

JERICO PRESENTS

DANY BOON LAURENCE ARNÉ NOÉMIE SCHMIDT PATRICK RIDREMONT

PENNY PINCHER!

A FILM BY
FRED CAVAYÉ

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SYNOPSIS

Francois Gautier is a cheapskate! Saving money is bliss to him. Spending puts him in a sweat. His whole existence is organized around just one goal: never spend a cent. But his life is turned upside down the day he falls in love and learns he has a child he never knew existed. Francois is forced to lie in order to hide his obsession. That's when the problems begin. Because lies can be convenient, but sometimes you pay the price. A very, very high price...

Interview
FRED CAVAYÉ

PENNY PINCHER! is your fourth film. The three previous ones, ANYTHING FOR HER (POUR ELLE), POINT BLANK (À BOUT PORTANT) and MEA CULPA were very dark thrillers. What made you want to take a stab at comedy?

I think all four of my films have one thing in common: they are all real "Sunday night movies." They are playful and made for the audience, movies of the pure cinematic pleasure, and that's the only thing that motivates me as a director. It's true that the first three are very different in form from PENNY PINCHER! but I never forbid myself from making a comedy. It was even exciting to jump into a genre I'd never done before. I was just waiting for the right subject... When Eric Jehelmann, my producer on ANYTHING FOR HER, came to tell me about this project, not really convinced it would even interest me, I said to myself, here is THE right story. To my knowledge, the subject had never been thoroughly taken on like that by a film. Except of course in L'AVARE, Louis de Funès' adaptation of Molière, which are pretty good references!

As a viewer, is that the kind of movies you like to watch?

Yes, absolutely. My career path began with photography and led to film through theater, mostly comedies. Back home in Rennes, I met an actor who was doing a one-man-show that had a run at the Point Virgule à Paris, before going back to Brittany, where we started up a sort of dinner theater. It's funny; we almost programmed Dany Boon, before he became a huge star, of course! It's a genre I like a lot, and actually, my first short films were comedies in their own way... When I came to Paris I had an idea that wasn't comic at all, which logically led me to ANYTHING FOR HER. But people who know me well were surprised I went that direction. They thought I would naturally get into comedy.

How did you adapt the script for PENNY PINCHER! and make it your own?

The original script already had all the story's the ingredients, and the main character's amazing cheapskate mechanics. I just asked permission to rewrite it in my own way before I definitively committed to the project, to modify the dialogue and plot. Eric Jehelmann said yes to me and I went home in Brittany, not knowing if I would find inspiration between fishing outings! One month later, I gave him the copy and he thought it was great!

Did you already have Dany Boon in mind for the role of Francois Gautier?

I mentioned Louis de Funès earlier, and that was my reference: an actor who, even when playing bad guys or undesirable characters, retains that ability to make the audience laugh. Normally, a cheapskate isn't a very likeable person... Dany's name came up early on because he has that talent for being likeable, and I thought it would be interesting to have him play that kind of role. Eric sent him the script on a Friday, the day after I got back from Brittany, Dany read it over the weekend and Monday he called us to say he wanted to do the film. We met on Tuesday and he informed me that because of his schedule, we had to shoot in October. That was July 10th! Two days later, I started preproduction while continuing to write...

Was that forced urgency an advantage for you, or a handicap?

It actually required me to do twice as much work, or at least a lot more than on my previous films. We had to be even more vigilant to make up for limited time. And that means nine weeks of preproduction without a single day off... but I loved it! So you won't hear me say handicap, and that's also thanks to Dany: I discovered a man with phenomenal power to work, and I'm telling you that as a huge workaholic! He is always at 100%, enthusiastic, positive, constructive, funny, attentive to others. That more than made up for the short deadline. For me, having never made a comedy, to find myself directing THE French champion of the genre was exceptional.

What's interesting in PENNY PINCHER! is that, beyond its basic theme, you also manage to talk to us about more serious subjects like fatherhood, feelings and family, which gives the character played by Dany Boon an unsettling and moving side. You also had to lead him in that direction.

Of course, but I'd describe it as an open and equal exchange. What Dany liked in the script was how the story, which is essentially a comedy, leads to the emotional. He knew and liked my other films, especially ANYTHING FOR HER. He knew he could bring his comedic talent and that the mix between our two worlds would serve the film. That's what sometimes is missing in comedy: the emotion is a little artificial. And I say that with total modesty! The script for PENNY PINCHER!, however, had a feeling of truth, and Dany's acting reinforced that.

Let's talk about your directing. You've trained us with your previous films to expect suspenseful and stories that are extremely elegant visually. This is a double principle you have succeeded in applying to PENNY PINCHER!.

When I was talking about playfulness earlier, I also meant to refer to the rhythm of my films. Even if I'd never made a comedy, I knew that the recipe for success depended upon that above all. Often what brings comedy into dialogue is the silence before or after, not necessarily the joke itself! What scares me in movies is the infamous "soft belly." So I make my films compact and not very long, so that, I hope, the audience won't get bored - but without making the directing frantic! So I made an effort to respect that principle for PENNY PINCHER!, as well as making sure the action and narration determined the camera placement, and not the opposite.

I mentioned elegance: the sets, the lighting and even the costumes seem to have been thought out down to the tiniest detail.

That was one of the first discussions we had with Eric Jehelmann about the film's artistic approach. Just because it was a comedy didn't mean it wasn't essential. In PENNY PINCHER!, even the color of the trash cans matches the window shutters in the housing tract! That creates what I call "reality+1": we are in the real world, but something's just a little off... That housing tract where part of the story takes place is improbable, and yet it really exists, with its twin, symmetrical houses. You mentioned clothing. It completely horrified our costume designer when I told her that Dany had to have only one outfit, to reinforce his comic strip look. In all modesty, for me François Gautier is a mix of Tim Burton, Jacques Tati and Mr. Bean!

We of course have to talk about the two actresses who are Dany Boon's acting partners, beginning with Laurence Arné, who plays the role of Valérie, a shy girl in love, which is a far cry from the type of part we usually see her play, especially her role in the series "Working girls."

Laurence is an incredible actress and for a director, that is the only treasure that counts. The ideal is to hire only great actors, and that way, you seem like a great director! I noticed Laurence's work a long time ago, especially on the Canal+ series. For PENNY PINCHER!, she was perfect for the character of a classical musician, very classy, with her hair in a bun. I was really interested in the idea of making her play an introvert: it gives her matter to work with when she holds back, as well as possibilities for irresistible gimmicks. It's an approach we developed together. I had a specific idea of what I wanted, but Laurence took it a lot further. Especially in the couch scene, where for the first time, she flies off the handle.

Another advantage of PENNY PINCHER! is Noémie Schmidt, who we first saw in THE STUDENT AND MISTER HENRI (L'ETUDIANTE ET MONSIEUR HENRI) with Claude Brasseur as well as on Canal+, in "Versailles."

And what's fantastic is that the people who saw her in that film or that series aren't going to recognize her! I cast her in the role of Laura because I needed a 17-year-old girl and I picked Noémie. When she showed up, she admitted right away that she was 25, saying that if I would have known that, I probably wouldn't have selected her. Noémie has that freshness, as well as being an excellent actress because she has the depth of a girl who is really 25. She was able to bring spontaneity to the character as well as something more profound and painful, something hidden which we discover towards the end of the movie. But what is fabulous is that she's still able to play the secret and we feel it, without being able to discover what it is until the right moment... Watch the film a second time and you'll see!

Which brings us to another thing in common with your previous films: the care you take with facial expressions in PENNY PINCHER!, even for secondary and feature characters.

Yes. What was bound to work for Laurence as well as Dany and Noémie was that need for naturalism in the characters. They all have that ability to not fabricate emotion, to always be credible. For me, comedy only works when it's sincere, even when you are playing unrealistic burlesque situations. In the film, when Dany borrows shoes that are too small, he plays it dramatically and we believe it. Same thing for the character of François Gautier's ex-wife, played by Karina Marimon, or for his banker. I have to say the fact we had Dany Boon in the film's cast gave me free rein to go looking for great talent that might be less in demand or famous. All these fantastic actors told me how happy they were just to be a part of such a great project like this... So in each sequence, each one brings something essential to the film, regardless of how big the character is.

So PENNY PINCHER! is your first experience with comedy. It's what you wanted, and you seem to be very satisfied. Will that affect your next choices as a director?

I sincerely hope to make another comedy one day, but I also hope to do more thrillers. In short, I hope to make more films, because it's everything I love! In fact, I'm more of a viewer than a director: I go to see movies according to what kind of inspiration their stories might have for

me, regardless of the genre. I want to apply that principle to my work as a filmmaker, even if I know that it's not the usual practice or even well-regarded in France. I would love to make a western, for example. I've actually asked my American agent to send me that kind of project if anyone proposes one to him. I also dream of a movie about knights... Right now, I'm working on a 6 x 52-minute series for Canal+ and Gaumont TV, a story about a serial killer. As for cinema, it's usually the film you just made that determines the next one. When I go back to fishing in Brittany, ideas of what I want to do are sure to pop up... To be perfectly honest, I have an idea for a "survival" film in nature, in a snowy expanse of Canada. So, as François Gautier says at the end of PENNY PINCHER!: "wait and see!"

Interview

DANY BOON

Is it fair to say this film wasn't initially one of your acting projects, but in a way, became a necessity to you?

Yes it's true, doing PENNY PINCHER! was not at all planned... I had read a first version based on the fantastic idea for the screenplay, but it wasn't completely there yet and lacked a little depth. Then, Fred Cavayé took on the subject and sent me the new version, and I really liked it - so much so that I said to myself, "I can't pass this up!" It was complicated, because I had quite a few other things in progress, not least of all my own film RAID DINGUE, but I worked it out so that each project fit into its place.

Was the fact that Fred Cavayé is labeled (though it's a bit dumb) as a "director of thrillers" a barrier to you? Did you wonder if he would be able to make the switch from that genre to comedy?

You're right to say "dumb," because I'm not in the habit of putting people into categories that they're supposed to stay in forever. But when I told people I was going to work with Fred, that was the kind of remark I got... I don't think Fred is a director of thrillers or a director of comedies - he's just a director! There's no conflict between those different genres: it's the same technicians, on the same film crews, who are just making movies. I thought Fred was a great director and I was sure of that as soon as we began the prep work for the film, when we talked about the script, the characters, and his approach to the story. I also knew his first short films had more of a comedic tone to them, so I really had no fear or worry about his ability to make a good film. But he didn't have any worries about me either, knowing I would be his actor and wouldn't interfere with his directing choices. If a director has character and vision, I follow his lead. Even if he is wrong, who cares - we've all agreed to go along with his project and we all take the leap together! I have to add that in real life, Fred is a very funny person, with great positive energy.

Actually, when you get down to it, PENNY PINCHER! is not just a comedy. I don't want to give away the second half of the film, but the story leads us into something more complex and touching.

That's exactly what I loved about Fred's version of the script: the human dimension of the story and the emotion it inspires. For me, a good comedy is a movie that makes you laugh but touches you, too. The project had that dimension to it: it's a reflection on the humanity of the character of François Gautier and his penny-pinching, but also on the society he lives in and the way we as individuals perceive others... What does generosity mean? Why and how should we give? All that moved me when I was reading it, and I was overwhelmed when I saw the finished film and that second half, which of course we shouldn't talk about!

It even goes beyond emotion: at certain moments, François Gautier is pretty dark, almost scary.

Yes, sometimes he is a bit raw, but that's how life is, actually, and that's what brings the film close to the experience that people in the audience have of life. PENNY PINCHER! is built upon the same model as fairy tales: within them, between the lines, there is always a fairly strong dramatic conflict going on... I think those are very beneficial assets for a comedy.

You can feel that in the film's esthetic approach, in the sets and the lighting.

Yes, those elements serve the story. Earlier, we talked about fear. Well, the way my character's house is decorated was a source of fear. Since he is a cheapskate, he only uses daylight or streetlight. Since he's a cheapskate, the furniture in his house hasn't changed a single bit since his parents died. The producers were a little afraid of that dark side, based on the principle that comedies are usually very colorful. But right away, I thought just the opposite: that it would serve the film and offer me a sort of very comfortable little box to act in... I'd like to point out the amazing work of Laurent Dailland, Director of Photography on PENNY PINCHER!, who was extremely precise and did a perfect job of combining his techniques with the vision of Fred Cavayé's world.

One department where the film saved a lot of money was costumes, since you spend almost the entire film in the same turtleneck and tweed suit!

You're forgetting about my magnificent t-shirt that says "Vivagel of course!" When Fred told me in rehearsal there was no point in looking for anything else but that infamous costume, that it was perfect, I asked him if he was absolutely sure, given that I was going to spend three months wearing it. In the end, he was right. It's a real costume, a second skin. It's part of the whole thing, of how cheap the character is and his vision of life, people and things. François Gautier's turtleneck keeps him from catching a cold and spending money on medicine!

A word about your character's profession: he is a violinist. Did you have to learn the basics of that complex instrument?

Yes, absolutely: finger placement, the way you hold it, how you tune it... I had a great coach, Sarah Nemtanu, who is lead violin for the National Orchestra of France, and who managed to get me to play... I was absolutely determined to learn to play actual notes on the instrument, and not just pretend by pulling the bow over the strings. It was important to me because Gautier's talent as a violinist is one of the things that saves him as a character: he acts like a total jerk in everyday life, but he has that gift of virtuosity, even if being a cheapskate has probably kept him from becoming a really great artist. So I wanted to be believable... The fact that I already play guitar helped me, or at least it kept my fingers from being totally bloody after a week of playing. But just learning the basics of the violin took me a lot of work and grated on the ears of my family, too! But I stuck to it... And I'm still taking violin classes today.

Let's get back to Fred Cavayé: beyond the initial fact that you wanted to work with him, how did you see him once you were on the set, given that you're a director yourself?

I love it when a director shows me that he knows where he wants to go, where he wants to take me... Not only did Fred know where he was going, but he also takes you there with

incredible energy. He actually has only one fault: he's from Brittany. Being from the North, I think he's a little too proud of that! But seriously, we read through the script together quite a few times, and that solidified our togetherness for the film. For example, when he had to choose the actress who would play the part of my daughter, I naturally offered to participate in the screen tests and read the cues. Usually, and unfortunately, you build a cast separately and when the shooting begins, the combinations don't always work.

So Noémie Schmidt was the obvious choice for the part of Laura.

Yes, all the candidates were fantastic, but she stood out from the crowd. I think she's overwhelming in the emotional scenes. She is an incredible actress, very mature for her age, with a true soul for acting. And another one of her good qualities is being Swiss - like my wife!

That reminds me, let's talk about the actress who plays your fiancée in PENNY PINCHER!, Laurence Arné.

To bring up my wife Yaël again, she was the one who told me about Laurence. She's a big fan of the segments Laurence does for Canal+ and she's the one who brought her to my attention. We met at the Alpe d'Huez festival, and when Fred mentioned her for the character of Valérie, I was of course very enthusiastic. The character of Laurence is a good part. I love that little naive side of her, which creates a lot of comical situations. We can tell she has probably had a lot of emotional disappointment in men because she's chosen the wrong ones. And she repeats the pattern by falling in love with me! Valérie sees the violin virtuoso in François and probably feels the pain in him as well as his humanity, even though it's buried very, very deep.

There is also an element in PENNY PINCHER! that resembles your own films: the care taken in choosing the secondary roles. Fred Cavayé not only chose good actors, he also found interesting faces and characters.

It's true - from my banker to my ex-wife, including all my neighbors on the way, Fred succeeded in doing a truly great job of setting the scene. I think that in this film, there are no small parts. All the characters are important because they contribute to the quality of the story, by helping transform comedy into emotion. That required a truly realistic cast... By the way, I'm using one of the actors on PENNY PINCHER! for my film RAID DINGUE: Jacques Marchand, who plays the old neighbor. I'm having him play a retired Prefect.

So you're going to act and direct again on RAID DINGUE. How did you see PENNY PINCHER! from the point of view of being "just" an actor?

The first time I saw the film, it wasn't finished. The color grading and mix hadn't been done, and yet I was taken in by the story's humor and emotion. Honestly, I've rarely seen myself like that in a film... It's a very beautiful character, and Fred did a great job of directing me and running a tight ship, to reference his Breton origins again. Adding this film while in preproduction on my own movie made me work a lot these past months, but I am very happy with the results. Fred offered me a rare role. He served me better than I serve myself in my own films! It makes me laugh and touches me when he tells me: "I can't wait to be in a theater to hear people laugh. I'm not used to that!" I'm happy for him in advance, because I know he's going to hear a lot of laughter.

Interview

LAURENCE ARNÉ

Let's start from the beginning, with your character. How would you describe Valérie?

I'd say she is an extremely sensitive young woman who has become a bit introverted and escapes in music to protect herself from the outside world, which is too difficult for her to deal with... Her career as a cellist has put her into a sort of bubble, and when Valérie comes to the Conservatory, paradoxically it's music that helps her to break out and dare to talk to people, meet François Gautier and fall in love... I think there is something very lovely about that: we see her finally letting herself go to her emotions. At first, she falls in love with the talent of François, who plays violin like no one else, with great generosity.

A generosity in stark contrast to him being pathologically cheap!

Yes, but as we know love is blind, and Valérie doesn't see what is hiding beneath at all. She is lovestruck, it's too late! For me, she is both child and woman, a whole person who is absolutely dedicated to her relationship with François, even when little clues show her the cheapskate he really is... She probably doesn't have the experience to refer to from past love relationships that could make it clear to her that this man has a serious problem with money. That is often the case in our first love relationships: we want to believe in it and forgive our partner for everything... You know, I know several Valéries in real life, who give you the impression they are living in their own world. To be able to create this unusual character was fascinating, because I had to keep her from seeming like a dimwit, which would have been a disservice to the love story.

You are a pianist. Do you think music can open you up to other people but also cut you off from reality in a certain way, like in the film?

Yes, absolutely, and I see a little bit of myself in Valérie. Music plays a very important part in my life; depending on what I'm going through, it reassures me, protects me - I can stay enclosed in a musical bubble for days at a time. And then on the other hand, it can shake me up and push me to take action and make contact with people. I am very vulnerable when I listen to music and what's more, I am often blown away by the impact an artist or group can have on me when I am 100% receptive to their music. As if it were written just for me, when it isn't at all. Those moments of intense vibration are magical, and Valérie experiences one when she hears François Gautier play violin for the first time. She is completely overwhelmed. And what's more, I think being a musician makes her all the more fragile, because in acting you have to be a very sensitive string to make the others vibrate.

It's an interesting character because it's a bit different from the type of roles you've been offered up until now in film as well as television and theater: you have rarely played women who are timid, almost introverted.

I'd already worked in a similar vein on Delphine de Vigan's *À COUP SÛR*, playing a young woman who was a bit of a "perfect little girl" who suddenly sees her whole system fall apart... Since I

began acting, I've actually often played childlike characters, which allows me to go to extremes without being vulgar. I must exude that woman-child thing.

Tell me what it was like as an actress to meet the director Fred Cavayé and work with him on the film.

It was Michael Laguens who cast me in the film, and we both saw the interest in making Valérie extremely sensitive and timid. So we worked on that before proposing it to Fred, who immediately saw the character come to life... All of a sudden, the mechanics of François Gautier's world and his love story worked, without having to make her look like an idiot! Fred is a director who knows exactly what he wants and is very precise about his work. He is a great writer, and throughout the shoot, he succeeded in rewriting scenes to take our comments into account... And I also love the care he took in choosing real secondary characters, who have a real existence in the film, from Dany's father to his banker or the little old man who loans him his car... Fred was smart to give these roles to unexpected actors and refuse to cast more obvious choices; instead, he made the script the priority to the very end. As an actor being directed, it's extremely enjoyable to let yourself be led by someone as solid as a rock. He already inspires trust just based on his previous films, which is a relief but also a challenge! What I mean is, Fred films a lot of scenes in one extremely long take, so you have to keep your energy up the whole time. That's a lot healthier than forcing yourself to find a feeling to play for a scene cut up in various shots, or for pick-ups... It's an incredible high, and you have to jump in and go for it: that's how I see my work on the set! Plus, there's Dany Boon, who has an instinct for comedy like no other.

So how was it working with him? Did you know him?

We had met each other briefly at the Alpe d'Huez festival. Of course I knew that Dany was a fabulous actor, but I have to admit I was still unbelievably impressed: it's crazy how much presence he has! I totally understand why they wanted him to do PENNY PINCHER! - because he has such an incredibly human side that he manages to be the nastiest bastard in the movie and still be totally touching the whole time. It's not easy for someone so cheap to be able to inspire empathy, and yet he succeeds in doing it; sometimes, he expresses all the suffering of his character in just one look... On the set, I often had an intense experience while shooting a sequence, and then went to look at the playback and felt even more emotion!

We shared a lot of things on this movie and thanks to him, I really learned about generosity between actors, and letting go.

You mention the film's emotion, which is in part thanks to Noémie Schmidt's performance in the role of Laura...

I would even say she lights up the story. In the part that happens at the Conservatory, the characters are all closed up in their own little bubbles, and suddenly, Noémie brings in the modern world. She is the one who gets Dany back in touch with real life... She does it incredibly well, and that allows the film to switch into a new direction, without us really expecting it. The comedy becomes more moving that way.

Let's get back to you. Do you feel like you have passed a hurdle in your acting career by doing PENNY PINCHER!, in terms of audience expectations and the importance of the project?

I don't really know how to answer that... Each new film that comes out is important to me. I am aware how important this project is; I was delighted to work with Fred and Dany, who I admire a lot. Outside of that, I'm not aware of everything that happens on the sidelines of a film, even if I can feel the buzz around PENNY PINCHER!. It's always risky to anticipate reactions from the audience and make career plans. I prefer to focus on my work, my personal projects and upcoming productions. As for the rest, we'll see!

If I understand you correctly, as of today, you don't have a strategy in your choices as an actress.

Yes I do - the strategy of the heart. I either feel it or I don't. After that, whether the film is successful or not is a different matter, but I have always been 100% synchronized with the projects I've worked on. I love to act, but there has to be something that touches me in the story or in the characters; there needs to be depth. Beyond dialogue and funny situations, what I love more than anything is expressing what it is to be human today in all its complexity. Regardless of the type of character, there is always a psychology beneath. I like that feeling that it works and moves forward - that I haven't been sent in the wrong direction!

What is fabulous about PENNY PINCHER! is that the film started as a concept with real comedic possibility, and they've fleshed it out by adding depth and real people who suffer. It's funny and yet very touching.

Interview

NOÉMIE SCHMIDT

When you read the script, how did you feel about the character of Laura ?

She is a young woman who touched me right away. Laura has lived her whole life without her father and she carries the scar within her, but what I liked was that she doesn't let any of that show. That's the whole ambivalence of the character. She doesn't know her father but she idealizes him, convinced that he works for humanitarian causes... That gives her a purpose in life - she is a member of Greenpeace, she wants to help people in a very generous way. That was a very strong postulate to begin with. I tried to make Laura into someone sweet and positive, despite the pain of her initial paternal lack and the reality of her father's personality when she ends up meeting him!

Without giving the film away, we could say Laura hides a secret that we discover as the film develops. In your work as an actress, you manage to reveal nothing, and yet your acting hints at that secret.

Yes, exactly, and that goes with the idea of ambivalence I was talking about. Laura is constantly on the edge of what remains unspoken; that type of suggestiveness in film interests me a lot. I like characters who are hidden and not too obvious, and it's actually in that sense that Laura is not exactly a comic character. Thanks to this young, refreshing woman and her confidence in her father, the story switches into another tone. It's very human, in essence, to have affection for someone like François Gautier, who doesn't have much going for him at first! Laura wants to see humanity in him, and with the help of Valérie, played by Laurence Arné, she will push him to change through gentleness and affection... Instead of condemning her father for being cheap, Laura tries to understand what has caused that flaw, which she sees as weakness that she tries to treat. She sees that her father makes himself miserable and isolates himself, and that touches her. I think that approach to Laura's character is important, because a flaw often hides a certain fear or sadness.

Since you brought up unspoken communication, I hear you didn't tell Fred Cavayé that you weren't quite the 17 year old the role called for!

Yes, and it was a challenge to convince Fred and Dany as well that I could play a girl that age... Dany was there during casting and the current needed to pass between us from the start. It was daunting but he and Fred quickly put me at ease. Fred is an honest, generous and enthusiastic person, so for me, it was more a question of meeting him than a necessity of convincing him I could play a younger woman. We talked right away about the script and the way I saw the character.

After that, how would you describe your day-to-day relationship with Fred Cavayé on the set?

I just love his energy: he could move mountains! That carried me through the whole film, especially in those moments when I had doubts or came down a notch. When that happens, Fred immediately has something positive to tell you, he lifts you up by making you feel that he

trusts you. He's also a director you can always talk to; he is very open to suggestions while you're shooting, which allows you to try different approaches to your character. Plus, Fred is extremely funny and when you make a comedy, that's important! He is a fun-loving man who likes to laugh and tell jokes, and that created a great atmosphere on the set... I knew Fred for his thrillers like ANYTHING FOR HER (POUR ELLE) and I imagined someone with a darker, almost tortured world view. Well, not all! Yet that didn't keep him from bringing certain elements to PENNY PINCHER! that are outside of the realm of pure comedy, including the lighting, the directing and the rhythm...

Another important moment on the film was meeting Dany Boon, who plays your father, François Gautier.

There are two sides to Dany. First of all, he is a beast of comedy who is a constant joy to watch as he acts, reacts and invents on the set. I think he also succeeded in bringing a lot of nuances to his character. Humor, of course, but also awkwardness and pain. I learned so much by observing Dany... But beyond that professional war machine, I was also very moved by the way he treated me. He encouraged me, supported me and reassured me when I got anxious. He is a very subtle, sensitive and observant person who manages to be attentive to others yet remain focused on his own acting work. That's true for me but also for the whole crew, actors and technicians... Dany always had a generous and benevolent attitude towards me. He remembers what it's like to be a young actor and face an experienced star. I'm even convinced that taking care of others and looking out for them makes him happy! It's obvious that to play François Gautier, he really had to build the character... Can you imagine, Dany even laughed at my jokes!

You were also surrounded by amazing acting partners such as Laurence Arné.

I loved her performance in the "Filles d'aujourd'hui" segments she did on Canal+; she is an incredible comic actress. The character of Valérie in the script for PENNY PINCHER! was initially less visible, less textured. She also succeeded in moving the character towards something much more offbeat, almost burlesque, while remaining extremely believable and touching. Laurence also impressed me a lot, and I think as a movie couple she and Dany work perfectly together. That's also the case with all the characters; all the "small roles" in the film are fantastic, and I'd like to point out the incredible work the casting director did, finding those surprising actors.

You've just had an incredible year: discovered in THE STUDENT AND MISTER HENRI (L'ÉTUDIANTE ET MONSIEUR HENRI) with Claude Brasseur, launched into the adventure of the series "Versailles" in the role of the wife of the Sun King's brother, and now in the credits of the fall comedy with Dany Boon - there have certainly been less spectacular beginnings!

Of course I see all those moments with joy, because it's my profession and I'm happy to be able to do my job with such talented, wonderful people. Each of those projects was a inestimable source of learning... What I love above all is mixing up the signals. To follow THE STUDENT AND MISTER HENRI, which was really my introduction to film in the lead role opposite Claude Brasseur, with "Versailles," where I had to study history and the royal customs of the court and act in English, and now today this film with Fred, which gives me the chance to refine my acting

skills and explore another kind of cinematographic world - that's unique. It reassures me in my hope to continue to navigate through films and roles that are different every time.

CAST

Dany Boon
Laurence Arné
Noémie Schmidt
Patrick Ridremont
Christophe Canard
Christophe Favre
Karina Marimon

François Gautier
Valérie
Laura
Cédric
Gilles
Demeester
Carole

CREW

Director
Original Idea
Screenplay and Dialogue
Adaptation and Dialogue
Director of Photography
Editing
Sound

Original Music
Script
Costume Designer
Casting
Production Designer
Assistant Director
Production Manager
Postproduction Managers

Produced by
A coproduction

With the participation of

Fred Cavayé
Olivier Dazat
Laurent Turner & Nicolas Cuche
Fred Cavayé
Laurent Dailland A.F.C
Yann Malcor
Pierre André
Jérôme Chenevoy
Lucien Balibar
Marc Doisne
Klaus Badelt
Laurence Couturier
Marie-Laure Lasson
Michael Languens
Laurence Brenguier
James Canal
Patrice Arrat
Abraham Goldblat
Nicolas Baudens
Eric Jehelmann & Philippe Rousselet
JERICO
TF1 FILMS PRODUCTION
MARS FILMS
CANAL+
CINE+
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