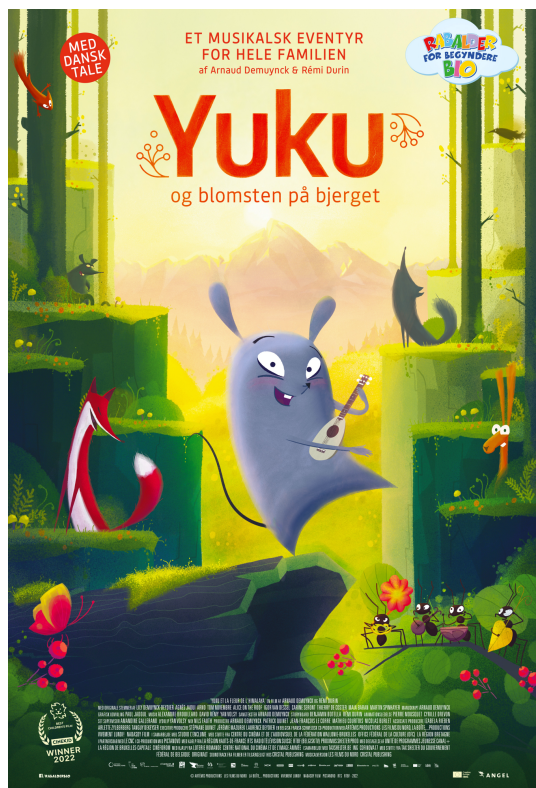


*Angel Films præsenterer*

# YUKU OG BLOMSTEN PÅ BJERGET



**Premiere:** 22. juni

**Længde:** 62 minutter

**Censur:** Tilladt for alle

**Instruktør:** Arnaud Demuyneck & Rémi Durin

**Premierebiografer:** Se den fulde liste på side 2

## Synopsis:

*Hver aften læser bedstemor eventyr for alle museunger til lyden af Yukus ukulele. Men nu er tiden kommet, hvor bedstemor snart må forlade familien for at følge den blinde muldvarp dybt, dybt ind i jordens mørke indre. Men i bedstemors magiske bog er der en historie om Himalayas magiske blomst, der giver evigt lys. Med sin ukulele under armen begiver Yuku sig derfor ud på en eventyrlig færd efter blomsten på bjerget. Det bliver en rejse, der byder på herlige sange, nye venskaber, mystiske gåder, og en truende udfordring: for ved frygtens bro venter den fæle ulv... Vil det lykkes Yuku at finde den magiske blomst i tide?*

*Vinder af "BEDSTE BØRNEFILM" ved CINEKID 2022 - Verdens største børnemediafestival. Filmen er en del af RABALDER BIO FOR BEGYNDERE, der består af udvalgte kvalitetsfilm målrettet det yngste publikum og deres familie.*

Trailer og pressemateriale kan hentes på: <https://www.angelfilms.dk/yuku-og-blomsten-paa-bjerget>

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## Premierebiografer:

Grand Teatret,  
Øst for Paradis,  
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FORMAT Biograf,  
Biffen Nordkraft Aalborg.

## Danske stemmer:

Mormor	Camilla Bendix
Egernet	Oscar Dietz
Ræven	Marie Tourell Søderberg
Katten	Peter Zhelder
Kaninen	Caroline Lindeneg
Ulven	Steffen Bruun
Rotten	Ole Boisen
Mor	Sasia Mølgaard
Yuku	Sophia Viktoria Teves Kjellerup

## Øvrige stemmer:

Frederik Rose  
Helena Saldern Vetö  
Helene Wolhardt Moe  
Laurits Laursen  
Mia Ellen Kjær  
Rebecca Saldern Vetö  
Selma Ertürk Løvstrøm Moe  
Selmarose Rasmussen  
Torben Sekov

## **For a playful musical, The Songs of Yuku**

Yuku, the heroine of the film, has understood that music offers the power to make friends, to express her feelings, to exorcize her sadness, to shout her revolt... She charms with her ukulele, given to her by her grandmother, and by varying rhythms and styles, she sings and communicates the irresistible desire to dance together.

With a catchy ska, Yuku bewitches the cat watching over the kitchen. Through the blues, she frees the rat, guardian of the sewers, the one who was perceived as a danger, from his melancholy and thus transforms him into a friend. She bewitches the rabbit and frees it from its stuttering by inviting it to sing its revolt in a boosted rap. She unlocks the squirrel's amnesia with an acrobatic swing and allows her to find the hazelnut hiding places. She even reconciles with a poet vixen by finding her rhymes in a bucolic and philosophical song. All these friends will be of the greatest support to her when it is necessary to escape the wolf! She will succeed in making him sing and dance on an introspective boogie-woogie, but, despite her talent as an enchantress, she will not be able to change the role of the wolf. It has been his destiny in the tales, since the dawn of time...

In this film, each song reinforces the characters in their identity. The author has consciously chosen a rich vocabulary, as he had already done for *The Scent of Carrots*, in order to embellish the linguistic perspectives of young spectators and also to delight the imagination of adults. From funny ska to moving blues sung by rocker Arno, from crazy rap to a swing worthy of King.

The film invites the spectators to sing and fidget in their seats. With this musical, the author offers viewers images, sounds and emotions that he hopes to see engraved in their memory as the animated films of his childhood did.

A "bonus" song where Yuku recounts her adventures with her friends, is the subject of a music video and concludes the soundtrack of the film with an intoxicating rockabilly.

## **Riddles: entering the story time**

**by Director Arnaud Demuyne**

*What is a riddle?*

It's a guessing game, of course. But beyond the simple riddle, there is also its convoluted formulation, which gives it its charm. The twisted, bizarre, sibylline look of the question is already a kind of treasure hunt, with its traps, which offers linguistic detours to better lose the adventurer. While the answer is often "simple", the enunciation of the riddle is not. A kind of "aha moment" appears when we hear the final word, the "key" to the riddle. The ambiguity of the riddle is probably more fascinating than the answer. In Eastern cultures, some sages teach through these incomprehensible ways to engender a quest that is more captivating than the destination itself. The bizarre utterance must find its way, be digested slowly, by rehashing, until the job is done.

*This is how the meaning of words benefits best.*

The first riddle of the grandmother is exemplary. She plays on the opposition “The taller I am, the less people see me.” This contradiction is disturbing. It secretly evokes darkness, where the gaze is lost all the more as it is deep. While giving a hint: “The answer lies with closed eyes.” Of course, when the eyelids lower, it’s dark... But after the clue, the mischievous grandmother leads the children astray. “Through my tale, you will find it. It draws them away from the search for the answer towards another quest, by another invitation, that of the tale, which prolongs the time of the journey.

*This is the role of the riddle that brings you right “into the story time”.*

The second riddle of the grandmother is a kind of echo to the first. What “seems far away to you is near to you.” This was already true for darkness, it is even more true for light. Because this flower is light. The one that opens when you listen to the music of your heart. Yuku is indeed the heiress of her grandmother. The first riddle she asks the rabbit is a kind of “doppelganger” of the one posed by her grandma, but with her own mischief. “You don’t know where you are when you are there.” Yuku also reveals herself by saying, “When you stop walking you can’t see anything, but if you dare to move forward, the path opens up before you...” Isn’t that the whole point of her decision in the movie? She moves forward in the tale so that the path opens before her! If she stops, she becomes blind, so she makes the choice to move forward “to see.”

The second riddle posed to the vixen, resonates with the song of this one: “I was already yesterday and I will still be tomorrow. Who am I?” The answer is always “before our eyes”, like the night, like the fog, “close to you”, like the flower. It is indeed closest to us, since it is “today”!

What if the answers to these four questions were always the same? A call to the present, to see the happiness that is here and now, the “Carpe diem” of the vixen’s song which returns at the end of the film, sung by Yuku, and then in chorus by all her little sisters, when their grandmother leaves them. Because she turns around from the first words of Yuku and smiles. Because she hears that they have understood, the “message” has set in, the transmission is assured, the tale can begin again.

Traveling to the top of the Himalayas to understand that happiness is before our eyes. Here is four times the same answer to all of these enigmas, of such different forms. The formulations play with the words, with the senses, with the spirit, to take the path. The path which, each time, leads to your true self.

## **Expedition through the film: a tale, songs and riddles**

“Listen to the music of your heart. The flower that seems far away to you is very close to you.”

In the opening sequence of the film, Yuku says to her mother, “If grandma has taught me to play music, it’s also to sing, right? Yuku announces, between the lines, the genre of the film, a musical. In the oral tradition, playfulness is the signature of both facetious tales and tales of wisdom. This character is immediately part of this line where the word is queen and distills its messages, secret or apparent.

Yuku happily runs every evening to join her grandmother who is waiting with her young sisters in her den, the library for story time. Yuku arrives, receives her musical instrument, a ukulele, from her grandmother's hands, and plays a few notes to open the session. With her little golden treble clef, the grandmother unseals her big book: "So... What tale do you want to hear today? », so the story begins.

A mise en abyme of the cinema by the dimming of the lights and the collective reception of the tale, but also a mise en abyme of the subject of the film, since the tale requested by the young mice is that of the story of the Himalayan flower.

The grandmother begins the tale which is illustrated in the stained glass windows of the library. The coloured rays that pass through them illuminate and warm the amazed faces of the audience. This light, as in the cinema, is the one that is reflected in the eyes of the spectators and projects the story in light on them.

"A long time ago, far away from here, high in the highest mountains on Earth, lived a plant that fed on the most perfect sunlight. This plant still exists today, children, it is called... the flower of the Himalayas. Our ancestors, to protect themselves, lived like us in the bowels of the Earth. They dreamed of warming their hearts in the light of this eternal flower. But to find it, they knew there was a long journey to travel, strewn with obstacles. They were also afraid of getting lost in the enchanted forest, and above all they were afraid of meeting the terrible wolf who was waiting for them at the little bridge of fear." A true metaphor for life, this tale foreshadows the film. The storyteller ensures the precious transmission from generation to generation. It is a story of the past that our ancestors already experienced: the search for the eternal light offered by the Himalayan flower. But this plant, said the grandmother, "still exists today, children"! It thus announces that adventure is always possible in the present. She invites us. Through a strange temporal fracture, the grandmother's tale then slips into the story of the film, which finally begins.

A trip to listen to the music of her heart.

It's decided, Yuku is going on a trip to bring her grandma the light of the Himalayan flower. In his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, a key reference to the hero's journey, Joseph Campbell, a specialist in myth, notes: "... the hero continues his adventure which leads him to the guardian of the threshold. (...) It limits the borders of the world, appointing a real sphere, or horizon of life, of the hero. Beyond is darkness, the unknown and danger; how dangerous is for the child what is beyond the supervision of their parents... Popular mythologies populate with dangerous presences any deserted place located outside the usual passageways of the village... It is only by stepping beyond these limits that the individual enters a zone of new experience. Always and everywhere, adventure is a passage into the unknown; the powers that guard the frontiers are dangerous; dealing with them is risky; yet for anyone who possesses skill and courage – the danger vanishes."

Yuku has courage... and has a skill: playing music and singing. It is with the instrument that her grandmother entrusted to her that Yuku will enchant the sewer rat, make him a friend who will then help her cross the moat of the castle. No more boasting this time following the song, but a

real complicity born of the sharing of emotions. It is with a blues sung together that Yuku brings the rat out of his melancholy and makes him a precious ally.

Dropped by the rat at the edge of the crow meadow, Yuku luckily escapes the dark bird's voracity. Fate smiles at her by putting on her way the brisk rabbit who draws arrows from the castle. They are what scares away the crows. The rabbit is stuttering. This "handicap" probably comes from the excessive stress caused by being perpetually hunted by humans. But at least he stutters in rhyme, which does not take long for our musician to notice.

Yuku then offers the rabbit a song, a rap, allowing him to express his anger, to free himself from his stuttering... And he helps our mouse to cross the meadow, thanks to the tunnels dug by the longeared creatures.

No forest without paths that get lost. The Enchanted Forest is beautiful, but its roads are secret. And inhabited by predators... Foxes, owls, lynxes. Some even talk of a wolf... But luckily the first being that Yuku meets there is a rodent like her... a squirrel looking for her nuts! So Yuku offers the skilled climber a song, by starting a frenzied swing with her ukulele; a song that relaxes the neurons and thus helps to refresh the memory. The song shared, the hazelnuts found, it's the squirrel's turn to offer Yuku to share her property: an accommodation for the night. The next day, the squirrel shows her the route to follow towards the Himalayas. But does this distracted animal have more memory for the roads than for her nuts...?

Again, Yuku gets "lost". She even has to escape the rain and the storm and finds refuge in the hollow of a fallen tree. But at daybreak, a beautiful surprise awaits her, the poetry of the forest, through a vixen. This one is already a singer, but struggles to find her rhymes. This is where our little mouse comes in, who offers to help the poet by accompanying her on the ukulele. Together, they sing an ode to life, also carrying the philosophy of the film, and which finds an echo in a new riddle that Yuku poses to the vixen: "I was already yesterday, and I will still be tomorrow. Who am I?" Having become her friend, the vixen leads Yuku to the famous little bridge of fear, guarded by the wolf. But in front of this bridge, she says "By the time I come back with the flower, you will have found the answer to my riddle".

The encounter with the wolf also begins with a riddle. But, this time, posed by the wolf. "I sink, but never drown. I have a throat, but do not speak. I live in a bed, but never sleep. Who am I?" Yuku gets away with it, by finesse or perhaps luck. In a boogie-woogie where the question of the function and the "destiny" of the wolf is raised, Yuku seems to succeed in "enchancing" the animal and influencing his destiny. The wolf recovers at the end of the song, and announces to Yuku that the hour of the "count" has come. "Now is the time to play wolf."

She then discovers the Himalayan range on the horizon. But it's still so far away... It's then that her grandmother's voice and riddle resonate in memory: "To make your trip a success, Yuku, solve this riddle again: listen to the music of your heart, the flower that seems far away is actually very close to you! Where is it?" Yuku picks up her ukulele and plays deep, intimate music. Then a miracle occurs, and the flowers of the Himalayas appear! The wolf watches in disbelief at the marvelous

scene. Yuku understands that she has succeeded in her journey and that she will be able to bring light to her grandmother.

## **Presentation of the characters**

### ***Yuku***

Yuku is the eldest of a family of mice that lives in the basements of a human castle. Her mother would like her to devote herself to gathering food in the kitchen, but Yuku, mischievous and clever, is expected by her grandmother to succeed her as storyteller, the one who embodies the tradition, passed from generation to generation, thanks to tales and to music. This is why Yuku inherits the musical instrument which she already uses to accompany the old lady at storytelling. It's an innocuous-looking ukulele, but it actually holds a great power that the old lady passed down: that of enchanting enemies, and above all, that of making new friends. Strengthened by this gift, Yuku will dare, following the accident of her grandmother, to take the path of the small bridge of fear and go in search of the Himalayan flower of the eternal light, to offer it to her grandmother before the little blind mole arrives.

### ***Grandmother***

A great storyteller, she is the guardian of the secular library and guarantor of the wisdom of the family of mice. At story time, her voice lulls the minds of children and encourages them to listen to solve the mysteries of life. She is a mischievous old lady, who sees in Yuku her spiritual heiress. She will know how to open the way for her.

### ***The kitchen cat***

To save her mother, a prisoner of the cat, Yuku uses the power of her ukulele for the first time. She enchants the cat, sensitive to rhythm and compliments, by playing and singing a "ska of a fat cat". But a small rookie mistake, a brief moment of boastfulness, breaks the spell and leads the cat to resume its mouse hunt. The whole family is safe after all, but the library is ransacked in the chase. Following this disaster, the old storyteller announces to her family that she will soon have to accompany the little blind mole in the meanders of the earth to find their ancestors there.

### ***The Sewer Rat: The "Threshold Guardian"***

He is the first character that Yuku meets on her path. The rat community has a bad reputation with the little mice who are afraid of them. The large rodents of the depths are the inhabitants of the sewers, which makes it a forbidden place that Yuku still has to pass through to begin her quest. She goes to meet the rat, guardian of the threshold who turns out to be more melancholic than dangerous. By teaching him to sing the blues, Yuku helps him to exorcize his pain and fears and thus makes him a precious, warm and good-natured friend that helps her to cross the moat, there and back!

### ***The crow***

He watches over the meadow that Yuku has to cross, between the castle and the forest. He is a scavenger, his mission is to eat dead animals. But he does not disdain weak or reckless little animals either! And crows don't really like songs...

### ***The rabbit***

Another meadow dweller dug his burrow under the shelter of a large bush. Very quick and skilled in dodging the countless arrows that fall on him from the castle, he is nonetheless a stutterer. Is his fate as a game that causes him this concern with language? Yuku detects in his stuttering not only a musical rhythm, but also a sense of rhyme. Using her ukulele, she transforms the bunny into a crazy rapper and makes his stutter go away! Having become her friend, the rabbit guides her through the tunnels to offer her a safe passage to the forest. The rabbit will also prove very valuable on the way back!

### ***The squirrel***

Lost in the forest, Yuku encounters a restless squirrel who keeps jumping from branch to branch, trees to the ground, looking for his forgotten hazelnut stashes. The breathtaking agility of the little red animal inspires Yuku with an air of swing that will carry them away in a most delightful acrobatic dance. The squirrel, entertained and liberated by the dance, finds his senses and all his hidden hazelnuts. Here is yet another new friend with whom to share a meal, shelter for the night and, when the time comes, receive unexpected help.

### ***The vixen***

This predator is more poetess than huntress. She walks singing between the trees in search of mushrooms and chestnuts. As the vixen struggles to find her rhymes, the intrepid little mouse whispers very pretty ones to her ear, accompanied by her ukulele. The musical ballad charms the carnivore who prefers friendship to a meaty meal. The vixen leads Yuku to the small bridge of fear, and fortunately does not stray too far to ensure the safe return of her new friend.

### ***The wolf***

He is an ambivalent character! He knows the mission entrusted to him since the dawn of time: that of scaring people. But this burden does not please him that much. He would rather meet a she-wolf and quietly start a wolf-family. The wolf confides these longings in his deep voice through a boogie-woogie that Yuku plays on her ukulele. But after this moment of musical distraction that the little mouse hoped would be life-saving, the wolf remembers the meaning of his mission and his destiny as a predator!

### ***The Himalayan flower***

This Impatient, the object of Yuku's quest, is a slender plant that originated in the Himalayan regions. Having become very common in Europe, it has developed a clever technique to reproduce. It keeps its seeds in small, elongated, slightly swollen green capsules that appear among its melliferous flowers. When insects brush against them (or when children pinch them lightly), the capsules burst and the seeds are thrown in different directions. This impetuosity is how Impatient got its name from botanists, and are also called "farting flowers" by children. There isn't much left after having been chased by the wolf, but a seed is enough to revive the plant from which springs the eternal light of the Roof of the World.



## **Arnaud Demuynck**

Director – producer – writer

Arnaud Demuynck is a screenwriter, director and producer specializing in animated films. He also practices oral storytelling, writes children's books and creates kamishibais (image theatre) for live performances. Since *L'Écluse*, a short choreographic fiction made in 2000, he has written and directed numerous animated shorts, including: a choreographic trilogy (*Signs of life*, 2004), a poetic trilogy which he co-directed with Christophe Gautry (*La Vita Nuova*, *The Lunatic Council* and *An Interrupted Show*), *Fossil Memory*, co-directed with Anne-Laure Totaro. With his first musical, *Sous un coin de ciel bleu*, his writing has oriented oriented towards young audiences, either by adapting traditional tales (*La Moufle*) and traditional songs (*Promenonsnous...*), or by bringing to the screen of children's books (*C'est moi le plus fort*, *Grosse Colère*, etc.). He is the author of three scripts for medium-length films in which music plays an essential role: *The Scent of Carrots* (co-directed with Rémi Durin), *The Wind in the Reeds* (co-directed with Nicolas Liguori), and *Dame Saisons* (co-directed with Celia Tisserant).

He created the character of *La Chouette du cinema*, his alter ego and a messenger bearing his filmmaker's gaze. Since 2014, he has built a dozen short film programs for young audiences that he considers "equal to feature films". They have, in a few years, attracted nearly a million and a half spectators in cinemas in France, Belgium, Switzerland and Spain. Arnaud Demuynck wrote his first animated feature, *Yuku and the Himalayan Flower*, a musical with the voices of Agnès Jaoui, Arno, Alice on the Roof and Tom Novembre. This film, which he directed with Rémi Durin, begins his career in the spring of 2022.

## **Rémi Durin**

Director

Rémi Durin is a graduate of the *l'Atelier de cinéma d'animation de l'ENSAV La Cambre* (Animation Film Workshop at ENSAV La Cambre). He is one of the three founders of *L'Enclume*, created in Brussels in 2007, an animation studio which deals with the production of short films, advertising, feature films, music videos, TV series... Since 2009, Rémi has been teaching at the *Albert Jacquard Computer Graphics School* in Namur. He directed *De si près* (2009), a moving evocation of the 14–18 war, *The Scent of Carrots* (2014), an animated musical comedy, in co-production with Arnaud Demuynck, *The unicorn* (2016) based on the children's book by Martine Bourre, and *Big wolf and little wolf* (2018) an adaptation of the book by Nadine Brun-Cosme and Olivier Tallec. These two short films are respectively part of the programs *The Wind in the Reeds* and *Tender and Crazy Wolves*, released in theaters in 2017 and 2019.

After the success of *The Scent of Carrots* (220,000 admissions in France), he continued the adventure alongside Arnaud Demuynck to co-direct *Yuku and the Himalayan Flower*.

## **PRODUCERS**

### **Artemis**

Patrick Quinet founded Artémis Productions in 1992. In 29 years of existence, the company has collaborated with many prestigious directors (Lucas Belvaux, Chantal Akerman, Raoul Peck, Tom Hooper, Elia Suleiman, Nabil Ayouch, Jacques Doillon, Guillaume Canet, Dany Boon...) on more than 150 productions as diverse as they are varied, and has developed solid partnerships in the European audiovisual sector. Lately, Artémis Productions has enriched its eclectic filmography with works such as *Des Hommes*, *Délicieux*, *L'Origine du Monde*, *Mandibles*, *Deux*, *Pupille*, *Sink or Swim*, and *In The Name of the Land*. Recently, the company developed and produced the Belgian series *Pandore*, in collaboration with RTBF.

### **Les Films du Nord – La Boîte,... Productions**

Managed since 1995 in Lille and Brussels by Laurence Deydier and Arnaud Demuyne, Les Films du Nord and La Boîte,... Productions have devoted more than 25 years to short and medium-length auteur films (fiction, documentary, animation). For twenty years mainly in animated films; for nearly ten years mainly in films for young audiences. The companies have acquired extensive experience in the distribution of their films to the general public: festivals but also, and above all, distribution in Arthouse cinema networks, on DVD (ARTE VIDEO...) and TV (Canal + Kids... ). Since 2014 with *The Scent of Carrots*, twelve programs have thus been released, on a par with feature films, accumulating more than 1.5 million spectators at the cinema: *La Chouette entre veille et sommeil*, *Loups tendres et loufoques*, *Chats par-ci, chats par-là...* *Yuku and the Himalayan Flower* is their first feature film.

### **Vivement Lundi!**

Since its creation in 1998, Vivement Lundi! has produced more than 100 documentaries, animated programs and short fictions. The company's animation productions have garnered more than 200 national and international honorable mentions and selections at the most prestigious events (FIFA Annecy, Sundance Film Festival, Critics' Week, Locarno Film Festival, etc.). Production within the company is structured around the work of three producers: Jean-François Le Corre (documentary, animation), Mathieu Courtois (animation, short formats), Aurélie Angebault (new writing, documentary).

### **Nadasdy Film**

Nadasdy Film was founded in 2001 by Zoltán Horváth, director-producer of animated films and Nicolas Bulet, producer and administrator. Specialized in the production, directing and manufacture of animated films, this company based in Switzerland, in Geneva, produces television series, shorts and feature films. For nearly 20 years, Nadasdy Film has been working on creative and original projects, produced with different techniques such as cartoon, CGI, stop-motion or rotoscoping. The films produced have been selected by numerous festivals, including those of Berlin, Venice, Cannes, Sundance, Clermont-Ferrand and Annecy.