

LAETITIA CASTA LUC BRUCHEZ THIBAUT EVRARD CLÉMENCE POÉSY



# BEYOND THE HORIZON

DIRECTED BY **DELPHINE LEHERICEY**

FRED HOTIER PATRICK DESCAMPS LISA HARDER SASHA GRAVAT HARSCH

Scenario, adaptation and dialogue JOANNE GIGER. In collaboration with DELPHINE LEHERICEY. Director of photography CHRISTOPHE BEAUCARNE. Edited by EMILIE MORIER. Original score by NICOLAS RABAELS. Sound FRANCIS MUSY. Mix FRANCO PISCOPO. First assistant director ALEXANDRA BAYZAL. Continuity SONIA PIEDI. Set designer IVAN NICLASS. Costume GENEVIÈVE MAULINI. Make-up ORIANE DE NEVE. Hair MARINA AEBI. Key light BRUNO VERSTRAETE. Key grip STÉPHANE THIRY. Line producer CHRISTELLE MICHEL. Producers ELENA TATTI, SÉBASTIEN DELLOYE, THIÉRRY SPICHER, ELONIE BRUNNER, FRANÇOIS TOUWAIDE. A production BOX PRODUCTIONS and ENTRE CHIEN ET LOUP. In collaboration with KINO OKO. In coproduction with RTS RADIO TÉLÉVISION SUISSE, TELECLUB, RTBF (TELEVISION BELGE), VOO ET BE TV. With the support of OFFICE FÉDÉRAL DE LA CULTURE (OFC), EURIMAGES, FONDS CULTUREL SUISSOIS, MEDIA DESK SUISSE, SUCCÈS PASSAGE ANTIENNE, SRG SSR, POUR CENT CULTUREL MIGROS. With the participation of CINÉFORUM, LOTERIE ROMANDE, LA RÉGION BRUXELLES CAPITALE. Produced with the help of CENTRE DU CINÉMA ET DE L'AUDIOVISUEL DE LA FÉDÉRATION WALLONIE-BRUXELLES. Directed with the support of TAX SHELTER DU GOUVERNEMENT FÉDÉRAL BELGE, CASA KAFKA PICTURES MOVIE TAX SHELTER EMPOWERED BY BELFIUS, INTERMÉDIAIRE TAX SHELTER DREAM TOUCH, DUOMOS SPRL. With the support of CASH REBATE MACEDONIA. International Sales BE-FOR FILMS. Swiss distribution OUTSIDE THE BOX.



**SSIFF**

NEW DIRECTORS

# BEYOND THE HORIZON

A FILM BY DELPHINE LEHERICEY





## SYNOPSIS

The drought of 1976. Under the unforgiving sun, Gus is about to leave childhood behind. Nature withers, emotions swell, the family unit splinters; everything splits and cracks until the unthinkable occurs: the eagerly anticipated thunderstorms will sweep across the tired and worn countryside, washing a whole world away.

## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Initially from the world of theater, Delphine Lehericéy started as an actress and stage director before training to become a video director. She organized and took part in courses to direct actors and also filmed objects and scenery for scenographic purposes in dance and theater productions. Her video work gradually expanded towards documentary, then fiction.

In 2007, she directed *Comme à Ostende* [*Like in Ostend*], a medium-length film which was notably selected at the Locarno film festival in the Concorso Cineasti del Presente section, dedicated to emerging directors.

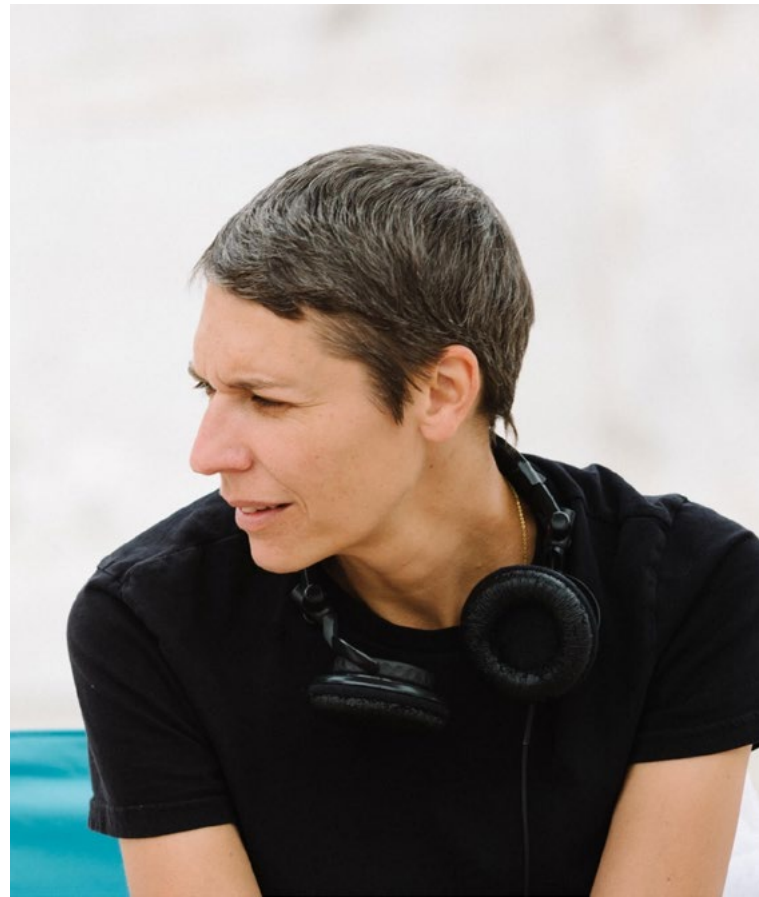
In 2009, she co-directed with the producers of the French TV show *Strip-Tease* the documentary *Kill the Referee*, which was selected by several film festivals and distributed by Gaumont.

In 2011, she directed a documentary about the Belgian fashion designer and visual artist Jean-Paul Lespagnard, *Mode in Belgium*, for Arte and the RTBF; in 2013 her first feature film, *PuppyLove*, with Solène Rigot and Vincent Perez made its international debut at the San Sebastian festival and then in numerous other film festivals.

Between 2014 and 2016 Delphine directed *A Chef and Her Lucky Star*, a documentary about a Michelin-starred chef commissioned by Arte and the RTBF.

She co-wrote the script for the comic book series *Starred* about the world of gastronomy published by Editions Dupuis, and wrote her first comedy *Le feu au lac* [*Lake on Fire*], which depicts the upending of a family when the grandfather marries a man.

2019 sees the release of her second feature-length film, *Beyond the Horizon*, with Laetitia Casta and Clémence Poesy.



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

*"It was the month of June in the year 1976. I was thirteen. It was the start of the summer holidays. It was the year of the drought."*

This is how Roland Buti's novel begins, with a short introduction to Gus, the young hero who, by the end of this disastrous summer, glimpses the world as the grownups will leave it for him, and as we know it today. A world in which nature's fragility is henceforth manifest, in which working the land no longer yields any wealth or nobility, in which a couple's relationship is no longer governed by traditional family values and in which a woman's place in the world has changed.

The threatening and disheveled nature that Gus walks through, like all the scenery in the film, creates a trap that closes in on the characters. Although we can constantly see the horizon and feel as if we are standing in the middle of a wide-open space up until the storm, I constructed the film as a claustrophobic drama.

The summer of 1976 and its scorching heatwave mark the end of Gus' childhood. I wanted to turn his story into a deliberately contemporary film broaching the challenges of the end of a certain rural world, as well as the end of childhood, throwing the young man into the throes of the condition of men and women.

It's by going through trials and upheavals that Gus grows up. Much like the grownups surrounding him, Gus is confronted with the inexorable end of things, but he is also confronted by his feelings, and in particular, love.

*Beyond the Horizon* is a strong, universal story which, between naturalism and reverie, strikes a chord in all of us.



## INTERVIEW WITH **DELPHINE LEHERICEY**

### **Why did you want to film the adaptation of Roland Buti's novel?**

I was captivated by Joanne Giger's screenplay. It's a story that really struck a chord with me, for just like Nicole, the character played by Laetitia Casta, I met a woman and fell in love with her while I was in a relationship with the man who is the father of my son. I was immensely moved by this character, by her freedom. I wondered whether I would have had her courage if it had happened to me in the 1970s.

What particularly intrigued me was that this story is told from the perspective of Nicole's son, Gus. Gus' story is equally that of a child who is turning into a young man as he sees the world of the adults around him collapse, but also be transformed. He wonders what type of world they'll leave behind for him and which choices he'll have to make. After *PuppyLove*, my first feature film, I wanted to once again explore the coming-of-age genre. The period of transition from childhood to adulthood fascinates me. It's a period that everyone experiences, a pivotal stage in life. I am especially attached to filming these moments, because they recall such unique emotions.





## **How can a story taking place in the mid-1970s resonate with today's moviegoers?**

*Beyond the Horizon* is a universal story and the film's topics are extremely current: the traditional family unit exploding, the redefinition of a woman's place in society, agriculture practiced on an industrial scale, climate change, a person's sexual awakening... The heatwave of the summer of 1976 has marked the collective memory, and it brings back memories of summers past, vacation, but also the tragedies that the heatwave caused. Our gamble was that the viewer would forget the time period, only being aware of it as an afterthought. This allows us to emphasize the way this film echoes the current era.

## **How did you, as well as the cast and crew, step into the 1970s?**

We called upon our own nostalgia. We remembered the colors and the textures that made up our daily lives when we were young. We then applied them to the farmhouse's interior, the wallpaper and the objects that the characters use every day.

This is also the reason why we shot the outdoor scenes with 35mm film, even though it's an additional challenge, especially when working with children, animals and climatic conditions that weren't always ideal. Shooting in 35mm allowed us to obtain

the grainy image and the nostalgia it conveys. We wanted to make a film that felt as though we'd shot it in the 70s, as though we were watching a memory. We pointedly worked on the emotions specific to memory.

### **It's Luc Bruchez's first role in a movie, with experienced actors at his side; what did this imply for you?**

It was indeed a true challenge to direct a 13-year-old child in the leading role who had no experience whatsoever. Luc is present in every scene. To find the perfect person, we organized a nationwide casting call over nearly two years. We saw more than 500 kids, boys and girls, for the roles of Gus and Mado. We were very lucky to find Luc. In fact, he was on his way back from karate practice with his mom, and on the car radio they heard that there was a casting call in Sion. His mother asked him if he wanted to stop by on the way home and he agreed. I thank his mom and the radio for creating this alignment of the stars placing this boy at the right place at the right time.

People don't always realize that it's a small miracle to find an actor able to deliver a role just as we see it in our mind's eye. Casting someone is a bit like falling in love. We were looking for an actor who was at an age when he still looks very much like a child, all the while also giving us a glimpse of the young man he will become. It means that we were aiming for a complex and limited window of time. Physically, Luc looked like the young boy that is on the cover of the book published by Editions Zoé; there was something rather evident when we received the first photos and videos of him. Yet, it's when he acted in front of me that I was love-struck: he truly was the child that I had imagined. After that, a family formed itself on the set: Laetitia was entirely committed to the project, she was very maternal; and Thibaut took Luc under his wing.

### **Can you tell us more about Nicole, the role played by Laetitia Casta?**

It is thanks to an encounter that Nicole realizes that there's a whole new world that can open up for her, beyond the farm and her role as a housewife.

I delved into archives about groups of women that had formed spontaneously in the countryside during that era. Sometimes, their meetings created a wish to shatter the established family model. In the 1970s, this emancipation movement was real. Laetitia's character follows a very interesting path, which reflects concerns that are still very much alive today.





Laetitia exudes an aplomb and strength – rarely filmed before – that allowed Nicole’s character to exist. One day, while listening to her on the radio in her function as France’s Unicef Goodwill Ambassador, I could actually see her face as Nicole’s. I think that Laetitia was very moved by what this character was acting upon. Nicole is not a dualistic person, she is far more complex. She is faced with emotions that she had never experienced before and she doesn’t want to shun them, she must confront them. *That* is what a true heroine role is!

### **What importance did Roland Buti’s book have in your film?**

It really was a very important tool. We even used it when we edited the film! There’s a lot of information in a novel that you aren’t necessarily able to film directly – emotional cues, actions, glances, many things that can help fuel the actors. I often used excerpts from the novel during the shoot giving them to Luc, Thibaut or Laetitia to read. This helped me to explain my vision of the literary work while also specifically focusing on the parts of the novel I intended to keep.

***Beyond the Horizon* is a man’s book that has become a women’s film. The producers, the director and the scriptwriter are all women.**

It’s complicated to talk about “work by men” and “work by women.” More importantly,



one should bear in mind that there are stories about women and stories about men, regardless of who tells them. I consider myself a feminist. How can we achieve a form of equality in speech, rights, existence and the sharing of roles? Humankind is about sharing; we must let others gravitate towards their own desires, whether it be for a man or a woman. It is through her own emancipation, in making her choices and following her desire that Nicole is a woman feminist. It is by giving this example to her son that he'll be able to cast a less oppressive look upon women. I see this film as a universal film, giving women the space they need to make their own choices. Feminism is a humanistic struggle for equal rights: a struggle men and women should fight together.

### **Which character would you like to be?**

All of them! All the female roles are strong in the film. I feel very close to Mado, for instance. I find it interesting to follow this young girl who becomes a young woman. I also love Gus' sister, for she stands up to her parents, rebels and becomes emancipated. There are parts of me and my personal story in several of the film's characters. But if I had to choose only one, obviously it would be Nicole.





## INTERVIEW WITH LAETITIA CASTA

### **What was it like to work with Delphine Lehericoy?**

Delphine presented the project to me when we first met in Paris. It instantly resonated with me. But it was especially the long letter she wrote, in which she explained why she wanted us to work together that definitely convinced me. I found her letter very touching. Delphine sees people and life with a highly sensitive eye. We got along extremely well; we shared a great bond and understanding. I truly felt I could trust her and a glance was sometimes enough for us to understand one another. I had the impression that I'd known her for a long time. Delphine was gentle, present and protective. All the right conditions were there for me to go full steam ahead, in confidence.

### **What about Nicole's character appealed to you?**

Her freedom. Whether faced with society, with her family's judgment or with the choice she has to make with regard to her son, she is extremely brave, especially if you think about the time period when the story takes place. She follows her desire; she discovers her sexuality, and her independence. It's also the intimacy that I



developed with Delphine that allowed Nicole's character to evolve. Our closeness enabled me to overcome the hurdles and difficulties inherent in the shoot. On the set, I was fully in character and could completely let go.

***Beyond the Horizon* is adapted from a literary work. Did this influence the way you prepared for the role? How did the novel enrich the way you played your character?**

Well, I must admit that working on an adaptation can sometimes entail additional pressure. The story and the characters have been set on paper and have already come to life in readers' minds. This can be somewhat of a constraint and take some room for maneuver away from the actor.

For *Beyond the Horizon*, I first read the screenplay, as it is my working tool, the benchmark during the entire preparation period and film shoot.

The novel, which I read later, most certainly allowed me to go deeper into Nicole's complexity and to discover further subtleties in her personality. It led me to understand the details that make her real and unique. Reading the book also gave me a chance to observe the accuracy with which Delphine and Joanne had managed to capture the essence of what plays out in Buti's book in order to transcribe it for the screen. I felt this even more acutely when we were filming, as it is the director's job to deal with unexpected events and last-minute changes. Her overarching vision of the work allowed us to always follow the thread and surpass ourselves.

**Is this what you particularly enjoy in your profession as an actress?**

Absolutely. I love this profession because it is never the same. We go back to square one every single time. Being an actor isn't always simple and is often quite intense, but that's what makes it unique. When there's joy on the set, when we're enjoying ourselves, it's extraordinary. We get to live several lives, and we never stop learning new things.

I often compare the actor's job to a lighthouse at sea. It doesn't only light ahead or behind, it lights all around – just like an actor casting a broader light on life, feelings and emotions.



### **How did filming with young Luc Bruchez go, as it was his first experience in front of a camera?**

I've always loved children. Working with them is a pleasure and something I'm very comfortable with. I love their spontaneity and sheer sincerity, which pressures us to do better. Even when inexperienced, their acting can be very powerful and truthful. They keep us on our toes: we never know what's going to happen with the next line, and that's something I like. Luc is an exceptional young boy; he's very smart and sensitive and I truly enjoyed working with him, whether during takes or down time.

### **Beyond the Horizon was filmed using 35-mm reel, does this add extra pressure for the actors?**

It actually gets me going and motivates me even more! Shooting with actual film adds a certain pressure for the entire crew. You always have to remain focused and avoid making any mistakes. Every time "ACTION" is heard on set, the pressure goes up a notch, yet we quickly let go of the fear of botching a take and wasting film, which is very expensive and limited in quantity. There's something sacred about it. Such imposed technical constraints add an instantaneous side, making it more akin to theater and that is tremendously stimulating for me.





Also, not to forget the naturally aesthetical side of this approach, the grain makes everyone's skin as well as the scenery look fabulous and gives the image a style that I particularly appreciate. In short, it makes everything beautiful; I love 35mm!

**When we think of you, we have this mental image of a sophisticated, urban woman. Did playing the role of a country woman appeal to you?**

Absolutely! In fact, it is much closer to who I truly am. I come from the countryside; I would go as far as to say that I'm more like a wild animal than a Parisian woman.



**CAST**

Gus	<b>Luc BRUCHEZ</b>
Nicole	<b>Laetitia CASTA</b>
Jean	<b>Thibaut EVRARD</b>
Cécile	<b>Clémence POÉSY</b>
Rudy	<b>Fred HOTIER</b>
Annibal	<b>Patrick DESCAMPS</b>
Léa	<b>Lisa HARDER</b>
Mado	<b>Sasha GRAVAT HARSCH</b>

**CREW**

Director	<b>Delphine LEHERICEY</b>
Screenplay	<b>Joanne GIGER</b> with the collaboration of <b>Delphine LEHERICEY</b>
Composer	<b>Nicolas RABAEUS</b>
Director of Photography	<b>Christophe BEAUCARNE</b>
Sound	<b>François MUSY</b>
Set Designer	<b>Ivan NICLASS</b>
Editor	<b>Emilie MORIER</b>
Producers	<b>Elena TATTI, Thierry SPICHER &amp; Elodie BRUNNER</b> (BOX PRODUCTIONS) & <b>Sébastien DELLOYE</b> (ENTRE CHIEN ET LOUP)
Co-producers	RTS RADIO TÉLÉVISION SUISSE, RTBF (TÉLÉVISION BELGE), TÉLÉCLUB, VOO & BE TV
With the participation of	KINO OKO (MK)
With the support of	OFFICE FÉDÉRAL DE LA CULTURE (OFC), CINÉFORM ET LE SOUTIEN DE LA LOTERIE ROMANDE, FONDS CULTUREL DE SUISSIMAGE, MEDIA DESK SUISSE, CENTRE DU CINÉMA DE L'AUDIOVISUEL DE LA FÉDÉRATION WALLONIE-BRUXELLES, TAX SHELTER DU GOUVERNEMENT FÉDÉRAL BELGE, CASA KAFKA PICTURES, CASA KAFKA PICTURES MOVIE TAX SHELTER EMPOWERED BY BELFIUS, RÉGION DE BRUXELLES-CAPITALE, EURIMAGES

**TECHNICAL DETAILS**

Sound Format	<b>5.1</b>
Ratio	<b>1.85</b>
Running Time	<b>92'</b>
Original Version	<b>French</b>
Year of Production	<b>2019</b>
Country	<b>Switzerland, Belgium</b>



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