

micro_scope



GABRIELLE

written and directed by
Louise Archambault

with

**Gabrielle Marion-Rivard, Alexandre Landry, Mélissa Désormeaux-Poulin
Vincent-Guillaume Otis, Benoit Guoin, Sébastien Ricard
Isabelle Vincent, Marie Gignac, Véronique Beaudet**

with the participation of
Robert Charlebois, Gregory Charles
students from **Les Muses**
and **La Gang à Rambrou**

original score and arrangements: **François Lafontaine**
choirmaster and choral arrangements: **Hélène-Élise Blais**

produced by
Luc Déry and Kim McCraw

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synopsis

Gabrielle is a young woman with Williams syndrome who has a contagious *joie de vivre* and an exceptional musical gift. Since she met her boyfriend Martin, at the recreation centre where they are choir members, they have been inseparable. However, because they are “different,” their loved ones are fearful of their relationship. As the choir prepare for an important music festival, Gabrielle does everything she can to gain her independence. As determined as she is, Gabrielle must still confront other people’s prejudices as well as her own limitations in the hope of experiencing a love far from the “ordinary”.

cast

Gabrielle
Sophie
Martin
Rémi
Laurent
Raphaël
Gabrielle's mother
Martin's mother
Social worker

With the participation of

Gabrielle MARION-RIVARD
Mélicca DÉSORMEAUX-POULIN
Alexandre LANDRY
Vincent-Guillaume OTIS
Benoit GOUIN
Sébastien RICARD
Isabelle VINCENT
Marie GIGNAC
Véronique BEAUDET

Robert CHARLEBOIS
Grégory CHARLES
The students of LES MUSES
La Gang à RAMBROU

crew

Writer/director	Louise ARCHAMBAULT
Producers	Luc DÉRY and Kim McCRAW
Script consultant	Valérie BEAUGRAND-CHAMPAGNE
Casting	Lucie ROBITAILLE
Acting coach	Félix ROSS
Director of photography	Mathieu LAVERDIÈRE
Designer	Emmanuel FRÉCHETTE
Costume designer	Sophie LEFEBVRE
Original score and arrangements	François LAFONTAINE
Choirmaster and choral arrangements	Hélène-Élise BLAIS
First assistant director	Éric PARENTEAU
Make-up artist	Kathryn CASALT
Hair stylist	Denis PARENT
Sound recordist	Pierre BERTRAND
Editor	Richard COMEAU
Sound designer	Sylvain BELLEMARE
Sound mixer	Bernard GARIÉPY STROBL
Line producer	Claude PAIEMENT
Production manager	Marie-Ginette LANDRY
Postproduction supervisor	Erik DANIEL
Production	micro_scope
Distribution in Canada	Les Films Christal
International sales	Entertainment One

director's biography

Louise Archambault

Louise Archambault holds a Master's Degree in Fine Arts from Concordia University in Montréal. Her first film, *Atomic Saké* (1999), attracted attention and toured the international festival circuit, earning the 2000 Jutra for Best Short Film as well as Best Film at the Festival delle Donne in Turin, Italy. In 2002, Louise directed her second short, *Mensonges*.

Her first feature film, *Familia*, produced by micro_scope, made its international debut in official competition at the 2005 Locarno International Film Festival. *Familia* was invited to numerous international festivals including, Göteborg, Sao Paulo, Taipei, Hong Kong and Jeonju. The film earned the Citytv Award for Best Canadian First Feature Film at the 2005 Toronto International Film Festival, and was nominated in seven categories at the Genie Awards, where it won the Claude Jutra Award for Best First Film. *Familia* was sold in several countries, including France and the United States.



Following her first feature, Louise Archambault directed *Lock*, a portrait of the choreographer Édouard Lock produced by the NFB and participated in the collective film *National Parks Project*, which brought together thirteen Canadian directors. She also created the short *Jacques et le haricot magique* for the web series *Fabrique-moi un conte* for Radio-Canada, co-directed the docufiction *Dictature Affective* with Karina Marceau, and shot some advertising campaigns.

Gabrielle is her second feature film.

director's filmography

Louise Archambault

Gabrielle

2013 | feature film | 102 minutes | HD | micro_scope

Dictature Affective

2012 | docufiction co-directed with Karina Marceau | 52 minutes | HD |
Productions Vic Pelletier

National Parks Project - *Kluane*

2011 | collective feature film segment | 10 minutes | HD | Primitive Films

Fabrique-moi un conte series - *Jacques et le haricot*

2011 | web series | 6 minutes | HD | Jimmy Lee, Radio-Canada

Petite mort

2011 | feature film | 4 minutes | HD | (co-directed with André Turpin and Stéphane Crête)

Lock

2010 | documentary short | 5 minutes | S 16mm | ONF

Familia

2005 | feature film | 102 minutes | 35mm | micro_scope

- Locarno International Festival – Official competition
- Toronto International Film Festival - *Citytv Award for Best Canadian First Feature*
- Palm Springs International Festival - Competed in *New Voices, New Visions*
- Göteborg International Film Festival - International selection
- Miami International Film Festival - International selection
- Delray Beach Film Festival - *Best Foreign Film Award*
- Hong Kong International Film Festival
- Jeonju International Film Festival
- Taipei International Film Festival - New Talent selection
- *Claude Jutra Award for Best First Feature Film* and seven other Genie nominations

Made in Montreal - *Margie Gillis + Neuro-Center*

2003 | documentary series | 2 x 4 minutes | video | Locomotion

Mensonges

2002 | short fiction | 12 minutes | 35mm | Thalie, Qu4atre par Quatre

Atomic Saké

1999 | short fiction court | 32 minutes | 35mm | Filmo

- Jutra - *Best Short Film*
- Festival delle Donne - *Best Film*

Conversation with Louise Archambault

How was this project born?

Originally there was the desire to talk about happiness, the happiness of marginalised people, who are in a way “invisible,” and the strength that art, such as music - especially choral singing - can provide them. There was also a wish to portray a love story between two young adults with intellectual disabilities; how they experience their love and sexuality, how this emotional awakening suddenly provokes in them a desire for independence and a quest for autonomy.

One of the triggers for this idea was a segment on the television show *Enjeux* about a foster family for people with intellectual disabilities (*Une famille particulière*, broadcast on Radio-Canada in 2004). I was impressed by the social service worker Jean-Martin Lefebvre-Rivest, who was the inspiration for the character portrayed by the actor Benoit Gouin. I approached Jean-Martin and told him about my idea for a film. We saw each other regularly, I spent time in his residence in order to experience his daily life and that of the disabled, and he introduced me to a few organizations active in this area. He also brought me to the famous Friday night dance that two hundred disabled adults attend every week, which by the way was where we filmed the karaoke and dance scenes in the film with the real crowd of regulars. In my opinion, what makes Jean-Martin special is that he does not infantilise disabled people. Instead, he provides them with tools to develop their potential and facilitate their integration into society. For example, he organizes trips outside of the city, or he makes sure to give daily responsibilities to each resident which helps to reduce their outbursts and anxiety. In short, I had the desire to share the unique reality of Jean-Martin and his residents.

During my research, several people with disabilities inspired me, as did the organisation Young Musicians of the World (we filmed a few scenes in their school in India), and also certain choirs with social missions supported by a variety of NGOs around the world. My meetings with music therapists and various people who work with the disabled also helped me to develop my characters and story. I wanted to be true, to be real. What they said greatly inspired me.

How did you find Gabrielle and the organization Les Muses who we see in the film?

I went to a play by the company *Joe Jack et John* that included an actor with an intellectual disability (Michael Nimbley, who has a role as a resident in the film). I discovered that he was a member of Les Muses, a stage arts centre that offers professional training in song, dance, and theatre, to people living with intellectual disabilities, pervasive developmental disorders or physical and sensory challenges. The goal is to turn these people into professionals without denying their limits. I frequented the centre for over a year, which shaped the rewriting of my script. I was floored! This experience helped me visualize the film I wanted to make. Not only do these people live in the present moment, their will is something to witness. It was a pleasure to be in contact with these students. They impressed me with their incredible energy, their talent and their imagination. I was especially charmed by Gabrielle Marion-Rivard. Her radiance, charisma, and authenticity made me want to follow her.

Did you know right away that you wanted to shoot the film with them?

I continued to write the script with the Muses students in mind. Amongst other things this helped me to define the main character's disability, Williams syndrome, which Gabrielle Marion-Rivard has, and which predisposes its sufferers to possess musical talent and perfect pitch. When it was time to cast, we wondered if she could handle the lead role and carry the film. Since Gabrielle's strength is singing and not acting, I did acting and improvisation workshops with her. She knew that she might not get the part, but she wanted to try and explore the possibility. Gabrielle is radiant and the producers and myself came to the conclusion that a professional actress probably wouldn't have the same authenticity and spontaneity: the role was hers. We spent a lot of time with her and the other actors preparing her for the role and eventually the shoot. I accepted that neither her acting nor her approach to the work would be perfect. My instinct told me to "let go" in order to enable the truth of her actions and reactions to come to the surface, but we still had to face reality. Gabrielle's disability makes her acting very theatrical, so on film it can appear fake. However, if I had asked her to be serious, to hold back, it wouldn't have been natural to her. So, I let her go while at the same time improvising with her, throwing her off guard, and she liked this way of working.

The same questions applied to the other Muse students who portray most of the choir members in the film. Did they have the ability and the physical and mental stamina to make it through the long days of shooting? Just like Gabrielle, we found the choir group unique, charismatic and especially gifted singers. So we prepared them with improvisation workshops before the shoot, which also served to enrich the final script. When I started writing, I would never have imagined that I would achieve my ultimate goal, which was to make a film with them, and not about them. This is, in my mind, my greatest accomplishment.

Your shooting is at times almost documentary-like. This quest for truth that it expresses in the choice of Gabrielle, the choir, the participation of Robert Charlebois or the shoot in India seems key to the film.

That was what I wanted in order to stay true and authentic. This was also reflected in the way we filmed. We often shot many long takes so that in editing we could piece together the best moments as we wished. I understood that imperfection would be part of the film's beauty. I also wanted to lean towards making a personal, sensual film that would stay close to Gabrielle and Martin and to each of the choir members. It was only on the last day of filming that I realized the breadth of the project and all of its risks. The producers had both flair and courage when they agreed to get involved with such an endeavour!

We worked on the spontaneity of several scenes, for example when the singer Robert Charlebois arrives in the class. The group knew that he was coming, but didn't know exactly when during the day. I filmed their initial meeting with him so that the audience could share their reactions, and at the same time, Robert could be present, in the moment as himself, not as a fictional character.

As for the shoot in India, we initially thought about creating a set with a full crew, then we realized that it would cost less to go to India if we went with a smaller crew. This is how Sébastien Ricard (who plays Raphaël), an assistant and myself found ourselves in the poor agricultural region of Karnatake in India, where the Young Musicians of the World organization has a boarding school for under-privileged children that specializes in traditional Indian music. This school inspired me as I wrote the script and undoubtedly adds production value and credibility to the images. We lived with the students in small manure houses in the jungle, with very little electricity and no running water. Immersing himself in a real school made all the difference to Sébastien; he experienced something very strong with these children. When they sang together, the emotion was palpable.

Did you approach Robert Charlebois, one of the most well-known singers in Quebec, or was the collaboration with Les Muses planned?

Initially, I was looking for a Quebecois or French artist whose music I liked and whose repertoire had a symbolic meaning in my life. When I heard Anthony Dolbec, one of the students at Les Muses, sing *Ordinaire*, I immediately knew that this song had to be in the film. *Ordinaire* makes perfect sense when it is sung by Martin's character, who simply wants to achieve his potential like "normal" people do. As for the choice of the song *Lindberg*, it is the logical follow-up to *Ordinaire* and accompanies the flight of lyricism at the end of the film: Gabrielle's sister leaves for India, there is the show at the Mondial Choral, and Gabrielle and Martin fulfil their dreams and experience their love. Based on this choice of songs, we said to ourselves that Robert Charlebois' presence would be something special. He was extremely generous with the members of the choir during the shoot. He was their equal and above all, they shared a love of music.

The songs sung by Les Muses are extremely emotional. Did you feel the emotion while you were shooting?

Frequently. I saw technicians crying several times in front of the video monitors outside of the room where we were filming. Choral singing has a very strong impact on people. They weren't sad tears, but rather raw emotion mixed with love and hope. It was a strange and unique feeling - suddenly there was a lot of hugging on set! The songs we selected contributed a lot to this, just as the magnificent piano arrangements by François Lafontaine, the keyboardist from the band Karkwa, who worked closely with Hélène-Élise Blais, the singing teacher of Les Muses who we hired as choirmaster for the film.

We see the choir singing at the Mondial Choral of Laval. Did the show really take place?

The Mondial Choral festival was real, but we created our show for the film. With the Mondial's collaboration, we succeeded in squeezing into their schedule. We filmed on their site, with the help of their technical team, but with an audience made up of extras. Gregory Charles, the event's founder, played along, as did Robert Charlebois. It was certainly one of the most complicated scenes to organize, because we had limited time to film with six cameras, all of the choir members, the extras and the musicians to manage, and the sun was setting.

Professional actors act with your choir members. For example, how did you work with Vincent-Guillaume Otis, who we see directing the choir?

Not only did Vincent-Guillaume Otis sing in a choir for several years, it also happens that he plays the piano, which was necessary for the role. When he auditioned, it was magical. We talked for 45 minutes, and then he did the two audition scenes only once each. His portrayal of the character was real and natural. Also, Vincent has a brother who is intellectually disabled and experiencing a similar situation as the characters when it comes to the quest for independence. Vincent-Guillaume was therefore already sensitive to the reality of the intellectually disabled. He also took the time to observe the choirmaster of Les Muses and used it as inspiration. Hélène-Élise Blais considers her choir members as complete individuals with their qualities and faults, and focuses on their singing and talent rather than their disabilities. We can see this reflected in Vincent-Guillaume's character in the film.

All of the professional actors, whether it be Mélissa Désormeaux-Poulin, Benoit Gouin, Isabelle Vincent, Marie Gignac or Véronique Beaudet, involved themselves in their own way with the non-professional actors. For example, Mélissa joined in their theatre courses and the teacher treated her just like the others. Then she spent time with Gabrielle, even going to visit her family. The professional actors had the feeling of participating in a human experience rather than a simple shoot. Their generosity, their openness and their ability to listen created a magical chemistry and atmosphere on the set.

A few of the choir members are portrayed by professional actors, including Alexandre Landry who plays Martin, Gabrielle's boyfriend. Why?

I auditioned actors with disabilities for the role: they were gifted actors, but the relational chemistry just wasn't there. Since these people are often straightforward, it was difficult when it came to feelings. By choosing a professional actor, Gabrielle found a partner, someone she could lean on. Alexandre demonstrated immense generosity. Even before he got the role, he came to Les Muses and instantly became part of the group. I was going to introduce him to Gabrielle that day to see if there was any chemistry between them, and I was surprised to find Alexandre singing along with the choir as if he had always been a member. Alexandre charmed everyone. Afterwards, he devoted himself to the role without looking for recognition. He took singing lessons and spent a lot of time with Gabrielle. On the set, he was always attentive to her. They really connected and wanted to be together. I couldn't have dreamed of a better boyfriend for the character!

How did you negotiate the screen representation of the love relationship?

Several people who are in daily contact with intellectually disabled people shared experiences of their loved ones' sexuality with me. In almost all of the cases, there was no shyness or modesty involved. As well, Gabrielle's mother, who used to be a professional violinist and is now a psychotherapist, read the script. She had several comments and we discussed Gabrielle's relationship to intimacy. The people with intellectual disabilities that I filmed do not have any filters. The love scenes were almost the easiest to shoot for Gabrielle. Anyway, they were easier, for example, than a scene involving going from one place to another while picking up a props on the way. In a case like this, we could do ten takes due to Gabrielle's lack of coordination. However, when it came to her emotions, you would think that she has been acting her whole life. Gabrielle has high emotional intelligence. I absolutely did not want to censor her on this level. And since Alexandre has played a lot of love scenes in the past, his presence helped Gabrielle a lot. He was very respectful towards her. He wanted her to feel free. As for me, I wanted her to feel comfortable with the situation. I did not want to push her. So we filmed considering her limits and in collaboration with her mother. The idea was to portray desire and love on screen, from a sensory and maybe sensual point of view, without being sexual or crude.

What did you want to express through this film?

I wanted to talk about the need for freedom and independence of the intellectually disabled whose lives are largely managed by their families and various health care workers. I wanted to get the audience involved in their daily lives in order to be able to appreciate their strength of character and, most of all, to show just how much their desires and emotions are the same as everyone else's - that they are all human and *ordinary*. I wanted everyone to recognize themselves somewhere in the story. This was one of the reasons that I chose music and choral singing. Music

inspires the desire to open up to others, to love and be loved. Music, and particularly choral singing, has the power to bring people together. It is universal and touches us viscerally, not intellectually. I hope that the film makes people feel this.

Then there was also the desire to share the story of a love relationship. The story of two intellectually disabled people who want to love each other, discover intimacy and make love without barriers. Love and sexuality are two subjects that are rarely discussed when it comes to people like Gabrielle and Martin. These subjects are still taboo. So I wanted to invite people to be more open to accepting differences. We all have our differences; for some they are more visible physically, but fundamentally, we all want to experience love.

I learned a lot while making this film. I had the feeling that I was experiencing something profound that would change me. Les Muses singers' lack of filters really touched and inspired me. Whether positive or negative, you know what they say is true. And I think, on the other hand, that the experience was also beneficial for the actors, the technicians and the non-professional actors. Some of Les Muses singers are very anxious and subject to panic attacks on a daily basis. In the middle of the shoot, one of the support people we hired for the singers came to tell me that we no longer needed her services, since there hadn't been any blow-ups or anxiety. They were happy, they had a specific and important role to play, they had gained a certain self-esteem from the experience. I took this as an incredible gift. Because the ultimate goal was to make a film with them, with their complete involvement.

Finally, if I can help the organizations that inspired me throughout this project, like Les Muses, the Young Musicians of the World, Compagnons de Montréal and La Gang à Rambrou, become more well known, I will be happy. They are the stars. They deserve to have cameras on them. What they accomplish for our society, always with very limited means, is enormous; each day, a small step for mankind but a giant step for humanity.

Interview by Michel Coulombe.

actors' biographies

Gabrielle Marion-Rivard

Gabrielle



Gabrielle grew up in a musical family. From a very young age, she attended many concerts, operas and ballets. From 1997 to 2006, she took ballet lessons with Entre-Jambes in Beloeil, as well as private courses in singing and piano. In 2006, she became a member of Les Démasqués with the Association de la Vallée du Richelieu pour la déficience intellectuelle, a theatre group for the intellectually disabled.

Gabrielle joined the Centre des arts de la scène Les Muses in 2007 and participated in the group's annual cabaret presented at L'Astral in 2010. That same year the troupe performed a song in Club Soda's *Cabaret citoyen*. Also in 2010, the artist Marie-Claude de Souza enlisted Gabrielle's talents for a poetic intervention as part of a video for the Musée des costumes et du textile du Québec. In 2011, Gabrielle participated in the 4th Biennale de gigue contemporaine as a performer and dancer in the show *Dans ta tête* by the choreographer Maïgwenn Desbois. The show was performed again in 2012 at the Festival Vue sur la relève, then again in 2013 at the Espace culturel Georges-Émilie-Lapalme in the Place des Arts. Gabrielle was also part of the cast of the end-of-the-year show *Dinde et Farces, le cabaret de Noël* performed at the Théâtre Espace Libre in December 2012. She once again worked with the choreographer Maïgwenn Desbois in 2013 for the dance performance *Six pieds sous terre* presented as part of the 5th edition of the Biennale de gigue contemporaine at the Monument National. The same show was also performed at the 2013 edition of the Festival Vue sur la relève.

In her first appearance on screen, Gabrielle plays the title role in Louise Archambault's second feature film, ***Gabrielle***.

Mélissa Désormeaux-Poulin

Sophie



Mélissa literally grew up on the small screen appearing in the series *Jamais deux sans toi* (1989-1993) and *Les Héritiers Duval* (1994-1996), and also performed various roles in *Asbestos* (2002), *Simone et Chartrand, la suite* (2003), *Grande Ourse* (2003), *Emma* (2000-2004) and *Il était une fois dans le trouble* (2004-2012). She was also part of the cast of *La Promesse* from 2006 to 2011, in which she portrayed

the role of Florence Daveluy and for which she received a Prix Gémeaux for Best Female Supporting Role (2012). Recently, she appeared in the television series *Les rescapés* (2011-2012), *Lance et compte : la déchirure* (2011), *Mon meilleur ami* (2012), and in the web series *Enquêtes romantiques* (2011) and *11 règles* (2012).

On the big screen, Mélissa had one of the lead roles in the film *À vos marques...party ! 1* (2007) and *2* (2009) by director Frédéric D'Amours. In 2008, she was in *Dédé à travers les brumes* directed by Jean-Philippe Duval. She portrayed the role of Jeanne Marwan in Denis Villeneuve's *Incendies* (2010), for which she earned a Jutra nomination for Best Actress and a nomination for Best Supporting Actress in a Canadian Film from the Vancouver Critic Circle. Recently she participated in the production of *Le projet Omertà* directed by Luc Dionne (2011), as well as in the Belgium-Canada-France co-production *Hors les murs* by David Lambert (2012), awarded a Rail d'Or for Best Feature Film at the Semaine de la Critique at the 2012 Cannes International Film Festival.

In Louise Archambault's ***Gabrielle***, she portrays Sophie, Gabrielle's older sister.

Alexandre Landry

Martin

Right after graduating in 2009 from the National Theatre School of Canada, Alexandre Landry participated in the theatrical production *Les aventures de Lagardère*, directed by Frédéric Bélanger for the Théâtre de la Roulotte (2009 - 2011). At the same time, Alexandre was in the cast of *Chambres* (2009), directed by Eric Jean and presented at the Théâtre du Quat'Sous. In 2011, he appeared in the play *Tom à la Ferme* by Michel-Marc Bouchard, directed by Claude Poissant and presented at the Théâtre d'Aujourd'hui. That same year, he was in the play *Médée* produced by Caroline Binet at the Théâtre Denise-Pelletier.



From 2010 to 2012, he portrayed the role of Olivier Côté in the TV show *Destinées*.

On the big screen, Alexandre appeared in Gabriel Pelletier's *La peur de l'eau* (2011). In 2013, he will be part of the cast of Rodrigue Jean's *L'amour au temps de la guerre civile*.

In Louise Archambault's ***Gabrielle***, he portrays Martin, Gabrielle's boyfriend.

Vincent-Guillaume Otis

Rémi

Vincent-Guillaume has participated in many theatrical productions both as a director and as an actor. He was in the cast of *Beaucoup trop de bruits pour rien* (2009) directed by René-Richard Cyr, *Chaque jour* (2011) created by the Théâtre de la Manufacture, and *L'histoire du Roi Lear* (2012) directed by Denis Marleau. Vincent-Guillaume is also the founder of the theatre company Picouille Théâtre for young audiences. On television, he appeared in series such as *Annie et ses hommes* (2004-2007), *Tout sur moi* (2007), *Musée Éden* (2009), *Une grenade avec ça* (2010) and *Apparences* (2010).



Vincent-Guillaume also appeared on the big screen in Érik Canuel's *Le Survenant* (2004) and Jean-François Pouliot's *Le guide de la petite vengeance* (2006), but it was his role in Luc Picard's *Babine* (2007) that made him more of a household name. In 2008, he was in the film *Le déserteur* by Simon Lavoie and will appear, in 2013, in Alain Chartrand's *La maison du pêcheur*.

In **Gabrielle**, Vincent-Guillaume portrays Rémi, the choirmaster.

Benoit Guoin

Laurent

Winner of a Géméaux for Best Supporting Actor for his work in the series *Grande Ourse* (2004), Benoit has been involved in more than thirty television productions, including *Les hauts et les bas de Sophie Paquin* (2009), *Mirador* (2009), *30 vies* (2011), *Apparences* (2011) and *Destinées* (2012). On stage, he has participated in more than fifty plays, including *Des fraises en janvier* (2002-2004), *Les trois sœurs* (2002-2010), the musical *My Fair Lady* (2006-2008), *Coma unplugged* (2007-2009), *Abraham Lincoln va au théâtre* (2008-2010), *Anna et les tropiques* (2011), *Contre le temps* (2011) and *Du bon monde* (2012).



On the big screen, Benoit has also appeared in many productions, such as Ricardo Trogi's *Québec-Montréal* (2001), Francis Leclerc's *Mémoires affectives* (2004), Xavier Dolan's *J'ai tué ma mère* (2008), Léa Pool's *La dernière fugue* (2010) and Yves P. Pelletier's *Le baiser du barbu* (2009). He appeared in 2013 in Chloé Robichaud's *Sarah préfère la course*, presented at the Cannes Film Festival in the Un certain regard section. This year, he will appear in Érik Canuel's *Lac mystère*; Guillaume Sylvestre's *Premier amour* and in Sophie Deraspe's *Les jeunes loups*.

In **Gabrielle**, he portrays Laurent, owner of the residence.

Sébastien Ricard

Raphaël



Sébastien Ricard shares his time between singing and acting (he is also one of the founders of and singers in the socially engaged rap group *Loco Locas*). A graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada in 1998, he has had several roles in such plays as *Big Shoot*, directed by Kristian Frédéric (2007), then in *Woyzeck* (2009-2010), *La nuit juste avant les forêts* (2010) and *L'Opéra de quat'sous* (2012), three Brigitte Haentjens productions. Sébastien also appeared in several television series, such as *Tabou* (2002-2004), *Nos étés* (2006), *Les hauts et les*

bas de Sophie Paquin (2006-2008), *En thérapie* (2012), as well as *30 vies* (2013).

In cinema, Sébastien was in Pierre Falardeau's *15 février 1839* (2001) and Denys Arcand's *Les invasions barbares* (2003). But it was his portrayal of André Fortin in Jean-Philippe Duval's *Dédé à travers les brumes* (2008) that earned him a Jutra for Best Actor in 2010. Recently he appeared in Jimmy Larouche's *La cicatrice* (2010) and Sébastien Rose's *Avant que mon cœur bascule* (2011). He will also appear soon in Catherine Martin's film *Une jeune fille* (2013).

In ***Gabrielle***, he portrays Raphaël, Sophie's boyfriend.

Isabelle Vincent

Suzanne

On stage, Isabelle Vincent became known for her roles in the creations of the troupe Les Éternels Pigistes, as well as her own work in collaboration with Sylvie Drapeau (*Avaler la mer et les poissons* - 2007, *Les Saisons* - 2010) amongst other work. She also appeared in the plays *Ronfard nu devant son miroir* (2011), *L'affiche* (2009-2013), *Après moi* (2012-2013), *Le prénom* (2012) and *Le roi se meurt* (2013). On the small screen,



Isabelle played several roles in *Annie et ses hommes* (2002-2008), *Providence* (2006-2010), for which she earned two Gémeaux for Best Supporting Actress, *Les hauts et les bas de Sophie Paquin* (2006-2009), *Penthouse 5.0* (2010), *Toute la vérité* (2011-2013) and *30 vies* (2011).

On the big screen, Isabelle was part of the cast of Robert Morin's *Le Nèg* (2001) and *Et que Dieu bénisse l'Amérique* (2004), Jean-Philippe Pearson's *Le bonheur des autres* (2011), Nathalie St-Pierre's *Catimini* (2011) and Bernard Émond's *Tout ce que tu possèdes* (2011).

In ***Gabrielle***, Isabelle portrays Suzanne, Gabrielle's mother.

Marie Gignac Claire



Marie Gignac received her actor's training at the Conservatoire d'art dramatique de Québec. In the mid-80s, she met Robert Lepage, with whom she created and acted in *La Trilogie des Dragons* in 1985 (Best Female Actor Award at the Festival de théâtre des Amériques in 1987), *Les Plaques tectoniques* (1988-1990) and *Les Sept branches de la rivière Ota* (1993). Artistic Director at the Carrefour international de théâtre since 1997, Marie has also staged many plays, including *Six personnages en quête*

d'auteur (2005 – Award from the Association des critiques de théâtre), *Les Mains Sales* (2007, four Masques Awards including Best Staging), *Cyrano de Bergerac* (2008 – Award from the Association des critiques de théâtre), *Henri IV* (2010) and *Je pense à Yu* (2012). As an actress, Marie was in the cast of *L'hôtel des horizons* (2000), *La déposition* (2002) and *Les trois sœurs* (2002-2003). She also appeared in several television series, including *Fortier* (2001 – nominated for a Prix Gémeaux), *Smash* (2004), *Nos Étés* (2005) and *La Chambre numéro 13* (2006).

On the big screen, she was in Robert Lepage's *Le confessionnal* (1995 – nominated for a Prix Génie for Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role) and *Nô* (1998), Érik Canuel's *La loi du cochon* (2001) and *Nez Rouge* (2003), as well as Stéphane Lapointe's *La Vie secrète des gens heureux* (2006).

In *Gabrielle*, she portrays Martin's mother.

Centre d'art de la scène Les Muses

Founded in 1997 by the dancer Cindy Schwartz, Les Muses is a unique school that offers professional acting, singing and dance training to artists with a disability, whether visible or not. Year after year, the organization creates ties with the Montréal arts scene in order to offer its students the possibility of participating in professional productions and of becoming part of the artistic community. Les Muses collaborates closely with troupes such as Joe Jack et John and Les Productions des pieds et des mains. In the last three years, some of the school's best students shone on television in shows such as *Annie et ses hommes* or more recently *Gang de rue*, *Tout sur moi* and *Virginie*.

<http://www.lesmuses.org/>

La Gang à Rambrou

La Gang à Rambrou is a theatre troupe based in Montréal that combines dance, music and visual arts. Since 1997, this community organization has promoted the integration of people living with a mild to medium intellectual disability or a pervasive developmental disorder, by involving other people in the community such as students, artists or volunteers who want to participate as actors, dancers or musicians.

production company profile

micro_scope is an independent production company working primarily in feature film. Led by producers **Luc Déry** and **Kim McCraw**, the company's primary mission is to initiate and produce innovative, creative and accessible projects. The company also ensures that once their projects are produced, they receive the attention that they deserve.

In its first year of existence, micro_scope participated in two co-productions: ***A Problem with Fear*** by Gary Burns, and ***Tiresia*** by Bertrand Bonnelo, in collaboration with the company Haut et court. In 2003, *A Problem with Fear* opened the Perspective Canada section of the Toronto International Film Festival and was selected for the Berlin International Film Festival, while that same year *Tiresia* was part of the official competition at the Cannes International Film Festival.

Louise Archambault's first feature film, ***Familia*** (2004), brings together on screen Sylvie Moreau, Macha Grenon, Vincent Graton, Paul Savoie and Micheline Lanctôt. The film was presented in the official competition at the Locarno Film Festival and opened the Canada First section of the Toronto International Film Festival where it won the Citytv Award for Best Canadian First Feature Film. *Familia* was also selected by over twenty international film festivals, including those in Göteborg, Sao Paulo and Hong Kong, and was sold in France and the United States as well as other countries.

In October 2006, the Canada-Belgium co-production ***Congorama*** by Philippe Falardeau was presented to Quebec audiences. Starring Paul Ahmarani (*La Moitié gauche du frigo*) and Olivier Gourmet (Best Actor at the 2002 Cannes International Film Festival for *Le Fils* by the Dardenne brothers), the film's world premiere took place in Cannes when it was presented as the closing film for the Quinzaine des réalisateurs. *Congorama* was also shown at the Toronto International Film Festival in the Special Presentation section and opened Montréal's Festival du Nouveau Cinéma. *Congorama* was also screened at festivals in San Francisco, Pusan, Göteborg, New Directors/New Films (MoMA) and Halifax, where it won Best Canadian Film. At the 2007 Soirée des Jutra, the film won five awards, including Best Film, Best Director and Best Script.

Presented in 2007, Stéphane Lafleur's ***Continental, un film sans fusil*** stars Gilbert Sicotte, Réal Bossé, Fanny Mallette and Marie-Ginette Guay. Its world premiere in August 2007 occurred at the prestigious Venice Film Festival in the Venice Days section, and the film was selected by several of the most important festivals around the world, including those in Thessaloniki, Göteborg, Rotterdam, Jeonju and the AFI Film Festival in Los Angeles. It distinguished itself in Toronto where it won the Citytv Award for Best Canadian First Film; in Namur where it earned a Bayard d'Or for Best Film; in Whistler where it won the Borsos Award for Best Canadian Film, and finally at the Rendez-vous du Cinéma Québécois, winning the Best Quebec Feature 2007 as awarded by the Association québécoise des critiques de cinéma (AQCC). In March 2008, *Continental* also won the awards for Best Film, Best Achievement in Directing, Best Screenplay and Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role (Réal Bossé) at the Soirée des Jutra.

In Fall 2008, micro_scope presented Philippe Falardeau's third feature, ***C'est pas moi, je le jure!*** Based on two novels by Bruno Hébert, the film features Antoine L'Écuyer, Suzanne Clément and Daniel Brière. After being noticed after its premiere in Toronto in the Special Presentations section, the film was presented at the Berlinale in the Generation section where it earned a Crystal Bear and the Deutsche Kinderhilfswerk Grand Prize.

C'est pas moi, je le jure! also earned awards for Best Canadian Film and Best Actor (Antoine L'Écuyer) at the Halifax Atlantic Film Festival, and for Best Film, Best Canadian Director and Best Performance by a Supporting Actress (Suzanne Clément) as chosen by the Vancouver Film Critics Circle.

Denis Villeneuve's ***Incendies*** premiered in September 2010 in the Venice Days section of the Venice International Film Festival where it won Best Film. Adapted from the play by Wajdi Mouawad, *Incendies* features Lubna Azabal, Mélissa Désormeaux-Poulin, Maxim Gaudette and Rémy Girard. The film won Best Canadian Film four times at the festivals in Toronto, Vancouver, Halifax and Calgary. Internationally, *Incendies* was invited to the Telluride, Sundance, Pusan, Rotterdam (Audience Award), Warsaw (Grand Prize), Namur (Audience Award) and Abu Dhabi (Best Female Actor Prize - Lubna Azabal) festivals. Sold in more than 50 countries, *Incendies* is distributed in the United States by Sony Pictures Classics and was one of the five finalists for Best Foreign Language Film at the 83rd Academy Awards.

In 2011, micro_scope produced ***En terrains connus***, Stéphane Lafleur's second feature film featuring Francis La Haye and Fanny Mallette. *En terrains connus* earned the Ecumenical Jury Award after its world premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival. It also opened Montréal's Rendez-vous du Cinéma Québécois. On top of participating in fifteen international film festivals such as those in Jeonju, Shanghai, Durban, Melbourne, Motovun (Croatia) and Monterrey (Mexico), the film won the Best Film Award at the Los Angeles Film Festival, the Jury's Grand Prize in the New Talent Competition section at the Taipei Festival in Taiwan, as well as the Best Actress Award at the Vladivostok Festival in Russia.

Monsieur Lazhar, Philippe Falardeau's fourth feature, made its world premiere in August 2011 in the Piazza Grande at the Locarno International Film Festival, where it won the Audience Award and the Variety Piazza Grande Award. Thereafter the film was a success with both audiences and critics alike, winning many festival awards: Best Canadian Feature Film at the Toronto International Film Festival, Special Jury Prize and Audience Award at the Festival du film Francophone de Namur, Art Cinema Award at the Hamburg Filmfest in Germany, Best Screenplay and FIPRESCI Prize from international critics at the Valladolid International Film Festival in Spain, and the Audience Awards at the Rotterdam, Copenhagen and Sydney festivals. It also earned six Genie Awards and seven awards at the Soirée des Jutra. The film was also presented at the Sundance Festival and the South by Southwest Festival. *Monsieur Lazhar*, distributed internationally by the Parisian company Films Distribution, was also nominated for Best Foreign Language Film in the 2012 Academy Awards.

Inch'Allah, Anaïs Barbeau-Lavalette's second feature film (*Le ring*), a Canada-France co-production filmed in Jordan, made its international premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival Special Presentations section in the fall of 2012. Starring Evelyne Brochu, Sabrina Ouazani, Yousef Sweid, Sivan Levy and Carlo Brandt, the film is distributed by Les Films Christal in Quebec and by Happiness Distribution in France. *Inch'Allah* was recently presented at the Palm Springs Festival and also earned the FRIPESCI Prize and a Special Mention by the Prize of the Ecumenical Jury in the Panorama section of the 63rd edition of the Berlin International Film Festival.

The feature ***Whitewash*** by director Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais and writer Marc Tulin premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival last April, where it won the award for Best New Narrative Director. The film features the American actor Thomas Haden Church as well as

Marc Labrèche, and is distributed by Les Films Christal in Quebec and by eOne Entertainment internationally. The European premiere took place at Karlovy Vary in July 2013.

micro_scope is currently in postproduction on the feature documentary ***Tricotées serrées*** by Annie St-Pierre.

Gabrielle, Louise Archambault's second feature film, will be premiered on the Plaza Grande at Locarno Film Festival and will also be presented at the TIFF 2013. The film will be released in Quebec cinemas in September 2013.