



# LA MIF

van

## Fred Baillif

24 maart 2022 in de bioscoop

Persvoorstelling: 14 maart 10:30 Het Ketelhuis

**VEDETTE** 

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## Synopsis

*La Mif* vertelt het verhaal van zeven jonge vrouwen die samenwonen onder hetzelfde dak, als een familie, zonder dat ze daar zelf voor kozen. Met ieder hun eigen achtergrond en levensverhaal vinden ze in deze opvang iets wat lijkt op een thuis. Ze delen vreugde en verdriet en rebelleren hartstochtelijk tegen de tekortkomingen in hun leven. Bevlogen directeur Lora doet er alles aan om de groep zo goed mogelijk te ondersteunen, maar haar emotionele inzet is eindig en conflicten zijn onvermijdelijk in deze diverse surrogaatfamilie.

*La Mif* is een eerlijk en openhartig portret van jonge vrouwen die, ondanks hun onzekere situatie, bruisen van levenslust.



**LA MIF**  
A film by Fred Baillif

Best Feature Film Generation 71  
BAYARD D'OR DU MEILLEUR FILM FIFF NANKU

STARRING Claudia Grob Amélie Tonsi Anais Uldry Amandine Gelay Kassia Da Costa Joyce Ndayisenga Charlie Areddy Sara Tulu  
PRODUCERS Véronique Vergari, Agnès Boutruche, Fred Baillif ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Jeremy Rieder D.O.P. Joseph Areddy  
STYLIST Lucy Mann SET DESIGNER Mary Villors EDITOR Fred Baillif POST-PRODUCTION Freestudios

fresh prod luna films VISUALS ASTURAL RTS CINEFORUM VEDETTE

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## Credits

Regisseur: Fred Baillif

Producers: Véronique Vergari, Agnès Boutruche

Assistant regisseur: Jeremy Rieder

DOP: Joseph Areddy

Camera assistent: Maxime Beaud

Belichting : Etienne Mordier

Geluidstechnicus: David Puntener, Bruce Wuilloud, Alan Mantilleri, Samuel Levy

Productie assistent: Carole Théraulaz, Charlotte Rey

Editor: Fred Baillif

Postproductie: Freestudios

Lengte: 100 min.

Taal: Frans

Land: Zwitserland

[Website](#) La Mif

Officiële [trailer](#)







## Cast

Van links naar rechts

Anaïs Uldry **als Audrey**

Amandine Golay **als Caroline**

Amélie Tonsi **als Alison**

Kassia Da costa **als Novinha**

Sara Tulu **als Tamra**

Joyce Esther Ndayisenga **als Précieuse** harlie Areddy **as Justine**

## Biography Fred Baillif

Fred Baillif is a self-taught filmmaker who grew up in the countryside of Geneva, Switzerland. He started making films while studying social work, playing basketball and DJing.



After a 7-year career as a professional basketball player and member of the Swiss national team, he enrolled at the Social Work Institute of Geneva in 1997. He graduated in 2000 and found a job as a social worker in a youth detention center. His dream, however, was to make films and DJ. He retired from basketball, left his job and moved to New York where he worked as a PA on documentary series “The It Factor”. He was working during the day and DJing at night in legendary bars like Brooklyn’s Frank’s Lounge and Madame X.

When he came back to Switzerland, he bought a DV camera and directed his first documentary « Sideman », about New-York-based Swiss harmonica player Grégoire Maret. He sold the rights to Swiss national TV channel RTS and started working for the city of Geneva as a street social worker. On the job, he realized there was a film to be made about Geisendorf park, where kids were terrorizing the population, especially in the gay community. He left his job and found a producer for this new feature length documentary project. *Geisendorf* received the Best Documentary Award at « Visions du Réel » in 2006. Now an established documentary filmmaker, he spent the next 10 years directing films such as: *Le Fond et La Forme*, *La Vie en Deux*, *Believers* for Canal +, and *As Long as It Rains in America*, a feature documentary shot in Ethiopia. He also worked for Swiss news program Temps Présent at RTS, before directing his first fiction feature film in 2010: *Tapis Rouge*, a no budget film made with teenagers from a Lausanne suburb. The film won the GIFF Best Feature Film Award and many others. This movie was a revelation for Fred. He realized that he had always wanted to work in fiction.

He started developing his own directing technique for non-professional actors. In 2017, he directed his second feature film, *Edelweiss Revolution*, a comedy with Jean-Luc Bideau and Irène Jacob. As the film was released in Swiss cinemas in 2019, he was already preparing his 3<sup>rd</sup> fiction project, *La Mif* in collaboration with a teens care home in Geneva. Again, it is when capturing the essence of young people, that Fred Baillif is at his best. The film is selected in the “Generation” Berlinale competition 2021.

## Directors Statement

In recent years, several women who had been sexually abused opened up to me. Carried by the desire to make films that are socially engaged, I collected their testimonies and used them as a basis for this project. One topic was recurring: the denial of the victim's relatives, which turned them into accomplices.

In need of characters and a setting for the story, I had the intuition that a children's home would be a breeding ground for situations of abuse. Faithful to my 'cinéma vérité' style, I decided to start a process of immersion. This is how I contacted Claudia, more than 20 years after having worked with her as an intern when studying social work. She was to retire soon and agreed to help, before sharing with me her strong frustration towards the youth protection system. This immediately inspired my story.

With my first two narrative projects, *Tapis Rouge* (2015) and *Edelweis Revolution* (2019), I developed a style inspired by direct cinema, based on real people and improvisation. What drives me with this method is the search of a natural performance and the fun of uncovering unsuspected talent in people who have had no previous acting experience.

With *La Mif* the actresses became the film's 'co-writers', as the access they gave me to their reality allowed me to build the story. This process offered fascinating outcomes. It started with individual interviews with each of the residents and the employees of the children's home, which led to improvisation themes. We then carried workshops over two years, which progressively allowed characters to emerge. I gathered all the elements that had come out of these improvisations and wrote a script. It didn't have predetermined dialogues, but a general plot, an outline and some punchlines.

Most of the scenes take place within a real children's home, a location full of lies, family and work drama. A place that allowed us to work in a flexible way with natural actors in an environment that was familiar to them. With this choice, the boundaries with documentary were blurred and made the setting an essential aspect of the story.

After two years of preparation, we couldn't produce the film because the lack of written dialogues prevented us from getting classic funding

options. But the girls were growing up so we decided to shoot the film anyway. In just over 2 weeks, the film was shot. All the dialogues were improvised and our flexibility allowed us to adapt the story to the actors' performances. In the editing phase, like in a documentary, the story evolved again based on what was captured. A first edit made the local fundraising possible, reaching RTS, Cinéforum and BAK.

To match the realistic style of acting, the cinematography had to be minimalist. My friend and dedicated DOP Joseph Areddy and I opted for a lot of natural light and a 360° "mise en scène" to give a better access to improvisation. Everything was shot handheld, in a very reactive way using mainly a 50mm lens to be as close to the characters as possible and to reinforce the feeling of claustrophobia felt by the protagonists.

Even though the children's home director Lora, interpreted by Claudia Grob, was to be the lead character, my desire to show various point of views pushed me in the direction of a hyperlink film. The young girls all had equal opportunities to occupy the story, depending on their desires and their inspiration 'in the moment' while shooting. Alongside, all the home's social workers also agreed to be part of the film and to interpret characters that would be close to their reality. Three professional actors were added to the group, Frédéric Landenberg (Seb), Nadim Ahmed (Malik) and Blaise Granget (François), the latter two having also trained as social workers.

They were key in facilitating the improvisations and helped with the non-professional actors' confidence. These multiple protagonists all helped to bring other themes to the story, which is the goal of this method. I wanted to be surprised by elements and dialogues that could arise at any moment. For example, I wanted to shed light on the complexity of social work, where questions around sexuality are the source of strong disagreements. The secondary characters in the film have, for this reason, taken a more important place than I initially planned. Their values and views have all influenced the plot. This didn't distract me from the central theme of abuse accomplices, which remains key in the story. Therefore, the plot is built around Lora's character and is woven with the other narrative arcs developed in parallel. Through her journey in the film, Lora understands that her denial is a defense mechanism just like the young residents lie to themselves to survive.

This is what I tried to achieve artistically. Moreover, this film is a social work project. I don't want to insist on the gender aspect which is not an



issue for me. I'd rather emphasize the social aspect of such an experience. These girls with intense backgrounds had to be heard, whether they had suffered abuse or not. Therefore, I trusted them through the process of being part of the film from the beginning.

Filmmaking is a tool that I used to help them gain self-confidence, delivering a strong and simple message to the audience: we can accomplish things. Sounds corny? Yes, I agree but I can already hear the audience ask them if this experience has changed their lives. While they are trying to find the best answer, I can already hear myself think; this is not about changing them, it is all about planting seeds.

*"When I was a basketball player, I was a point guard. My role was to make my teammates play a better game. This is exactly what I am trying to do today as a film director. My teammates are non-professional actors and my mission is to help them express what they have been hiding to themselves sometimes for a long time." – Fred Baillif*





# Filmography Fred Baillif

## Fiction

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2021

**La Mif**

« Generation »

Feature length

Freshprod

Berlinale competition

2019

**Edelweiss Revolution**

Feature length

Freshprod

With J-L Bideau and Irène Jacob

Journées de Soleure

FIFDH

2015

**Tapis Rouge**

Feature length

Freshprod

GIFF, TV5 Monde Best feature  
Nador – Best picture & best  
actors

Chelsea Film festival – Best  
director

Festival de Delémont –  
Audience award

Journées de Soleure

Mashariki Festival Kigali

Festival du premier film  
d'Annonay

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## Documentaries

2017

**Un Canapé pour deux**

Prime Time TV doc series

RTS, Point Prod

2014

**Une douche contre la misère**

**Fraude aux douanes**

Prime Time TV doc

RTS, Temps Présent

2012

**As long as it rains in America**

Visions du réel –  
Competition

Feature length

Les Productions JMH

2010

**Believers**

CANAL + Prime Time TV doc

Empruntes Digitales

2009

**La vie en 2**

Visions du réel – Competition

Prime Time TV doc

Les Productions JMH

2009

**Le Fond et La Forme**

Feature length

Freshprod

2006

**Geisendorf**

Visions du réel – Best  
documentary

Feature length

Namur – Competition

Point Prod, TSR, Freshprod

2003

**Sideman**

Freshprod

Feature length

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**Other**

**1993 to 2000**

Professional basketball player, member of the swiss national team

**1993 to 1995**

Foyer Handicap, Social worker

**2000**

Graduate from HETS in social work

**1999 to 2001**

La Clairière, Social worker in penitentiary

**2003 to 2005**

Youth Delegation, Social worker for the city of Geneva



## Awards (wins)

- Berlin, Berlinale - Internationale Filmfestspiele, Grand Prix for the Best Film in the 14plus Competition 2021 (Winner)
- Zurich, Zurich Film Festival, Goldene Auge (Focus Wettbewerb) 2021 (Winner)
- Zurich, Zurich Film Festival, Ökumenischer Filmpreis 2021 (Winner)
- Namur, Festival international du film francophone, Bayard d'Or du Meilleur film 2021 (Winner)
- Namur, Festival international du film francophone, Prix Agnès 2021 (Winner)
- Valladolid, Semana Internacional de Cine, Award for Best Director 2021 (Winner)
- Valladolid, Semana Internacional de Cine, Award for Best Editing 2021 (Winner)
- Valladolid, Semana Internacional de Cine, Special Jury Mention for the film's cast for their performances 2021 (Winner)
- Berlin, European Film Awards, European Film Award, European Feature Film (Selection) 2021 (shortlisted)

## Festivals (A selection)

- Solothurn, 57. Solothurner Filmtage  
19.01.2022 - 26.01.2022
- Les Arcs, 13e Les Arcs Film Festival  
11.12.2021 - 18.12.2021
- Bellinzona, 34. Castellinaria Festival internazionale del cinema giovane Bellinzona  
13.11.2021 - 20.11.2021
- Tallinn, 25th PÖFF Black Nights Film Festival  
12.11.2021 - 28.11.2021
- Taipei, Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival 2021  
11.11.2021 - 28.11.2021
- Cork, 66th Cork Film Festival  
05.11.2021 - 21.11.2021
- Seville, 18° Sevilla Festival de Cine Europeo  
05.11.2021 - 13.11.2021

- Thessaloniki, 62nd Thessaloniki International Film Festival  
04.11.2021 - 14.11.2021
- Leeds, 35th Leeds International Film Festival  
03.11.2021 - 18.11.2021
- Valladolid, 66. Semana Internacional de Cine de Valladolid  
23.10.2021 - 30.10.2021
- Montreal, 50e Festival du Nouveau Cinéma Montréal  
06.10.2021 - 17.10.2021
- London, 65th BFI London Film Festival  
06.10.2021 - 17.10.2021
- Namur, 36e Festival international du film francophone Namur  
01.10.2021 - 08.10.2021
- Frankfurt, 44. LUCAS Internationales Festival für junge Filmfans  
30.09.2021 - 07.10.2021
- Zurich, 17. Zurich Film Festival  
23.09.2021 - 03.10.2021
- Espoo, 32nd Espoo Ciné International Film Festival  
23.08.2021 - 29.08.2021
- Giffoni Valle Piana, 51st Giffoni Film Festival  
21.07.2021 - 31.07.2021
- Shanghai, 24th Shanghai International Film Festival  
11.06.2021 - 20.06.2021
- Berlin, 71. Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin Industry Event  
(postponedCorona - hybrid edition)  
01.03.2021 - 05.03.2021
- Genève, Geneva International Film Festival GIFF  
05.11.2021 - 14.11.2021

## Over Vedette

Vedette is een door vrouwen geleide filmuitgeverij die ernaar streeft een poortwachter te zijn van meer inclusieve en relevante cinema. Waar elk hedendaags verhaal een kans krijgt om verteld te worden en waar hard wordt gewerkt vanuit liefde voor film.

Rebels van aard zijn we niet bang om risico's te nemen en de status-quo uit te dagen. Of het nu gaat om een release in de bioscopen of online, Vedette zoekt naar de beste match tussen films en publiek. Voor minder doen we het niet.

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