



UN FILM DE
CAROLINE MONNET

BOOTLEGGGER

Mani, a master's student, returns to the reserve in northern Quebec where she grew up. Her painful past resurfaces. Resolved to reintegrate into the community, she gets involved in the debate around a referendum on allowing the free sale of alcohol on the reserve. Laura, a bootlegger, pockets the profits she makes there under the protection of the band council and her partner Raymond. The latter is still angry with Mani, whom he holds responsible for the death of his daughter in a fire. Two radically opposed women divide the community into two sides who face each other to determine the best path to independence.

Drama, 81 minutes
French, Anishinaabemowin
2021

A film by Caroline Monnet
Produced by Catherine Chagnon

Financing: SODEC, Telefilm Canada, Le Fonds Harold Greenberg
In association with Best Friend Forever
In collaboration with Société Radio Canada, Super Écran

Markets: CineMart, Berlinale Co-Production Market,
Cinéfondation, BoostNL, Stowe Story Labs, First Cut Lab FNC,
First Look USA

CNC Award for Best Screenplay, Cinéfondation, 2017 Cannes Film Festival

A Microclimat Films Production
Distribution in Canada: MK2 MILE END
International Sales: Best Friend Forever



Devery Jacobs in the role of Mani
Production Still: Microclimat Films



Pascale Bussi res in the role of Laura
Production Still: Microclimat Films



Photo: Ulysse del Drago

Director's Biography

Caroline Monnet is a multidisciplinary artist of Algonquin ancestry from Outaouais, Quebec. She studied Sociology and Communication at the University of Ottawa (Canada) and the University of Granada (Spain) before pursuing a career in visual art and film. Her work seeks to communicate complex ideas around Indigenous identity and bicultural living through the examination of cultural histories. She is based in Montreal.

Monnet's short films *Ikwé* (2009), *Warchild* (2010), *Mobilize* (2015), *Tshieutin* (2016), *Dada Creatura* (2016), and *Emptying the Tank* (2018) all screened at TIFF. *Gephyrophobia* (2012) screened at Les Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin, and *Mobilize* was selected at the Sundance Film Festival. She was nominated for Best Short Film for *Roberta* (2014) and Best Short Documentary for *Tshieutin* at the Canadian Screen Awards.

Her first feature film *Bootlegger* was selected for Cinemart and Berlinale Co-Production Market in 2016. It won Best Screenplay at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival, an award granted by the Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée (CNC) and Cinéfondation.

Director's Statement

Bootlegger started taking shape in my imagination at a time where we were seeing the proliferation of referendums in Canada's First Nation communities to abolish the law prohibiting the sale and consumption of alcohol. These political debates are not unanimous and can blatantly polarize communities, mainly because of the hypersensitivity related to the subject of alcoholism. My desire to tell stories, break cycles of victimization, and tackle preconceptions led me to want to build a cinematic world on this topic.

In failing to provide the necessary resources, the Canadian government demonstrates a real hypocrisy relative to reserves. This hypocrisy exists at the very heart of the community in *Bootlegger* and manifests itself in the form of corruption, secrets, and family taboos. I staged characters that transcend stereotypes and put forward their humanity, humour, and the contemporary reality of Indigenous people in isolated situations.

The territory is captivating but also threatening. My approach is contemporary, portraying my people in a modern and colourful way. Hope, laughter, and tears reverberate on a daily basis and illustrate the pulse of the community.

Bootlegger is a social drama, but it is also an ode to the vitality and resilience of the Algonquin people. This story is common to any poor and marginalized communities. The topics in *Bootlegger* are thus universal and serve as springboards to explore the fear of losing control, the hope of a better world for future generations, and the quest for identity.

— Caroline Monnet



Photo: Julie Artacho

Producer's Statement

Bootlegger deals with the subjugation of a community and individual resilience. The story involves two main female characters who are diametrically opposed but who come together in an essential aspect, to push themselves to the limit without compromise. Laura and Mani are unique, direct, and authentic characters. Together, they build an alliance that forces each of them to stop and listen rather than continue in the tireless tug of war of the powerful and the more assimilated.

The project was noticed during our presence at international markets: Cinemart, Berlinale Co-production Market, BoostNL, Stowe Story Labs, and the prestigious residence of the Cinéfondation—an official selection of the Cannes Film Festival—where Caroline won the CNC award. The production phases supported by SODEC, Telefilm Canada, and Le Fonds Harold Greenberg enabled principal writer-director Caroline Monnet to create a sensory and contemporary cinematic universe.

Monnet's sometimes extravagant universe is rooted in a raw, difficult, and harsh reality both in terms of the landscape and the Indigenous people living on a reserve. The multidisciplinary filmmaker and artist portrays this reality with rigour and affection, since she speaks of her maternal ancestry and her community, which she infinitely respects. The fact that the Canadian government has wreaked havoc in Northern Quebec, on the periphery of the major centres where the strongest and most affluent win, reflects a world that would be but cannot be silenced.

Monnet's artistic approach is clear and in keeping with our society's identity and relational concerns.

— Catherine Chagnon

Microclimat Films

Founded in 2010 by producer Catherine Chagnon, Microclimat Films is a Quebec company dedicated to a cinema outside the box.

Microclimat Films has been involved in numerous productions and coproductions, including the documentary *Rue de la Victoire* with a world premiere at Hot Docs 2017 and an international premiere at El Gouna Festival in Egypt.

In 2018, Microclimat Films received the support of SODEC for its interactive production activities. The company was chosen for the innovative nature of its proposal as well as the strength of its partnerships.

In 2019, Microclimat Films released a seven directors' film-concert, *The Seven Last Words*, an original idea of Kaveh Nabatian, with a world premiere at Rotterdam, in the Bright Future program while *Free Fall*, a 360-degree danse film, is created in residency at the Society for Arts and Technologies (SAT). The immersive film by Dana Gingras is distributed by Diversion cinéma.

In 2021, Microclimat Films produced *Bootlegger*, Caroline Monnet's debut feature. Presented by MK2 MILE END, the film will open the 50th Festival du nouveau cinema.

microclimatfilms.com

Bootlegger

Cast

Pascale Bussi res
in the role of Laura

Devery Jacobs
in the role of Mani

Samian
in the role of Oscar

Jacques Newashish
in the role of Raymond

Dominique P tin
in the role of Jeanne

Jos phine Bacon
in the role of Nora

C, S, Gilbert Crazy Horse
in the role of Johnny

Brigitte Poupart
in the role of Nadine

Charles Bender
in the role of  ric

Charles Buckell-Robertson
in the role of the Radio Host

Written by

Caroline Monnet
Daniel Watchorn

Directed by

Caroline Monnet

Produced by

Catherine Chagnon

Executive Producer

Pierre Even

Associate Producer

Sheldon McGregor

Cinematographer

Nicolas Canniccioni

Editor

Aube Foglia

Production Designer

Louisa Schabas

Costumes Designer

 ric Poirier

Sound

St phane Barsalou
Guillaume Daoust
Jean-Fran ois B. Sauv 
Bernard Gari py Strobl

Original Score

Jean Martin
Tanya Tagaq

Country of Production

Canada

Shooting Locations

Kitigan Zibi
Tiohti :ke / Moonyang and
surroundings

Release Date

October 8th, 2021

Official website

bootleggerlefilm.com