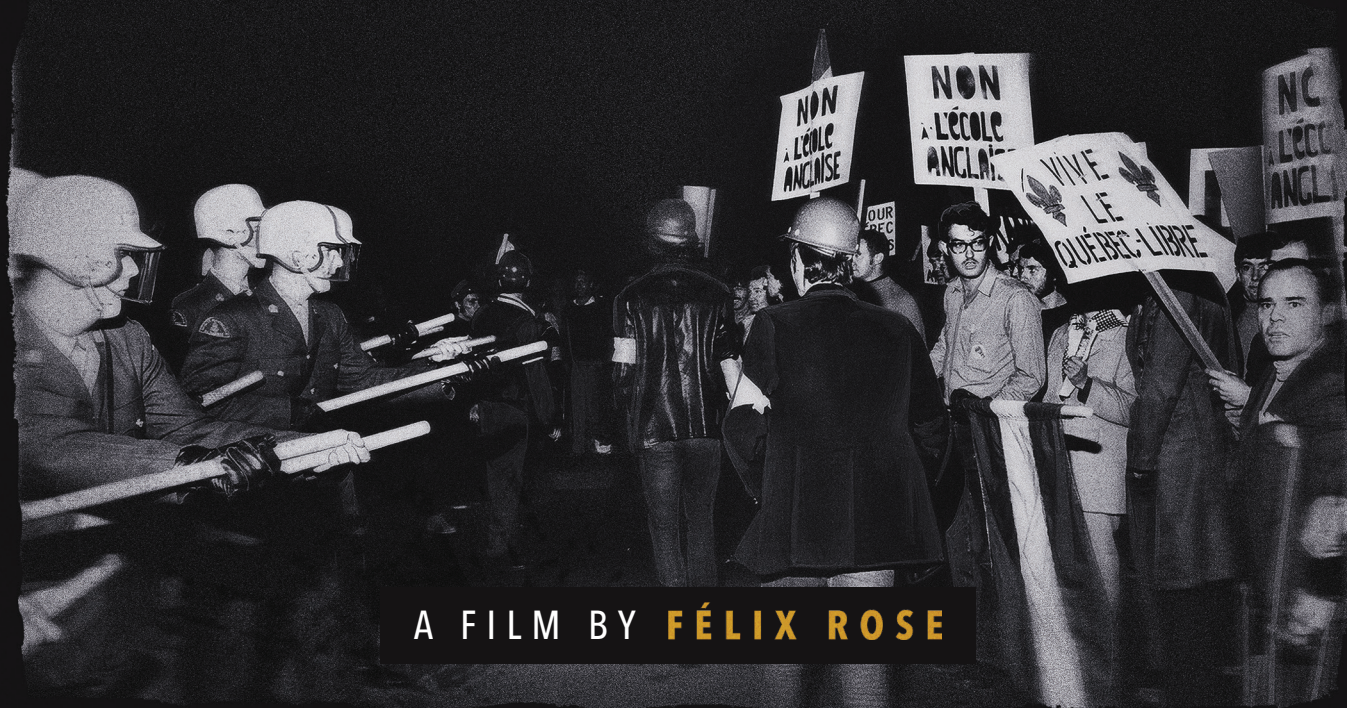




compétition 2024  
officielle  
fcvq

THE CONFLICT THAT LED TO **BILL 101**





A FILM BY **FÉLIX ROSE**

# THE BATTLE OF SAINT-LEONARD

PRESS KIT

[labatailledesaintleonard-lefilm.com/en](http://labatailledesaintleonard-lefilm.com/en)

  [Maison4tiers.com](http://Maison4tiers.com)



## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Original Title .....	<b>La bataille de Saint-Léonard</b>
English Title .....	<b>The Battle of Saint-Leonard</b>
Original Version .....	<b>French</b>
Languages .....	<b>French, English and Italian</b>
Running Time .....	<b>108 minutes</b>
Year of production .....	<b>2024</b>
Format .....	<b>2K</b>
Ratio .....	<b>1:85</b>
Genre .....	<b>Documentary</b>
Country .....	<b>Canada</b>
Sound Mix .....	<b>5.1</b>

## CREATIVE TEAM

Research, Screenwriting and Directing .....	<b>Félix Rose</b>
Production .....	<b>Karine Dubois</b>
Executive Production .....	<b>Marie-Pierre Corriveau Karine Dubois Félix Rose</b>
Production Company .....	<b>Picbois Productions</b>
Cinematography .....	<b>Priscillia Piccoli</b>
Sound Engineering .....	<b>Laurence Turcotte-Fraser</b>
Editing .....	<b>Michel Giroux</b>
Original Score .....	<b>Marc Gravel</b>
Sound Design .....	<b>Simon Gervais</b>
Color Grading .....	<b>Marilène Clouâtre</b>
Graphic Design .....	<b>Eric Piccoli</b>
Production Manager .....	<b>Marie-Hélène Beaudry</b>
Financing and Legal Affairs .....	<b>Catherine Lord</b>
Promotion and Marketing .....	<b>Cindy Labranche</b>



## LOGLINE

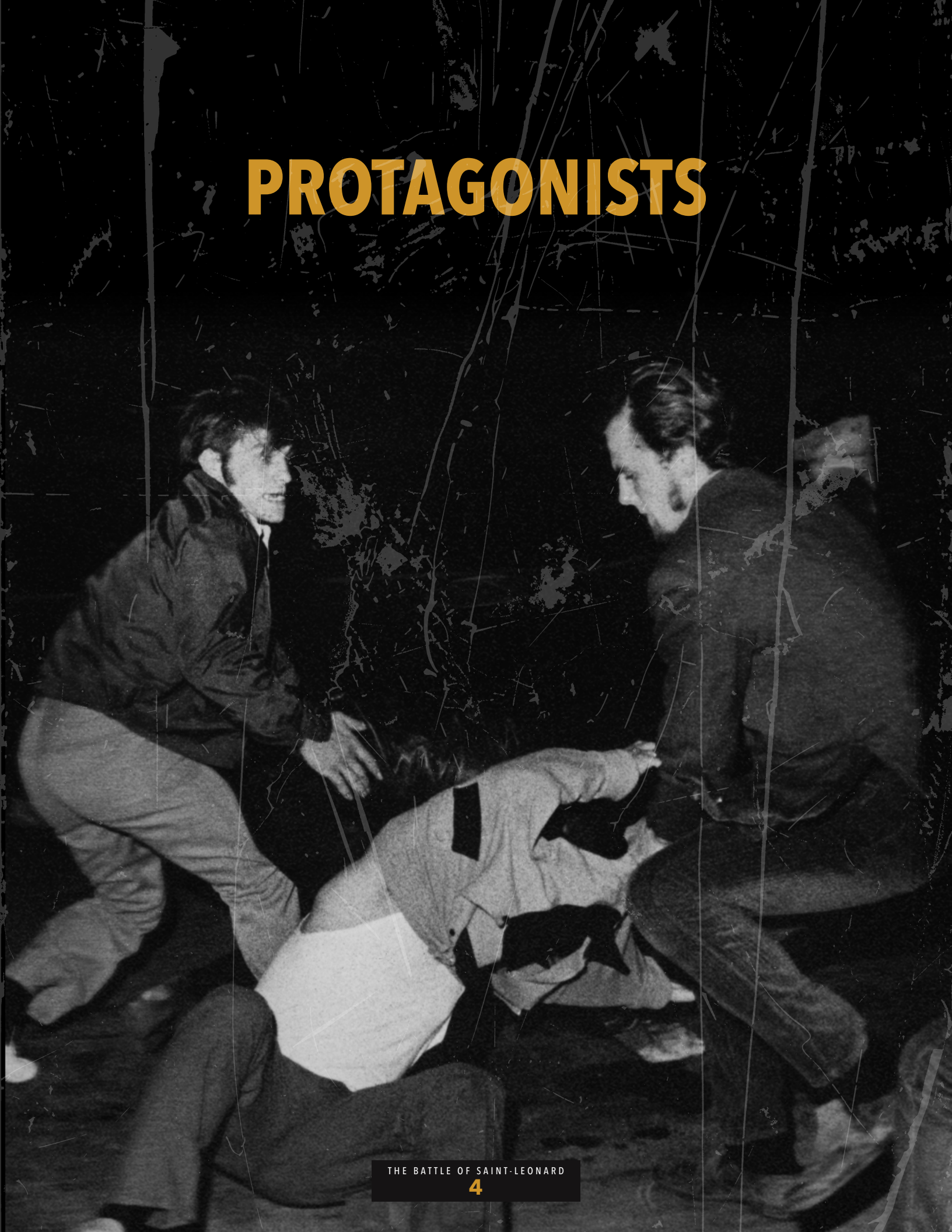
The conflict that led to Bill 101

## SYNOPSIS

An unprecedented language crisis unfolded in the heart of the town of Saint-Leonard in 1968-1969. French-speaking parents demanded French-only schools, while members of the Italian community wanted to preserve bilingual schools. The conflict spread throughout Québec, creating enormous tensions that degenerated into violence and culminated in a bloody riot. ***The Battle of Saint-Leonard*** tells the story of Raymond Lemieux and Mario Barone, two remarkable yet forgotten men of modest origins, who each fought with strength and conviction, despite the heavy consequences to themselves, their families, and their professional lives. Their struggle changed the destiny of Québec and led to the adoption of the Charter of the French Language (Bill 101).



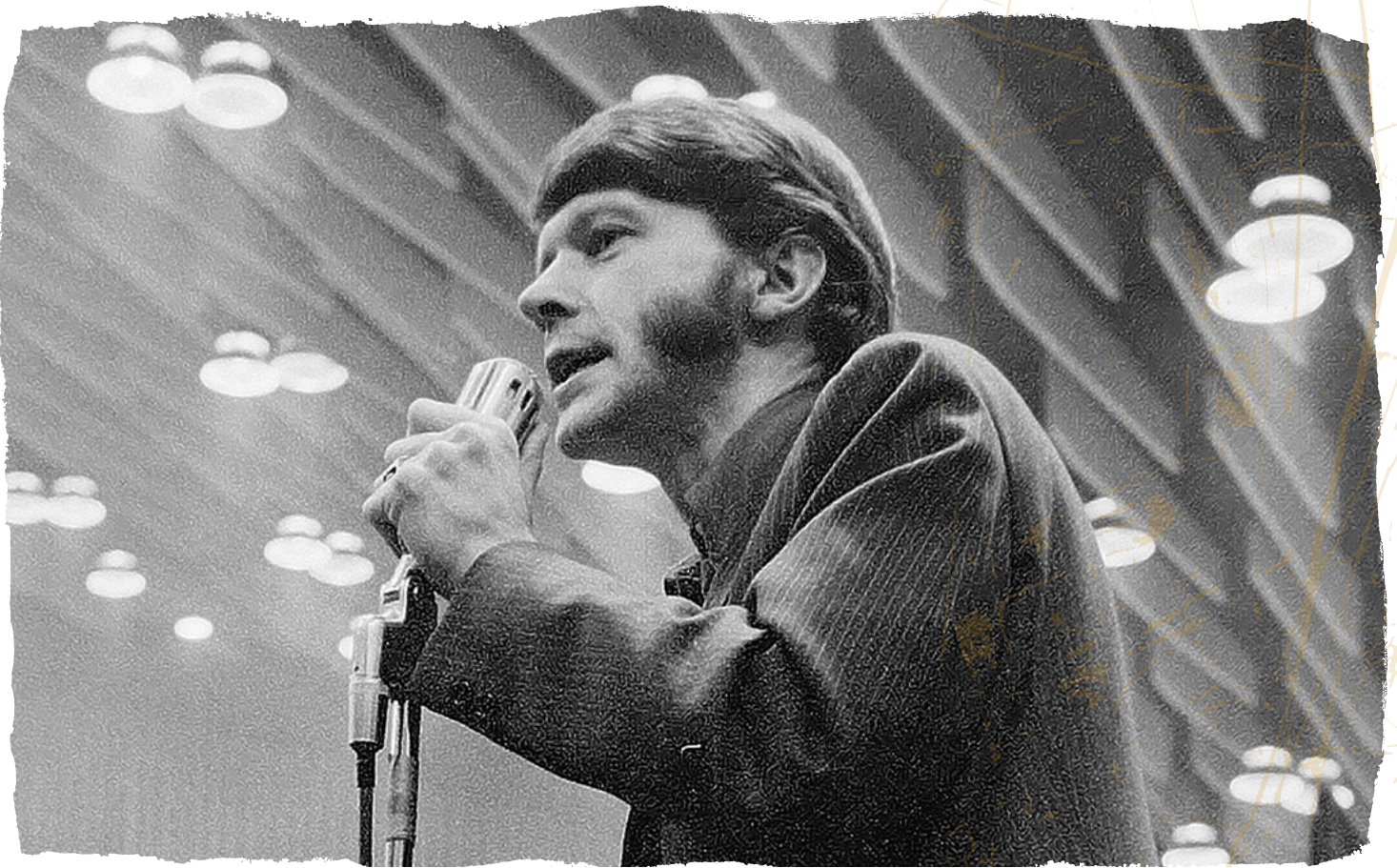
# PROTAGONISTS



THE BATTLE OF SAINT-LEONARD

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## **RAYMOND LEMIEUX**

### **(1933 – 2018)**

Lemieux was born in Montreal in 1933. His father, an Anglophone of French-Canadian descent, was born in New York, and his mother, of Irish descent, in Chicago. Although English was the language of the home and neighborhood, the Lemieux parents chose to educate their children in French, so that they would become bilingual. It was while working summers in the railroad industry that he became aware of inequalities and indignant at the fate of Francophones, who were often at the bottom of the ladder and scorned by Anglophone bosses. An architect, he moved to Saint-Leonard in the mid-1960s to build a school, a church and an arena. In reaction to the bilingual school system, of which he strongly disapproved, he founded and presided over the Mouvement pour l'intégration scolaire, which ran candidates in the 1968 school board elections. The Saint-Léonard crisis ignited the debate on the French language throughout Quebec, and Raymond Lemieux became a national figure. In September 1969, a few days before the introduction of Bill 63 advocating the free choice of language of instruction, Raymond Lemieux was accused of attempted sedition by the Québec government in the wake of a riot in Saint-Leonard. Despite attempts to muzzle him, Lemieux decided to continue the struggle at great personal risk. Exhausted following his acquittal at trial, he withdraws from public life. Raymond Lemieux passed away in 2018.





## **MARIO BARONE**

**(1931 – )**

Mario Barone decided to leave Italy as it struggled to recover from World War II. Arriving in Montreal in the early 1950s, he worked in a garbage dump, then on construction sites, before becoming a successful entrepreneur. He built numerous duplexes in Saint-Leonard, attracting many members of the Italian community. A popular and influential figure in his community, Barone was elected a Saint-Leonard City Councillor. He noted that, in Quebec at the time, the majority of bosses were English-speaking, and that Francophones were often oppressed. He believed that children of immigrants had no choice but to master both languages if they were to have a better future. From the very beginnings of the language crisis, he took a public stand in favour of maintaining bilingual schools, and participated in the creation of underground English-language classes when the school board imposed French-only education. Barone's efforts helped put pressure on Jean-Jacques Bertrand's government, which passed Bill 63 in 1969, giving parents the free choice of language of instruction.





## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Despite the undeniable impact of the Charter of the French Language on the lives of Quebecers, very few people are aware of the events leading up to its adoption in 1977. Unlike the resulting Bill 101, the Saint-Leonard language crisis has likely been erased from our collective memory. To address this forgotten part of our past, I went back to the roots of this conflict, hoping that this film might shed new light and historical perspective on the current language debate.

***The Battle of Saint-Leonard* focuses on Raymond Lemieux and Mario Barone, two remarkable yet largely forgotten men of modest origins, who each fought with force and conviction over the language of instruction on the local, and then national, stage. Their respective involvement changed the course of history, but it also had a heavy impact on their personal lives and those of their loved ones.**

Having myself grown up in a politically committed family, I've always been intrigued by activists who sacrificed everything for their ideals. Before joining the Front de libération du Québec, my father, Paul Rose, took part in numerous demonstrations in Saint-Leonard in 1968–1969. I wanted to tackle these events in *The Rose Family*, a documentary about my family, but I realized it was too large and complex a subject to touch. That's why I decided to make it the subject of my new film.

In line with the themes explored in my previous projects, I'm tackling the language issue, which is inextricably linked to the class struggle and the national empowerment of Quebecers, while exploring new subjects that fascinate me, such as immigration and vivre-ensemble (coexistence). I've also developed a strong interest in the history of Montreal's Italian community, which has experienced many forms of discrimination that are rarely talked about. Over the past seven years, I've built up an archive on this crisis, bringing together thousands of audiovisual and photographic documents to convey the effervescence of the period and allow us to travel back in time.

***The Battle of Saint-Leonard*, the thematic sequel to *The Rose Family*, is a historical fresco, a political thriller, and an Italian-Québec tragedy.**

– Félix Rose



# BIOGRAPHIES





## FÉLIX ROSE

Director

With a passion for history, Félix Rose developed a political and social conscience at an early age. After studying film and television, he began his career as a documentary filmmaker with the films *Avec la gauche* (2014) and *Yes* (2017). In 2020, he directed the documentary *The Rose Family*, the culmination of a personal quest to better understand the past of his father, the felquist Paul Rose, and his family. The same year, he co-directs a six-part investigative series, *Le dernier felquiste*, on the unsolved assassination of the felquist François Mario Bachand and the history of the various Front de Libération du Québec networks. In 2024, he completed a four-part series on the musical rivalry between two Quebec rock bands: Offenbach and Corbeau. His most recent documentary, *The Battle of Saint-Leonard*, focuses on a language crisis that led to the adoption of the Charter of the French Language (Bill 101).

## Filmography

- 2024** The Battle of Saint-Leonard
- 2020** The Rose Family
- 2017** Yes
- 2014** Avec la gauche





## KARINE DUBOIS

Producer

Producer and founder of Picbois Productions, Karine Dubois has been producing documentaries for a wide audience for over 15 years. With degrees in journalism and political science, she digs deep into her subjects with impactful documentaries and takes bold steps to ensure that the company's work shines. Passionate about content, she has produced award-winning projects, both locally and internationally, that tackle current issues and provoke discussion in the public arena.

### Filmography

**2024** The Battle of Saint-Leonard  
Winter Harvest

**2023** Essential

**2021** Alone

**2020** Breaking the Code

**2019** Trafic

**2018** Une place pour eux

**2017** Bagage

**2013** Bà Nôi

**2012** Le dernier cabaret

**2008** Un trou dans le temps

# CONTACTS

## Public Relations

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## International Distribution

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