

BLUE SKY JO – LA PETITE ET LE VIEUX

Original version: French/ English subtitles



Director: *Patrice Sauvé*

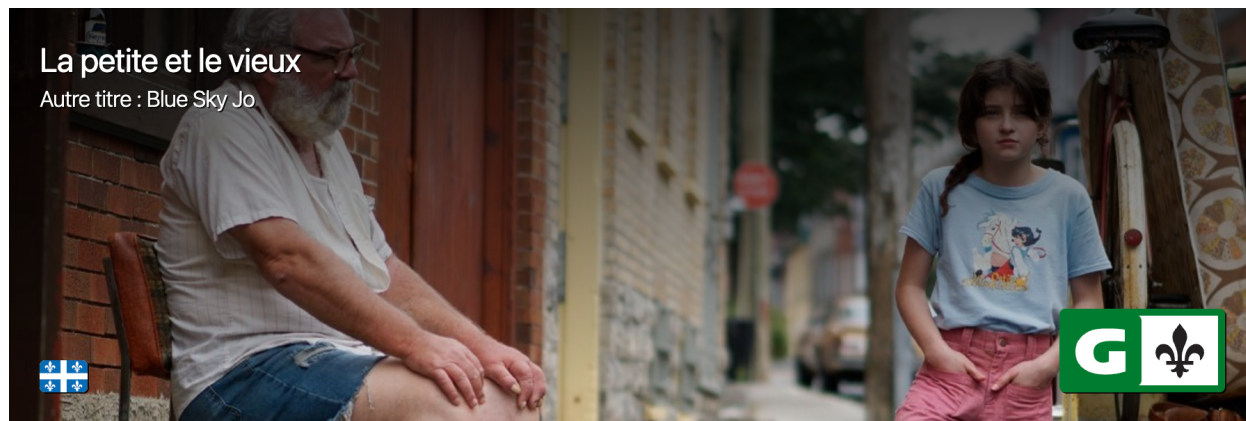
Release Date (Quebec): *October 4, 2024*

Genre: *Drama*

Country of origin: *Canada (Quebec)*

Run Time: *104 minutes*

AGE APPROPRIATENESS: OPINIONS



📅 2024

🎬 Comédie dramatique

CLASSEMENT DU FILM

FICHE TECHNIQUE

DISTRIBUTEURS

VERSIONS DU FILM



Motifs de classement

Avec nostalgie, le récit plonge le spectateur dans les années 1980 à Québec. À travers la complicité développée entre les deux protagonistes, cette adaptation du roman homonyme de Marie-Renée Lavoie offre un regard sur l'amitié, la famille et les relations intergénérationnelles.



Date de classement

19 août 2024

SYNOPSIS

Quebec, 1980s. 10-year-old Jo, inspired by her cartoon heroine, dreams of saving her unhappy father. Surrounded by her three sisters and a busy mother, she finds an ally in Monsieur Roger, their gruff neighbor who hides a tender heart.

Rotten Tomatoes

REVIEWS

Translated from excerpts of articles from Le Journal de Montréal and Le Soleil

... director Patrice Sauvé returns to cinema in a *beautiful* way by signing a *charming film*, filled with *tenderness and benevolence* (...)

While some of the subjects addressed are harsh (poverty, mental illness, alcoholism), the director emphasized the *message of hope* that emerges from this coming-of-age story.

Screenwriter Sébastien Girard did a **good job** of staying true to Marie-Renée Lavoie's **everyday poetry** by respecting her great talent for writing **tasty dialogues** that ring true.

[Juliette Bharucha] **lights up the screen** with her bright eyes and spontaneous acting. **Disarmingly accurate**, Gildor Roy has achieved a feat, that of making **human and moving** a character who could have easily fallen into caricature. Together, they carry this **warm and comforting** film wonderfully.

Max Demers - Le Journal de Montréal

With **Blue Sky Jo**, director Patrice Sauvé offers us a story that celebrates not only the **courage and resilience** of a child, but above all a reminder of this important period that is childhood.

Thomas Thivierge - Le Soleil

DETAILS

LANGUAGE

Adapted from the novel of the same name by Marie-Renée Lavoie, the film reflects life in the Limoilu neighbourhood in the 80s with a very Quebecois language.

Mr. Roger is difficult to understand because he "is not stingy with swearing" (Media Films), speaks joul and "a Quebec language" specific to his region.

Watch/listen to this excerpt from the trailer with the cascade of "swear" words uttered by Mr. Roger:

<https://www.lapresse.ca/cinema/2024-07-10/la-petite-et-le-vieux-en-primeur-au-festival-du-film-de-locarno.php>



The English translation repeats "Goddamnit" a lot to express this rain of Quebec swear words that include "maudit", "Jésus", "Crisse", "Calisse", "Ostie", etc.

We hear "ça pince en crisse" [*stings like a sonofabitch*], "Calisse de saint Simonaque crisse ça s'peut-tu-tu..." ", "Laissez-moi moi icit tabernak" [*If I ain't about to croak, then f**k off*], and much more.

When Helen/Jo is attacked, Mr. Roger swears in both English and French.

The other characters such as Hélène/Jo and her family have a daily vocabulary that is somewhat familiar at times and good even for "the old man":

“Le bonheur ça se force pas sur quelqu’un qui en veut pas » -*You can’t force happiness on someone who doesn’t want it*

♣ The teacher in Hélène/Jo's class encourages her students to read a novel.

“Lire un roman c’est comme s’ouvrir au monde” *Reading a novel opens up the world to you.*

“C’est aussi voyager dans le monde tout en restant dans son salon” *You can travel anywhere right from your couch*

♣ The nurse who harasses little Philippe, even in her anger, sticks to a succession of names without profanity addressed to Hélène/Jo:

« C’est une insolente, une éhontée, une culottée, une impertinente, une dérangeante, une impolie, une désobéissante, une impudente, une effrontée, une insupportable »

She is insolent, brazen, cocky, impertinent, disruptive, rude, arrogant, disobedient, impudent, obstreperous, intolerable

This reaction was provoked by Hélène/Jo who rebelled against Philippe's treatment by the school nurse:

« Tu vas le lâcher Maudite merde! » *Leave him alone, Goddamnit!*

With M. Roger, this incident provokes reflections such as

“C’est triste en chien” *F**king sad!* or “Une maudite frustrée c’est une maudite frustrée”*”a woman” But a hag is a hag*

In keeping with this mood, Hélène/Jo repeats “Je suis tannée” *I’m tired or sick of...* to express her own frustrations.

Mr. Roger approves of what Hélène/Jo has done and he often uses affectionate words by calling her “Ma vermine” *Little pest* or “chérie” *sweetie*

This school incident adds to the Hélène/Jo’s difficulties in life:

This school incident adds to the trials of Hélène's life:

“Une job de gars” *A guy's job*

“C’est dur en maudit cette job-là” *It's hard as hell, this job*

“T’es dans la merde ma fille” *You are screwed.*

The Bingo owner asks Hélène/Jo how the old “Schmuk” is doing, while noting that she should speak French more naturally and not take on a false accent.

As the story progresses and the appearance of characters such as young people with disabilities, Hélène/Jo wonders why these young people talk to themselves:

« c’était un maniaque qui venait de sortir de l’asile ? » *Was he a maniac who had just been released from the asylum?*

She noticed that her father was drunk and that “he was crying.” His sister explains to him that their father is unhappy in his job teaching *a bunch of drooling teens* “une bande d’ados baveux”.

Mr. Roger loves beer, and he repeats this often, hence his move near the convenience store, he says.

Social class is the subject of both insensitive behaviour, such as that of the nurse who does not seem to understand that Philippe is probably poor and neglected, or observations about money:

“L’argent ne fait pas le bonheur” *Money doesn't buy happiness* (Hélène/Jo's mother)

« C’est juste les gens pauvres qui disent ça, maman » *Only poor people who say that, mom* replies Hélène/Jo.

A sexual allusion looms: “J’ai pas de sein” *I am not-a-boob.*

« J’ai un sein qui pousse pas. » *I have a boob that doesn’t grow*

The language, very colourful and dynamic, varies as it should according to the situations and the characters to enhance themes and contribute to the specific features of the protagonists, hence the charm, intensity and truthfulness of the film.

VIOLENCE

During her newspaper deliver round, Hélène/Jo is suddenly kidnapped. On the ground, we see her briefly struggling with her attacker.

This gesture and its suddenness are startling. The violence is not graphic: some aggressive arm movements against which Hélène/Jo are shown when she defends herself.

When Mr. Roger pulls the aggressor away from Hélène/Jo, it's a surprising occurrence: a short fight during which Mr. Roger hits the young man against what seems to be the back of a caravan. The action is intermittent between gestures and words.

Hélène/Jo is safe, and the attacker has finally been arrested.

Not to mention violence per se, when Hélène/Jo's dad is drunk, he falls to the ground.

Mr. Roger also collapses on the ground after a crazy run around the block with Hélène/Jo.

At Bingo, a customer also loses consciousness and falls to the ground. Nothing serious.

NUDITY

Mr. Roger is wearing an ordinary hospital gown that is not tied in the back but fortunately he is wearing his underpants that hide his buttocks.

SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Nothing significant. Hélène/Jo notices from afar a couple in love kissing

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT/ MESSAGES

THE POWER OF LITERATURE

Patrice Sauvé addresses important social themes and rightly emphasizes the emancipatory power of literature.

<https://www.ledevoir.com/culture/cinema/820984/petite-vieux-voyage-initiatique-limoilou?>

Hélène/Jo's father plays a key role in the taste for literature. He motivates her (like her teacher) to read which inspires her and makes her better understand her father: Jo Di Maggio and his Yankee cap, the happiness of writing one day "I have lots of novels in my head" ...

Thanks to Hemingway's novel which serves as a mirror to her story with the grumpy Mr. Roger, H  l  ne/Jo will better appreciate her friendship with the old man.

INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONS

H  l  ne/Jo initially does not get along with Mr. Roger ["Gros soulon" *Drunk*] but after he saves her, the bonds become closer. Mr. Roger's approval of her way of acting towards the nurse reassures her.

The legacy of the old man's friendship brought her wisdom and knowlwdge like

- Knowing that a steak can relieve calf cramps. When the paramedic at the caf   advises her to use a steak for her cramps, she already knew it from Mr. Roger

- thinking about caring about t young people with disabilities

- "lending" her hard-earned money to her sister to go to Winnipeg.

Her attachment to her neighbor becomes greater when she learns that he was illiterate and that he had made a huge effort to read *The Old Man and the Sea*.

The film shows that the character of H  l  ne/Jo gets along with older people like

   Fred who provides her with the work of delivering newspapers.

   The young bingo waitress who also teaches her the tricks of the trade

   Her father who also approves of H  l  ne/Jo's reaction to Philippe's treatment. He confides in her his dreams.

SOME IMPORTANT THEMES

The theme of happiness is taken up several times, either by quoting Mr. Roger

« le bonheur    se force pas sur quelqu'un qui en veut pas » *You can't force happiness on who doesn't want it*

or by talking about the power of money with H  l  ne/Jo's mother

« J'aime que tu veux   tre ind  pendante, mais tu sais, l'argent, il faut que   a reste    notre service, pas le contraire » *I am happy you want to be independent but money should work for us not the other way around*

The theme of alcoholism: the female protagonist's father is unhappy. He helps himself to glasses of what appears to be alcohol in addition to the beers he drinks. He falls to the ground in front of his daughters because he is so drunk.

Mr. Roger also likes to drink beer. This seems to have been a common practice at that time for working-class men.

Smoking: H  l  ne/Jo's father smokes a lot. Monsieur Roger also likes his cigarettes.

The theme of death. Although Mr. Roger's death is very sad, it gives Helen/Jo a range of emotions that enrich her as well as treasured memories and wisdom.

Mental illness: H  l  ne/Jo tries to understand the young people with disabilities who pass by Mr. Roger's door by asking questions about what they wear, what they do (why do they talk to themselves), where they come from...

Thanks to Mr. Roger, she learns not to be selfish and to think of their good.

FILM PHOTOS

Hélène/Jo in her Limoilou neighbourhood in the 80s. Very nice historical reconstruction



Hélène/Jo uses her bicycle wherever she goes

The neighbourhood «Le Dépanneur» with Monsieur Roger, Hélène/Jo and her dad



Hélène/Jo catches her dad crying in the bus



Hélène/Jo enjoys spending time with her neighbour Monsieur Roger
He likes drinking beer

A “friendly” race in the neighbourhood



**The whole family : the mother, the sisters (Margot and Jeanne),
Hélène/Jo, the father and standing in the back Monsieur Roger**