accordance with acts. Etienne gradually learns not to lie to himself, not to delude himself about his own abilities, be they artistic or romantic. For example, not to consider himself faithful when he isn't.

### **Is the film very autobiographical?**

The film takes a very free approach to combining real-life experiences and pure fiction. While it's more «autofiction» than autobiography, I have to admit that it must be the first time I have so little perspective on my characters because I know them so intimately. I was able to talk to each actor extensively and precisely about the character, text and subtext, and what references came into play. During preproduction, we had regular preparatory work sessions, like in the theatre. I tried to infuse in them some of that fervor for cinema, and they immersed themselves in their characters with such generosity and eagerness that it still impresses me today. As we had decided to shoot without delay, the momentum we picked up in those rehearsals never dissipated.

### **The actors are almost all unknowns.**

Working with young actors is always a great pleasure. With every film, they give me the feeling

that I'm at the beginning of something again. Devoid of an image, they are incredibly receptive and touchingly modest. In *A Paris Education*, there's a kind of echo between the actors and the film student protagonists. The students I rub shoulders with all year long at Paris VIII, who greatly influenced the script by infiltrating the autofiction of my own time as a student, have something in common with these budding actors: they are just starting to make films, they are unsure of their talent and worried about the future the world reserves for them (socially as well as ecologically, politically, etc). They at once display innocence and lucidity, which often leads them to engage very strongly. To have that embodied in the film by a new generation of French film actors helped, I believe, to establish credibility and thereby touch on very contemporary issues and emotions.

### **How did you set about casting the movie?**

In auditions, I never use a scene from the script. Seeing it performed repeatedly wears it out so that, by the time you come to shoot, it is barely possible to breathe life into it. I prefer to write a separate scene featuring the film's protagonists. For *A Paris Education*, I wrote a dialogue about art and its importance in life because, in the movie, the discussions about cinema had to be perfectly credible. Some of the actors who auditioned were unable to look as if they knew what they were talking about. That enabled me to make an initial selection. Then I added a second part to the scene,

where one of the characters confessed their love for another, which was intended to bring out how the actors in both roles could depict strong emotions. Only when we had chosen the actors who reached the greatest intensity did we allocate parts. So they found out which character they were going to play at the same time as me. A read-through involving the whole cast allowed us to check there had been no slip-ups in the distribution of roles, which was entirely feasible because each actor brought something to his or her character that I had not foreseen, adding another dimension to it. My whole process was based on the idea that combining a real-life person and an on-paper character creates the unique personality of a character on screen.

**A Paris Education is a realistic film, which is not true of all your movies.**

I have made films with internal realism and others with external realism, as Jean Renoir called it. While some portray an almost dreamlike fantasy world, others such as *A Paris Education* portray a very real world, even though I am far removed from naturalism, of course. In this film, there is a real-life context, a real-life city, with relationships between people that we can identify with. Bergman excelled in these two forms of realism: *Persona*, on the one hand; *Scenes from a Marriage* on the other. With *Fanny and Alexander*, he succeeded in combining both forms in the same picture, and it's one of my go-to movies.

**What was your aesthetic approach?**

I thought the film needed simple, sparing, transparent direction, so the camera is forgotten, self-effacing rather than intruding between audience and characters. It's the exact opposite of *A travers la forêt*, which is ten long takes with the camera as a character generating space and time. If the camera in *A Paris Education* is motionless or at most panning (except in the ultimate shots), and filming dialogue between people who are walking or sitting, it's precisely because I felt the point of the film lay in those characters, and therefore in those actors. Orson Welles recalled someone asking Chaplin, «Why is your framing never interesting?» And Chaplin replied, «Because what's interesting is me.» That seems to me the perfect answer.

**Did the film change a lot in editing?**

The crux of each scene posed few problems. On the other hand, the overall structure of the film required quite a few adjustments with regard to the script. I had pictured the film as a chronicle of student life, freely juxtaposing scenes without any particular link of cause-and-effect. That mosaic, however, was not completely effective. I realized that the film had an unexpectedly large narrative dimension. As a result, in editing, we reestablished the causes and effects, reinforced the narrative structure, and reduced the «chronicle» dimension that had been in the script.

**As so often in your films, Bach is omnipresent.**

He's the only composer I can listen to every day without ever getting bored. It's a liking that I wanted Etienne to share because when I was a student, I forged my character with the help of radical artists – Godard, Straub/Huillet, Bresson, Pasolini, Genet, Emily Dickinson and, yes, Johann Sebastian Bach. Having solid points of reference seems to me a legitimate need when you're a student, but they wind up crushing all the rest. Over time, you learn to love many other things, without the contradictions that you might rather dogmatically presuppose. Such as, in the film, the fairly romantic music, associated with love, which is by Giya Kancheli.

**You filmed your characters with a great deal of indulgence.**

Once more, it's the legacy of Renoir and his famous «We all have our reasons.» I don't like movies that lead a whole swathe of mean, stupid or alienated characters to the slaughter, while the director leads the flattered and suddenly complicit audience members to believe that they are not like the people on screen. I try to shine a light on all the characters in my film, while leaving the audience to make up their own minds about them.

## Jean Paul Civeyrac

### *Biography & Filmography*

Born in 1964, Jean Paul Civeyrac graduated in philosophy from the University of Lyon before studying film at La Fémis in Paris. *La vie selon Luc* (1991), the short feature he made there was selected in competition at Cannes.

In 1996, he shot his debut feature, *Neither Eve nor Adam*, followed by *Les Solitaires*, *Fantômes* and *Man's gentle love*. *All the fine promises* won the Jean Vigo Prize in 2003. His other credits include *Through the forest*, *Young Girls in Black*, which premiered in Directors' Fortnight at Cannes 2010, and *My Friend Victoria* in 2014. Alongside his work as a filmmaker, Jean Paul Civeyrac has taught at La Fémis, Paris VIII University and Cours Florent drama school. In 2014, De l'incidence Editeur published *Écrit entre les jours*, a collection of texts devoted to cinema and music, and in 2017, P.O.L. published an essay on filmmaking, *Rose pourquoi*.

### *Filmography of Jean Paul Civeyrac*

- 2017 **A Paris Education**  
(Fiction, 136 mn)
- 2014 **My Friend Victoria**  
(Fiction, 95 mn)
- 2012 **Fairy Queen**  
(Fiction, 45 mn)
- Françoise au Printemps**  
(Fiction, 10 mn)
- 2011 **Louise, le Dimanche**  
(Fiction, 4mn)
- Une Heure Avec Alice**  
(Fiction, 13 minutes).
- 2010 **Young Girls in Black**  
(Fiction, 85mn)
- 2008 **Malika s'est envolée**  
(fiction, for the Théâtre de Gennevilliers, 35mn)
- 2006 **Ma Belle Rebelle et mon Prince Charmant**  
(fictions ADAMI-Talents Cannes, 2x11 mn)
- 2005 **Through the Forest**  
(fiction, 65mn)
- 2004 **Tristesse Beau Visage**  
(fiction, for ARTE, collection of Portraits, 17mn)
- 2003 **All the Fine Promises**  
(TV fiction - ARTE, 85mn)
- 2002 **Man's Gentle Love**  
(fiction, 80mn)
- 2001 **Fantômes**  
(fiction, 95mn)
- 2000 **Les Solitaires**  
(fiction, 75mn)
- 1997 **Neither Eve Nor Adam**  
(fiction, 90 mn)
- 1991 **La Vie Selon Luc**  
(fiction, 15 mn – End of studies film)

### *Literature*

- 2017 **Rose Pourquoi** (POL edition)
- 2014 **Écrit Entre Les Jours** (De l'incidence edition)

## Cast

### Andranic Manet – *Etienne*

#### Film

- 2018 **A Paris Education** by Jean Paul Civeyrac  
2015 **Heal the living** by Katell Quillévéré  
**A Mighty Team** by Thomas Sorriaux

#### Theatre

- 2017 **Les enfants du siècle** by Jean-Pierre Garnier

### Gonzague Van Bervesselès – *Jean-Noël*

#### Film

- 2018 **A Paris Education** by Jean Paul Civeyrac  
2013 **Tout est permis** by Emilie Deleuze

#### Theatre

- 2017 **Jean Moulin Evangile** by Régis de Martrin-Donos  
2016 **Laisse la jeunesse tranquille** by Lena Paugam  
**Rimbaud Chante** by Régis de Martrin-Donos  
2015 **Le prince de Hombourg**  
by Giorgio Barberio Corsetti  
**Antigone** by Jean-Charles Raymond  
2014 **N'enterrez pas trop vite Big Brother**  
by Catherine Marnas  
**La famille Schroffenstein**  
by Giorgio Barberio Corsetti  
2013 **Toutes les dates de naissance et de mort**  
by Gilbert Desveaux

### Corentin Fila – *Mathias*

#### Film

- 2018 **A Paris Education** by Jean Paul Civeyrac  
2017 **Jealous** by David Foenkinos & Stéphane Foenkinos  
2016 **Being Seventeen** by André Téchiné

### Diane Rouxel – *Lucie*

#### Film

- 2018 **A Paris Education** by Jean Paul Civeyrac  
2017 **Volontaire** by Hélène Fillières  
2016 **The Wild Boys** by Bertrand Mandico  
**Moka** by Frédéric Mermoud  
2015 **Fou d'amour** by Philippe Ramos  
Festival Jean Carmet - Jury Prize  
Best Supporting Actress 2015  
Montreal World Film Festival:  
Grand Prize of the Americas 2015  
**Standing Tall** by Emmanuelle Bercot  
César 2016 nomination for Most Promising Actress  
2014 **The smell of us** by Larry Clark

### Jenna Thiam – *Valentina*

#### Film

- 2018 **A Paris Education** by Jean Paul Civeyrac  
2017 **Daydreams** by Caroline Deruas  
2015 **Anton Tchekov 1890** by René Féret  
**L'année prochaine** by Vania Leturcq  
2014 **Smart Ass** by Kim Chapiron  
**Wild Life** by Cédric Kahn  
**We Love You, You Bastard** by Claude Lelouch

#### Theatre

- 2017 **La mort de Danton** by François Orsini  
2011 **La fiancée aux yeux bandés** by Daniel Mesguich

# Moby Dick Films

*Production*

**Sophie Verbeeck** – *Annabelle*

## *Film*

- 2018 **A Paris Education** by Jean Paul Civeyrac  
**The Red Collar** by Jean Becker  
2016 **Iris** by Jalil Lespert  
**Parenthèse** by Bernard Tanguy  
2015 **All About Them** by Jérôme Bonnell  
**Marussia** by Eva Pervolovici  
2014 **Romantic Delusions of the Bird** by Jurga Zabukaite  
2013 **Oceane** by Philippe Appietto & Nathalie Sauvegrain  
**F** by Y. Apsit, M. Hubert, G. Kiaku,  
M. M. Marechal & K. Soirat  
2011 **Forme** by Guillaume Mika  
2010 **Rox** by Sarah Karama

## *Theatre*

- 2012-15 **Sœur, je ne sais pas quoi frère** by Sylviane Fortuny  
2012 **Roman avec cocaïne** by Romain Pellet  
**Theory and practice of catastrophes**  
by Jurga Zabukaite & Riccardo Giacconi  
**Fiction d'hiver** by Grégoire Strecker  
2011 **Le musée vivant** by Valérie Dreville, Charlotte Clamens  
**Phèdres** by Valérie Dreville, Charlotte Clamens  
**La prière des clowns** by Youri Pogrebitchko  
& Lilia Zagorskaïa  
**Cabaret Jacques Dutronc / Françoise Hardy**  
by Véronique Dietschy  
2010 **Embronnes** by Alexandra Badea  
**Comment Barbie traverse la crise mondiale**  
by Mihaela Michailov  
**Tourista** by Robert Cantarella  
2009 **L'atelier** by Béatrice Houplain, Frédéric Grosche  
2008 **Richard III n'aura pas lieu** by Franck Garric  
1999 **Le malade imaginaire** by Aimé Vieux-Pernon

After graduating from the producing section of La Fémis film school in 1998, Frédéric Niedermayer founded Moby Dick Films and has since produced around twenty feature films.

## *Filmography*

- 2018 **A Paris Education** by Jean Paul Civeyrac  
2018 **Mademoiselle de Joncquières** by Emmanuel Mouret  
2016 **Celui qu'on attendait** by Serge Avédikian  
2015 **Caprice** by Emmanuel Mouret  
2014 **Lovers** by Emmanuel Mouret  
2013 **Grand Central** by Rebecca Zlotowski  
2012 **Chercher le garçon** by Dorothee Sebbagh  
2011 **The Art of Love** by Emmanuel Mouret  
2010 **Dear Prudence** by Rebecca Zlotowski  
**Toutes les filles pleurent** by Judith Godrèche  
2009 **Please, please me!** by Emmanuel Mouret  
**À l'aventure** by Jean-Claude Brisseau  
2007 **Shall we kiss?** by Emmanuel Mouret  
**My Son** by Martial Fougeron  
2006 **Change of Address** by Emmanuel Mouret  
**Un camion en réparation** by Arnaud Simon  
2005 **Odessa...Odessa!** by Michale Boganim  
2004 **Venus & Fleur** by Emmanuel Mouret  
2003 **Clement** by Emmanuelle Bercot

## Cast

Etienne.....Andranic Manet  
Jean-Noël.....Gonzague Van Bervesselès  
Mathias.....Corentin Fila  
Lucie.....Diane Rouxel  
Valentina.....Jenna Thiam  
Annabelle .....Sophie Verbeeck  
Barbara.....Valentine Catzeflis  
Héloïse.....Charlotte Van Bervesselès  
Paul Rossi.....Nicolas Bouchaud  
William.....Laurent Delbecque  
Solange .....Jeanne Ruff

## Crew

Written and directed by.....Jean Paul Civeyrac  
Assistant director.....Tigrane Avédikian  
Director of Photography.....Pierre-Hubert Martin  
Film Editor.....Louise Narboni  
Production Designer.....Brigitte Brassart  
Costumes/Script Supervisor.....Claire Dubien  
Sound .....François Méreu  
Re-recording Mixer.....Philippe Grivel  
Casting .....Constance Demontoy  
Unit Manager .....Flore Camus  
Produced by .....Frédéric Niedermayer  
.....Michèle et Laurent Pétin  
Production.....Moby Dick Films  
Coproducton .....ARP Sélection

**Son**

5.1

**Format**

CinemaScope 2.39

**Press kit, photos  
and trailer  
can be downloaded at**

[www.filmsdulosange.fr/en/film/244/a-paris-education](http://www.filmsdulosange.fr/en/film/244/a-paris-education)