

MENUET PRESENTS  
A SHORT BY GILLES COULIER



SHORT FILM  
competition  
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

# MONT BIANC

WIM WILLAERT JEAN-PIERRE LAUWERS

PRESS FILE

# MONT BLANC

## PITCH

A father undertakes a last journey to the mountains together with his son.  
Looking for the Mont Blanc and for each other.



## SYNOPSIS

When an 80-year-old father is declared terminally ill, he asks his son to make a journey together. He wants to see the Mont Blanc for the last time. Soon it becomes clear that the relationship between father and son isn't ideal. They don't understand each other. But with the end of his life in sight, the differences get even more obvious.



© Kris Dewitte

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The inspiration for *Mont Blanc* came from my own life, although I have a great relationship with my own father. But there was a time in my teens when things were not so smooth, and I wondered how it would be if that feeling had endured. What if you hate the man who is your father for the rest of your life?

My way into the story was to imagine the father making a dying wish, asking to be taken back to a place of better family memories. As a son, I don't think you could say no. You would have to do it. But that doesn't make everything alright.

Initially conceived as a road trip to the Alps, I found that the story only came alive after father and son had reached the mountains. Once arrived, the characters' relationship is stripped bare. Not a lot is said, but in that way many things are said. In that moment, the fact that they don't talk is what is interesting.

From the outset, I had Wim Willaert in mind for the role of the son, having worked with Wim on my student shorts *IJsland* and *Paroles*. I love the way he acts. I really believe his performances. Finding someone to play the father was harder, since I did not want to cast a well-known face. But when I saw a picture of Jean-Pierre Lauwers, I knew he was the one.

## BIOGRAPHY DIRECTOR

Gilles Coulier (°1986) studied Audiovisual Arts at the academy of Sint-Lukas in Brussels. In 2009 he made the short film *IJsland*. It was immediately picked up by the Flanders Audiovisual Fund (VAF) and won prizes such as the VAF Wildcard at the International Short Film Festival of Leuven (2009) and the SABAM Award for Best Belgian Short Film (2010). After the success in its home territory, *IJsland* also received recognition abroad. The film was selected for the Cannes Film Festival in 2010 and screened at various festivals including a.o. the Abu Dhabi Film Festival and the Leeds Film Festival. With his short film *Paroles* Gilles won the Jury Prize for Best Short Film at the International Short Film Festival of Leuven in 2010 and was selected for several national and international film festivals such as the Hong Kong Film Festival among others.

Gilles recently set up his own production company, De Wereldvrede (The World Peace), together with actor Gilles De Schryver, best known internationally for *Come As You Are*.

Meanwhile he's also working on a script for his first feature film, *Cargo*, to be produced by Menuet, about a family fishing business that turns bad in harsh economic times.

## CAST

Wim Willaert (°1967) graduated from Studio Herman Teirlinck as an actor. He acquired fame in France by acting in Yolande Moreau's film *When the Sea Rises* (2004), which won two Césars. He also played in Koen Mortier's *22<sup>nd</sup> of May* and *Ex Drummer* and recently won the prize for Best Actor at the Amiens Film Festival for his role in Peter Monsaert's *Offline*. Willaert is also known as a musician. He is a member of the big band ensemble 'Flat Earth Society' and co-founded 'De Dolfijntjes' together with fellow actor and musician Wim Opbrouck.

Jean-Pierre Lauwers (°1943) is a retired newspaper vendor who's still very active as a local politician, a volunteer for several organisations and an enthusiastic extra at various productions. He reacted to a casting bulletin issued by Gilles and Angelo and was selected because of his natural way and because of his physical similarity to Wim Willaert.



# CREW - TECHNICAL DATA

title	Mont Blanc
director	Gilles Coulier
screenplay	Gilles Coulier & Angelo Tijssens
executive producer	Dirk Impens
producers	Alberte Gautot & Katelijne Pieters
1st assistant director	Tim Lammers
director of photography	David Williamson
editor	Tom Denoyette
original music	Liesa Van der Aa & Johannes Genard
gaffer	Benjamin Van de Water
sound design	Matthias Hillegeer
art director	Philippe Bertin
costume designer	Valerie Le Roy
make-up artist	Labhise Allara Mandango Ciratu
hairstresser	Jytte De Muynck
location manager	Thomas Koopmans
assistant producer	Elise Van Reybroeck
coach	Felix van Groeningen
camera assistant	Tingyao Zhou
postproduction	Grid vfx
with financial support from	Flanders Audiovisual Fund (VAF)
locations	Belgium, France, Switzerland
original language	Dutch
shooting period	22 - 28 April 2012
support	ARRI Alexa, colour
medium	DCP, HDCam, dvd, Blu-ray
length	14'
subtitles	Dutch, French, English
sound	5.1
format	2:35

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menuet

With the support  
of the Flemish Government



VAF



screeners

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