

A Cinema Guild Release



Cousin Jules

A film by Dominique Benicheti

91 minutes / DCP restoration from 35mm / 2.35:1 Scope / Dolby / France / Not Rated

In French with English Subtitles

Stills available at: www.cinemaguild.com/downloads

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SYNOPSIS

A rare combination of sophisticated movie-making technique (shot in CinemaScope and recorded in stereo) and content that is a veritable ode to the beauty of rural France, the simplicity of daily peasant life, and the nearly wordless intimacy of a lifelong relationship. Recording over a 5-year period, director Benicheti palpably captures the rhythms and rituals of blacksmith Jules Guiteaux and his wife Félicie as Jules dons wooden clogs and leather apron to begin work in his shop, while Félicie tends a vegetable garden and prepares their meals. Awarded the jury prize at the Locarno Film Festival in 1973 and widely acclaimed around the world, the film nevertheless remained unreleased in the U.S. until now. - (Synopsis Courtesy of Film Forum)

ABOUT THE FILM

Cousin Jules originally premiered at the Locarno International Film Festival in 1973, where it won a special Jury prize. It went on to play at other festivals such as New Directors/New Films in New York and the Los Angeles International Film Expo (Filmex). It was not released theatrically.

The new 2K digital restoration was produced by Arane-Gulliver Labs, and premiered at the 2012 New York Film Festival. It has gone on to play other festivals such as the 2013 Berlin International Film Festival and the 2013 Viennale.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

A lost masterpiece of documentary cinema, *Cousin Jules* was the result of five years of painstaking work by director Dominique Benicheti and renowned cinematographer Pierre-William Glenn (cinematographer of Truffaut's *Day for Night*, Tavernier's *Coup de torchon* and others). They ambitiously photographed in Cinemascope and recorded in stereophonic sound the lives of Jules and his wife. The result is a ravishing, totally immersive work. The film received extraordinary reviews, won the Special Jury Prize at the Locarno International Film Festival in 1973, and was exhibited at many prominent festivals including Moscow International Film Festival, New Directors/New Films and the Los Angeles International Film Expo (Filmex).

Despite a strong festival response, the film did not find a distributor. This was in part due to the fact that most arthouse theaters of the day did not possess the equipment necessary to screen the film in its native Cinemascope format, and Benicheti refused exhibition of the film under any other format. He believed that the drama of the film was best understood on a monumental scale.

Over the years, the original negative and existing copies of *Cousin Jules* began to disintegrate. Benicheti was in the early stages of restoring the film himself when he died in 2011; a group of the film's most dedicated supporters banded together to raise the funds for the remainder of the restoration work. The exquisite 2k DCP was completed by Arane-Gulliver Labs and was premiered at the 2012 New York Film Festival and proceeded to screenings at the 2013 Berlin International Film Festival and other venues around the world.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Dominique Benicheti was born in 1943 in Paris, France. He graduated from the National School for Applied Arts, National Superior School of Fine Arts, and the Institute for Advanced Cinematographic Studies (IDHEC) in the Animation program. He directed and produced more than 30 films over his lifetime; documentaries, scientific films, institutional films and animation. He was a technical and creative consultant for many 3D, large format and panoramic films. His expertise in these departments contributed to the success of The Futuroscope Park in Poitiers, France.

In 1975, Benicheti arrived at Harvard University, first teaching documentary filmmaking and then working for several years at the Jefferson Laboratories of Experimental Physics, and the Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. Later, Benicheti was active in the launch of Arane-Gulliver, one of the premier 70mm and special format film laboratories in Europe. He achieved many technical advancements in the field, including designing and building printing shuttles for 4-5-8-10 and 15 perforations in the 70mm format, as well as anti-bubble systems for 70mm wet gate printers.

He died suddenly in 2011, leaving behind several screenplays for 3D and large format films. His aim in films was always to achieve through sound and image what words could not express. In the words of Richard Pena, “he possessed an extraordinary mind and unique talent, a mind literally too creative to be encumbered by traditional film formats.”

Selected Filmography

***Cousin Jules* (1973, 35mm Cinemascope, 91 min.)**

***Le Prix de la Liberte* (1994, 35mm, 20 min.)**

A 360 degree panoramic film, created for a custom built theater at the Museum in Aroomanches to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the landing at Normandy.

***La Revole* (1997, 70mm 3D, 20 min.)**

The first French 3-D musical, a magical realist story set in the last days of the wine harvest.

***La Grotte Chauvet* (2000, 70mm/5 perf.)**

In celebration of the discovery of the 34,000 year old Chauvet Cave in 1999, Benicheti designed a special motion control system to allow a 70mm camera to fit into the entrance of the cave. 3D sequences were produced using stop motion and long exposure techniques.

***L'Odysee Magique* (2009, 70mm/8 perf.)**

A documentary hymn to nature, produced for the Vulcania Edutainment Park in Auvergne, shot in countries around the world.

***Pathe-Baby* (incomplete, 35mm 3D)**

A blend of fiction and documentary, this time-travel story featuring 3D interviews of individuals long passed on through the eyes of a ten year old girl. Benicheti was at work on this film at the time of his death.

CREDITS

CAST: Jules Guitteaux
Felicie Guitteaux

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY: Dominique Benicheti

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Pierre William Glenn
Paul Launay

CAMERA OPERATOR: Walter Bal

ASSISTANT PRODUCERS: Georges Dupont, Michel Gauthier,
Pierre Albin, Philippe Ricou.

GAFFER: Jean-Claude Gasche
CAMERA ASSISTANT: Philippe Delpont

SCRIPT SUPERVISOR: Genevieve Benicheti

SOUND: Roger Letellier
Rene Jean Bouyer

EDITING: Marie Genevieve Ripeau

SOUND MIX (1972): Jacques Maumont

LAB (1972): LTC Saint Cloud

REMASTERING (2012): Jean-Rene Faillot and Geraldine Desindes
Arane-Gulliver Lab, Paris

Re-mastered to 2K DCP
from the original 35mm Cinemascope negative.