



FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION BEST LIVE ACTION SHORT



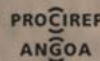
LES VALSEURS PRESENT

NEFTA FOOTBALL CLUB

A FILM BY YVES PIAT

"This kind-spirited childhood adventure
cleverly twisted our expectations"
Aspen Jury for Best Comedy

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2018 - 17min - Fiction

Two young brothers come across a donkey in the desert.
Strangely, the animal wears headphones over its ears.



97 FESTIVAL

65 AWARDS - 20 AUDIENCE AWARDS:

Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival
Aspen Shorts Fest
Florida Film Festival
Sao Paulo International Short Film Festival
Show Me Shorts
Cinemed

Yves Piat's live-action short film stars Lyes Salem (Munich) is a huge hit on short film festival circuit with more than 65 awards out of 97 selections and an impressive series of Audience Awards, including Clermont Ferrand and Florida Film Festival the Oscar-qualifying Best Comedy award at Aspen Shortsfest. The film is also in selection for the César 2020 in France.

This wonderful film shares the story of two boys who stumble on something unusual which creates unexpected events. To shoot this film Yves Piat worked with the french DOP Valentin Vignet. Vignet is an AFI alumni and his past work includes Agnes Varda's documentary Faces Places.





BIO

Yves Piat discovered the world of cinema through his technician work as a decorator and studio manager on set. He developed the Nefta Football Club story by mixing a personal experience coming from his childhood and his observations after several travels in South Morocco.

INTERVIEW WITH YVES PIAT

What was your starting point or inspiration, for *The Nefta Football Club*? Was it the visual of a donkey wearing headphones, the pure innocence of our young lead character, or something else?

Many things have inspired the movie.

First, a personal experience coming from my childhood. I was 14. At this time, we often sneaked out in forbidden places, with torchlights, with my best friend. One day, we found a twisted spoon, a camping stove and thousand of little plastic bags full of white powder.

With my friend, we thought it could be drug material.

We decided to take all these « loot » on our motorcycle. Finally, as we didn't know what to do with it, we dumped it in the river without really thinking about what we were doing. Our decision may have cost life to somebody, or something else important. It's a story I kept for more than 30 years now. This is how everything started.

Also, I wanted the movie to take place at the border between Morocco and Algeria because I was amazed by the impressive landscapes I saw there. I started imagining a film where the desert would play a great part in the story. Border zones are often dangerous, no man's land, going from a state to another.

Regarding the story about the donkey and the walkman, it's a true story even if smugglers records whistle sounds and not music as presented in the movie. I found funny to bring

this misunderstanding with the music. And for the football field, the idea came to me after seeing all these kids playing football all along my trip, from north to south Morocco. All these little stories stayed somewhere in my mind to finally merged in one, The Nefta Football Club one.

The film includes two wonderful performances from two young actors. What did they bring to this project?

The youngest of the two boys embodies the game idea and the bigger embodies the serious issues you can meet in your life ... The two young actors were like two brothers on set despite the fact they barely knew each other. As soon as I discovered them, I knew immediately that they would perfectly assume their respective roles.

You worked in the mountainous desert with children and with a donkey. How was the shooting with all these challenges? Interesting stories to share?

Yes, there would be dozens of stories. Too bad that there is no way to show all of these stories to the audience.

For example, during the preparation of the film, it was planned to shoot in Morocco, but shooting there in the desert was too expensive. My producers from Les Valseurs decided, a month and a half before the shooting, to move it in Tunisia. It was the only way to make this shooting possible.

First, I was very worried because I had spent a lot of time scouting for location in Morocco, but in the end we were pretty lucky, because while we were shooting in the Tunisian desert, the Moroccan desert was under the snow.

In addition, I learned that we would only have 6 days of shooting, otherwise it was not possible to make the film with our limited budget. I had to rewrite some scenes in order to

shoot at the end or beginning of the day. This way we were able to maximize the period of shooting each day. Finally, it adds a lot to the atmosphere of the film. Also, one day the technicians had to install a crane in the mountain at three in the morning without light ... a real challenge, but finally a large part of the scene had been cut during the editing. I have so many anecdotes to tell. This shooting was an adventure itself.

My favourite shot in the film is when we see the boy's shadows. What was your approach to the cinematography for 'The Nefta Football Club'?

This plan was in the storyboard like almost every shot of the movie. I like to draw and redraw my plans during the preparation, then have more freedom to shoot and easily share my ideas with the whole team. On this point, Valentin Vignet, my cinematographer, worked remarkably and perfectly transcribed what I wanted. He is a warrior of light ...

I wanted a light without artifice and actors without makeup. I choosed the cinemascope format to capture the large spaces of the landscapes we shot. These landscapes play a key role in the film. Both the drug trafficker and the two children are lost in the middle of nowhere under a blazing sun and delivered to themselves (we never see the children's parents). When suddenly this mule arrives as a gift of God in the divine light and this gift could change their poor life. It's an example of how the lighting of the film participates to tell the story.

It was fun for me to watch a film that name drops both Adele and Riyad Mahrez. Where do you get your sense of humour from?



(Laughs) I don't know how and where it comes from but I like the absurd side of situations. I like to push the absurd to the limit of reality but sometimes the reality itself goes beyond fiction. I really like the English or Nordic ads of the 90s ... This sense of humor may come from this inspiration.

The film has already received awards at Clermont-Ferrand and Aspen Shortsfest. Why do you feel this film is connecting so well with international audiences?

I assume the film brings an original story, with original characters and sets, a certain sense of humor and social aspects in the background. Everything is mixed, and we were lucky enough to make this mix works as a film. I'm still surprised by the incredible audience response to the film. I feel very happy about this.

I understand you were a decorator and studio manager before you discovered cinema. How did you get to make the step into filmmaking?

I actually discovered cinema earlier. At the age of 8, I wanted to become cartoonist. Then, at the 16, I managed to join a cartoon studio where i was the assistant of Joel TASSET who was kind of head of artistic department. After a while, I decided to write stories and making fake ads for fun. Then I joined a film studio called "Fouillet Wieber" where I worked as an assistant.

Later, i was able to make my first short film financed by the TV channel France 2.

Finally, at 28, I started working on a feature film script with a production company that ended up declaring bankruptcy. It killed five years of work. I stopped making movies for ten years, but never stopped to write.

What is next for you? Any ambitions or plans to share with us?

I am currently working on a feature film taking place in Jerusalem. An israelian diplomat suffocates to death while eating sheep, few days before a peace agreement could be signed. The forensics discover an israelian bullet in the diplomat's aorta and the police investigation reveals that the sheep is coming from palestinian territories. The American emissary in charge of the success of this peace agreement has to handle the situation with extreme caution.

Read the full interview by
James Prestridge on Close-up culture website
John Higgs on Film and TV now website

TO SEE THE FULL FILM:
[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/366761106](https://vimeo.com/366761106)



CREDITS

Cast

**Eltayef Dhaoui, Mohamed Ali Ayari, Lyes Salem,
Hichem Mesbah**

Director and screenwriter

Yves Piat

Production

Damien Megherbi, Justin Pechberty

Director of Photography

Valentin Vignet

1st AD

Stéphane Chaput

Editor

Jérôme Bréau

Sound

**Sabri Thabet, Victor Vilette, Jérémie Halbert,
Antoine Bertucci**

Music

Jérôme Rossi

LES VALSEURS

Producers Damien Megherbi and Justin Pechberty created their production company Les Valseurs in 2013, in 2018 their animated film Wicked Girl was the first animation to win the Grand Prix at Clermont-Ferrand, before winning the César. They have produced twenty short films, including QIU Yang's She Runs (Leitz Discovery award at International Critic's Week, Cannes 2019), Nara Normande's Guaxuma and Yves Piat's Nefta Football Club (Oscar-qualified for 2020, Audience Award & Best Comedy at Aspen Shortsfest, Audience Award at Clermont-Ferrand and Florida Film Festival). They also produced three first features in 2019 that premiered in prestigious festivals as Tallin Black Nights, IDFA and FIDMarseille.

PRODUCTION

SHE RUNS by QIU Yang

Fiction - 19' - 2019

Leitz Cine Discovery Prize, International Critics' Week 2019

THE DIVER by Michael Leonard&Jamie Helmer

Fiction - 12' - 2019

World Premiere, Mostra internazionale d'arte cinematografica di Venezia (Compétition Orizzonti) 2019

GUAXUMA by Nara Normande

Animation - 14' - 2018

Best Animated Short, SXSW 2019

Selected for Césars 2020

WICKED GIRL by Ayce Kartal

Animation - 8' - 2017

Best Animated Short, César 2019

National Grand Prize, Clermont Ferrand 2018

SLITS by Carlos SEGUNDO

Docufiction - 80' - 2019

World Premiere FIDMarseille 2019

International Premiere, Ji.lhava 2019

A DOG'S DEATH by Matías Ganz

Fiction - 80' - 2019

World Premiere, Tallinn Black Nights 2019

NA Premiere, Slamdance 2020

AFTER YOUR REVOLT, YOUR VOTE by Kiswendsida Parfait Kaboré

Documentary - 85' - 2019

World Premiere, IDFA 2019



LES VALSEURS

Complete list of selection and awards on the page of the film :
lesvalseurs.com/nefta-football-club

