

Helen Olive, Martin Bertier & Utopie Films Present

T
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T
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M
S

a film by Sarah Arnold





SYNOPSIS

How does history affect us ? After completing her PHD thesis on *The Unknown Soldier*, Adèle returns to her rural hometown to look after her grandfather. Like a modern-day Antigone, her grandfather is a rebellious writer who has secretly kept the remains of a soldier from World War I buried at the bottom of their garden.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

What do we inherit from wars that we have not directly experienced? What remains from conflict, not in museums, but in us? And how does the State build and maintain patriotic feeling in its people?

I grew up in the Marne valley in Northern France where WWI ravished the countryside at the beginning of the 20th Century. I lived near WWI cemeteries & ossuaries and military training bases. For me, it is a landscape that has never been able to free itself from its violent past. From this experience grew the desire to film a region that is principally visited for its war tourism, tourism that continues to glorify our past rather than asking the questions about the real reasons behind war.

Rather than only looking at conflict and war, I also hoped to express liberation: Adèle's liberation through the deconstruction of patriotic discourses; Emile's liberation from his hatred of war, a hatred that has always bound him intrinsically to it; and Majid's liberation through sculpture – works of art that reposition the war memory monuments in a civil sphere.

I constructed the film in a way I hoped would reveal the similarities between Adèle and these sculptures. Adèle's reconstruction of her own life parallels the sculptures' fabrication. As with the rough cuts made by Majid's chainsaw, I made elliptical cuts in the film editing so as to follow Adèle's emotional journey. I wanted the film to have a certain brutality to it that moved towards something gentler.

The film was shot in autumn, a cruel season in Northern France, but one of beautiful greys and mists. The more a landscape is hostile and unwelcoming, the more characters have to turn towards one another for warmth. I chose to shoot on 16mm stock to capture this season and create a grainy and harsh image that mirrored the subject matter and landscape.

DIRECTORS BIO

Swiss-Italian filmmaker, Sarah Arnold grew up in France and graduated from Toulouse Ecole Supérieure in filmmaking. She experimented with cinematographic forms in several self-produced shorts, then, in 2010 directed her first produced short THE QUARTET (Leçon de Ténèbres) that received the Turin Film Festival Jury Prize. TOTEMS is her second film. It received the Golden Leopard for best Swiss short film at the Locarno Film Festival 2014.

I WANT TO HOLD YOU LIKE A DOG (15 min)	2006
9 & LA COLÈRE (20 min)	2007
LEÇON DE TÉNÈBRES (15 minutes)	2010
TOTEMS (29 minutes)	2014



CAST

Adèle
Emile
Majid
Jérémie

Julie Lesgages
Albert Delpy
Slimane Dazi
Yann Chevèlle

JULIE LESGAGES

Julie Lesgages studied theatre at the National Theatre school in Strasbourg between 2004 and 2007. Principally a theatre actress, Julie has acted in many creations and plays in France. On graduating she acted in one of France's most famous plays, TARTUFFE directed by Stéphane Braunschweig.

Then, in 2009, she acted in DANS LA JUNGLE DES VILLES by Brecht directed by Clément Poirée. In 2009 and 2010 she joined the art collective of the Comédie de Reims under the direction of Ludovic Lagarde and acted in LA TERREUR DU BOOMERANG by Anne Kawala directed by Emilie Rousset, and Fassbinder's LE BOUC and PREPARADISE SORRY NOW directed by Guillaume Vincent. She also acted in Fidèles a spectacle created by Anna Nozières. She works with Emilie Rousset again in LA PLACE ROYALE de Corneille, and acts in AU MOINS J'AURAI LAISSE UN BEAU CADAVRE based on a play by William Shakespeare directed by Vincent Macaigne. In 2012, she appears in Portraits chinois directed by Gweltaz Chauviré and Louison directed by François Orsoni.

In 2013/14, she appears in Visite au père directed by Adiren Béal and in Le système pour devenir invisible by Guillermo Pisani and acts in La Pluie d'Été by Marguerite Duras directed by Sylvain Maurice.

Her film work includes the film MUSEE HAUT MUSEE BAS by Jean-Michel Ribes and the lead role in Nicolas Maury's film "Virgine ou la capitale". En 2014 she is the lead role in Sarah Arnold's short film Totems and acts in Catherine Corsini's La Belle Saison.



ARTISTIC COLLABORATORS

CHRISTIAN LAPIE - Sculpteur

Born in 1955 in Reims, Champagne, France, Christian Lapie studied at the École des Beaux Arts in Reims and the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts in Paris.

Initially a painter, following a creative visit to the Amazon Forest, Lapie moved on to producing monumental sculptures, shaping figures in rough-hewn, fire-blackened timber. Some were created in the Champagne region, a region that witnessed bloody fighting during World War I. Works in stone, wood and cast iron have been erected in various locations around the world: the Sculpture Park at Echigo Tsumari, Japan; the Salomon Foundation, Alex, France; the Musée des Beaux Arts in Reims, France; The Crowsnest Pass, Southern Alberta, Canada; Jaipur, India; Parc de Sceaux near Paris; and a quantity of works in private collections in Europe and the United States.

Christian Lapie's oeuvre probes individual and collective memory. Specific history-charged sites inspire his installations of spectral figures. Wherever they stand, whatever the continent, the powerful and monumental figures without arms or facial features question and unsettle.

ADRIAN O. SMITH - Co-writer

Adrian O. Smith is a writer, filmmaker and sound artist. He won a Fuji prize for his first short film *Eve, one morning* film directed in Bristol. He edited the first films of Chris Smith then made experimental work and art videos exhibited in modern art museums like the Centre Pompidou in Paris. His next shorty *The Immature* has been widely acclaimed in many festivals (Locarno, Clermont-Ferrand, Palm Springs, Cinémathèque Française). As a scriptwriter he collaborated with Agnès Merlet, Marina de Van, Djo Munga, Sarah Arnold, Erik Zonca, Chris Smith... He also teaches scriptwriting at Metz University and medias studies in Paris. As a sound artist and musician he works under the moniker Arden Day (contact@ardenday.com). He co-wrote and contributed to the soundtrack of *Totems* by Sarah Arnold. He is currently preparing a feature film shot in Paris.



PRODUCERS

HELEN OLIVE

With more than 15 years in the film industry, Helen Olive has worked with directors including Alexander Payne, François Ozon, Wim Wenders and Ridley Scott and on films premiering in Cannes and Berlin and nominated at the Oscars. She executive produced Attila Marcel by Sylvain Chomet with Eurowide Film Production and Charles de Meaux's feature Schimkent Hotel with Donaldson Polakoff Productions. In 2010 she produced Sarah Arnold's first short film, Leçon de Ténèbres with Karin Sitbon and Utopie Films, winner at Turin and selected in over thirty festivals. Totems is her second collaboration with Sarah Arnold.

MARTIN BERTIER

Following six years experience working with the French company Films du Poisson, working on fiction and documentaries by directors such as Emmanuel Finkiel, Julie Bertuccelli, Mathieu Amalric, Etgar Keret and Shira Geffen, Martin Bertier began producing his own projects in 2013. He continues to work with Les Films du Poisson and also produces projects for Les Films d'Ici. In 2014, he coproduced Comme un seul homme by Denis Darzac, Totems by Sarah Arnold and Dzisiaj by Aurélien-Verhnes-Lermusiau.

KARIN SITBON / ★ UTOPIE FILMS

Utopie Films is a young short film production company headed by the producer Karin Sitbon. Karin has produced several short films which have been selected and won at in many international festivals. She supports exciting new filmmakers, often female directors. Currently Utopie has in development: GIGOT-BITUME de Clémence Madeleine-Perdrillat, LES VIES PASSAGERES de Bruno Lefèvre-Brauer (scénario Olivier Dague), Films in exploitation: TOTEMS de Sarah Arnold 28', PASTORALE de Oriane Polack 18', MAUVAISE TETE de Camille Vidal Naquet 29', BAL DE NUIT de Clémence Madeleine-Perdrillat 19', AUTOPSIE de Pauline Goasmat 10', LEÇON DE TENEBRES de Sarah Arnold 16', REFLUX de Pauline Goasmat 12', NE M'OUBLIE PAS de Katia Grivot 16', E 1000 de Pauline Goasmat Film interactif de 5' développé avec le Forum des Images, A LA DROITE DE DIEU de Pauline Goasmat 12'.

With the participation of Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée – Contribution financière and of France 3

With the support of the region Champagne-Ardenne and Adami and Procirep & Angoa



CREW

Director
Produced by
Screenplay by
The Sculptures are by
Image
Sound
Set Design
Costumes
Editing
Mix & Sound Edit
Sound design
Original Music
Associate Producer

Sarah Arnold
Helen Olive, Martin Bertier & Karin Sitbon
Sarah Arnold & Adrian O. Smith
Christian Lapie
Tristan Tortuyaux
Virgile van Ginneken
Hélène Cisterne
Cécile Choumiloff
Carlos Pinto
Virgile van Ginneken
Jan Vysocky
Arden Day & Wysozky et Benjamin Tixier
Bruno Lefèvre-Brauer



TECHNICAL INFO

Nationality:

Screening Format:

Sound:

Length:

Visa d'exploitation:

French

DCP 24i

5.1

28m37

n°138.229

FESTIVAL SELECTION

67e Locarno Film Festival (Golden Leopard for Best Swiss Short Film)

20e Jean Carmet Film Festival Moulins (Public prize for best rising star for Julie Lesgages),

32e Festival Tous Courts (Aix en Provence, France),

18e Internationale Kurzfilmtage (Winterthur, Switzerland)

5e Overlook CinemAvvenire Film Festival (Rome, Italy)

50e Journées de Soleure (Switzerland),

44e International Film Festival Rotterdam (Netherlands)

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