

MY STEPMOTHER IS A WITCH

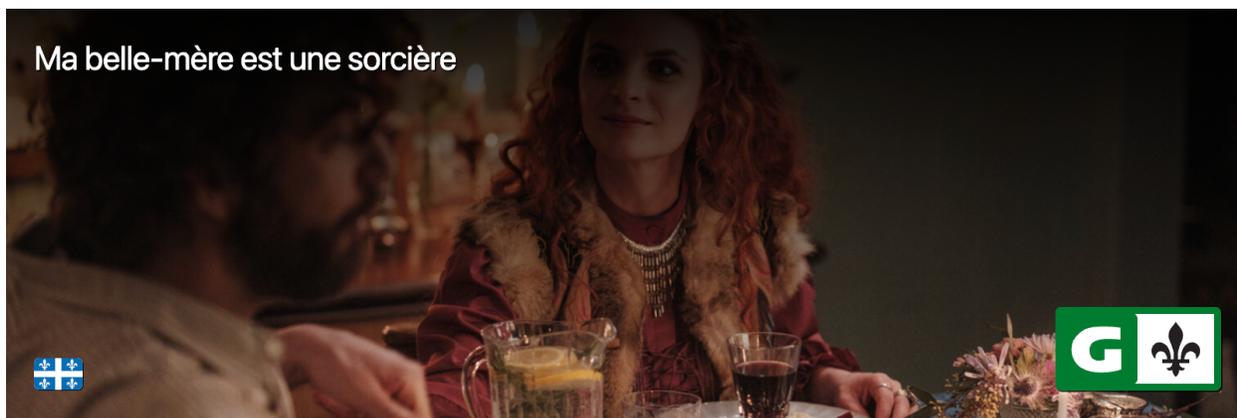
Original version: French / English subtitles



Director: *Joëlle Desjardins Paquette*
Release date (Quebec) : *October 10, 2025*
Genre: *Adventure/ fantasy*
Country of origin: *Canada (Quebec)*
Runtime : *80 min.*

CLASSIFICATION

<https://repertoire.cinema.mcc.gouv.qc.ca/film/ma-belle-mere-est-une-sorciere-443907/>



Ma belle-mère est une sorcière



📅 2024

🎬 Aventures fantastiques

Synopsis

Depuis que sa mère a quitté la maison familiale, Margot, 12 ans, ne cesse d'espérer son retour. Un soir, en rentrant de l'école, elle trouve son père, Marcel, d'ordinaire taciturne, roucoulant auprès de Jeanne, une ancienne camarade de classe qu'il vient de retrouver. Puis, elle découvre que son petit frère s'exerce avec talent à la guitare, lui qui n'avait jamais touché à cet instrument auparavant. Le lendemain, dans son cours de science, la jeune fille parvient à disséquer une grenouille en un temps record, à la stupéfaction de son meilleur ami. Lorsque Marcel annonce que Jeanne emménage chez eux, Margot, alertée par les événements étranges entourant la présence de sa nouvelle belle-mère, décide de prendre les grands moyens pour prouver qu'il s'agit d'une sorcière.



Motifs de classement

Issu de la lignée des Contes pour tous, ce film aborde avec fantaisie et originalité les répercussions de la séparation des parents sur leurs enfants. Centré sur une préadolescente déterminée à réunir la cellule familiale coûte que coûte, le récit est campé dans la réalité du quotidien, qu'il pimente d'éléments surnaturels. Ces derniers ponctuent avec légèreté la quête de l'héroïne, qui n'est par ailleurs jamais menacée. Si de brèves images d'une tombe profanée ainsi que la présentation d'un rituel magique risquent de causer des frayeurs passagères aux tout-petits, celles-ci s'estompent rapidement au profit d'une histoire rassembleuse, riche en émotions comme en péripéties amusantes et dont on retiendra le message positif et le dénouement heureux.



Date de classement

26 septembre 2025

SYNOPSIS

After her parents' separation, Margot, a preteen, vows to bring her family back together. But one day she makes a shocking discovery; a "mysterious" woman has moved into their home. Unsettling events begin to unfold, convincing Margot that her soon-to-be stepmother is a witch who has cast a spell over her father and brother. Determined to save her family, she turns to an eccentric self-proclaimed occult expert to reveal and expel the witch. She will leave no stone unturned.

Attraction Distribution

REVIEWS

Reviews from English magazines are hard to find. This is a summary of reviews from French press in English by AI

Main press reviews (French)

- Quebec print/online critics describe it as a youth film that mixes a separation/recomposed-family story with light fantasy, using the "witch" angle as a metaphor for dealing with change rather than real horror. [destinationvilledequebec+1](#)
- One major Quebec daily gives it around 3.5/5, calling it an ideal family movie for the Halloween period and praising the balance between gentle thrills and accessibility for children. [journaldemontreal+1](#)
- Reviewers often underline that the film treats themes like divorce, marginality and prejudice with tact and sensitivity, even if some regret a tone that becomes a bit too serious and not quite as funny as the premise suggests. [lesoleil+1](#)

Family and youth-oriented reviews

- A youth news site aimed at kids notes that, despite the "witch" title and some genre elements (crystal ball, potions, cemetery), the film is more charming than frightening and that viewers "shiver with pleasure more than with fear".
- That same outlet emphasizes how natural and believable the performances feel, especially Juliette Aubé as Margot, and recommends the film warmly to both children and adults.

DETAILS

LANGUAGE

The characters speak everyday Quebec French without swear words (there is just one use of the word "shit").

The vocabulary revolves around witchcraft and the family/couple formed by the parents.

WITCHCRAFT

In the film there are several visual elements such as candles, a crystal ball, the cemetery, and also the classic appearance of a witch in a few photos.

The focus seems to be on the witches' powers:

"Real witches who were disturbing... not because of their appearance but because of their knowledge... with powers to do good... or who manipulated and controlled" (Miss Dalloway, an expert in the occult and rituals in a public laundromat).

With this focus, we hear incantations in Latin (not translated in the subtitles), formulas mentioning “the forces of darkness” and “black magic” (“there are consequences to trying to awaken someone else’s powers”), as well as the removal of powers or a love spell.

More concretely, Margot talks about “a Winnebago full of weird stuff, potions, eggs.” Her friend Eli-Antoine also mentions egg-shaped eyes.

The instructions for stripping powers seem to come from old books, including that of the witch Mme Corriveau, whose grave the girls dig up in order to get to her book.

In this sequence, the search for the road to the cemetery is accompanied by references to the cemetery and to “witches buried with their secrets.”

Miss Dalloway gives the recipe to check whether Jeanne is a real witch: moon water, a wood core, slug slime, a rat hair, virgin’s blood (no explicit explanation is given here)... The beet juice Jeanne serves is looked on unfavourably by Margot.

THE FAMILY / THE PARENTS’ RELATIONSHIP

Margot’s parents are affectionate toward her. Her father calls her “my big girl” and “coco,” and her mother talks to her more often. On the phone: “I miss you, “ma chouette” / “I love you, sweetie,” and she mentions that her new apartment will be “our little cocoon, just for us.”

Margot’s mother clarifies the situation in simple words addressed to Margot:

“Daddy and I are not a couple anymore.” This shocks Margot: “But love doesn’t just go away like that!”

The beginning of the film already hinted at the looming divorce with the arrival of the “divorce papers,” which Margot could not accept. The tone of her questions reflects her anger:

“Who is that girl?” she asks / “Since when do you like carrots?” she asks her brother / “You have to help me get rid of her,” she tells Miss Dalloway.

Margot’s father is not as clear as her mother: “We’ve got the happiness train passing through our lives,” he tells his daughter, who does not understand.

“I couldn’t imagine my life without my parents being together,” says Margot.

The film softens Margot’s attitude by contrasting it with the harmony and acceptance in Eli-Antoine’s blended family. It also humanizes love by making it more universal: Jeanne confesses, “I’m a witch, but that doesn’t stop me from being in love with you.”

Margot herself recognizes and admits: “I was wrong about you. I manipulated things. But you can’t improvise love. I’m the villain in this story.”

VIOLENCE

The violence is neither graphic nor gratuitous, because it serves to move the plot forward. For example, Margot needs blood for her potion, so she pricks her finger to draw a drop. It is a very brief image. She also looks for a rat hair, goes down to the basement and sees a motionless rat in a rat trap. We do not see her take the hair, but it is implied.

The appearance of a few elements may disturb the youngest viewers, such as the rumbling in Jeanne's stomach, the ensuing invasion of frogs, or the skeleton of the witch that Margot and her friends dig up.

To capture Jeanne, the witch stepmother, Margot hits her on the back of the head with a shovel; again, the gesture is very brief and more suggested than explicitly shown. Screams and a thunderstorm add suspense to the scene.

To strip her of her powers, Margot and her friends chant incantations around Jeanne, who is sitting on a chair with her hands tied with ropes. This is presented as a *fait accompli*; the tying-up itself is not shown. The incantations seem to work, since Jeanne, still in her chair, rises into the air and then comes back down.

The music at times, the sudden storm and lightening establish a suspenseful atmosphere intended to increase the mystery.

NUDITY

Nothing to report

SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Nothing to report except loving gestures: Marcel Rivard and Jeanne kiss twice on the mouth and affectionately embrace.

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT / MESSAGES

The potential psychological impact on a young audience is generally positive, but the film may stir up certain fears or vulnerabilities in children already affected by separation or a blended family. Its tone remains warm and reassuring, with a resolution that values tolerance, dialogue, and acceptance of difference.

MESSAGES THAT COULD WORRY / DISTURB CHILDREN UNDER 10

- Emotions triggered by the parents' divorce: anger, sadness, disgust, fear of losing a parent.
- Margot's sense of alienation from her family, which she no longer recognizes because of the changes she notices: her brother suddenly plays guitar even though he has never taken lessons, he eats carrots even though he does not like them, her father plays music during dinner when he has never done that before.
- The witches' powers: children might be frightened by the mystery and dark magic surrounding witchcraft, which they do not understand.
- Worth noting: the digging up of the skeleton and the process of extracting powers are carried out only by girls. Margot's friend has disappeared from the plot.
- The music, the storm with lightening, the places like the cemetery or the strange camping car may also frighten the little ones.

POSITIVE MESSAGES

- Margot's positive evolution, as she moves from hating her parents' divorce to accepting the recomposition of her family. She also learns to look at her friend's blended family differently.
 - The film also deconstructs the cliché of the wicked, destructive stepmother.
 - The power of imagination as a tool and a refuge for coping with pain.
- The discovery of the witches' powers in both their negative and positive aspects lead Margot to accept her parents' divorce and to appreciate her stepmother for her positive powers.

Note: Miss Dalloway is an LGBTQ character.



JEANNE'S MYSTERIOUS CAMPING VAN

THE MAIN CHARACTERS



The expert in the occult and rituals/ A friend of Margot's -

A member of a recomposed family

A school friend of Margot's

FAMILY DYNAMICS



Marcel and Jeanne are in love



Margot's gaze speaks volume about her feelings of distrust towards Jeanne



Margot and Eli-Antoine are friends

VISIT TO THE CEMETERY
On the mission to unearth a witch



*Margot and her friends and Miss Dalloway find the grave
Aline Corriveau, the witch from 100 years ago*



The unearthing begins