

PICTOR MEDIA & XBO FILMS
present

Women's letters

A film by Augusto Zanollo

A stop-motion short film (11' 15")

Press book



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Women's letters

Duration: 11'15"

Type: An animated short film in stop motion

Director: Augusto Zanollo

Scenario, adaptation, dialogues: Augusto Zanollo and Jean-Charles Finck

Design: Arnaud Béchet

Original Music: Christian Perret

Artistic Director: Arnaud Béchet

Line Producers : Olivier Dehors and Luc Camilli

Executive Producers: Gilbert Hus, Charles Malka and Luc Camilli

A coproduction: PICTOR MEDIA / XBO FILMS

With the participation of France Télévisions

Principal casting

Constantin Pappas, in the role of Simon

Adeline Moreau, in the role of Madeleine

Jérôme Pauwells, in the role of Gallet

Martial Leminoux, in the role of Vaguemestre

Véronique Uzereau, in the role of Sidonie



Synopsis

On the battle fields of the First World War, the nurse Simon patches up the shattered faces of the infantrymen with love letters.

These words from beloved women have the power to heal the wounds of these paper soldiers. Simon himself seems immune to injury.

Untouched by the attacks and unblemished in his white uniform.
So what's his secret?

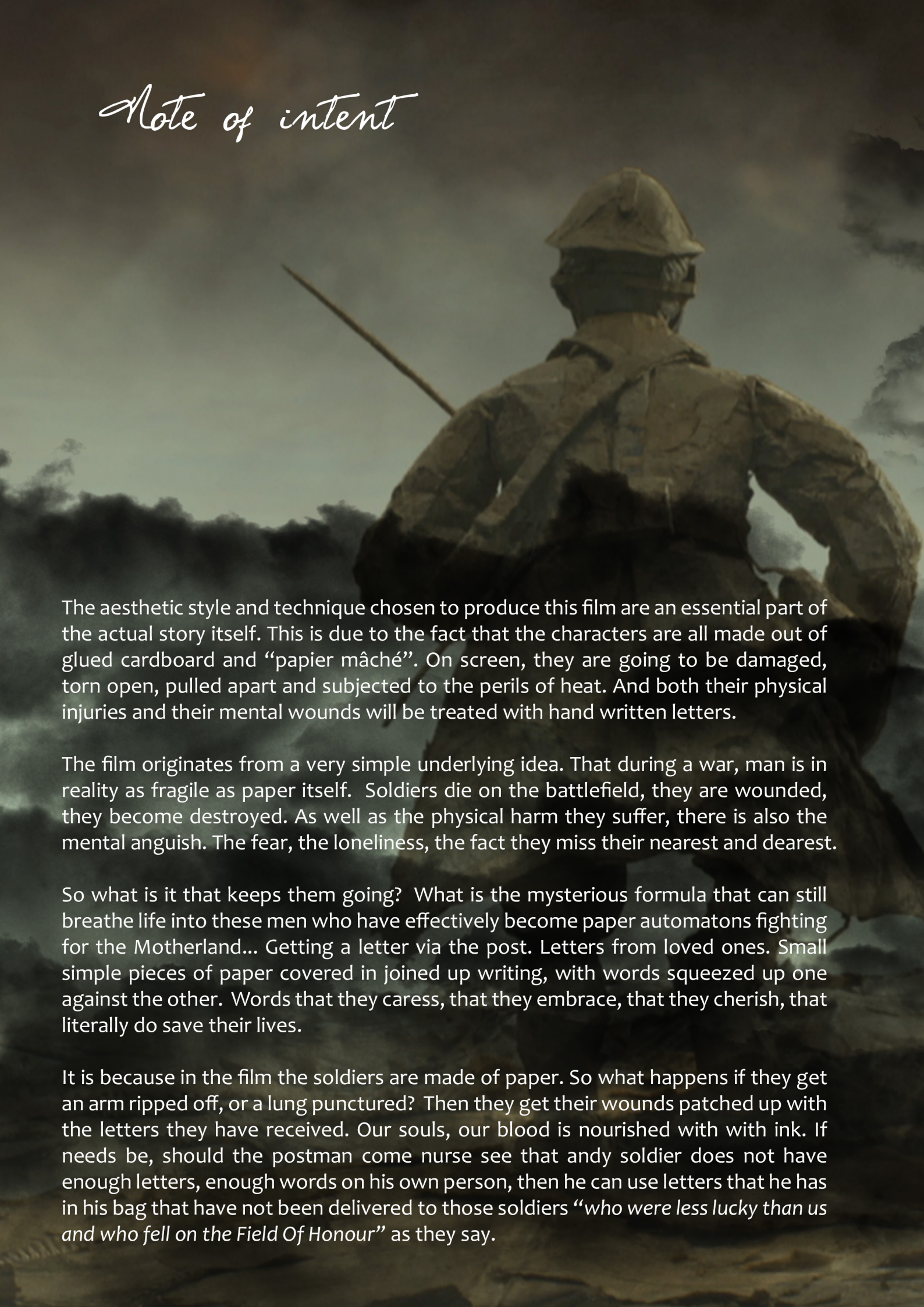
His wartime pen friend who occupies his thoughts every spare moment he has. Knowing that she is out of harm's way but standing behind him gives him the necessary strength to confront the daily horrors and death that war throws at him.

But when death happens where it is least expected it, can these words on paper still ease the pain?





Note of intent

A soldier made of cardboard, seen from behind, holding a rifle, standing in a war-torn landscape. The soldier is wearing a helmet and a uniform made of cardboard. The background is a dark, smoky sky over a battlefield.

The aesthetic style and technique chosen to produce this film are an essential part of the actual story itself. This is due to the fact that the characters are all made out of glued cardboard and “papier mâché”. On screen, they are going to be damaged, torn open, pulled apart and subjected to the perils of heat. And both their physical injuries and their mental wounds will be treated with hand written letters.

The film originates from a very simple underlying idea. That during a war, man is in reality as fragile as paper itself. Soldiers die on the battlefield, they are wounded, they become destroyed. As well as the physical harm they suffer, there is also the mental anguish. The fear, the loneliness, the fact they miss their nearest and dearest.

So what is it that keeps them going? What is the mysterious formula that can still breathe life into these men who have effectively become paper automatons fighting for the Motherland... Getting a letter via the post. Letters from loved ones. Small simple pieces of paper covered in joined up writing, with words squeezed up one against the other. Words that they caress, that they embrace, that they cherish, that literally do save their lives.

It is because in the film the soldiers are made of paper. So what happens if they get an arm ripped off, or a lung punctured? Then they get their wounds patched up with the letters they have received. Our souls, our blood is nourished with with ink. If needs be, should the postman come nurse see that any soldier does not have enough letters, enough words on his own person, then he can use letters that he has in his bag that have not been delivered to those soldiers “*who were less lucky than us and who fell on the Field Of Honour*” as they say.

So he fixes the bodies and raises moral with these paper dressings. He sticks our faces back together and - hey presto - we are ready to get back to the charge, ready to face the shells that obliterate everything, that shatter our advances into a thousand pieces.

These letters speak to us. They create voices that we hear in our heads amongst all the other noise of war. They are women's voices of course, which is strange - war is a male activity, isn't it? The women stay at home, bringing up the soldiers of the future and making shells and armaments. But we miss them. Their voices do us good in the face of evil. Be it a mother, or a sister, or a wife or a lover, their voices soothe us. Their dulcet tones are like music in our heads, encouraging us amongst the spray of machine gun bullets and the non-stop noise of explosions. They talk about love, or the harvest, about discretely controlled fears or the speed at which the children are growing up - and playing at being soldiers of course. Whether they hint at the promise of future intimacy or bemoan the price of bread, these voices talk to us and sweep us up into their arms when all we want to do is cry like a child.

Yet they can sometimes also hurt. Hurt that only a woman knows how to do to a man. A hardened soldier can be ready to stare death in the face day after day in the name of the Homeland or perhaps just out of fear. Yet he needs just one word from a woman to weaken him. He just needs a woman's sigh to shatter him into a thousand pieces of ripped up paper, just like those from the letters. Words can give life just as they can take it. And then there is the time when there is no post. Because that means the voice has fallen quiet. And that is the worst. A soldier can survive several deadly charges a day. He can overcome multiple injuries. He can carry on despite the daily sight of absolute carnage. With a bit of luck, he can survive on the battlefield. Yet all the while, in the apparent tranquillity back home, a woman can also die, because quite simply, death is part of the cycle of life.

Death is in reality everywhere. Seen from the trenches, this may seem impossible to comprehend to a frightened soldier but death can strike far from the front as well.

So when the letters no longer arrive, when the gentle voices that read them fall quiet, the poor soldier who really needs some luck just to stay alive, no longer understands life itself.



Making Of







Augusto Zanovello

Biography

Born in 1965 in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Augusto Zanovello studied at the Belo Horizonte school of fine art, where he had his first taste of stop motion animation films. In 1985, he settled in France, spent time at the Paris III university and at Les Gobelins, before going to the Louis Lumiere Institute (The National Film, Photography & Sound Engineering School) where he graduated with a degree in cinema studies in 1991. Since then, he has worked at various animation studios as an animator, layout artist and storyboarder. He has directed a range of series and short films. He is also a script writer for cinema and television.


Realisation

- « Peter Pan » (TV series – 26x26'), 2011/2013 – Method anim
- « Rue de la lune » (fiction – 25'. – 35mm), In progress
- « Match Fastich » (pilote-fiction/anim – 39x7'), 2004
- « Le Roi Mathias » (pilote-TV series – 52x13') B prod, 2004
- « Les durs du mur » (TV series – 39x7'), 01/2003 – B prod
- « Le Marsupilami » (TV series – 26x26'), 98/2000 – Marathon int
- « Points de vue » (fiction – 4' – 16 mm), 1995
- « Le Gardien de la cave » (fiction – 15' – 35mm), 1993

Scenarior

- « Vic, le viking » (TV series – 78x13') – Studio 100, 2011
- « Summer Camp » (TV series – 78x13') – Xilam, 2011
- « Mini Loup » (TV series – 52x7') – Timoon, 2011
- « Charlot » (TV series – 104x52') – Method Films, 2011
- « Le Petit Prince » (TV series – 26x52') – Method Films, 2010
- « Lulu Vroumette » (TV series – 52x13') – Mondo TV, 2009
- « Terrablaba » (dévelop TV - 26x26') – Carrère prod, 2009
- « Podcats » (TV series – 52x7') – Okidoki, 2008
- « La minute au musée » (TV series – 1') – Films de l'Arlequin, 2008
- « Ozie Boo » (TV series – 7') – Cyber Group Anim, 2006/07
- « Zazie et Mr Raymond » (concept – 26x13'), Lauréat Beaumarchais
- « Kid Paddle » (TV series – 13') – Dupuis audiovis, 2003/04
- « Gennarino, il mastino » (TV series – 26') Carrere, 2000
- « Kong » (TV series – 26') Studio Ellipse, 2000
- « Désirs liquides » (fiction – 1h30), 1995





Awards and Selections

Awards

Audience Award

International Animated Film Festival of Annecy (France) - June 2013

Jury's Favorite Film Unifrance

Unifrance Awards at Cannes International Film Festival (France) - May 2013

Selected

Césars 2014 (France)

Finalist

Cartoon d'Or (France) - September 2013

Grand Jury special prize / Young Jury Award / Jury Press special prize

"Festival du film court en plein air" of Grenoble (France) - July 2013

Audience Award

"Autour du court" Festival of Nogent sur Marne (France) - June 2013

Best Animated Short Film

The International Film Festival of Vebron (France) - July 2013

Special Mention - For ingenious integration of material and story

Anibar International Animation Festival (Kosovo) – August 2013

Best Idea/Screenplay

BuSho - Budapest Short film (Hungary) - September 2013

Audience Award / Special Mention for the Best Animated short film

“Tournez court” (France) – September 2013

Best Short Film Award

Anim'est Bucarest (Roumania) - October 2013

Special Jury Mention

Animated film festival of Bourg en Bresse (France) – October 2013

Special Jury Mention - For the incredible work of animation and his poetry

International Short Film Festival "Vilnius Film Shorts" (Lithuania) - October 2013

Best film award (Professional Category)

Montreal Stop Motion Film Festival (Canada) - October 2013

Best Short Film Award

Tirana International Film Festival (Albania) - October 2013

Bronze Brick

Animax Skopje Fest (Macedonia) - October 2013

Winner (2nd place)

Big Cartoon Festival (Russia) - November 2013

Audience Award

“Court en Champagne » (France) - November 2013

Best professional film award

Bradford Animation Festival (United Kingdom) - November 2013

Jury Prize

Animpact (Korea/China / Japan) - November 2013

The Best Visual Imagery

Multivision (Russia) - November 2013



Selections

“Festival des Nouveaux Cinémas” (France) - June 2013
French film Festival of Tokyo (Japan) - June 2013
“Faites de l'Image” of Toulouse (France) - July 2013
Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival (Swiss) - July 2013
Odense Film Festival (Denmark) - August 2013
Animanima (Serbia) - September 2013
“Chacun son court” (France) – September 2013
“Fenêtres sur courts” (France) – September 2013
Short Film Encounters of Montpellier (France) – September 2013
Calgary International Film Festival (Canada) - September 2013
International francophone film Festival of Namur (Belgium) - September 2013
Animage Festival (Brazil) - September 2013
Manhattan Short (US) - September 2013
Short film festival of Saint Paul Trois Chateaux (France) – October 2013
Balkanima to Belgrade (Serbia) – October 2013
“Un festival c'est trop court” (France) – October 2013

Se-Ma-For Film Festival (Poland) – October 2013
DOK Leipzig 2013 (Germany) – October 2013
City court festival to Hagondange (France) - October 2013
Short Film Festival of Noyon (France) - October 2013
Colchester Film Festival (United Kingdom) - October 2013
“Festival du cinéma International en Abitibi-Témiscamingue” (Canada) – October 2013
European short film festival of Brest (France) – November 2013
“Séquence court-métrage” (France) – November 2013
3D Wire Animation Market (Spain) - November 2013
KLIK Amsterdam Animation Festival (Holland) - November 2013
“Court c'est court” (France) - November 2013
Film Festival of Alcala de Henares – Alcine (Spain) - November 2013
Ciné Premières Festival of Groningue (Netherlands) - November 2013
Cinanima (Portugal) – November 2013
Film Festival of Compiègne (France) - November 2013
Flensburg Shortfilmfestival (Denmark) - November 2013
Tubingen – Stuttgart film Festival (Allemagne) - November 2013
International Film Festival of Bilbao – ZINEDI (Spain) - November 2013
Interfilm Berlin (Germany) - November 2013
French Film Festival in Czech Republic (Czech Republic) - November 2013
“Les nuits magiques” (France) - Décembre 2013
Whistler Film Festival (Canada) - December 2013
Short Film Festival of Fréjus (France) - January 2014
Images en vues (Canada) - November 2013
Reanimania (Armenia) - November 2013
International Film Festival Etiuda & Anima (Poland) - November 2013
Istanbul International Short Film Festival (Turkey) - November 2013
Akbank Short Film Festival (Turkey) - March 2014
“Un poing c'est court” - francophone film Festival (France) - January 2014
”L'ombre d'un court” - Jouy en Josas (France) - February 2014
MECAL - International Short film and animation of Barcelona (Spain) - March 2014
Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival (France) – January-February 2014
Ciné Junior (France) – January-February 2014
Ciné Court Animé (France) – March 2014
International Festival of animated film Stuttgart (Germany) – April 2014
Animex – Middlesbrough (United Kingdom) – February 2014
Landshut Short Film Festival (Germany) - March 2014
International short film Festival of Nimègue - Go Short (Netherlands) - April 2014
Anima (Belgium) – February-March 2014

Pictor Media's filmography



Petz Club

Animated series 52 x 13' - In production

Directors : Régis Vidal / Florian Thouret

Coproduction : Pictor Media / Project Images Films

Agogo Entertainment (Chine) / Green Apple Animation (Singapour)

With the participation of France Télévisions



Stellina

Animated series 26 x 26'

Directors : Sidney Kombo et Alessandro Belli

Coproduction : Pictor Media

The Animation Band (Italie) / RAI (Italie)

Published by Bayard Presse

With the participation of France Télévisions



Loulou de Montmartre

Animated series 26 x 26'

Directors : Patrick Claeys/Giuseppe Lagana

Coproduction : Pictor Media

The Animation Band / RAI Fiction (Italie)

Published by Bayard Jeunesse and the DVD by Citel

With the participation of France Télévisions



Mark Logan

Animated special 1 x 52' or 2 x 26'

Director : Patrick Claeys

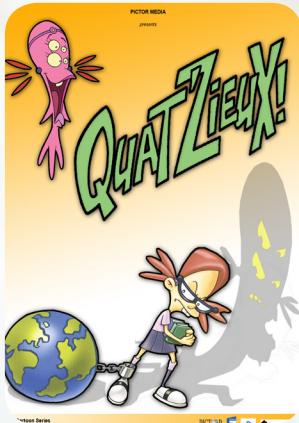
Coproduction : Pictor Media / Project Images Films / France 3
Mondo TV (Italie)

Published by Bayard Presse

Nominated at the Reims international television festival

One of the 5 nominees for the 2008 «Pulcinella Awards»

Finalist for the best television script prize (FIPA 2005)



Quat'zieux

Animated series 52 x 13'

Director : Patrick Claeys

Coproduction : Pictor Media / France 3

Porchlight Entertainment (Etats-Unis)

Telegaël Teoranta (Irlande)



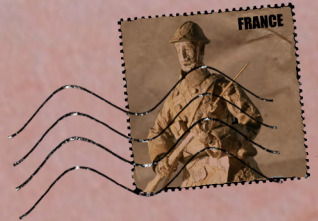
Shtoung Circus

Animated series 52 x 13'

Directors : Raldo & Raskal

Coproduction : Pictor Media / Praxinos / Carrere / France 3
RG Prince Films (Corée)

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A coproduction:



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