



— MOTHER SCHMUCKERS

A Film by Lenny And Harpo Guit

PRESSKIT



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A film by
Lenny And Harpo Guit

SCREENING IN SUNDANCE

FRI. 29

10:00 PM ^{MST}

Followed by live Q&A

SUN. 31

8.00 AM ^{MST}

— MOTHER SCHMUCKERS

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— SYNOPSIS

Brussels, today.

Issachar et Zabulon, two broke twenty-something brothers with a knack for stupidity and trouble, live in a low-income housing complex in Brussels with their mother Cashmere. When they lose their mother's beloved dog, January-Jack, she gives them an ultimatum - find him in 24 hours or get kicked out of the house.

A hilarious adventure through contemporary Brussels, MOTHER SCHMUCKERS features appearances by French actor Mathieu Amalric (THE FRENCH DISPATCH, SOUND OF METAL) and Claire Bodson (YOUNG AHMED). As the two brothers encounter a cast of eccentric characters, they're never too far from trouble.



— INTERVIEW OF LENNY AND HARPO GUIT

What's your background ? What led you to cinema ?

Lenny

Since we were kids, our father is a filmmaker who has directed four films we love and since we were kids, we were surrounded by films. For sure, it had an impact on the fact that we wanted to make films. During our childhood, we made little films together with our sister Lulma. Then, after my high school diploma, I went to Belgium to attend film school (IAD). I met a lot of great people, including Guillaume Lion, our editor, and Sylvestre Vannoorenberghe, our cinematographer, with whom we immediately had a great affinity for making films. We really got a kick out of working with our best friends.

Harpo

I joined Lenny in Belgium a little later, but to attend drama school. That's where I met Maximilien and Habib who play in *MOTHER SCHMUCKERS*. Many other characters in the film are played by friends I met during my studies.

You went from producing your own films with a very small team (often even just the two of you) to having a bigger team and a budget to work with, what has it changed for you?

Harpo

When it was just the two of us, we had to think of everything, but that's how we learned how to make a film. Gradually, we had a bigger crew, people we met at school and outside of school. We realized that we were happy to make films with people close to us, and super proud when our films started to screen in festivals.

For *MOTHER SCHMUCKERS*, we worked with the same crew from our short film days. The only thing that changed was that they were getting paid for their work! And we had a producer too, for the first time, who took care of a lot of things. It was very useful !

Lenny

Yes exactly, the «recognition» of our work was sort of the reward for having made films all together during these years. We still love to produce our own projects. Outside of our bigger projects, we continue to do what we want. But it's true that we have to play multiple roles. When we had a team for the first time, it was both very liberating and it was also very pleasant not to fight alone anymore to make our films.

You were granted a new Belgian Fund for small films, and the film was pre-sold to TV. But you still had to work with a small budget. How do you make a film with little money?

Harpo

It was natural, we were used to finding clever solutions in our short films when we couldn't afford to do otherwise. It starts during the writing process. You realize that something is too expensive, then you adapt and change the scene. We remain flexible until the shoot. For example, there was a scene where there were supposed to be lots of dogs, but on the day of the shoot, there were far fewer of them. So we improvised, and we changed the scene to make it fit to the story.

Lenny

We also realized that as soon as there is money, everything takes longer, since it involves more people. In our case, it was perfect, we had just enough to be ambitious, but not too much that we were prevented from doing what we wanted. We were very free. We are super grateful to have had this fund to help us. If we hadn't had it, Harpo and I said to ourselves that we would have done it without anything, but it would obviously have taken longer.

Which were your inspirations for *MOTHER SCHMUCKERS*?

Lenny

We had many inspirations for *MOTHER SCHMUCKERS*. It's often a complex exercise to communicate to our team what we have in mind. As a result, we talked a lot about films that inspired us. We also gave them acting and costumes references.

Harpo

We love John Waters' trashy universe. *PINK FLAMINGOS* and *POLYESTERS* made us want to make our film in odorama for a while. We also love the Italian comedies of the 60s, which often depict characters who are struggling but who always manage to sublimate these dramatic situations with humor and lightness, like Mario Monicelli's *BIG DEAL ON MADONNA STREET*, Nanni Loy's *FIASCO IN MILAN* or Mario Mattoli's *POVERTY AND NOBILITY*. We are also big fans of the American comedies we grew up with: *BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD DO AMERICA* by Mike Judge, *DUMB AND DUMBER* by the Farrelly brothers, *NAPOLEON DYNAMITE* by Jared Hess. Popular French comedies are also a great source of inspiration for us: French comics Eric and Ramzy, but also Claude Lelouch's films for example. There are also more obscure French films; such as *SORGOÏ PRAKOV*, *MY EUROPEAN DREAM* by Rafael Cherkaski, *THEMROC* by Claude Faraldo and *AUGUSTIN* by Anne Fontaine.



MOTHER SCHMUCKERS is about two brothers, unkempt, penniless and really stupid. When two brothers write a film about two brothers, one is tempted to think that there is an autobiographical part in the writing. What do you have in common with your characters?

Harpo

The biggest thing in common is the fact that they are two brothers. Then, frankly, everything is ultra extrapolated. We imagine things we would never dare to do in real life, or situations we really wouldn't like to be in, and we let our characters experience it. We tell ourselves that with filmmaking, everything is possible. We take the characters to crazy places, we make them have fun encounters and we try to surprise ourselves by imagining what our craziest reaction would be in such and such a situation. It's often weird.

LENNY

The other thing we have in common is that we love to eat. When we work or when we're not doing anything, it's the best time of the day. So we try injecting that into the motivations of the characters.

Issachar and Zabulon have an animal connection to the world. They are sincere, raw, violent, and often totally oblivious to the norms of society. What attracts you to the animal side of human beings?

Lenny

What attracts us to these characters is their marginal way of existing in our society. In the films we like, often it is the raw, bizarre, almost animal characters that touch us the most. It's as if their quirkiness brought a fresh look to the norm that surrounds us.



MOTHER SCHMUCKERS is a comedy with themes that could turn it into a social drama. The stakes are hard and difficult: poverty, death, betrayal. What led you to explore these themes?

Harpo

When we write and move forward with a story, the themes come out quite naturally. They are themes that touch us. What we love in the Italian comedies of the 60's and 70's is the way they explore deeply dramatic themes with great humor. For instance in Monicelli's THE PASSIONATE THIEF (1960): it's the story of two outcasts who are alone on New Year's Eve and who are going to experience an evening full of hardships. When you think back on the film, their story is sad, but their way of dealing with this evening makes the film super funny. We were very inspired by this period of Italian cinema and its outlook on life. We like the bittersweet mix of comedy and struggles.

Harpo, you are both behind and in front of the camera, how do you combine these two roles in a first feature film?

Harpo

When Lenny was behind the camera, it was fluid. We talked all the time, we took time to think about the scenes on set. I went to drama school with Maximilien, who plays Issachar, so our relationship in the film was very instinctive.

And how do you divide the work?

We do everything together, from writing to editing.

You work with young actors, unknown to the audience, but also with artists whose reputation is well established, like Mathieu Amalric and Claire Bodson. How do you work with big names like them when you're a young filmmaker?

Harpo

They were very very very nice. Both of them dove into our crazy world, we didn't feel any distance between us. They didn't make us feel the weight of their experience at all, they were kind, encouraging and super motivated.

Lenny

It's true. We were very impressed to work with actors and actresses of their magnitude. But they were so kind and patient that we succeeded in creating together a trusting relationship. We were very lucky to be able to work with actors and actresses whose work we admire.

You have been selected in the Midnight selection of the Sundance festival, a selection dedicated to genre cinema. First of all, how do you feel about it? Also, how do you define your cinema, does this category agree with you?

Harpo

We're so happy to have been selected at Sundance, we've been hearing the name of this festival forever and it's really crazy to be a part of it. It's so cool that the film is associated with this selection that has welcomed movies we're huge fans of, like *TIM ERIC BILLION DOLLAR MOVIE*, *THE FOOT FIST WAY* or *WHAT WE DO IN THE SHADOWS*. Our cinema falls into the category of low-budget comedies, it has become a genre in itself, which the Midnight selection appreciates. Some day, if we have more money, I don't know how our cinema will be affected.

Lenny

We realize how lucky we are to be selected at Sundance. We thank as much as we can all the friends and collaborators who have always encouraged us and gave us everything they had to make our films. We are very happy. It's true it's not

easy to define one's own cinema. We like the idea of making films in a raw, resourceful, spontaneous way. We often tell ourselves: if our characters made films, this is what they would look like.

How do you think the Sundance audience will react?

Harpo

We hope they have a blast! Even if it's an online edition this year, we hope that the American audience will be receptive, and that they will call each other after the show to discuss it, just like they would after the movies.

Do you have any ongoing projects?

Harpo and Lenny

We're thinking about our next film. We're writing ideas. We also like to hang out, eat and watch movies.

The dog gives a great performance, is he a professional actor?

Harpo

Fresco is a great actor indeed. He is available and eager to work. Don't hesitate to contact him, he's a real sunshine on the set.

Lenny

Fresco is great indeed. In all my career, I've never seen that much talent. He's very creative and a true professional. He is also the most ambitious actor I've ever met. So yes, he's an actor by profession and I wouldn't be surprised if he was cast in big films soon. He's a star in the making.



— BIOGRAPHY LENNY AND HARPO GUIT



Born in Paris and based in Brussels, Harpo and Lenny Guit make movies together. They've worked with the same crew since their film school days, starting with a few shorts including LA SEMAINE EST ENCORE LONGUE (2015), NATHALIE F*** YOU ALL (2016) and LA BRIGADE DU KIFF (2018), all available on their Youtube channel Clubb Guitos. MOTHER SCHMUCKERS is their first feature film.

— FILMOGRAPHY LENNY AND HARPO GUIT



FEATURE

2021	Mother Schmuckers
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CAST

Issachar	Maxi DELMELLE
Zabulon	Harpo GUIT
Cachemire	Claire BODSON
Choukri	Habib BEN TANFOUS
Violeta	Chaïda CHADDY SUKU SUKU
Daniel	Toni D'ANTONIO
Anthony the policeman	Yannick RENIER
Zarma	Valentin Wilbaux
Mister Tramp	Théophile Roux
Corentin	Tom Adjibi
The Guru	Rafaël Cherkaski

With the special participation of

The Father	Mathieu AMALRIC
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SHORTS

2017	La Brigade du Kiff (short, 12 min)
2015	Nathalie Vous Nique Tous (short, 17 min)
2015	La Semaine est encore longue (short, 28 min)
2013	Bonne Nuit (Short, 17 min)





— ROUE LIBRE PRODUCTION

— CREW

Director	Lenny And Harpo Guit
Screenplay	Lenny And Harpo Guit
Director Of Photography	Sylvestre Vannoorenberghe
Editors	Guillaume Lion And Naftule Tarraschuk
Sound	Albert Van De Bui
Production designer	Jean-Pierre Fargeas
Costume design	Justine Struye
Sound editing	Virgile Jans, Sébastien Lheureux
Mixer	Aurélien Lebourg
Color grading	Lucien Keller
Make-up	Celine Yetter
1st AD	Michiel Blanchart
Location manager	Thomas Xhignesse
Production manager	Alice Leclercq
Producers	David Borgeaud, Erika Meda
Production Company	Roue Libre Production
Countries Of Production	Belgium
International Sales	Best Friend Forever

After completing film school where they met, David Borgeaud and Erika Meda founded Belgium production company Roue Libre Production in 2014 with an aim to accompany and support directors in their artistic processes. With no restriction of genre or format, they began to produce short films, notably Kapitalistis, by Pablo Muñoz Gomez, awarded in Locarno and many other festivals, and nominated for Magritte, César & European Film Awards. Over time, they started developing feature documentaries and fiction films, as well as hybrids and experimental films. In 2021, their first feature film Mother Schmuckers is selected in the Midnight section of the Sundance Film Festival.

David serves at the head of industry relations at the Festival International du Film Francophone in Namur since 2018. He's also an alumnus of the Rotterdam Lab and a reader for the Belgian French-speaking Film Fund.



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