

TF1 Studio presents  
a production Bonne Pioche Cinéma

Chantal Ladesou Julie Thierry Julie Lucien Claudia Philippe Arié Nino  
Gayet Neuvic Depardieu Jean-Baptiste Tagbo Katherine Elmaleh Kirtadze

She loves to  
party and have  
fun! she hates  
kids!

# Who's that Granny?!

But this  
summer,  
granny aurore  
has seven at  
home.



A film by  
**Gabriel Julien-Laferrrière**

  
**CANNES  
JUNIOR**

Sadio Diallo Violette Guillon Teïlo Azaïs Luna Aglat Benjamin Douba Paris Chann Aglat Lilian Dugois Mattéo Perez



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TF1 Studio presents  
A Bonne Pioche Cinéma production

# WHO'S THAT GRANNY ?!

A film by  
**GABRIEL JULIEN-LAFERRIÈRE**

Running time: 99'

**RELEASE DATE: AUGUST 7, 2019**

## PRESS KIT

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## SYNOPSIS

After two years of happy life together in their own big apartment, the patchwork bunch of seven half-brothers and half-sisters are forced to move out. As they split up for summer vacation with different parents, little Gulliver the youngest gets sent alone to stay with his grandma by the seaside. But eccentric Granny Aurore is no ordinary baby-sitter - she'd rather party than take care of her grandson! So the rest of the gang decide to come to Gulliver's rescue. A new family revolution is about to begin.

She was all set to enjoy the good life... Until these seven showed up at her door!

## CAST

Mamie Aurore	<b>Chantal LADESOU</b>
Sophie	<b>Julie GAYET</b>
Philippe	<b>Thierry NEUVIC</b>
Agnes	<b>Julie DEPARDIEU</b>
Hugo	<b>Lucien JEAN-BAPTISTE</b>
Babette	<b>Claudia TAGBO</b>
Claude	<b>Philippe KATERINE</b>
Paul	<b>Arié ELMALEH</b>
Madeleine	<b>Nino KIRTADZE</b>
Gulliver	<b>Sadio DIALLO</b>
Clara	<b>Violette GUILLON</b>
Bastien	<b>Teïlo AZAÏS</b>
Leopoldine	<b>Luna AGLAT</b>
Eliot	<b>Benjamin DOUBA PARIS</b>
Juliette	<b>Chann AGLAT</b>
Oscar	<b>Lilian DUGOIS</b>
Kevin	<b>Mattéo PEREZ</b>

## **CREW**

Director	<b>Gabriel JULIEN-LAFERRIÈRE</b>
Original screenplay	<b>Gabriel JULIEN-LAFERRIÈRE</b> <b>Sébastien MOUNIER</b>
Producers	<b>Yves DARONDEAU</b> <b>Emmanuel PRIOU</b>
Production companies	<b>BONNE PIOCHE CINEMA</b> <b>TF1 STUDIO</b> <b>M6 FILMS</b> <b>REZO PRODUCTIONS</b>
Director of Photography	<b>Cyrill RENAUD</b>
Sound Engineers	<b>Alain SIRONVAL (AFSI)</b> <b>Olivier MORTIER</b> <b>Roland VOGLAIRE</b> <b>Éric CHEVALLIER</b>
Head Editor	<b>Thomas BÉARD</b>
Production Designer	<b>Mathieu MENUT</b>
Costume Designer	<b>Noémie VEISSIER</b>
Original Music	<b>DA SILVA &amp; Frédéric FORTUNY</b>

## INTERVIEW WITH GABRIEL JULIEN-LAFERRIÈRE (director)

### What made you want to do a sequel to "We Are Family"?

**Gabriel Julien-Laferrière:** How could I not want to continue on the adventure of a film that made me happier than any other film ever did? When Yves Darondeau (Bonne Pioche) and Jean-Michel Rey (Rezo Films) gave me the script to **"We Are Family"**, written by Camille Moreau and Olivier Treiner, I loved the tone: funny without being vulgar, bending the rules without breaking them, and it was a big cast, a real challenge for a director. Plus, there were a lot of kids to direct, seven to be exact, and they were the story's driving force, not just acting accessories in a film full of adults. I was in heaven! Everything went smoothly - a real joy to shoot. When things go that well, you want to make them last.

Of course, if the movie hadn't been successful, there wouldn't have been a sequel. But we had about 800,000 admissions and the critics gave us pretty good reviews. We got the green light. The producers and partners gave us the okay. We could get to work! (laughs) Camille Moreau and Olivier Treiner weren't available, so I took up my pen, or my keyboard actually, and I wrote this sequel with Sébastien Mounier.

### What did making a sequel represent for you?

Obviously, it was more than just reviving the characters of this crazy blended family where the kids had taken over for lack of stable, mature parents. It also implied imagining what they were like several years later. For example, some of the kids who had reached the age of graduating high school were claiming their independence, and the cocoon they had built for themselves was about to burst, while the parents had become more reasonable. So we had to shuffle all the cards and find a new dramatic premise while keeping the principle of an ensemble movie intact. **"We Are Family"** was about parent-child relationships and problems that couples have within blended families. I thought the sequel could talk about the role grandmothers play in families in general, and in this family in particular.

### Why?

Maybe I got hit with a flood of my childhood memories! (laughs) When I was a little boy, I was very close and affectionate with both my grandmothers. They weren't very outgoing, but they meant a lot to me. Today, now that they're no longer with us, the adult I have become loves other people's grandmas. Grandmothers are often the keystones of the family. They are the ones who keep the kids together. When they disappear, the family grows apart, the cousins grow distant, certain traditions disappear... something is lost, irremediably.

### Who inspired the idea?

Not my own grandmothers, in any case. They were more traditional. I think it's my personal idea of the post-1968 years. I was a child during those years, which to me, even today, are still an "enchanted parenthesis" of freedom. "Forbidding is forbidden!" I was too little at the time, I couldn't take advantage of it. When I reached the age of adulthood, it was over. The bubble had burst. Actually, I think I put into the film's grandma character

everything I always imagined about the freedom and extravagance that the 1970s had instilled in the people who had lived those years to the fullest. Chantal Ladesou's vivacity and lunacy inspired me to push that even further.

### **Did you know Chantal Ladesou before you made the first film?**

Not very well. That might seem strange, because she is a real theater star. I went to see her on stage and arranged to meet her. I discovered an irresistibly funny woman full of witty banter. I immediately thought she would bring sparkle to that slightly off-kilter grandma. I also understood why she has so many fans: Chantal is an actress who pushes boundaries, and she's right to do it. The more she does it, the better it works and the more she seems natural. In her league, she's a unique phenomenon. She has the gift of the gab, as well as a rare instinct and innate sense for comedy. Surprisingly, she is very paradoxical: she tackles her characters head-on, without fear or taboo, but also with true modesty.

On the set of **"We Are Family"**, we really got along well together. We had a lot of fun. Even so, she put me in a cold sweat sometimes. She gets so caught up in her acting that she can forget she's on a movie set. So sometimes she would step out of the camera's view or totally block it, or she'd make little comments aside, like you do in theater! She also seriously injured her ankle on the first day of the shoot... But given the energy she brings to her character and co-actors big and small, she's easy to forgive. She was amazing!

When I proposed the idea of her being the central character for the sequel, she got unanimous approval. She'd told me she'd been frustrated about not having enough scenes with the kids in the first film. This time I think she got her share!

### **In this sequel, you've made Gulliver, the youngest of the kids, her main acting partner.**

In three years, the eldest children have become teens. Making kids who are fifteen, sixteen or seventeen years old spend their vacation with their grandma wasn't believable. So I chose to send Gulliver, the youngest. That worked for the script, and I was sure that Sadio Diallo, who plays him, could take on the challenge and that he and Chantal would make an amazing duo. But I also wanted to make sure that the second film didn't penalize any member of the film, that we would bring back all the actors from the first film, which really owes its success to the whole group.

### **Is it hard to make an ensemble film?**

Yes, it's pretty hard! (laughs) Even if some of the characters are more "visible", all of them have to exist, have meaning and be treated equally. The construction game can turn into a brain teaser. For **"We Are Family"**, which I partially adapted to give the actors' personalities the best possible fit, I found a way to always put adults in the kids' scenes and vice-versa. A way of giving everyone their turn to join in the circle and make sure nobody would be forgotten. I couldn't exactly put that same principle to work for **"Who's That Granny?!"**, but I came close.

### **How did you put together the "family" of the first film?**

We wanted it to be believable, to correspond to today's society and the characters' place in society, which meant it had to be multi-racial. We picked the kids first, since that's always the most problematic and takes the most time and effort. Once we had all the brothers and sisters in place, we cast the "parents". I was lucky that all those actors from different professional backgrounds were available and fit right into my story - from Julie Gayet to Claudia Tagbo, Lucien Jean-Baptiste to Philippe Katerine, Julie Depardieu to Arié Elmaleh, Thierry Neuvic and Nino Kirtadze. And of course Chantal Ladesou!

### **The thought of doing a movie with seven children would have scared a lot of other filmmakers away.**

Well I jumped in feet first! With children, I'm in my own element. We play together and have fun. For me, it's a real pleasure to direct kids. I found that out in 2006, on my first film as a 2nd unit director on "Big City" by Djamel Bensalah. In that case there were thirty of them! The most important part is casting them right. You have to hire kids who are motivated. On a film shoot, children who get bored can make your life hell. To get them to continue to act when they don't want to anymore, you've got to negotiate, invent secret strategies, make promises and give them gifts. It's horrifying! I lived through a nightmare like that when I was starting out, working on films as 1st assistant director, on which I hadn't chosen the child actors. After that I only hired children that I got to know first, which takes a lot of time. Casting for "**We Are Family**" took six months. Every Wednesday and Saturday, I met new candidates and did callbacks. I made them come back several times, and only kept the ones who enjoyed coming back and had fun. Once I had all the brothers and sisters set, I wanted them to get to know each other. We organized a weekend trip at a big cabin out in the country. My assistant had the good idea of making them sleep in a large dormitory, everyone in the same room together, girls and boys, big kids and little kids, all from different backgrounds, from the city and the suburbs. The pandemonium was spectacular, but in the end, they were like a gang of cousins, with me as their uncle. After that, the shoot went fantastic. When we asked them to come back to make the sequel, they all immediately said yes. It didn't take long for them to get back into family mode. It was the same thing for the adults. Making the second film felt a little bit like an Indian summer.

### **Your screenplay crosses just as many boundaries as the first film did, but with a new twist: this time, it's the grandma who's breaking the rules.**

We were making a sequel, so we had to change the story, but not its tone, which is nonconformist in a way that makes you laugh and relax. And too bad if it rattles some cages! We live in a mosaic society, where the jet-set and sloppy dressers hang out at the same places, where heterosexuals and homosexuals coexist, where girls and boys study and work together, and so on. I'm writing for all those people - for a seven-year-old with permissive parents just as much as for my own mother, who's eighty-seven and fairly traditional.

In "**We are Family**", since both the parents and the children, like so many others today, are rather conventional and "politically correct", the grandmother was the only one who

could shake things up. We made full use of that. What's more, it was 100% in line with Chantal's personality.

But I was careful to make sure that the film would never become divisive. Shaking things up, digging deeper, exaggerating and being provocative, yes. Because conformity is annoying. But shocking just for shock value, or to horrify, no.

### **Your own primary objective is to make people laugh.**

I'm a director of situation comedy. My movies are anchored in reality and have something to say. The first thing I want is to make people laugh, of course, but I also want to provoke emotions and give things meaning. I'm not qualified for farce or extreme comedy. For a long time, I used to be assistant to great indie filmmakers like Leos Carax, Claire Denis, Chantal Akerman, Nicole Garcia and Elia Suleiman. I love their work, their films are magnificent, but sometimes I came out of screenings of films I'd spent several months of my life working on, feeling a little depressed, invaded by the darkness in them. When I became a director, I swore I'd only make films that make you come out happy, lighter, with a smile on your face, full of life.

### **Is there anything particularly tough about making a comedy that's also a character film?**

You deprive yourself of a lot of the standard tools used in movies, for example crane shots and inserts. Inserts and spectacular shots are wonderful, but that never made anyone laugh! When you set out to do a character comedy, you better have rock-solid dialogue that you can make even better every day, with inspired actors whose brilliance you capture with a technical crew that understands that the story and characters come first, and everything else comes second, in service to those elements. Otherwise, it doesn't work. After that, you can try to work on the directing, lighting and sets. When technical methods are limited, as frustrating as that may be, it stimulates the imagination. You try to find visual solutions worthy of the big screen.

### **When you write dialogue, are you searching for good lines?**

No. First I try to find the truth in the situation and the characters. With great care. After that I do read-throughs with the actors and encourage them to improvise and modify their lines. When it comes to dialogue, you can never guess which ones are going to inspire them! I remember in "**Neuilly Yo Mama!**", one of the characters says: "I'm just a loser. I'm Ballardur!" Back then, everyone had told me to cut that line on the assumption that in the schools, nobody knew who Ballardur was. I kept it in anyway. It became a catchphrase in schoolyards for years! Dialogue is know-how, instinct, and above all, the actors who deliver it.

### **What kind of a director are you?**

For me, filmmaking is very much a team effort. I love to work closely with others, with the technical crew as much as the actors. I prepare, plan and direct, but I'm not authoritarian. I consult, get advice and listen. If you've got a good team, it's not unheard of that an actor or technician has a better idea than you do. I can change the dialogue, improvise a scene



and change a work schedule at the last minute. I'm not the castrating type. And I only yell cut when the actors have finished the take!

### **A word about the music?**

I'm very happy about it. It's original music that Da Silva and Frédéric Fortuny wrote especially for the film. They did their first film music for "**We are Family**". I think their music is transcendent, supportive and engaging. I have a culinary metaphor for music: as a filmmaker, I'm the cook. I choose all the ingredients and spices, I chop, I mix, I master the cooking methods and the presentation on the plate. And the musicians, they make the sauce, the soul of the dish, the first emotion it triggers!

### **Is "Who's That Granny?!" a projection of yourself?**

Obviously. I wrote and directed it. Every situation and character has a little bit of me in it. I tried to do it with my own brand of wit and humor, boisterous but kind, epicurien, provocative and a little bit silly. It's a very joyful film and I also hope that it communicates the values most important to me: mutual acceptance, humanism, education, courage and love of freedom. Some very serious words, but that's also what breathes life into a 100% family comedy that aims to bring together three or even four generations and make it enjoyable!

### **Are you a grandfather?**

I became a grandfather right after shooting the film. I had a granddaughter. I dedicated the film to her.

## **INTERVIEW WITH CHANTAL LADESOU (Granny Aurore)**

**In "We are Family", the children were the ones who called all the shots. Did you expect the sequel to hand over that role to their "granny", meaning you?**

**Chantal Ladesou:** I was totally surprised. Gaby (Gabriel Julien-Laferrrière) hinted to me that my role would be bigger this time, but not to the point of becoming the film's main character and having the honor of being in the title! When he had me read his new script, of course I was wildly happy about it! Not because "Granny" had snatched the star role from the kids, but because I got to play her again, and this time with the opportunity of fully exploring her imagination and complexity. And I also have to admit, it was the first time anyone offered me the lead role in a film. After about thirty films playing supporting roles, my little acting ego got a great boost!

**Did the responsibility of taking on the title role of a movie frighten you?**

If I had parachuted from out of nowhere, into totally foreign territory, I probably would have really flipped out. But in this case, since I already knew the crew and my character, everything was smooth and easy. I took being promoted to this "granny" as a stroke of luck. I don't get to have that much fun with a character in a movie very often.

**Why did you say yes to being in the first film of this adventure?**

I loved the story of this separated and remixed family. At first sight, everyone blended together in a pretty random way, as emotional impulses surfaced. The screenplay was well-structured, and at the same time funny, looney, empathetic and warm, just like a lot of "Benetton" families I know! What I also liked about it is the way it turned the world upside down: faced with the adolescent immaturity of their parents, the children were the ones who took control and decided to live together in the same apartment. In the middle of that joyful bazaar, my eccentric granny character delighted me. The part wasn't very big, but I liked its craziness and freedom. Acting-wise, it was as great as it promised to be.

**Besides your role, what made you so thrilled about the sequel?**

First, the script. Even if it doesn't have the same structure as the first film - which is actually a good thing! - I also thought it was well-constructed. At first, with all those little scenes about these blended families going to various places on vacation with their children, it seems scattered, like a patchwork, multicolored and cool. And then it gets tighter, brings together its little group and closes up like an umbrella. That "centrifugal" construction seemed to be smart as well as charming. Besides that, I was happy to get back together with that "family" of actors, adults and children alike. The adults because in addition to being "aces" on set, they are all exquisite and funny human beings. The kids because each one is endearing in their own way.

**They say that acting with children can turn into a nightmare.**

It's true that it can be a hellish exercise: children get tired fast, their powers of concentration can be short-lived, they don't always respect the "blocking" and acting can

bore them quite quickly. It's very hard to get a kid motivated again when he's lagging or doesn't want to do another take.

So it was pretty logical that when I imagined myself faced with seven kids of all different ages, no matter how much I wanted to do it, I was a little uneasy about shooting **"We are Family"**. My fears soon disappeared. All seven behaved like real pros. Gaby had done a good job getting them ready. He'd taken them all out to the countryside. Not to rehearse, just so they could get to know each other and become friends. Between the water fights, pillow fights and all the rest of the tomfoolery, night and day, it made for a pretty raucous weekend. But the seven of them had bonded. On set, coached and managed by Karin Catala, a woman who is gentle, yet energetic and motherly, not only were they extremely disciplined, they also really worked together and were very respectful of everyone. Some of them even came and asked us for bits of advice, which they followed so carefully it was touching. After shooting the first film, which had gone smoothly for the whole team, the little troop kept in touch, so getting back together for **"Who's That Granny?!"** was a real joy. The only difference was that the kids had grown up and Gulliver (Sadio Diallo) and I had been promoted!

### **Do you still identify with the granny you left behind two years ago?**

Yes, her personality hasn't changed a bit. She is just as extravagant and independent as ever. But now that she's front and center, she progresses in plain view. Beneath her eccentricity and lifestyle, which seems so rebellious, you discover an amazingly powerful woman. Besides succeeding in bringing everyone together, she has her own special way of taking the children under her wing, helping them to break out of their cocoons and overcome their fears, which fuels that really symbolic sequence I love so much, jumping into the water from the top of the cliff. In the second film, it's not the granny who's changed, it's the children who have grown up and become even more reasonable, as well as the parents, who have become more mature as they have aged and now take their educational role more seriously.

### **What do you, Chantal Ladesou, have in common with this "granny"?**

A lot of things: exuberance, joy, sarcasm, a touch of madness, the absolute necessity of feeling free, and also being sensitive and affectionate to the point of not being able to express it sometimes. The only thing we don't have in common is her promiscuity. Not only am I very prude in that respect, but I've been married for 47 years to a very jealous man who wouldn't tolerate me even lifting a finger! And that's mutual, actually! (laughs) But to get back to my granny, I'm probably a little more traditional in my daily life than she is. I dress more conservatively and my behavior is less eccentric. I reserve my extravagance for the stage, which is the only place I allow myself to do nearly anything.

### **Were you afraid this granny's character was too "over the top" for you?**

Not at all. A character like that makes you soar. You can imagine really going somewhere with it and having fun! I'd work up the "nerve" and energy to play her while I got ready. In the time it took me to put on her makeup and clothes, I'd rehearse my lines, and snap! I was in character. I could just go for it, instinctively, without thinking. I'm a straightforward actress! (laughs)



### **A straightforward actress... who's easy going?**

I think so. People often think that actors who do one-man shows are hard to deal with, because in their work they do everything - script, costume, sets, directing, and sometimes even the box office! (laughs) It's true sometimes, but not always. In my case, for example, I love surrendering to a role. I love being directed. I'm docile. I listen carefully to directions and I don't complain very much.

### **Are you also the kind of actress who sticks to the script?**

In the theater, especially in my "solo shows", I like to indulge in little verbal digressions. But in films, even if I let myself go sometimes, I generally stay on track with the script, especially if the dialogue is good. For this film, as well as the previous one, I was lucky: Gaby had tailored my dialogue for me. I had some fabulous lines, like "Don't call me granny, it gives me wrinkles!" When you have lines like that to deliver, you don't change a single comma. The comic impact they have is equivalent to a rocket ship!

### **What kind of director is "Gaby"?**

The kind every actor dreams of. He is open-minded but directive, hard-working but fun-loving, intuitive but thoughtful. He's very down to earth, also very practical and very kind. He knows what he wants, but you can talk to him - he puts himself on the same level as his cast and crew. It's simple: Gaby is such an enjoyable filmmaker that at the end of a full day of work, you still want to have dinner with him!

### **For you, what's the difference between acting for theater and film?**

In theater, there is immediacy. You can't go back, so too bad if you screw up! But you can pace around freely - for example, leave the stage and join the audience. It's a lot of adrenaline, but it's also a source of stimulation that I have a hard time doing without for very long. Movies give you a different feeling. Lighting, timing, blocking - everything has to be spot-on. You project your voice less, the acting is more internal, you look for precision. I like the discipline, it makes me focus. The only thing that annoys me is when we have to redo takes. I feel like I'm losing simplicity and spontaneity.

### **How did you react when they told you the film's title was going to be "Who's That Granny?!?"**

At first, I was a little ticked off. I was afraid my acting partners on the radio show "Les Grosses Têtes" were going to make fun of me. I also swore to myself that my grandchildren would never call me "granny". I tried to convince them to call the film "**We are Family 2**", but when that didn't work, I made myself come to my senses and buck up. Today, I think "granny" is a wonderful nickname! (laughs)

### **Who do you think "Who's That Granny?!" was made for?**

For everyone. It's a bright, energetic family comedy that gives some good advice for life and brings along lots of wonderful values, such as mutual respect and accepting

differences. My husband really liked it, and so did my daughter, which proves that it's intergenerational. Of course, they're not in the least bit biased!

**Are you, Chantal Ladesou, a granny in real life?**

Yes, but my grandchildren aren't as old as my character's grandkids are. My grandson is three and my granddaughter is only one. It's too bad, I'll have to wait a while before showing them the movie!