

VALÉRIE
LEMERCIER

KAD
MERAD

DOMINIQUE
LAVANANT

FRANÇOIS-XAVIER
DEMAISON

BOULI
LANNERS

MATHÉO
BOISSELIER

FIDÉLITÉ et IMAV éditions présentent en association avec WILD BUNCH



Les vacances du Petit Nicolas

Un film de LAURENT TIRARD

- D'après l'œuvre de RENÉ GOSCINNY et JEAN-JACQUES SEMPÉ

Scénario LAURENT TIRARD GRÉGOIRE VIGNERON

avec la collaboration de JACO VAN DORMAEL avec LUCA ZINGARETTI FRANCIS PERRIN DANIEL PRÉVOST JUDITH HENRY image DENIS ROUDEN, AFC montage VALÉRIE DÉSÈNE son ERIC DEVULDER mixage CYRIL HOLTZ décors FRANÇOISE DUPERTUIS, AOC costumes PIERRE-JEAN LARROUQUE, AFCCA
1^{er} assistant réalisateur ALAN CORNO casting AGATHE HASSENFORDER et JULIE DAVID musique originale ERIC NEVEUX directeur de production SYLVESTRE GUARINO directrice de post-production SUSANA ANTUNES productrice exécutive CHRISTINE DE JÉKEL produit par OLIVIER DELBOSC et MARC MISSONNIER
coproduit par WILD BUNCH M6 FILMS SAINT SEBASTIEN FROISSART avec la participation de CANAL+ OCS M6 W9 avec le soutien du TAX SHELTER DU GOUVERNEMENT FÉDÉRAL BELGE ventes internationales WILD BUNCH en association avec CHOCORP DÉVELOPPEMENT et CN3 PRODUCTIONS



FIDÉLITÉ

IMAV

6

CANAL+

OCS

f /LePetitNicolaslefilm

PRESTIGE

CNSI médiation

CHOCORP

W9

wild bunch

FIDELITE and IMAV present
in association with WILD BUNCH

Nicholas on Holiday

A film by Laurent Tirard

starring Valérie Lemerrier, Kad Merad, Dominique Lavanant,
François-Xavier Demaison, Bouli Lanners, Mathéo Boisselier

French release: July 9th 2014

France – Running time: 1h37 - Image: 1.85 - Sound: Digital 5.1

**INTERNATIONAL SALES
WILD BUNCH**

Carole BARATON - cbaraton@wildbunch.eu
Gary FARKAS - gfarkas@wildbunch.eu
Vincent MARAVAL - ndevide@wildbunch.eu
Silvia SIMONUTTI - ssimonutti@wildbunch.eu
Noémie Devide – ndevide@wildbunch.eu
Olivier Barbier – obarbier@wildbunch.eu

**PR – INTERNATIONAL
PRESS JUNKET**

Magali Montet
M +336 71 63 36 16
magali@magalimontet.com
Delphine Mayele
M +336 60 89 85
delphine@magalimontet.com

SYNOPSIS

It's the end of the school year. The long-awaited holidays have finally arrived. Little Nicholas, his parents and Granny hit the road heading for the sea, and move into the Beau-Rivage Hotel.

At the beach, Nicholas wastes little time making new friends: there's Ben, who isn't on holiday because he lives here; Freddy, who eats anything, all the time... even fish... even raw. There's Jocky, who talks funny because he's English, Crispin the constant crybaby, and Christopher, who always wants to be right and is really, really annoying. Nicholas also gets to know Elizabeth, a little girl who follows him everywhere, wide-eyed. "How sweet, those two. I hear wedding bells in the future," laugh the grown-ups. Nicholas panics! Luckily his pals are there to help him... and to cause trouble.

Between the beach, the hotel and the forest, with his friends, his family, the beach attendant and the swimming coach, Nicholas is really going to enjoy a holiday to remember.

LAURENT TIRARD - INTERVIEW

What made you want to throw yourself into another Nicholas adventure?

Nicholas is a series, so we thought about a follow-up early on. It became obvious after the success of the first film. The holiday theme reminded me of the films of my childhood such as *Mr Hulot's Holidays* or *Holiday Hotel*; I thought this theme would allow us to move into a completely different world, evoking the carefree feeling of the holidays of the '50s and '60s. It is precisely this aspect, this change of world and tone, which made me want to do it again.

Making the first movie was a powerful emotional experience that left a strong memory: working with children was magical. I was torn between the dread of potential disappointment and the powerful attraction of doing it again. And I made the right choice: it has been another great joy.

What is your connection with the character?

As a child reading the books I identified strongly with Nicholas. I used to compare myself to this kid who looks at life in a quirky way, through the prism of his imagination.

Did you feel you had more freedom this time when you were writing the screenplay?

For the first film Grégoire Vigneron (co-writer) and I felt the weight of responsibility to write an adaptation that had to be as faithful as possible to the original. This time we had less material, as only one book tells the story of the summer Nicholas spends on holiday. That allowed us greater freedom. Having shown our abilities, gained the trust of Anne Goscinny, Jacques Sempé and the public, and having made the character our own, we felt we could be freer and more inventive.

What were the main challenges this time round?

We had to avoid the succession of little stories of the books and find a single plot with one main theme. But by telling several stories in parallel - Nicholas and Elizabeth, their parents, Nicholas' father's relationship with his boss - we were able to include more narrative threads than in first film.

The screenplay develops the adult characters a lot. Was this a conscious decision from the beginning?

Not exactly... In the first film we thought it necessary to give the adult parts a certain importance so it would appeal to all members of the audience. But working on their characters was great fun - the mother in particular, to whom we gave a comic aspect. That's what we wanted to develop in this film as well.

You are very keen on double meanings. Why?

As a spectator I loved what Pixar Studios started in films like *Toy Story*, setting the benchmark. Before that, most animation films targeted children only. I feel comfortable with today's trend. Probably more than most people, I have something of a split personality - that of an adult and of a child. It's easy for me to be on the same level as the younger audience, the double entendres come to me quite naturally when I'm writing.

Did you take the opportunity to slip in any personal memories?

I didn't hold back in the first film. In *Little Nicholas* a lot of the anecdotes came straight from my own childhood. In this second film I preferred to insert my cinematic references: Tati for one but also nods to Kubrick, Bardot, Fellini, Hitchcock... in particular *Psycho* for the shower scene. The film is a sort of homage to the kind of cinema I grew up with and that nurtured me.

As the young actors from the first film are now older, you had to recreate the entire cast of children. Was that tedious?

No, I saw about fifteen kids for the lead but it didn't take long. Casting children is a very different exercise: since they are not aware of what's at stake, they are not under too much pressure and are more spontaneous. It's a bit like bringing friends together one by one so they can play. I always try to make it as enjoyable as possible, with games and improvisations. I have a lot of fun doing it and I am always full of ideas.

How do you direct children?

Unlike adults, children mustn't intellectualize a scene: if they assimilate too much they won't be able to be spontaneous and natural. So you have to try to communicate with as few words as possible. Since everything you say is important, you have to find whatever little trick will help the kid keep his intuitive side so that it all remains a game.

Besides Kad Merad and Valérie Lemerrier, did you write with other actors in mind?

I wrote the part of the Italian producer for Luca Zingaretti, whom I loved directing in *Asterix and Obelix: In Britain 3D*. In Italy he's known for acting in very dark films but I thought he had great comic potential. For Granny I thought of Bernadette Lafont with whom we actually shot for a day, but who sadly passed away before our second meeting. Dominique Lavanant, who loved her since they worked together in *Paulette*, was at first reluctant to take over her part but we decided that's what her friend would have wanted and we were very happy when she finally agreed.

Why the island of Noirmoutiers?

Two years ago when I told a friend I was starting to write this film she immediately suggested I should shoot on the Plage des Dames. I had never been there. When the time came to look for locations, we knew we had to find a place on the Atlantic coast: we sent scouts looking from Normandy all the way to the Basque Country. One photo caught our attention... it was the Plage des Dames! It was so charming: its size, its crescent shape, the little hotel overlooking it, the forest bordering it, it was ideal, very close to the childhood world of *Little Nicholas*. It was the obvious place to shoot.

What were your instructions as far as the sets were concerned?

Having used black and red as the main colours for the first film, we made a point of pushing yellow and blue to the fore in this one. I didn't have to give too many indications: I've worked with the same crew, the same production designer since *Molière*. It saves a lot of time: they know my tastes in colour, materials and design... we understand each other very quickly.

What were the most powerful moments of the shoot?

There was something magical about the masked ball with everyone in costumes that reminded me of my childhood. The scene where the kids pass a live snake between them was very funny because they were having a great time for real. And magical moments, like the conversation between the father and the refreshment stall owner. On paper these few lines of dialogue didn't amount to much but when the actors did their stuff, they took an amazing turn. It was the same with the scene in the attic, when Isabelle's face changes from terrifying to the face of a charming little girl in the blink of an eye. You can always write this kind of scene but it will never work unless you find actors capable of doing it.

What made you happiest in this adventure?

Working again with children and with my crew. There was a real lightness, a happy-go-lucky attitude on the shoot. We were filming a comedy with our feet in the sand and in the evenings we were still on set. Things seemed easy to achieve, everyone was happy to be there. I often thought to myself that making films in the '60s must have been like this.

Would you like to make more *Little Nicholas* films?

It would be a pleasure. But after these two films, plus the *Asterix* adaptation, I'd like to focus on a more personal project before returning to it.

JEAN-JACQUES SEMPE - INTERVIEW

How was *Little Nicholas* born?

In the late '60s I was doing a weekly humorous drawing for a Belgian newspaper called *Le Moustique* - a very classic illustration featuring a little boy. One day the editor asked me to find a name for him. On my way to see him I'd noticed a sign for "Les Vins Nicolas" (*Nicolas Wines*), so I called him Nicholas. But when he suggested I do a comic strip I refused: it wasn't my thing. It was René Goscinny who convinced me to do it, saying that in *Little Nicholas* we had a real cartoon character. Then I suggested he join me in the adventure.

Does Nicholas resemble you as a boy?

He's a combination of several children, and there's something of me and of René in every boy in the gang. But *Little Nicholas* has undoubtedly inherited my rowdy side.

Does he occupy a special place in your work?

He represents our youth: mine and Goscinny's. It's an era about which I'm inevitably nostalgic.

How do you explain his enduring appeal?

I don't explain it but I'm happy to see that even if everything has changed, even if schools are different today and kids no longer wear short trousers, they can still identify with him.

Were you surprised by the success of the first film?

Everything always surprises me. When I make drawings and they sell, when my books sell, I'm astonished. You never get used to success. Unlike artists who perform on stage, we don't see our readers, so it all stays quite abstract.

What do you like about Laurent Tirard's work?

He is quite strict and doesn't need huge budgets, as it is the trend today. Being old school, it's his restraint I like best. That's why, when he suggested a second film, I was delighted and allowed him free rein.

What was your reaction when you saw this new film?

It's another world for me, very different from the drawings in our books. But I pay attention; as an outsider in the film business, it interests me.

Did you feel you were watching a different character than *your* Little Nicholas?

No, but a different way of looking at him, and at things in general... The *Nicholas* we see on the screen is really endearing and the film is a success. The graphic world of film always surprises me compared to drawings. It is another world, it interests me and I find it fun. The choice of colour is a great idea.

Would you like there to be more *Little Nicholas* films?

If there are more it is because there is a demand for them, so of course, I'd be delighted!

ANNE GOSGINNY - INTERVIEW

What did you like about this project?

It was exciting to have *Little Nicholas* on screen again, after the very high standards and box office success of the first film. Of course, I love the book *Nicholas on Holiday*. Relocating the character, taking him out of school, seeing how he behaves on the beach, watching him with new friends... You'd have to be crazy to turn down a project that would allow you to watch all this up close.

Were you surprised by the success of the first film?

I didn't imagine such a great success. I adored the first film: I found it sensitive, well judged and moving. I feel that the world of Sempé and my father was translated into images with great talent. But you'd have to be very conceited not to be amazed by such a success. Kids *and* their parents loved the film. The former make the decision to go and the latter are delighted not to be bored when they go to the cinema!

What does *Little Nicholas* represent for you?

It occupies a special place in all of my father's work. I often imagined that with *Little Nicholas* he was telling me about his childhood. They are certainly his memories, and sometimes Jean-Jacques Sempé's (when it comes to sports or summer camps). That wasn't the case with *Asterix* or *Lucky Luke*. Not all of us were Gauls or cowboys but we've all been children.

I am particularly fond of *Little Nicholas* because the text comes into its own, without the strict formal constraints of speech bubbles. My father had more room to express himself and display his talent as storyteller. Unlike a comic strip, you have an instant rapport with the text, an access to the words without having to go through the drawings. In a comic strip the illustrations hit you first. Whereas here, Sempé's drawings illustrate and accompany the text, as lyrics accompany the melody of a song...

Did you follow the writing of the screenplay?

I always follow the writing very closely. Aside from my own inclination towards the written word, I am my father's rights holder and I don't want his works to be misdirected. You have to know how to break the rules to help, and not to help yourself at the price of breaking the rules! But with Laurent Tirard and Grégoire Vigneron, I could relax because I trust them. Their work is brilliant, straightforward, well judged... and very funny.

Did any of their ideas seem absurd?

Everything seemed quite natural. There is even one scene that my father could have written that really made me laugh: when Kad Merad asks the refreshment stall owner: "*What would you write to your boss?*" and the other replies: "*How would I know when I am the boss?*" This is my father's spirit, his taste for the absurd, a Pierre Dac kind of humour. It's really funny. At times the film occupies a territory between Tati and Fellini... hardly third-rate references!

What do you like about Laurent Tirard's work?

I discovered Laurent Tirard through his debut, *The Story of My Life*, which I thought was really funny. The film was hilarious, smart, beautifully acted. Certain rather surrealistic scenes fitted very well with the idea I have of my father's humour.

Do you think your father would also have liked his work?

When I was coming to terms with my father's death, I made the decision that I would never make him think or say anything. Never say: "He would have liked", "loved" or "hated", because I didn't want to develop myself by making someone think who, by the way, didn't think any longer. I instinctively realized early on that this would be a futile exercise. But according to the idea I have of my father I think, yes, he would have liked it.

What did you feel when you saw the film?

A great and genuine happiness... I find it very funny, intelligent and beautiful. It is very well edited and the rhythm seems excellent to me. When I came out I thought: "Wonderful, I've just seen a great movie." I'm crazy about cinema and go to the movies as often as I can. In this case, the audience member liked it as much as the rights holder. The colours are very important in this film. You almost need to wear sunglasses the weather is so beautiful! Sempé's drawings being black and white, it felt as if Laurent Tirard had coloured them in.

What are your thoughts about a third film?

What Laurent does is so beautifully achieved and so elegant that I'd love it! But I would understand perfectly if he told me that after one *Asterix* and two *Nicholas* films he longed to explore another world. Anyway, the audience will tell us if they want a third *Nicholas* movie or not!

CAST

Valérie Lemerrier

Kad Merad

Dominique Lavanant

François-Xavier Demaison

Bouli Lanners

Mathéo Boisselier

Luca Zingaretti

Judith Henry

Francis Perrin

Daniel Prévost

Bruno Lochet

Fabienne Galula

CREW

Directed by	Laurent Tirard
Screenplay	Laurent Tirard, Grégoire Vigneron
with the collaboration of	Jaco Van Dormael
Adapted from	<i>Nicholas on holiday</i> by René Goscinny and Jean-Jacques Sempé
DP	Denis Rouden – AFC
Editor	Valérie Deseine
Stills Photographer	Jean-Marie Lerou
Sound	Eric Devulder
Sound Editor	François Fayard
Mix	Cyril Holtz, Damien Lazzarini
Production Designer	Françoise Dupertuis - ADC
Costume Designer	Pierre-Jean Larroque - AFCCA
1st Assistant Director	Alan Corno
Location Manager	Sina Frifra
Casting	Agathe Hassenforder – ARDA
Juvenile Casting	Julie David
Original Music	Eric Neveux
Postproduction Manager	Susana Antunes
Production Manager	Sylvestre Guarino
Line Producer	Christine De Jekel
Produced by	Olivier Delbosc, Marc Missonnier
Coproducers	Wild Bunch, M6 Films, Saint Sébastien Froissart
With the participation of	Canal +, OCS, M6, W9
With the support of	Tax Shelter of the Belgian Federal Government
International Sales	Wild Bunch

wild bunch