



SPECIAL JURY  
AWARD

INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL  
ROTTERDAM  
2021



# — I COMETE

A CORSICAN SUMMER

A Film By Pascal Tagnati

PRESSKIT



127 MIN

FRANCE

2021

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FRENCH, CORSICAN

A film by  
Pascal Tagnati

# CANNES ACID SCREENINGS

TUE 6 <sup>th</sup>	2:00 PM	@ Palais G (market screening)
THU 8 <sup>th</sup>	9:00 AM	@ Studio 13
THU 8 <sup>th</sup>	8:30 PM	@ Arcades 1
THU 8 <sup>th</sup>	9:00 PM	@ Arcades 2
MON 12 <sup>th</sup>	3.00 PM	@ Alexandre 3

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# I COMETE

A CORSICAN SUMMER



# SYNOPSIS



Corsica, in a small village.

Kids brighten the streets, teens mess around, grown-ups discuss the future while elders reflect on time passing by. Those who never left welcome back those who went abroad. Family and long time friends share together this precious moment in the mountains.

Under the burning sun and to the sound of rippling laughter, summer suspends time but doesn't heal all wounds.







# INTERVIEW WITH PASCAL TAGNATI

As an actor and director, you directed several short films, would you consider *I Comete*, your first feature film, to be the next natural step in your artistic path?

Short or feature film, it makes no difference to me. A film is a film, whatever its length. I don't consider shorts to be a rehearsal of feature films. Directing a good short can even be more complicated. When I wrote the script of *I Comete*, the question of the format did not even cross my mind. *I Comete* being my latest film.

What made you want to film this summer chronicle of a Corsican village? Do you come from this village? Are these your own memories?

During the summer, all Corsicans come back to their village. The ones from the diaspora and the ones who now live in the city, whatever their social backgrounds. The village is a place where people meet and exchange on a daily basis, so much happens in a village. In this story, there is a little bit of everything: memories, creations and some projections. But most of all: images from my heart. Yes. This village is not where I grew up. We shot in Tolla, 400 residents in the summer, the village is located in the Prunelli valley, not far from Ajaccio.

How did you manage to create a bridge between fiction and documentary?

It was very simple. I had my actors act in the streets of the village. No need for extras, the residents of the village were naturally present on camera, living their lives. Sometimes, something emerged from the meeting of the two worlds, and sometimes nothing happened. But either way, the scenes were solid, the script and the dialogues are the real base of the film. They represent 80% of it. Only 20% of the scenes were shot on the spot or improvised. *I Comete* is indeed a fiction. It tells the story of an imaginary village in summer.

How did the shooting go? Was the crew welcome in the village?

Villagers made sure we felt at home, without even really knowing me. They enabled us to shoot where we wished, night and day. We were a small crew, which made things easier in this very case. But there is one sure thing: without the open mind and generosity of the Tolla residents, this film would not exist today. That's for sure.





Was it clear from the beginning that this story had to be told through an ensemble cast, with its multiple trajectories? A more classical narrative, focussed on one character, seemed less relevant to you?

I did what I felt necessary. Trying to capture the life of a Corsican village during summer, by following only one character and living his difficulties with him, seemed to me off-topic and dull. One point of view is not enough. How can you imagine the life of a village during summer be representative without the presence of children running around? And what about teenagers and the elderly? A village during summer is a mixture of all these different voices, different issues and ideologies, it's a whole world.

In French, the title means *Comets*. It refers to multiple trajectories. Did it seem natural to choose a Corsican title?

*Comets* felt too much like “user instructions”. Whereas *I Comete* can sound like a local dish. The Corsican language is very present through the film, so it seemed natural to give the film a Corsican title, it imposed itself like a *lamentu* (a traditional dirge).

In *I Comete*, there are no murders, no crime, and no radical politics... Violence appears in very subtle ways. Was it your goal to show another image of Corsica, different from most of its representations in cinema?

It take all kinds. But it's true that this political or crime related representation of Corsica was starting to bore me. Not because of the films, some were needed, but because of the image it advertised, an image most people remember. In a way, I think this repeated depiction of Corsica hurts the island and the Corsicans, it strengthens the bias people have abroad against Corsica. I am inspired by what surrounds me. And in my life in Corsica, I am almost never exposed to violence or radical politics. Most of the time, I am exposed to

other things. Things that can indeed seem ordinary but that I find charming. I try to talk about what I know, I shift subjects and sometimes have fun with it.

You chose professional and non-professional actors, why is that?

I chose the best actors for the parts. Their professional experiences were not relevant.

How did you choose the non-professional actors and how did you work with them?

Sometimes, things just fall in place naturally. I arrived in this village where I knew no one. Almost all the parts for the young ones and some of the adults were standing before my eyes. On our first day of scouting, Lucas Vittori and I were looking at half of the cast. For the other non-professional actors, we casted them the traditional way, through casting ads and some of them are friends. I worked with them the same way I work with professional actors. Learn your lines by heart, know your lines like the back of your hand. Say it. Feel it. Throw it. Say it again. Live. Say it again. And trust them. I expected the same commitment from Palma Vittini, a 10 years old little girl (during the filming), than from Jeremy Alberti who is an experienced actor. But every actors is different, no matter their age, the important thing is to find the right words for each of them, to translate your intent. But most of all, they need to have fun, pleasure is essential. If an actor does not feel any pleasure while acting, it means I failed at my job. But as a friend of Jean-Noël Picq used to say: “Dear, there is no pleasure without pain”.



You used a lot of fixed sequence-shots (sometimes very long ones) in your film and there is often a great distance between the camera and the actors. Why these directing choices?

Just because I wanted to be simple. On one hand, by choosing a single point of view per scene, it allows the spectator to feel as if he was a passer-by witnessing this scene by chance. And on the other hand, I wanted the actors to feel free and for time to have no impact. It's them and only them who give rhythm to the sequences and impact the scenes, not a camera movement or a film breakdown. But this can only happen when the best professionals surround you: from the technical crew and their great sensibility, on set and in post-production, to producers who believe in your vision and trust you. I was lucky to be surrounded by the best. Fuoriclassi.



The script and the editing build a dense and delicate narrative, mingling chronicle and dramatic conflicts. How did you imagine the irruption of drama in this narrative?

What's the definition of drama? Joy and pain are both part of life. To me, there is no hierarchy in my narrative. But today, everyone expects just that: stakes, dramatic tension and drama. We see so many dramas on screen. Everything needs to be a drama. The reading grids are all the same now. In *I Comete*, conflict is part of summer, like parties or discussions about football... They just happen, life goes on.

The theme of departure and coming back to one's origins are at the centre of this film. Are these questions about identity present in Corsican contemporary society?

To talk about being from here and there, leaving and coming back is the very essence of Corsican contemporary society, it's the very essence of these islanders, of these People. I stress the word "People".

The character of François-Régis gives you the opportunity to mention the *CorsAfrique* (an informal system of economic domination over former French colonies based on personal connections between African politicians and Corsican personalities). Why did you choose to talk about this topic from an intimate angle?

My film is not a scholar lecture and even less a tribunal. My goal is not to dwell on the "Corsica-Africa" issue or to point the finger and give lessons. It exists and it's a fact. I love all my characters, without any exception, I defend them. Even if some of them are less lovable than others, they have a reason for being who they are at this precise instant. Why bring up the matter? Because it allows the film to broaden the community, enrich its history and create more complex relations between the characters and their intimacy. It gives us more food for thought. François-Régis character played by Jean-Christophe Folly thickens what is not on screen: past, present and future. He has this power and this capacity to embody a whole community. He projects and defeats the forecasts.

You chose to set your film in this very particular territory that is Corsica, are you afraid of not being understood by all the spectators?

First of all, I make movies for myself, and I like working with talented people who help me grow. And then, I have the pleasure of sharing the result of this work with spectators. What I am intimately convinced of is that we are twenty years behind the spectators. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, more intelligent and greedy than the eye of a spectator. It is art. And art can entertain without necessarily being entertainment. Everyone understands things in his or her own way, it's called interpretation and it's the ultimate talent of the spectator. Trying to make something understood in art, I say "to try to make it understood", is already to step away from one's own intuitions, from one's own truth – it prevents the extraordinary from happening. That's how I see it.



Looking at family, friends, intergenerational ties... in the end, the community painted by *I Comete* is much more universal than it seems at first sight. We are in Corsica, but we could be in a village in Provence, deep in the Philippines, Thailand or Mexico. How did you think about this relationship between the particular and the universal?

I don't have the pleasure to know Thailand, Mexico or the Luberon. I do not know the characteristics of these territories. If you see it that way, so much the better, but for my part, I didn't think about it that way. The person who believes he is creating a universal work is either disconnected from reality or a pretentious one. What would that mean? That we all live the same things, in the same way? Meaning this person would know in advance what the public needs? Universalism is a dangerous concept. We're all here and we have to deal with it.





# BIOGRAPHY PASCAL TAGNATI

Born in 1982 in Ajaccio, Pascal Tagnati is an actor, author and director.

In front of the camera, he has notably played in films by Lucie Borleteau (*Fidelio*), Delphine Leoni (*La Nuit est là*), Sarah Arnold (*Fabula Rasa*), Thierry de Peretti (*Sleepwalkers*), Antonin Peretjatko (*Struggle For Life*), Lavinie Boffy (*La Vie ou la Pluie*); On stage, under the direction of François Orsoni, Jean-Christophe Meurisse for the group Les Chiens de Navarre, Thierry de Peretti, Cristèle Alves Meira and in his own productions. In his films, Pascal Tagnati observes his time, his contemporaries or himself, with humor, sensitivity and melancholy. *I Comete* is his first feature film.



# FILMOGRAPHY PASCAL TAGNATI



## FEATURES

2021

I Comete – A Corsican Summer





SHORTS

2017	La Punta (short, 19 min)
2016	Le Fan de base (Short, 27 min)
2016	Les Nymphes de la Punta (Short, 7 min)
2013	Bugarach (Short, 39 min)
2012	Vergogna (video, 20 min)
2010	Belorusskaïa (video, 4 min)

CAST

François-Régis	Jean-Christophe FOLLY
Théo	Pascal TAGNATI
Bastien	Cédric APPIETTO
Amandine	Apollonia BRONCHAIN ORSONI
Greg	Jérémy ALBERTI
Carina	Davia BENEDETTI
Lisandru	Joseph CASTELLITI
Lucienne	Roselyne DE NOBILI
Auguste	Eric PATRIS DE BREUIL
Cindy	Maryse MIEGE
Charles	Ange-Marie BISGAMBIGLIA
Nina	Livia VITTINI
Paulan	Thomas AUGUGLIARO
Letizia	Palma VITTINI







# CREW

Director	Pascal Tagnati
Screenplay	Pascal Tagnati
Director of photography	Javier Ruiz Gómez
Editor	Pascal Tagnati
Production designer	Kalli Tormen
Sound	Amaury Arboun, Pierre Bompy, Vincent Verdoux
Colorist	Gadiel Bendelac
Second camera	Lucas Vittori
Assistant director	Thomas Bobrowski
Location manager	Antoine Lefeuvre
Sound assistants	Antoine Bertucci, Laurent Blahay
Assistant decorator	Tom Mattei
Producers	Martin Bertier, Helen Olive, Delphine Leoni
Production Company:	5à7 Films, Lotta Films
Countries of production	France
French distributor	New Story
International Sales	Best Friend Forever

