



**BOOTLEGGER**

A FILM BY  
CAROLINE MONNET



Mani, a master's student, returns to the reserve in northern Quebec where she grew up. Her painful past resurfaces. Resolved to reintegrate into the community, she gets involved in the debate around a referendum on allowing the free sale of alcohol on the reserve. Laura, a bootlegger, pockets the profits she makes there under the protection of the band council and her partner Raymond. The latter is still angry with Mani, whom he holds responsible for the death of his daughter in a fire. Opposing forces quickly divide the community into two sides who face each other to determine the best path to independence.

Drama, 81 minutes  
French, Anishinaabemowin  
2021

**A film by Caroline Monnet**  
**Produced by Catherine Chagnon**

Financing: SODEC, Telefilm Canada, Le Fonds Harold Greenberg  
In association with Best Friend Forever  
In collaboration with Société Radio Canada, Super Écran

Markets: CineMart, Berlinale Co-Production Market,  
Cinéfondation, BoostNL, Stowe Story Labs, First Cut Lab FNC,  
First Look USA

**Production: Microclimat Films**  
**Distribution (Canada) : MK2 MILE END**  
**International Sales: Best Friend Forever**



Photo: Lou Scamble



Photo: Laurent Guérin





Photo: Ulysse del Drago

## Director's Biography

Caroline Monnet is a multidisciplinary artist of Algonquin ancestry from Outaouais, Quebec. Her work seeks to communicate complex ideas around Indigenous identity and bicultural living through the examination of cultural histories. She is based in Montreal.

Her first feature film entitled *Bootlegger* is selected for both CineMart and Berlinale Co-Production Market 2016. Following her residency in Paris, she won Best Screenplay at the Cannes Film Festival 2017, an award granted by Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée (CNC) and the Cinéfondation.

## Director's Statement

*Bootlegger* started taking shape in my imagination at a time where we were seeing the proliferation of referendums in Canada's First Nation communities to abolish the law prohibiting the sale and consumption of alcohol. These political debates are not unanimous and can blatantly polarize communities, mainly because of the hypersensitivity related to the subject of alcoholism. My desire to tell stories, break cycles of victimization, and tackle preconceptions led me to want to build a cinematic world on this topic.

In failing to provide the necessary resources, the Canadian government demonstrates a real hypocrisy relative to reserves. This hypocrisy exists at the very heart of the community in *Bootlegger* and manifests itself in the form of corruption, secrets, and family taboos. I staged characters that transcend stereotypes and put forward their humanity, humour, and the contemporary reality of Indigenous people in isolated situations.

The territory is captivating but also threatening. My approach is contemporary, portraying my people in a modern and colourful way. Hope, laughter, and tears reverberate on a daily basis and illustrate the pulse of the community. *Bootlegger* is a social drama, but it is also an ode to the vitality and resilience of the Algonquin people. This story is common to any poor and marginalized communities. The topics in *Bootlegger* are thus universal and serve as springboards to explore the fear of losing control, the hope of a better world for future generations, and the quest for identity.

— Caroline Monnet



Photo: Julie Artacho



## Producer's Statement

*Bootlegger* deals with the subjugation of a community and individual resilience. The story involves two main female characters who are diametrically opposed but who come together in an essential aspect, to push themselves to the limit without compromise. Laura and Mani are unique, direct, and authentic characters. Together, they build an alliance that forces each of them to stop and listen rather than continue in the tireless tug of war of the powerful and the more assimilated.

The project was noticed during our presence at international markets: Cinemart, Berlinale Co-production Market, BoostNL, Stowe Story Labs, and the prestigious residence of the Cinéfondation—an official selection of the Cannes Film Festival—where Caroline won the CNC award. The production phases supported by SODEC, Telefilm Canada, and Le Fonds Harold Greenberg enabled principal writer-director Caroline Monnet to create a sensory and contemporary cinematic universe.

Monnet's sometimes extravagant universe is rooted in a raw, difficult, and harsh reality both in terms of the landscape and the Indigenous people living on a reserve. The multidisciplinary filmmaker and artist portrays this reality with rigour and affection, since she speaks of her maternal ancestry and her community, which she infinitely respects. The fact that the Canadian government has wreaked havoc in Northern Quebec, on the periphery of the major centres where the strongest and most affluent win, reflects a world that would be but cannot be silenced.

Monnet's artistic approach is clear and in keeping with our society's identity and relational concerns.

— Catherine Chagnon

## Microclimat Films

Founded in 2010 by producer Catherine Chagnon, Microclimat Films is a Quebec company dedicated to a cinema outside the box.

Microclimat Films has been involved in numerous productions and coproductions, including the documentary *Rue de la Victoire* with a world premiere at Hot Docs and an international premiere at El Gouna Festival in Egypt.

In 2018, it received the support of SODEC for its interactive production activities. The company was chosen for the innovative nature of its proposal as well as the strength of its partnerships.

In 2019, Microclimat Films released a seven directors' film-concert, *The Seven Last Words*, with a world premiere at Rotterdam, in the Bright Future program and a vertiginous 360-degree film, *Free Fall*. Created in residency at the Society for Arts and Technologies (SAT), the immersive film is distributed by Diversion cinéma.

The company is developing a sci-fi by the writer-director Marie Brassard, *The Train*.

In 2021, Microclimat Films will release Caroline Monnet's debut feature, *Bootlegger*.

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# Bootlegger

<b>Rôles principaux</b>	Pascale Bussières in the role of Laura	<b>Scriptwriters</b>	Caroline Monnet Daniel Watchorn
	Devery Jacobs in the role of Mani	<b>Directed by</b>	Caroline Monnet
	Samian in the role of Oscar	<b>Produced by</b>	Catherine Chagnon
	Jacques Newashish in the role of Raymond	<b>Executive Producer</b>	Pierre Even
	Dominique Pétin in the role of Jeanne	<b>Associate Producer</b>	Sheldon McGregor
	Joséphine Bacon in the role of Nora	<b>Cinematographer</b>	Nicolas Canniccioni
	C, S, Gilbert Crazy Horse in the role of Johnny	<b>Editor</b>	Aube Foglia
	Brigitte Poupart in the role of Nadine	<b>Production Designer</b>	Louisa Schabas
	Charles Bender in the role of Éric	<b>Costumes Designer</b>	Éric Poirier
	Charles Buckell-Robertson in the role of the Radio Host	<b>Sound</b>	Stéphane Barsalou Guillaume Daoust Jean-François B. Sauvé Bernard Gariépy Strobl
		<b>Original Score</b>	Jean Martin Tanya Tagaq
		<b>Country of Production</b>	Canada
		<b>Shooting Locations</b>	Kitigan Zibi Tiohtià:ke / Moonyang and surroundings
		<b>Release Date</b>	2021