



CLIMAGE présente



GARÇONNIÈRES

un film de CÉLINE PERNET

réalisation CÉLINE PERNET image HEIDI HASSAN son direct BRUCE WUILLOUD, THIBAUD WEILER montage KARINE SUDAN assistante de réalisation SÉLIMA CHIBOUT musique SARA OSWALD montage son et mixage JÉRÔME CUENDET étalonnage ROBIN ERARD production CLIMAGE - STÉPHANE GOEL co-production RADIO TÉLÉVISION SUISSE - UNITÉ FICTION DOCUMENTAIRE ET SÉRIES ORIGINALES STEVEN ARTELS, GASPARD LAMUNIÈRE, BETTINA HOFMANN avec le soutien de l'OFFICE FÉDÉRAL DE LA CULTURE (DFI), FONDATION CULTURELLE SUISSIMAGE, SUCCÈS CINÉMA (OFC), FONDATION ERNST GÖHNER, BCN FONDATION CULTURELLE, FONDATION SUISA, avec la participation de CINEFORUM et le soutien de LA LOTERIE ROMANDE stage soutenu par STAGE POOL FOCAL distribution suisse AGORA FILMS ventes internationales LIGHTDOX

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CONTACTS & MATERIALS

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Press kit, poster and photos to download <https://climage.ch/films/garconniere/>

LOGLINE

The tender and offbeat view of a young woman in her thirties on the men of her generation.

SHORT SYNOPSIS (LESS THAN 450 CHARACTERS)

Filmmaker and anthropologist Céline Pernet questions her relationship with the men of her generation. Through a newspaper ad she finds thirty men between 30 and 45 years old who are willing to talk about their relationship(s) with masculinity on camera. In a quest that is both intimate and societal and with an amused and caring eye, *Garçonnières* reflects an urgent need to discuss current models of masculinity.

SYNOPSIS

After three years and 476 matches with men on dating applications, and a certain number of "short relationships that were as nice as they were brief", director and anthropologist Céline Pernet decides to take the time to investigate her relationship with the men of her generation. Through an advert, she brings together around thirty men aged 30 to 45 years old, living in Switzerland, who agree to talk to the camera about their relationship(s) with masculinity. The director questions them about seduction, sex, couples, love and even paternity, in a quest as personal as it is societal. The protagonists show an urgent need to discuss contemporary masculinity and share their secrets, cry, doubt and laugh. In *Garçonnières*, toxic models of masculinity are put into words while inspiring interpretations of masculinity are considered together for the future. With welcome frivolity, the director casts an amused and kindly eye on the masculine world. This film asks us to listen attentively to each other and, one day, to be something other than what is expected of us.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

My name is Celine, I am 35 years old and I am single without children. I have been attracted to men for as long as I can remember. However, I must have missed the train that takes princesses to the combo of a fulfilling married life, a house in the country, a screaming baby and a Renault Espace in the garage before turning 30. I wonder today. What could have gone wrong for me to not be what was expected of me?

During 3 years, I accumulated the rather honorable score of 476 matches on Tinder, 65 dates and about fifteen small flings as nice as they were brief. What you need to know about the wonderful world of dating applications is that during a first date, it doesn't take more than 10 minutes to know if the trip was worth it or not. But the implicit codes of speed dating - and a minimum of human decency - oblige both parties to show up for about 60 minutes before politely getting up with an excuse. So I had a lot of encounters with strangers, whose purpose was finally not the search for love but the need to fill the time. Strange parentheses of life, suspended moments. Once the usual banalities had been exhausted, the prospect of following up on the rain and the good weather only excited me a little. I had therefore naturally taken the habit of asking these men, with great simplicity and a touch of candor, what it was like to be a man in the great theater of human relations.

I was struck by the spontaneity and sincerity with which men my age spoke to me. Thanks to a meeting tool that was commonplace for people of my generation, I had opened a breach, a direct access to the male psyche. The ritual that prevented me from sinking into the boredom of sterile exchanges quickly became the fertile ground for an investigation that was as exciting as it was fascinating. I needed to know more. Until then, the male empire appeared to me as a relative societal fiasco. Suddenly, I discovered men who wanted to talk to me, to exchange and who were not afraid to expose themselves. What they told me, their questions and their doubts echoed the state of mind of a generation that is searching for itself and that no longer necessarily recognizes itself in the principles of masculinity imposed by the macho system. They are trying - not without difficulty - to build an identity for themselves outside the myth of virility that no longer really suits them. These men touch me and challenge me. I see in their fragility and discomfort the unexpected promise of a possible change in our relationships. What started as an innocent game on the tortuous path of my love life became in a few weeks the genesis of a real documentary investigation in the heart of our intimate relationships. Thanks to the success of these first encounters, I had the perfect opportunity to survey the world and the words of men.

In 2020, I launched a call, by publishing an ad on social networks. In a few weeks, I received nearly fifty messages from men (between 30 and 45 years old) that I did not know at all. They all told me they wanted to talk to me. Face to face, in front of my camera, they talked to me about seduction, sex, relationships, work and fatherhood, love and their dicks too. I saw the portrait of a generation of men taking shape in this direct and liberated speech. Men who want us to meet, to talk to each other and to find a way to rewrite together new ways of being and living together.

Céline Pernet

CÉLINE PERNET: DIRECTOR AND ANTHROPOLOGIST

Céline Pernet is a director and anthropologist of Swiss origin, born in Nyon in 1986 and living in Neuchâtel. She first studied Journalism and Anthropology before doing a Master's degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology. She studied in Switzerland at the University of Neuchâtel and in Canada at Laval University. Céline discovered documentary filmmaking during practical work in visual anthropology in 2009. These courses allowed her to make her first short films. She joined the Climage association in 2013, first as an assistant director, then as a director, editor and sound engineer. She is also one of the founders of the aREC association Recherche, Ethnologie et Cinéma in Neuchâtel and directs commissioned films for museums, universities and cultural institutions in the French-speaking region. Her first feature film "Garçonnières" produced by Climage was selected in the national competition at Visions du Réel in April 2022 and will be released in cinemas in French-speaking Switzerland in September 2022.

STUDIES

- 2008-2011 **Master of Arts in Social and Cultural Anthropology.** UNINE (CH) and Laval (CA)
2005-2008 **Bachelor of Arts and Humanities (Anthropology and Journalism).** UNINE
2001-2004 **Certificate of Federal Maturity.** Option : Spanish. Gymnasium of Nyon (CH)

SELECTIVE FILMOGRAPHY

As a director

- 2023 **Backcountry** (TV doc 4x45min) in production
2022 **Sauvage(s)** (doc 12x 6min - direction and editing) in production
2022 **Garçonnières** (feature doc, 90 min)
2019 **La faute au croco** (doc, 40min - direction and editing)
2019 **Culture club** (doc, 6x2' - direction and editing)
2018 **Face-offs** (doc, 30min - direction and editing)
2015 **Quiet clients** (doc, 3 min - direction and editing)

Selections: International Competition Un poing c'est court Festival (France)
International Competition Bamberger Kurzfilmtage (Germany)
International Short Film Festival Berlin (Germany)

Prize: Audience Award, Festival " C'est pas la mort " Neuchâtel (Switzerland)

As an assistant director, Climage audiovisuel Lausanne

- 2018 **Islander** - by Stéphane Goël (doc 90' cinéma)
2017 **Les dames** - by Stéphanie Chuat and Véronique Reymond, (doc 90' cinéma)
2015 **Fragments du paradis** - by Stéphane Goël, (doc 90' cinéma)

As an editor

- 2021 **A real dancer doesn't know how to behave** - Alice Aterianus (doc, 26min)
2018 **Mobilet'** - Daniel Wyss (doc, 20 min)
2018 **The birth of the alphabet** - Stéphane Goël, Unil (doc, 14 min)
2016 **Got to the wound** - Lara Duc (doc, 18 min)
2016 **1010 against the police** - Daniel Wyss (doc, 20 min)

INTERVIEW WITH CÉLINE PERNET

How was the idea for the film born?

Céline Pernet: I had a period in my life where I used dating apps a lot. It was shortly after #metoo. I felt invigorated by this new feminist momentum that filled my heart and made me stronger and more confident. I was ready to take the lead and listen more to my desires and needs. I met a lot of men, and my curiosity often led me to ask them questions about how they felt, how they lived in the present time, how they dealt with relationships and sexuality, etc. I threw some of them off with my questions, but I felt they had a real desire to explore these topics, even though it wasn't always obvious and they clearly weren't used to doing it. At the same time, I could hear more and more men around me gritting their teeth. I was completely riding this wave of women's liberation with the feeling that things were finally going to move and at the same time I could already feel the annoyance coming from the male population. I wanted to know more. Something was going on with the guys, and this hubbub of frustration, fear and misunderstanding was becoming more and more deafening in my daily life. I wanted to try to get to the bottom of it in my own way, using two tools that I love; intimate talk and film.

Why did you choose this particular generation?

C.P.: I am a pure product of the 80s. I was a teenager in the 90s and early 2000s. Decades which lived, in my opinion, a *no man's land* in terms of feminist actions or reflections. In any case, in my daily environment, no one asked the question of gender roles and the distribution of tasks in sentimental, family or professional relationships. The boys were happily dressed in blue and the girls in pink, we were fed sitcoms as caricatured and sexist as the others and the most popular music groups were boy's bands full of muscular and tanned boys who would win over the girls at a glance. In the movies, *American Pie*, *Bridget Jones* and *Pretty Woman* were all over the place, and advertising was not afraid to show lustful, objectified women and powerful, aggressive men; images and stories that shaped the imagination of the young girl I was. In this film, I wanted to talk with men who shared the same liabilities with me and who had grown up in the same decades as I did. Men who today find themselves a bit caught *between two chairs*. Like me, they wonder what to keep from their education and what kind of individual they want to be tomorrow.

How did you find all these men, did you know them?

C.P.: I don't know them and I've only met them once, at the time of the interview. I realized quite quickly that this subject - gender issues in general - could become very emotional, especially with people you know too well. I myself was not immune to losing my temper with a friend. And I wanted us to be able to talk and listen to each other without going overboard. I decided to call on strangers by posting an ad on social networks. After a successful first attempt with about 20 men in early 2019, I received more than 50 responses when I published my ad in 2020.

How did you go about choosing the characters?

C.P.: The trials I did in 2019 immediately showed that the spontaneity and sincerity of these encounters were essential elements for the success of these moments spent one-on-one. This device creates a unique relationship; an instant discovery of the other captured on the

spot where the quality of the emotion that emerges is the most natural and sensitive. I wanted to keep this during the shooting in 2020 and therefore decided to see all the men who offered themselves without meeting them beforehand and without casting. The final choice of characters was made during the editing. We had to make a difficult choice among all these voices, all these personalities to keep only the strongest ones dramatically speaking, those who worked best together.

Why let the men speak?

C.P.: I am convinced that addressing - together - the new masculinities and the infinite possibilities of being a man is an integral part of a long-term feminist approach. As soon as we question gender roles, injunctions and expectations of society, we shake the established patriarchal order a little more. I am a woman, I am straight. There are men that I love, that I desire, and I want us to work together so that in the future no one has to irremediably correspond to *the* all-powerful *norm* that prevents us all from letting ourselves be, live and meet freely.

Did you encounter any difficulties because you are a woman?

C.P.: I didn't really encounter any difficulties. The men always welcomed me with open arms. My camera opened many doors for me, even in places that were not used to welcoming a woman. But it is certain that my gender influenced the exchanges during the interviews and the behavior of the men in the places I explored. It's not a small thing when a woman comes to your house, your living room or your kitchen and asks you questions about your intimacy for 3 hours! There is a bit of apprehension, embarrassment, and also seduction in the exchange. I reversed the balance of power a bit and I was the one holding the reins in a way. But, as many of them told me, that's what they liked. If the request had come from a man, they would have been more wary and would have feared a form of competition or judgment.

What do you retain from this shooting and these meetings?

C.P.: It allowed me to feel more confident, stronger and even more legitimate in front of the men around me in my private and professional life. The message of the film is that it is possible to talk to each other, to listen to each other, to laugh together and to disagree as well, but that it requires energy, time and a personal investment from each of us. There are men who sincerely wonder about their place in the world and who wish to be something other than what is expected of them. But nothing is simple when it comes to gender identity, models, social norms or historically and socially constructed myths and injunctions. We test, we grope, we make mistakes and we try again in the hope of opening the door to a new field of possibilities.