

**THE LULUS**  
**LA GUERRE DES LULUS**  
*Original version: French / English subtitles*



**Director:** *Yann Samuëll*  
**Release date (France):** *January 18, 2023*  
**Genre:** *Adventure, History, Drama*  
**Countries of origin:** *France, Luxembourg*  
**Run Time:** *109 minutes*

## CLASSIFICATION OPINIONS

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What is the appropriate age?



General (France)



Not appropriate for children under 10 years of age

<https://www.filmstouspublics.fr/aventure/la-guerre-des-lulus/>

*The Lulus for children from 10 years of age, to discover in theatres on January 10.*

[https://www.allocine.fr/article/fichearticle\\_gen\\_carticle=1000008975.html](https://www.allocine.fr/article/fichearticle_gen_carticle=1000008975.html)

**OPINIONS VARY DEPENDING ON THE REVIEWS.  
FOR STUDENTS IN TORONTO AND AREA SCHOOLS, THE FILM IS  
RECOMMENDED FOR AGES 13 AND UP.**

### SYNOPSIS

August 1914. While the German army is gaining ground in the North of France, four boys aged 10 to 15, LUCien, LUCas, LUigi and LUDwig are left behind during the evacuation of their orphanage.

Soon joined by LUCe, a young girl separated from her parents, they decide to reach the neutral country of Switzerland by all means possible... They embark on an adventure for which nothing has prepared them! *Unifrance*

### REVIEWS

*La Guerre des Lulus is a wonderfully rousing film that navigates some dramatic highs and lows. Samuëll shows how kids, unlike adults, can often trust and connect across barriers, untainted by prejudice or dogma. And that some adults: here a teacher, a soldier, a mother, and a maverick, can really inspire young people to greatness by mentoring and supportive companionship. -*

**FILMUFORIA**

*... The film saves the day thanks to the freshness of this adventure that tells the story of the war from a child's point of view. Awarded the Audience Award at Mon Premier Festival, the feature film seems to have many ingredients to ensure a certain public success in early 2023 and validate the project of a sequel already envisaged by the Samuëll-Hautière duo. [translation]*

<https://www.lebleudumiroir.fr/critique-la-guerre-des-lulus/>

*The Lulus, solidly portrayed by very young actors, including the endearing Tom Castaing, form a touching little bunch - Le Dauphiné Libéré*

*Despite its repetitive storylines, the film is dynamic with five brilliant young actors - Les Fiches du cinéma*

*A touching and well-paced adaptation - Femme Actuelle*

## DETAILS

### LANGUAGE

The language in this film must be placed in its historical context (the First World War), in the prejudices of the society of yesteryear and in the innocence and naivety of the child/adolescent characters.

Little Lucas tries to figure out what's going on: a deserter comes from the desert?

He also doesn't hide from calling Luigi "FATSO". Luigi rebels and tells him that he's not fat but strong.

When Hans draws his wife with a big belly, Ludwig makes it clear to Lucas that she is pregnant and that she is not fat or cannibalistic. It's a surprising adjective "pregnant" coming from a 10-year-old.

Lucien is in love with Luce. He tries to listen to the advice of adults to prove to her that he loves her. Luce considers herself "a lady" and demands "gentlemanly" behavior from Lucien who makes mistakes such as calling Luce a "gnan gnan" (translated as "drippy") which offends her.

The stereotypes of "girls" are blatant:

- War is not a girl's thing
- (In Luce's bag, the boys think there are "chick" things: old dolls, a toy tea set, thimbles.

But "girls" tell truths about the war that go beyond young boys:

- It's not a boyish thing either. It's an adult thing, Luce remarks

The character of the witch is both classic and a bit nuanced:

- Louison (the witch) carries a gun to drive away intruders. Her language is colloquial and even violent:

*Foutez-moi le camp!* – Get out of here!

... ..*ou je vous troue la panse* – Scram or I'll shoot your brains out

- She uses the classic vocabulary of witches when Lucas asks her to tell a story: terrible stories with monsters and demons. She talks about her husband's flying broom.
- Louison becomes the mother of the Lulus for a time, she uses the word "orphans" quite often in her remarks. But one word is missing from her vocabulary, that of a mother who loses her child as she lost her Anselm in the war.

Food plays an important role in the lives of the Lulus who must survive: Luigi dreams of eating, Hans has made a rabbit stew, Louison gives soup to the children who eat the berries with delight at first and enjoy her apples. Even the wine of the Mass is coveted!

Prejudice against Germans expressed in derogatory words such as:

-What is an enemy? Octave asks, and he answers, a Boche

Learn more about the derogatory words used by Germans between 1870 and the Second World War

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISKS7Q2q-pA>

-The presumption that Moussa does not speak French because he is African.

The film emphasizes the importance of verbal language in communication with the beautiful sequence where Hans repeats the word "friends" in French and German so that the children understand. The same idea of "friends" is repeated with the Lulus meeting Moussa.

## VIOLENCE

The film is set during the First World War, the war of trenches and violence.

o Ludwig, under Father Turpin's responsibility, finds himself in the orphanage of the Abbey of Valencourt where 2 clans confront each other: Octave's, the villain, and Lucien's. They fight with sticks, jostle each other, push each other... Losers receive pee from dormitory chamber pots as a mark of defeat and humiliation.

When Father Turpin distributes the oranges, all the boys rush in and fight over the fruit except Ludwig.

A visual of actions but no precise graphic details.

The schoolteacher Leutellier gave a name to their fights: **the art of wrestling.**

- o **The harassment** that Octave inflicts on Ludwig by pouring ink on his beautiful book to punish him for knowing too much in class.
- o **The Abbey explodes** and catches fire under the bombing
- o **The weapons** we see:

-The rifle of "the witch" who shoots to make the intruding children leave.

- the weapons of the German soldiers called the "Teutons" by the French: they shoot a man in front of the children without knowing that they are there. Distant image of blood on the body of the man.

Gunshots can be heard, one of which implicitly killed Gaston who was accompanying Moussa.

- French soldiers shoot Hans killing him almost in cold blood.

- o **The pursuit of the truck** driven by Hans: soldiers on motorcycles and in vehicles shoot at the children in the back of the truck.
- o **The escape of the children** through the roof of the center of Guise with the threats and the arrest of the doctor of the place as well as the sacrifice of Moussa who diverts the soldiers from the children.
- o **The trenches** that show the cruelty and harshness of war (agitation, smoke, noises) with the wound in the thigh of one of the characters
- o Children are confronted with **the vision of bodies of dead soldiers** floating in the river.

**Violence is an integral part of the story and is not the subject of precise graphic details.**

## NUDITY

None

## SEXUAL ACTIVITY

It is obvious that Luce and Lucien are attracted to and like each other. They squabble. Lucien is jealous of Luce's attention to Hans, whose accent she likes.

Moussa gives advice on how to successfully seduce "a girl".

Luce and Lucien end up kissing each other on the mouth.

## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT/ MESSAGES

### ☀️ Characters in search of family love

- Ludwig is very attached to his mother who he misses
- The schoolteacher Leutellier is a father figure for Ludwig
- Father Turpin does his best to protect the orphans
- Little Lucas considers Louison the witch as a mother, Hans as a father. Their loss grieves him

### ☀️ The Violence of War

Children are subjected to painful life episodes haunted by death:

- that of alleged traitors (shooting of a man in the village)
- Hans being shot in the back
- the presumed (off-screen) shooting of the shoemaker Gaston (sound of the shot heard not seen)
- Anselm's death (off-screen) that causes Louison the witch to leave.
- that of the soldier's floating body at the end

### ☀️ The changes caused by the war:

- Octave becomes a spy for the Germans with his red armband, hence the exploitation of children in wartime
- Teacher Leutellier is completely disoriented by what he is experiencing. It is no longer the same.
- Louison, saddened by the death of her son, whom she will try to recover.

### ☀️ War breeds good deeds too:

- It unites children by encouraging them to show solidarity. "The greatest gift of all: brothers."
- Louison shelters, feeds, and protects children
- Hans also takes care of the children and feeds them (he is a pastry chef)
- Gaston, the cobbler, gives gifts to the children
- Mrs. Berrault warmly welcomes the children at Guise: she arranges for them to watch a play just for them.
- The Lulus Gang is feeling so good that everyone (or almost everyone) wants to stay in Guise until Ludwig announces that he has to join his mother

**The sense of loss of loved ones and the search for love are at the heart of this solidarity band.**

## FILM PHOTOS



*The Lulus*: an adaptation of the cartoon albums by Amiénois Régis Hautière and Hardoc



The characters in the film  
First there were 4 Lulus. Then they were 5 Lulus with Luce



Ludwig meets his school master Mr. Leutellier and Father Turpin at the "Abbaye de Valencourt" orphanage.



The witch (Louison) saves the children in the village invaded by German soldiers

For a time, the Lulus were protected by Louison and enjoyed his orchard with her apples



While the Lulus are fleeing from the forest and Gaston's caravan, Gaston is interrogated and threatened by German soldiers. Note Octave with the red armband of spies in the background of the photo





• The Lulus are chased by German soldiers in the truck driven by Hans.

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### The Lulus: all the characters

