



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
OFFICIAL SELECTION
OUT OF COMPETITION

BACK TO NORMANDY

A FILM BY
NICOLAS PHILIBERT



FESTIVAL DE CANNES

OFFICIAL SELECTION
OUT OF COMPETITION

Les Films d'Ici & Maïa Films present

BACK TO NORMANDY

A film by **Nicolas Philibert**

Running time: 113 minutes

2006 • Format: 35 mm / 1:85 • Sound: Dolby SRD • Visa n°112 199

Press kit and photos can be downloaded from the following site www.returennormandie-lefilm.com

International Sales

Les Films du Losange

Daniela Elstner • Agathe Valentin • Lise Zipci

22, av. Pierre 1er de Serbie - 75016 Paris

Tel. +33 1 44 43 87 24 / 28 / 13 • Fax. +33 1 49 52 06 40

in Cannes :

Riviera Booth L5

Tel. : +33 4 92 99 33 35

International Press

Alibi Communications / Brigitta Portier

Unifrance / Club Unifrance

Village international Pantiero

Tel. : +33 4 93 99 86 18

in Cannes :

Portable: +33 6 29 60 75 41 or +33 6 79 12 07 93
brigittaportier@hotmail.com or alibi-com@skynet.be



Joseph Leportier

SYNOPSIS

◀◀ This film's origins lie in another.

The one that the director René Allio shot in Normandy in 1975 based on a local crime: ***I, Pierre Rivière, Having Slaughtered My Mother, My Sister and My Brother...***

I was 24 at the time. René Allio had offered me a position as first assistant director.

Shot a few miles from the scene of the triple murder 140 years earlier, this film owed most of its uniqueness to the fact that nearly every part was given to local country people.

Today, I have decided to return to Normandy to seek out the transient actors of the film.

Thirty years have passed... ▶▶



INTERVIEW WITH NICOLAS PHILIBERT

/ Before you were hired to work on *Moi, Pierre Rivière...* what had your previous experience been?

My very first professional experience was as a trainee on *Les Camisards*, also directed by René Allio, in the summer of 1970. I was in my first year at university in Grenoble at the time. I was 19 and I dreamt of “being in movies” without really knowing in what capacity. In early July, I heard that a film was going to be shot in the Cévennes. With a friend, I hitchhiked down to Florac. Two days later, when we turned up at the production office, we were told that they were only taking trainees from among local people to avoid paying for hotel rooms. So we lied, said that we were locals and it worked! Over three months, I was, in turn, a messenger for the set crew, an assistant grip, an assistant prop man and an extra. Then I went back to Grenoble and returned to my studies but, two years later, I decided to move to Paris. René Allio - again - was preparing a new film, *Rude journée pour la Reine*, for which I was hired as an assistant set designer, in charge of props. I didn't know much about the job but I got by somehow. The following year, I worked with Alain Tanner, Claude Goretta, and then the experience of *Moi, Pierre Rivière...* came along.



/ Why was this film so important for you?

Firstly, I didn't have much experience as an assistant and, all of a sudden, I found myself entrusted with a huge responsibility: the screenplay indicated that it would be a complex shoot with a large number of characters, children, animals, numerous sets, costumes... and a very tight budget. And the decision to entrust the main roles, at least the roles of peasants - the murderer, his family, the neighbours, the witnesses - to local farmers and their families rather than to professional actors gave the whole undertaking a unique human dimension. We had to travel the countryside looking for our characters, overcome the scepticism with which they greeted the project, make it credible in their eyes and so enrol them in an adventure that they were not at all prepared for. With Gérard Mordillat - the other assistant director - I thus spent almost three months, going from farm to farm, from country fairs to union meetings



Charles et Annie Lihou

to find the actors and to share our conviction with them. It was a fascinating experience but a difficult and uncomfortable one, especially when you realize that three weeks away from the planned shooting date, we still didn't know if the film would be made or not since money was so short. And then the shoot, after several delays, finally started and, in spite of the financial difficulties that weighed down on it until the end, this shared experience between film people, nearly all of them Parisians, and Normandy country folk was a very powerful one. The shooting conditions were tough, the weather unreliable, the days long and trying, but I think that everyone who participated in this adventure had the feeling that they were experiencing something exceptional. The film set itself apart from the usual representation of the rural world in the cinema that is often mocking or scornful. We were also a long way from any condescending approach. Allio was just as demanding with his country actors and had as much faith in their abilities as he was

with the professional actors who rounded out the cast. As a result, in the group that we formed, we never had the feeling of a division between the film crew and the country people. We all had our own part to play to bring the same project to fruition. Later, looking back, I realized just how lucky I had been to take part in this exceptional experience, totally unique in French cinema. The film has stayed with me over the years. It has perhaps even irrigated my own work, like an underground "riviere" (river). Probably because fiction and documentary were so closely interlinked in it.

/ Over the years that followed, did you stay in touch with the actors of Allio's film?

One year after shooting *Moi, Pierre Rivière...* some of us went back to Normandy to present the film. But, after that, we lost touch and I didn't see them again, except for Claude Hébert, who played Pierre Rivière. He continued to work as an actor for a few years. He was living in Paris and I would often meet him at Allio's place. Then in the middle of the 1980s, Claude left Paris for good and I never saw him again either. Then, in the spring of 2000, before I started filming *Etre et Avoir*, I went back to Normandy where I saw Joseph and Roger. It was a friendly reunion and, in the back of my mind, I started thinking about a film with them all.

/ When did you decide to start work on this project and how did they react?

At the end of 2004, the Fémis (*Cinema and Audiovisual professional school*) invited me to present a film of my choice to its students. I chose *Rivière*. None of them had seen it. Most of them hadn't even heard of Allio, less than ten years after his death. That made my blood



Roger Peschet



Annick Bisson

run cold. After the screening, instead of having the usual debate, I read texts to them for an hour: notes made by Allio about his film, extracts from his "diaries"... They discovered a filmmaker, an unusual and fascinating body of work and they were stunned. I went home and I decided to make this film. For the last thirty years, I have kept a few photos and documents from *Rivière*: the shooting schedule, my copy of the screenplay... It all started from there. In early January, I hopped on a train to Caen, rented a car and started calling on everyone. It was very moving! The memories left by the experience were incredibly vibrant. Each participant had turned the page, undertaken all kinds of things, had lived happy times and less happy ones, but they all spoke about this experience with an intense feeling of gratitude. A few weeks later, when I first mentioned the idea of making a film with them, they had no better idea than I did what it would be like but they trusted me. They had followed my work, knew some of my films and had remained intensely loyal to Allio and his crew, recalling each member clearly.

/ When the project started to come together, what were the choices that guided your work?

From the very beginning, it was obvious that this would be a film narrated in the first person, with its roots in my own memories, and that I would intervene through a voice-over. At the same time, I wanted to make a film set firmly in the present, not a filmed pilgrimage. And finally, in relation to my previous films that nearly all focused

on a single setting, I wanted a more fragmented and freer form this time in which it would be possible to slip from one register to another, at times from one period to another, with as much fluidity as possible. I imagined that there would be a common core - Allio's film - giving rise to a multitude of characters, stories, settings, and sequences of varying nature: voice-over, interviews, documents, extracts, direct cinema sequences, landscapes... But everything was fairly vague and it wasn't until shooting and then editing that this tree-like structure asserted itself.

/ You often talk about your penchant for a portion of improvisation. How does that work in this film?

From that point of view, *Back to Normandy* follows my usual approach. The ideas came along during filming and, apart from certain places like the prison, the courthouse or the Calvados archives where we could only film on specific dates, the shoot was mostly improvised, according to encounters and conversations. In general, I don't like to prepare things too much. If everything is mapped out ahead of time, you miss out on the essential. There has to be an element of the unknown. The fact of having to invent the film day after day, to seek it out until the very end, procures a dual feeling of freedom and fragility that stimulates me and drives me into a corner. During editing, it's the same. I had 60 hours of rushes, in other words virtually tens or hundreds of combinations. And yet, at the end of the day, there's only one film possible: the one you carry deep within you.



However, I continually avoided the pitfall of making a film for film buffs or an audience already aware of the original story. It has to speak to everyone. If you haven't seen Allio's film or ever heard about the Rivière case, that doesn't matter. This story has an almost timeless dimension and could have taken place anywhere: a long time ago, somewhere in the country, a film was shot about a crime, with non-professional actors. Since then, life has gone on, but not exactly the same as before...

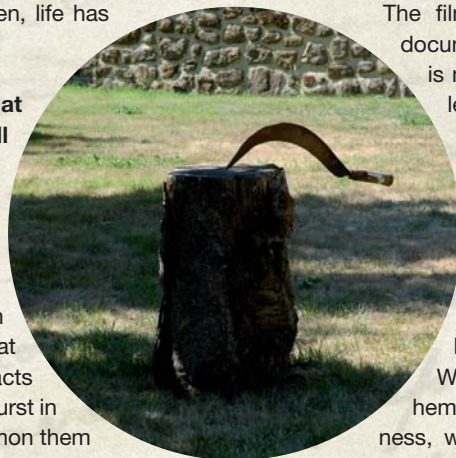
/ The film is constructed in such a way that we never know what the next shot will show...

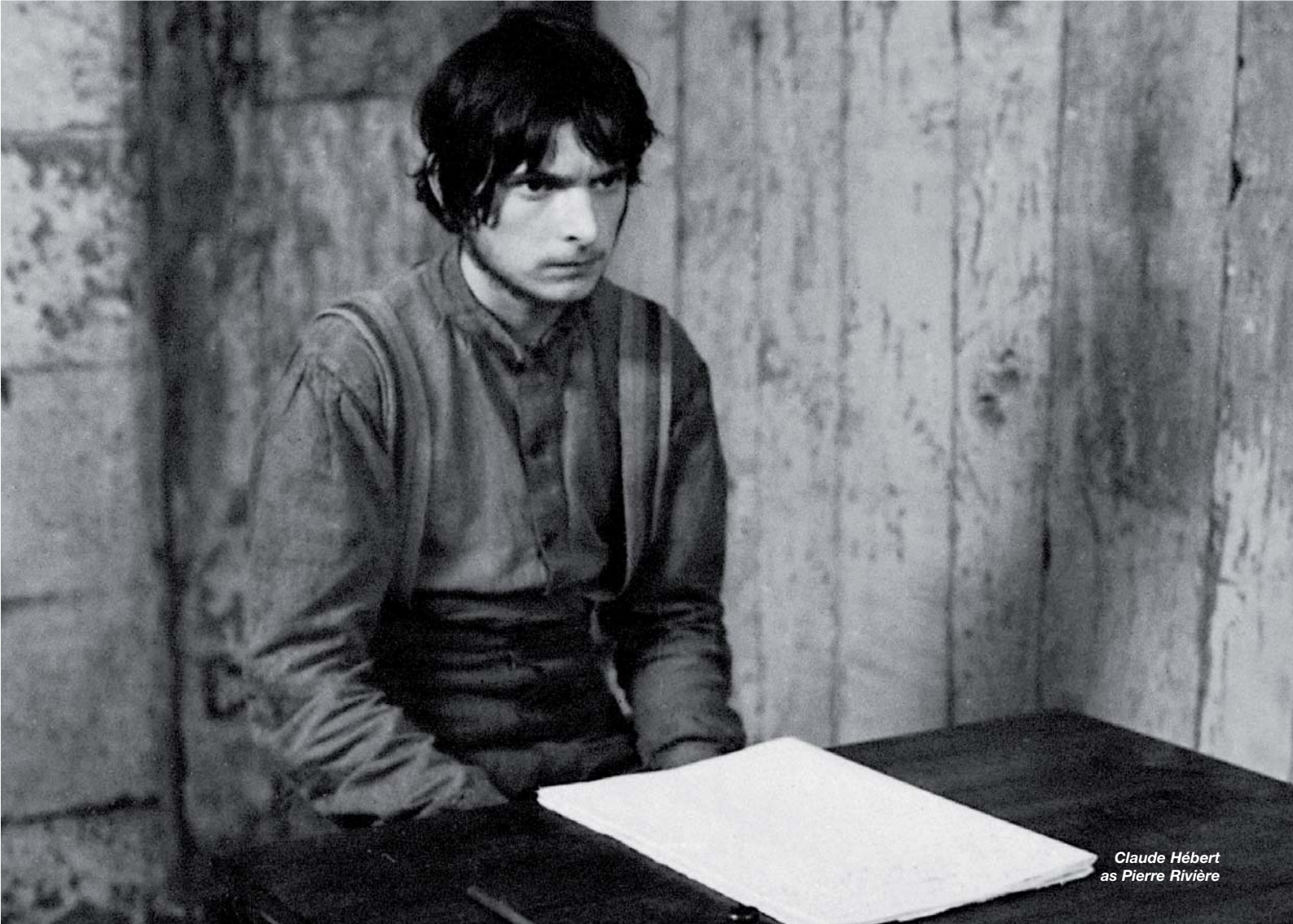
That's a result of its fragmentary nature, the diversity of registers and the materials used. Since the film tells several stories in parallel, they echo each other, mingle and mutually enrich each other. The relationship between them is explicit at times and less obvious at others. From this point of view, my use of extracts from *Moi, Pierre Rivière...* is significant. They burst in when we least expect them since I never summon them up to illustrate an interview. Each time we switch from my footage to Allio's, the transition takes place on a sensory level: it occurs according to a fictional, almost dream-like logic, as if Pierre Rivière's appearances were there to irradiate the rest. As we progress through the film, we realize that it is like a layer cake made up of different superimposed strata, linked between each other. Deep down, I wanted to work on a sort of paradox: the evocation of Allio's shoot had to be central to my film but it could not be an end unto

itself. It had to echo other questions. About the cinema, about our world, about our relationships with others, with our fathers...

/ This fragmentation allows you to pass from one theme to another as if the film were progressing through associations of ideas...

The film gradually leaves the straightjacket that a documentary is usually constrained in: its subject. It is marked out by encounters and sequences that lead us off in other directions... I'm thinking of Annie and Charles who talk about their daughter's illness; about Nicole, the former militant who had the bakery in Athis, and about her struggle since her accident to recover the power of speech; about Joseph, who still makes his own cider; about the workers at the Éclair labs; about the prison in Caen, where Pierre Rivière ended up hanging himself, etc. With such a multitude of elements, it's hard to hem in the film. Present and past, memory, madness, writing, speech, illness, lurking death, passing time, the law, transmission... The film concerns all those things and many others that are not cleaved together. As in real life, where the intense and the insignificant frequent each other at all times. But this is first and foremost a film that talks about the cinema, from the angle of desire, obstinacy and its capacity to build bridges and forge bonds. Most of the interviews evoke this collective dimension since the film returns to a shared experience of cinema. We realize that, for them too, the shooting of Allio's film was





*Claude Hébert
as Pierre Rivière*



La famille Borel

a decisive and even fundamental experience, just as it was for me. Both because it brought together people who wouldn't have met otherwise and also because it raised us up somehow.

/ Your voice-over narration describes the preparations for Allio's film at length but you say hardly anything about the shoot itself...

I felt that it was more interesting to talk about the problems that we had encountered and, beyond this example, of the obstinacy that all filmmakers have to show to reach their goals, whenever their projects display artistic ambition and stray from the beaten track. The gap between rich and poor films, that has continued to grow wider in recent years, already existed thirty years ago. I worked on four occasions with René Allio and I always saw him deploy incredible energy in order to make his films and pay off his debts. The general public usually only sees the glamorous side of the cinema, as if that's all there were to see! I wanted to lift a corner of the veil. The sequence shot at the Éclair labs also shows the other side of the story: the chemical industry, the violence of the market, the pension funds and these people who work for set hours, with breaks, like on a production line...

/ The final sequence remains very discreet. We don't learn anything about your father...

My father was a professor of philosophy and loved the cinema. Alongside his university lectures, he would give a weekly "public class in the cinematic art" in front of a crowded lecture hall in which he would screen and analyze films by Bergman, Dreyer, Antonioni, Bresson, etc. There's no need to tell you where my love of the



cinema comes from! Michel Philibert, René Allio... Since we're dealing with the question of filiation here, I should add that the music used in the film is partly by a young French jazzman, Jean-Philippe Viret, and partly by André Veil, an industrialist from Lorraine and an amateur composer whom, as a child, I would listen to for hours in the evening as he composed at his piano. He was my maternal grandfather.

CREW

Direction **Nicolas Philibert** • Photography **Katell Djian** • Camera **Nicolas Philibert, Katell Djian** • Sound **Yolande Decarsin** • Editing **Nicolas Philibert** assisted by **Thaddée Bertrand** • Mix **Julien Cloquet** • Camera assistants **Justine Bourgade, Nicolas Duchêne, Benjamin Serero** • With the occasional participations of **François Belzeaux, Bertrand Boudaud, Jordane Chouzenoux, Sofiane El Fani, Jean-Gildas Guéran, Christophe Leraie, Christophe Lussignol, Magali Pacher, Cécile Philibert, Olivier Schwob, Andra Tevy, Dominique Vieillard** • Production management **David Berdah, Tatiana Bouchain, Katya Laraison** • Post-production coordination **Sophie Vermersch** • Executive producers **Serge Lalou et Gilles Sandoz** • Co-producers **Les Films d'Ici/Serge Lalou - Maïa Films/Gilles Sandoz - ARTE France Cinéma / Michel Reilhac, Thierry Garrel and Rémi Burah** • With the backing of **Canal +, TPS STAR, the Centre National de la Cinématographie and France Télévisions Distribution** • In partnership with **Soficinéma** • With the support of **Région Basse-Normandie** and the collaboration of **la Maison de l'Image Basse-Normandie Distribution & International Sales Les Films du Losange**.

Music « *Élégie* » (*André Veil*) performed by **Gaëlle Pavie**, piano / recording **Jean-Marc Laisné, Amati** • « *Espoir* » et « *Volonté* » (*André Veil*) performed by **Alice Ader**, piano and **Alexandre Brussilovsky**, violin / recording and mix **Ludovic Palabaud, Acousti studios**

« *Trois jours de trêve* » and « *Sablier* » (*Jean-Philippe Viret*), by **Jean-Philippe Viret**, double bass, **Edouard Ferlet**, piano and **Antoine Banville**, drums, album *Étant donnés* (P) Sketch (E) Mélisse, album *L'indicible* (P) Atlante productions • « *Le nucléaire on n'en veut pas* » (*Achille Lorentz*) and « *Sors ton pied de cette m...* » performed by the **Stop Bure Brothers n'Sista** • Additional original music **Jean-Philippe Viret** (E) 2006 Mélisse, performed by **Edouard Ferlet**, piano, and **Jean-Philippe Viret**, double bass / recording and mix **Sylvain Thévenard**.

With extracts from « *Moi, Pierre Rivière ayant égorgé ma mère, ma sœur et mon frère ...* » directed by **René Allio**, based on the collective work edited by **Michel Foucault** • With the kind permission of **Pascal Bonitzer, Jean Jourdeuil, Serge Toubiana, Paul Allio, Pierre Allio, Roland Rappaport, Francine Fruchaud, Denis Foucault** and the participation of the **SFPC** and the **INA** • Photo credits **Paul Allio, Corinne Atlas, Philippe Barrier, Gérard Mordillat, Jean-Denis Robert, Les Productions de la Guéville, Sabine Strosser**.

Film stock **Kodak** • Camera equipment **Les Films d'Ici, Iris Caméra** and **Les Poissons Volants** • Sound equipment **DC Audiovisuel** • Editing facilities **Les Films d'Ici** and **Pom'Zed** • Mix **Archipel Productions** and **SIS** • Optical transfer **Ciné Stéréo** • Titles **Ercidan** • Insurance **Diot Bellan** • Laboratoires **Eclair Didier Dekeyzer, Thierry Gazeau, Daniel Langenfeld, Catherine Athon, Ronald Boullet, Philippe Turret, Emmanuel Chex, Nicolas Criqui, Régis Oyer, Christophe Boutigny, Laurence Vidot** Timing **Raymond Terrentin**.





Norbert Delozier

WITH

In order of appearance **Joseph** and **Marie-Louise Leportier**
Nicole Picard • **Gilbert** and **Blandine Peschet** • **Annick** and **Michel Bisson** • **Jacqueline Millère** • **Anne**, **Catherine**, **Christophe**, **Olivier**, **Pierre** and **Yvonne Borel** • **Norbert Delozier** • **Charles** and **Annie Lihou** • **Roger Peschet** and **Caroline Itasse** • **Janine Callu**
Nicole Cornué • **Bruno Gahéry** • **Claude Hébert**.

And **Alain Bazin**, **Pierre Ducreux**, **Gül Kütükcü**, **Aline Leprévost**,
Jean Mican, **Patrick Poulain**, **Fabienne Requeut**, **Stéphane**
Rogue, **Alain Carel**, **Anthony Delalande**, **Michèle Belfleur**
Legeai, **Simone Soubien**, **Viviane Thébault**, **Mohamed**
Hamidèche, **Annie Lemée**, **Muriel Lemmel**, **Jocelyne Liebmman**,
Gilles Martin, **Cyril Roussin**, **Béatrice Roy**, **Liliane Gallon**,
Valérie Poirier, **David Boisgontier**, **Jean Peschet** and **Raymond**
Pringault.

Thanks to **Christian Goret**, **François Callu**, **Julien**, **Romain** and
Rémi Bisson, **Laurence**, **Daniel** and **Raymond Hébert**, **Christelle**,
Mathias et **Emmanuel Peschet**, **Dominique Gonet**, **Franck Pillot**,
Aline Fromont, **Loïc Gautier**, **Christine Hubert**, **Maxime Sannier**,
Marguerite and **Jacques Devalpinçon**, **Jean-Noël** and **Marie-**
Odile Chapelle, **David Nevoux** et **Sonia Pouchard**, **Colombe** and
Guy Mongodin, **Monique** and **Michel Feron**, **Madeleine** and
René Géhan, **Thérèse** and **Albert Husnot**, **Gérard Jambin**, **Elie**
Alizon.

Marie Archambault, **Philippe Charrier**, **Olivier Corpet**, **Alain**
Desmeulles, **Julie Le Mer**, **Sandrine Samson**, **Eliane Vernouillet** -
Institut Mémoires de l'Edition Contemporaine • **Isabelle Homer**,
Jean-Marc Lebeurrer, **Louis Le Roc'h Morgere** - Archives
départementales du Calvados • **Dominique Blondel**, **Céline Caroff**,
Jean-Christophe Castaings, **Olivier Lefèvre** and the whole staff
at the Faurecia factory in Flers • **François Chevaller**, **Pascal**
Moyon and **Patrick Wardenski** - Centre Pénitentiaire de Caen
Hélène Michelot, **Guy Frémy** - Tribunal de Grande Instance de
Caen.

Les Editions Gallimard • La Cinémathèque française • SETE - Éclai-
rages Pierre Bideau • **Isabelle Truffaut** - Festival Granit • **Françoise**
Plouviot, **Frédéric Valay** • Hôtel Le Galiond • Cinéma Les 4 Vikings
Alain Jublan and **Deen Touré** - Football Club de Flers • **Gilles**
Asselot and the staff of Les Andouilles Asselot • The restaurants
Au bout de la rue, Berverl'Inn, Saint-Germain and Le Carneillais.

Linda De Zitter, **Christine Laurent**, **Laura Briand**, **Céline Païni**,
Frédéric Cheret, **Catherine Roux**, **Christophe Besnard**, **Ophélie**
Lerouge, **Monique Assouline**, **Michelange Quay**, **Nathalie**
Bloch-Lainé, **Sandra Mirimanoff**, **Laurent Hassid**, **Valéry**
Gaillard, **Roland Rappaport**, **Judith Schor**, **Marie Quinton**, **Denis**
Fruchaud, **Philippe Barrier**, **Corinne Atlas**, **Jacques Doillon**,
Pascal Kané, **René Féret**, **Gérard Mordillat**, **Régine Vial**, **Daniela**
Elstner, **Sophie** and **Romain Goupil**, **Alain** and **Stéphanie Weill**,
Jean-Paul Commin, **Isabelle Le Guern**, **Thierry Garrel**, **Daniel**
Defert, **Janine Philibert**, **Cécile** et **Bastien**, **Annette Guillaumin**,
Stéphane Lemolleton.



NICOLAS PHILIBERT

FILMOGRAPHY

Nicolas Philibert first worked as a trainee on **Les Camisards**, by René Allio (1970), as props man on **Rude journée pour la Reine** (1973), as assistant director on **Moi, Pierre Rivière...** (1975) and as line producer on **L'Heure exquise** (1981) all directed by René Allio. He has also worked with Alain Tanner (**Le Milieu du monde**, 1974), Claude Goretta (**Pas si méchant que ça**, 1974) and Joris Ivens (**Une Histoire de vent**, 1986).

Retour en Normandie (Back to Normandy) - 2007 (113 mn)
L'Invisible - 2002 (45 mn) • **Être et avoir (To Be and to Have)** - 2002 (104 mn) • **Qui sait ? (Who Knows ?)** - 1999 (106 mn) • **La Moindre des choses (Every Little Thing)** - 1997 (105 mn) • **Un animal, des animaux (Animals)** - 1996 (59 mn) • **Portraits de famille (Family Portraits)** 1995 (3 mn) • **Le Pays des sourds (In the Land of the Deaf)** - 1993 (99 mn) • **La Ville Louvre (Louvre city)** - 1990 (84 mn) • **Migraine** 1989 (6 mn) • **Le Come back de Baquet (Baquet's Come Back)** - 1988 (24 mn) • **Vas-y Lapébie ! (Go For It, Lapébie!)** - 1988 (27 mn) • **Trilogie pour un homme seul (Trilogy for One man)** - 1987 (53 mn) • **Y'a pas d'malaise (No Problem)** - 1986 (13 mn) • **Christophe** - 1985 (28 mn) • **La Face nord du camembert (The North Face of the Camembert)** - 1985 (7 mn)
Patrons / Télévision (Bosses / Television) - 1979 (3 X 52 mn, co-directed with Gérard Mordillat) • **La Voix de son maître (His Master's Voice)** - 1978 (100 mn, co-directed with Gérard Mordillat).

I, PIERRE RIVIÈRE, HAVING SLAUGHTERED MY MOTHER, MY SISTER AND MY BROTHER...

Format **1,66 - 16 mm** blown up to **35 mm** - Running time **130 minutes** - French theatrical release **Octobre 27, 1976**.

Directed by **René Allio**.

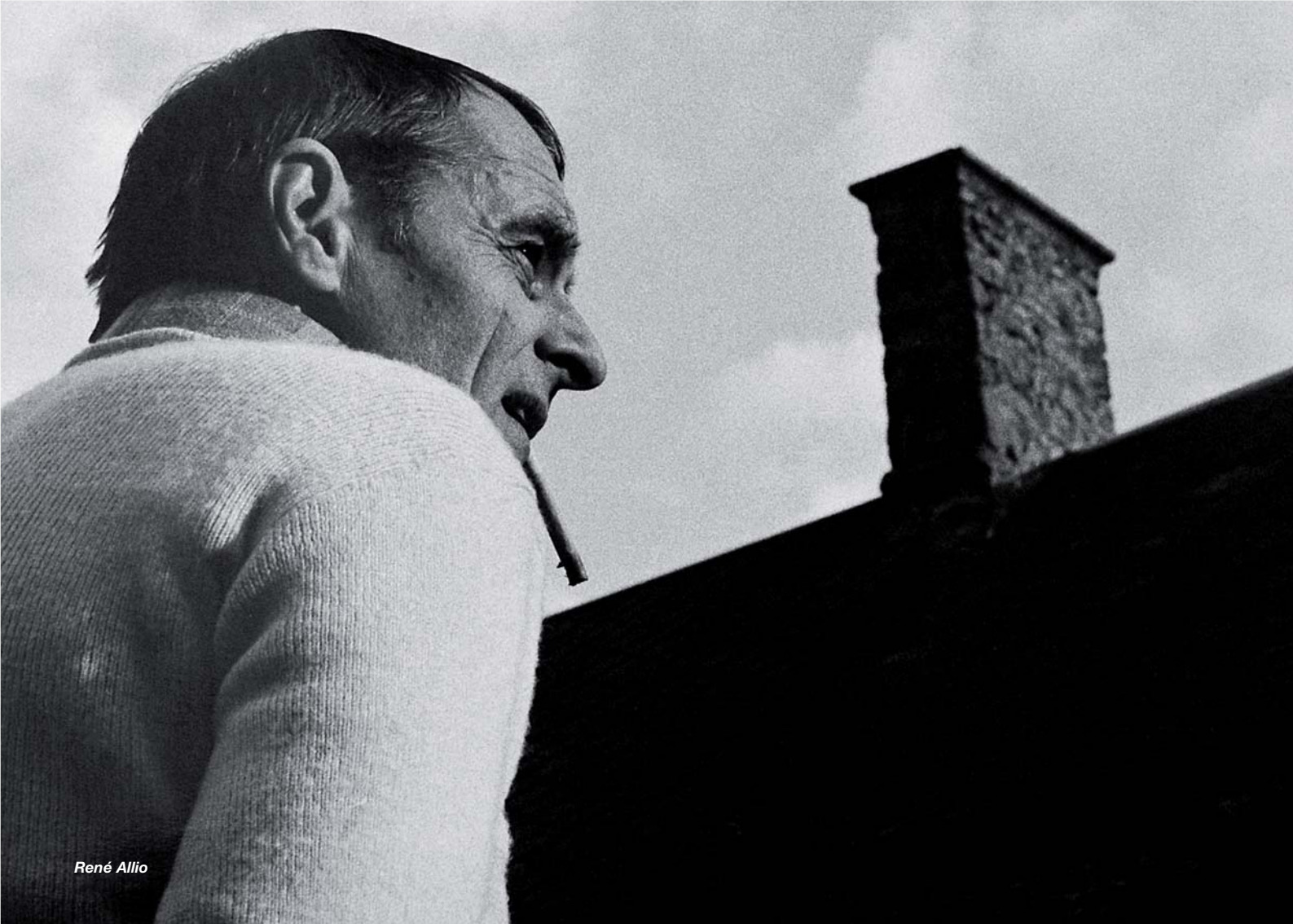
Co-produced by **Les Films Arquebuse, Polsim Production, Société Française de Production, Institut National de l'Audiovisuel**.

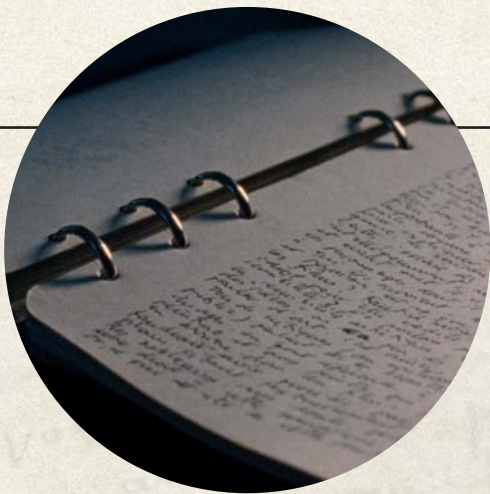
Collaboration on the screenplay **Pascal Bonitzer, Jean Jourdheuil, Serge Toubiana**, based on the collective work edited by **Michel Foucault**.

Photography **Nurith Aviv** • Sound **Pierre Gamet** • Editing **Sylvie Blanc** • Assistant direction, shoot preparation and casting **Gérard Mordillat, Nicolas Philibert** • Script supervisor **Marie-Hélène Quinton** • Costumes **Christine Laurent** • Sets **Françoise Darne** Location manager **Bernard Bouix** • Production manager **Michèle Plaa** • Line producer **René Féret** • Distribution **PlanFilm**.

With **Claude Hébert** Pierre Rivière • **Jacqueline Millièr**e Mother **Joseph Leportier** Father • **Annick Géhan** Aimée • **Nicole Géhan** Victoire • **Émilie Lihou** Paternal grandmother • **Antoine Bourseiller** Judge Legrain • **Michel Amphoux** Clerk of the Court Lebouleux **Jacques Debary** Doctor Bouchard • **Chilpéric de Boiscuiller** Royal Prosecutor in Vire • **Léon Jeangirard** Doctor Vastel • **Robert Decaen** Maternal grandfather • **Marthe Groussard** Maternal grandmother • **Monsieur Bisson** Paternal grandfather • **Roger Harivel** Uncle • **Jeanne Bouquerel** Dame Hébert • **Pierre Borel** Drummer **Anne-Marie Davy** Widow Quesnel • **Gilbert Delacour** Lami Binet **Norbert Delozier** Nativel • **Henri Gahéry** Hébert • **Albert Husnot** Farmer • **Christian Jardin** Victor Marie • **Victor Lelièvre** Fortin **Olivier Perrier** Handsome carpenter • **Gilbert Peschet** Quevillon **Yvonne Peschet** Cousin • **Bernard Peschet** Postel • **François Callu** Young Pierre Rivière • **Vincent Callu** Prosper Rivière • **Laurent Callu** Jean Rivière • **Myriam Callu** Victoire Rivière, 4 • **Christophe Millièr**e Jules Rivière • **Pierre Allio** Pierre Rivière, 4 • **Christophe Menou** Prosper Rivière, 5 • **Pierre Leomy** Justice of the Peace • **Guy Mongodin** Clerk of the Court Langliney • **René Féret** Doctor Morin **Jean-Bernard Caux** Health officer de santé • **Charles Lihoux** Mayor of Aunay • **Marc Eyraud** Father Suriray • **Paul Savatier** Priest at Courvaudon • **Roland Amstutz** Sergeant at Langannerie • **Michel Dubois** Judge in Vire • **Yves Graffey** Judge Foucaud • **Roland Rappaport** General prosecutor • **Gérard Guérin** Presiding judge.







RENÉ ALLIO'S NOTEBOOKS (*extracts* *)

“When I was a young man and dreamt of being an artist, I saw myself as a painter. Those whose works I saw, whose biographies and letters I read were Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin (...) If I identified with those artists, they didn't prepare me for an easy life where success and recognition for your work are what drive you on but rather the struggle, stubbornness above all, obstinate progress, more often than not alone.”

“Pierre Rivière. We must make a film to express as best as possible, in other words in artistic and poetic terms, what I write here or say so often, namely my desire to save from oblivion and death... those violent, dramatic moments, intense, beautiful moments of all these lives, of those who cannot speak, who leave no trace and yet who display skill, imagination, bravery, invention and love in order to simply exist, to go on existing or to change or simply to endure.”

“You need to be like couch grass and grow back whenever you're cut down. Ineradicable. That's it. With my films, I want to be like couch grass. Be like it for myself when I doubt or lose heart. The only reaction: one more film, one more fight, one more surge. Like couch grass, ineradicable.”

* *Editions Lieu Commun (1991)*

RENÉ ALLIO

FILMOGRAPHY

René Allio was born in Marseille in 1924. He started out as a painter after studying literature. He showed his works in Paris between 1957 and 1962.

During the same period, he worked for the stage. First in Paris for avant-garde theatres, then in the provinces for various Dramatic Art Centres. In this way, he designed sets and costumes for a number of plays in the French and foreign repertoire and worked on the first performances of plays by **Adamov, Vauthier, Ionesco, Alberti.**

From 1957 on, he worked regularly with **Roger Planchon**, for several years on the stage design for all the productions at the Théâtre de la Cité, with plays by **Brecht, Shakespeare, Molière, Racine, Marivaux, Marlowe, Gogol.**

He also worked for the Comédie française, the Paris Opera, the TNP and the most famous stages in Europe : Scala de Milan, the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Cologne Opera...

His work led him to take a close interest in the problems of modern theatrical architecture and the transformation of the stage area. He designed the Théâtre d'Aubervilliers, collaborated on the design of the future Maison de la Culture in Tunisia, on the project to convert **Arnold Wesker's** « *Rond House* » and on the transformation of the former Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt in Paris, now called the « *Théâtre de la Ville* ».

He made his cinema debut with an animated film that he designed for a stage production of **Gogol's** « *Dead Souls* » and continued with a short film that he shot in 1963. From that point on, until his death in 1995, he never stopped working for the cinema.

La Meule - 1963 (CM) • **La Vieille dame indigne** (*The Shameless old lady*) - 1965 • **L'Une et l'autre** (*The other one*) - 1967 • **Pierre et Paul** (*Pierre and Paul*) - 1968 • **Les Camisards** - 1970 • **Rude journée pour la Reine** (*Rough day for the Queen*) - 1973 • **Moi, Pierre Rivière, ayant égorgé ma mère, ma soeur et mon frère** - 1975 • **Retour à Marseille** - 1980 • **L'Heure exquise** - 1981 • **Le Matelot 512** - 1984 • **Jean Vilar, quarante ans après** - 1987 • **Un médecin des Lumières** - 1988 • **Transit** - 1990.

