BLAISE

The Savage family
just wants to be loved

ACID CANNES 2026

ANNECY 2026 COMPETITION

A Film by Dimitri Planchon and Jean-Paul Guigue

PRESSKIT

BLAISE

82 MIN

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FRENCH

SCREENINGS IN CANNES
THU. MAY 14th,12:00 PM @ Arcades 2
(Market Screening)
THU. MAY 14th, 4:45 PM @ Alexandre 3
FRI. MAY 15th, 11:00 AM @ Studio 13
FRI. MAY 15th, 2:00 PM @ Palais C
(Market Screening)
FRI. MAY 15th, 8:00 PM @ Arcades 1
(World Premiere)
FRI. MAY 15th, 8:30 PM @ Arcades 2
WED. MAY 20th, 4:30 PM @ Alexandre 3

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SYNOPSIS

The Savage family is desperate to be loved. Carole knows her employees hate her and is determined to win them over at any cost. Jacques has never worked a day in his life and doesn't feel respected. As for their 16 y.o introverted son Blaise, who lacks a personality, he always goes along with everyone and agrees to everything... So much so that when he meets this girl, Josephine, he politely embarks on a revolutionary, violent, and completely impromptu crusade.

A CONVERSATION WITH DIMITRI PLANCHON AND JEAN-PAUL GUIGUE

Originally, Blaise was a successful comic book, later adapted into a series of three-minute episodes for Arte. How did the adaptation from the comic book to the series come about?

DP: Producer Alexandre Gavras suggested turning the comic into a television series, and we came up with the idea of approaching the animation studio *Je suis bien content*, which is behind adult animated films I really admire.

JPG: I'm a director at *Je suis bien content*, and I've always appreciated Dimitri's work. In this kind of adaptation, there's usually a great deal of work to be done on the design and on reinterpreting the illustrator's style, even if the goal is to preserve its visual language. What was particular about *Blaise*, with its cut-out paper characters, is that I immediately saw a connection with our own methods: I realized we wouldn't need to undertake a major graphic overhaul while still preserving the spirit of the series. It felt like a natural extension of the comic, and the technique itself wouldn't interfere with the visual identity of these very bold, graphic characters. So, we were able to focus on how the scenes were constructed, without technical obstacles or the need for costly experimentation.

The visual style is both highly realistic and poetic, unlike anything in contemporary animation ...

DP: I work with cut-out paper – it's a form of digital photomontage. At first, the style had a slightly Dadaist feel, but as I went on, I moved toward something closer to a kind of pictorial realism. I'm very drawn to uncanny realism and to all the poetry that comes with it – the moment when an image looks real, but something imperceptible tells us it isn't. Slightly off proportions in faces or bodies, imperfect perspective in the backgrounds... I like working with those kinds of distortions. And it fits well with the writing of these characters, who always seem slightly out of sync with the world around them. Going back to the comic, at the time I was animating my characters frame by frame, using small puppets whose arms, heads, pupils, and eyebrows I could move. Even in the way I built them, there was already something of an animator's approach.

JPG: Dimitri talks about shots that function almost like standalone images. There are very few camera movements; everything is composed pictorially, the way you would frame a photograph, a painting, or a comic-book panel. Of course, there's more movement in the film than there was in the series, but the stillness is intentional. Back when we were making the series, Dimitri was experimenting with different textures for the characters, and the collage work had a more overtly artistic dimension.

What really changed with the feature film?

DP: The comic book was made up of one-page gags focused on this family struggling to connect with other people. From a writing standpoint, I wanted to take the character dynamics further, beyond the accumulation of short stories. I wanted to move beyond isolated, anecdotal situations and explore how far Blaise and his parents could be pushed by their fear of speaking up. The idea was for this family – consumed by appearances and conformity – to become more than just a comic premise, but the driving force behind an absurd spiral, a wildly funny momentum that only a feature film could carry all the way through. In fact, the film doesn't reference the comic book or the series at all. It has a life of its own. We created our own source material. We worked with a costume designer and set up a photo studio. I photographed a huge number of people from every possible angle, focusing both on their faces and their clothes. And whenever we were missing a particular angle, Jean-Paul, I, or someone else on the team would put on the costume and photograph ourselves all over again. But beyond that, the work still relied on photomontage. No photograph is ever reused

as-is. The characters' faces are made up of multiple fragments of distorted faces, and the bodies are cut apart, manipulated, and reassembled.

JPG: We tried to work with the limitations of the series, which had been a source of some frustration. In certain poses and movements, the characters felt a bit stiff, and their gestures sometimes conveyed emotions that didn't quite match what we had intended. Thanks to the photo studio, we were able to storyboard the sequences and develop very precise poses to express specific emotions. Photography opened up a whole new range of possibilities for us in terms of storytelling and directing the scenes.

How have the characters evolved over time?

DP: The comic was called *Blaise*, even though the boy only appeared in about a third of the stories – and even then, he didn't say much when he was there. But I liked the idea that his face was on the cover and that the series bore his name. Through that simple device, he became the center of it all – the vessel for an entire human comedy: his parents, school, social life, television, politics, and so on. All of that environment feeds into this child and helps shape him into a more or less well-adjusted adult. With the animated series, Blaise took on a larger role. But whether it's the comic, the series, or the film, even if my writing evolves, the core of the characters remains the same: people obsessed with the image they project, constantly worried about not offending anyone. Blaise's goal is to blend into the crowd, to go unnoticed. And this fear of standing out—or of expressing even the slightest opinion – paradoxically pushes him quite far. The same goes for the parents and, ultimately, most of the characters. Another key element of the film, as it was already in the comic, is their environment. They live in a harsh world, a society in crisis, while they themselves belong to a fairly privileged middle class and are not directly affected by it. They observe it from a distance. And when they do take a stance, it's because they feel that not doing so would make them guilty in the eyes of whoever they're speaking to. And of course, that "who they're speaking to" changes depending on the situation. In the film, Blaise finds himself opposite a young woman like him, who tries to go along with him – while he has no real opinions of his own. It's this absurd relationship between the characters that lies at the heart of the film.

What really struck me about the characters is that they don't understand each other and struggle to connect. Several very funny scenes come out of their inability to truly understand one another, to genuinely connect...

DP: Even when they seem to understand each other, they're constantly misunderstanding one another because they focus on what they're saying instead of really listening to the other person. That's the driving force behind everything I write. Each character is built around the way they communicate – whether it's Blaise, with his reluctance to express even the slightest opinion; Carole and her class anxiety; or Jacques, who has a very precise idea of how others should see him. I could also mention the TV star who suffers from his own fame even though no one recognizes him, or Joséphine, who completely invents a persona for herself. In the end, they're all very lonely, even though they want to be like everyone else – and in fact, they're far more like everyone else than they realize...

You can also sense how uncomfortable and out of place they feel, and how much they constantly need to justify themselves ...

DP: Exactly. Carole's issue, for example, is that she feels a strong disconnect between what she wants to say and what she actually ends up saying. As a result, she's always correcting herself as she speaks.

JPG: We understand that Carole may have had difficulty connecting with the people in her department. So, as the film begins, she tries to be considerate toward her team, and unlike the others, she is more aware of her surroundings.

Léa Drucker and Jacques Gamblin had already lent their voices to the series. Was it easy to bring them on board for the feature film?

DP: We were hoping they would come back with us. Everything they brought to the characters in terms of tone and comedy back in the series has now become part of their DNA. As I was writing the film, I could hear their voices in my head. Carole was a real challenge as a character, with a tone that constantly runs counter to her emotions. She could easily have become hard to read. Léa immediately understood how to approach the role, and made her even more funny – and more touching – than she already was. As for Jacques Gamblin, he brought a wonderfully precise, musical quality to Jacques's constant monologues. They said yes straight away, and it was a thrill to work with them again. It was also a real boost for the film. We're very grateful to them.

JPG: Back when we were working on the series, Blaise was voiced by an actress. But as he became a teenager and we introduced new characters, we held auditions.

DP: For the rest of the cast, we decided to do blind auditions. The casting director recorded several actors performing the dialogue and had us listen without seeing their faces or knowing their names. That way, we could focus solely on the tone of the voice, without anything else influencing us. That's how we cast Timéo Béasse as Blaise. He had a vulnerable quality in his voice that matched the character. And you could tell he was young – he really sounded like he was Blaise's age. That was something we liked as well.

Did the actors record before the animation was created?

DP: Absolutely. Since it's above all a dialogue-driven film, the acting was essential. The voices were recorded early on, so we built the visuals around them. The actors set the rhythm. Unlike the series, where actors came in one after another depending on their availability and performed separately, this time they worked together: we organized group sessions and they played off one another.

JPG: We wanted to make sure the "music" of the voices worked, and from there we built the storyboard.

DP: We even had a boom operator, so it felt more alive – almost like a stage performance. It was very natural, and the work on the acting was quite specific.

JPG: Having worked with different voice-recording methods in animation, this ensemble approach is invaluable for breaking away from the artificial feel of lines that don't flow into one another. You immediately feel the energy between the actors; there's something more sensitive and natural the actors get an immediate reaction to their lines, a bit like in theatre.

DP: That's what contributes to the film's slightly hybrid nature – halfway between live action and animation.

What was your approach to the music, and how did you come up with the idea of the choirs?

DP: Jean-Paul and I love 1970s cinema – the films of our childhood. Many European comedies used layered, slightly jazzy vocal arrangements in canon, like Ferreri's *Dillinger Is Dead* or the Pierre Richard comedies, with scores by Cosma. Our idea was that our characters' struggles with language and communication could also be

expressed in a lighter way through the music. Voices trying to harmonize, sometimes clashing, overlapping, contradicting one another… We brought in the composer Alexis Pecharman, with whom we had worked on the series.

JPG: We started again from a piece in the style of François de Roubaix that Alexis had composed for the series but which we hadn't used. Alexis and his collaborator Denis Vautrin created the first sketches. I've worked with them on several projects; we're the same age and share the same references. They handled the full sonic palette of the film, including the electronic tracks. And when we heard these intertwined voices, we decided to keep the demos.

DP: The demos came together very quickly, and they helped us build the animatic. We also liked the idea of a relatively upbeat score, which allowed us to lean into the darkness of certain scenes without losing the lightness of the comedy.

We laugh a lot, but it's often quite biting, and the humor is very dark…

DP: I'm not very social myself, so I might as well laugh about it. And I've always been drawn to darkness. I feel that, to get through a world that can be so harsh, you need to find ways of turning it into something absurd. In terms of influences, I'm very fond of Roy Andersson's films, which build a kind of fixed, theatrical world where the characters struggle to connect with one another. In a similar vein, I love Buñuel's *The Exterminating Angel*. Artists like Jerry Seinfeld, Larry David, and Ricky Gervais are also a major source of inspiration for us. Jean-Paul and I share the same taste in cinema – we're very much on the same page when it comes to our references.

The film is quite political, with a strong sense of protest and a radical, even anarchic tone…

DP: You see, I'm like Jacques – I'd love for people to see me as an anarchist, so I'm not going to argue with you! But the truth is, I'm not so sure. Not really that political. Being political seems to imply a considered, deliberate position. I don't really have those qualities, unfortunately. I feel more overwhelmed – overwhelmed and paralyzed by a world that's becoming harsher and more fragmented every day. My stories come out of that sense of panic and confusion.

BIOGRAPHY DIMITRI PLANCHON & JEAN-PAUL GUIGUE

Born in Paris in 1977, Dimitri Planchon is a graduate of the *École Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs* in Strasbourg. When he returned to Paris, he began publishing in 2003 in *Fluide Glacial*, then in *L'Écho des Savanes* and at *Glénat*, where the comic strip 'Blaise' (2009–2012) was published. In 2016, it was adapted into a 30-episode animated series broadcast on ARTE, produced by KG Productions. As a continuation of this collaboration, he worked with KG Productions on the feature-length adaptation of '*Blaise*'.

Jean-Paul Guigue is a French animator. He has directed several series, including 'Blaise' and '*Silex and the City*', which have been broadcast on ARTE. In 2024, he co-directed the feature film '*Silex and the City*' with Jul. He is now reuniting with Dimitri Planchon for the adaption of '*Blaise*' into a feature film.

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FILMOGRAPHY DIMITRI PLANCHON

2016	*Blaise* (animated series) - Arte

FILMOGRAPHY JEAN-PAUL GUIGUE

2024	*Silex and the City* - Cannes Film Festival, Annecy
2019	*Best Bugs Forever* - TV Series
2016	*Blaise* (animated series) - Arte
2012 - 2018	*Silex and the City* - TV Series

CAST & CREW

Carole	Léa Drucker
Jacques	Jacques Gamblin
Blaise	Timéo
Joséphine	Nina Blanc-Francard

Directors	Dimitri Planchon and Jean-Paul Guigue
Original Screenplay	Dimitri Planchon
Adaptation and dialogues	Dimitri Planchon and Clémence Lebatteux
	Based on the comic book by Dimitri Planchon, first published by Editions Glénat in France © Editions Glénat
Editing	Jean-Paul Guigue
Music	Alexis Pecharman and Denis Vautrin
Sound Design	Vincent Verdoux
Graphic Design	Dimitri Planchon
Production	KG Productions
Producer	Alexandre Gavras
Country	France
French Distributor	The Jokers Films
International Sales	Best Friend Forever