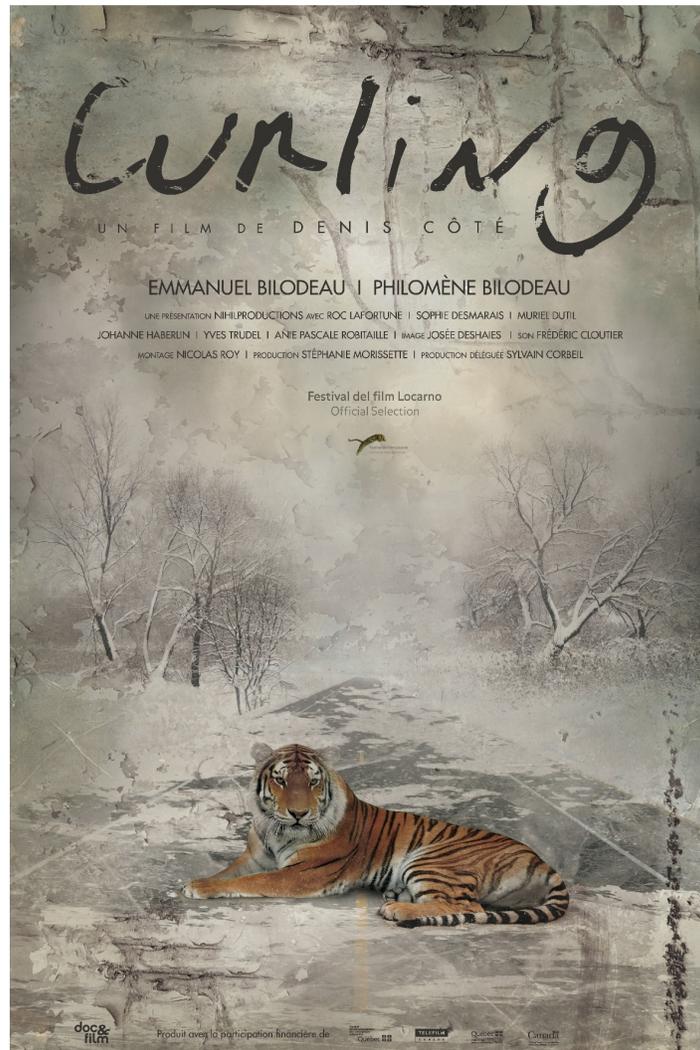


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presents



A Film by Denis Côté (92 min., Canada, 2010)

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## Synopsis

Set on the fringe of society in a remote part of the countryside, ***Curling*** takes a keen look at the unusual private life of a father and his daughter. Between his unremarkable jobs, Jean-François (Emmanuel Bilodeau) devotes an awkward energy to Julyvonne (Philomène Bilodeau). The fragile balance of their relationship will be jeopardized by some bleak circumstances.

## Awards

Best Actor & Best Director – *Locarno International Film Festival*  
Official Selection – *New Directors/New Films*

## Director's Bio

### Denis Côté

Denis Côté was born in New-Brunswick, Canada in 1973.

Since 1997, Denis has produced and directed 15 short films which have been screened at many international film festivals. Journalist and film critic until 2005, Denis Côté directed his first feature film *Les états nordiques* which won the Golden Leopard Award at the prestigious Locarno International Film Festival. The Indie Vision Grand Prize followed at the Jeonju International Film Festival in South Korea. *Les états nordiques* been screened at more than 25 international film events. His third feature film *Elle veut le chaos* won the Silver Leopard for Best Director at Locarno in August 2008. *Carcasses* was premiered at Cannes in The Directors' Fortnight section in 2009. In 2010, Denis Côté presented his piece for the Jeonju Digital Project entitled *The Enemy Lines*. ***Curling*** is his fifth feature film.

**2005 *Les états nordiques (Drifting States)***

**2007 *Nos vies privées (Our Private Lives)***

**2008 *Elle veut le chaos (All that She Wants)***

**2009 *Carcasses***

**2010 *Les lignes ennemies (The Enemy Lines)* (43min)**

**2010 *Curling***

## **Interview with Denis Côté**

### **– Where did the inspiration and the characters for *Curling* come from?**

There were several sparks. I read a news story that seemed to me morbid, spectacular and ultimately seductive. I think it was in Alberta. A dozen bodies were found in the middle of a corn field. It was a settling of accounts by a criminal biker gang no doubt. Initially my story was set in the summer. Finally though, the wintertime setting seemed to me a beautiful challenge. I succumbed to a few cinephilic urges. I reviewed again and again masterworks: Victor Erice's *The Spirit of the Beehive* and as well Charles Laughton's *Night of the Hunter*. I liked the idea of closely guarded properly raised children who despite everything, in the end fall upon horror. And as well there was also my obsession of writing a story whose characters are slightly removed from rest of the world.

### **– Do you consider them to be marginal?**

Not really. They are not bizarre. They are not trying to be different. I would say that they unconsciously question how to be with the rest of the world. The concept of *The Other* is something that my characters always have a fear of. My job as a writer is to establish a character's rapport with his world, a connection. It's always arduous for them. This time I sought to draw this father and his little girl towards to the living. I do not consider them to be dead, rather they are benumbed– paralysed in their terrifyingly ordered routine. Julyvonne connects with the rest of the world in her uncovering of something horrible. But this discovery is probably most beneficial to her. There is a world outside her house. At her age she needs to dream and her strange awakening is a result of this discovery that she makes. For his part, Jean-François suffers in great hardship. But at the end of his hell he finds a deliverance which perhaps he does not see as one, but that most probably is one for him. This is a very dark film with a great white light at the end.

### **– Did you encounter any particular difficulty shooting in winter?**

Our crew was marvellous. Emmanuel Bilodeau is an immense actor and his daughter revealed herself to be perfect for the role. In her eyes, she had a kind of constant detachment. She composed a Julyvonne to which both everything and nothing seemed to adhere, a sort of False Alice in False Wonderland. The light shines through her. There is a natural precision that non professionals have that I am passionate about, and Philomène constantly found this fidelity, her non-performance. Assuredly, shooting in winter in Québec is a considerable challenge. The weather was winter true to form. It was my first 35mm shoot and I once again was able to rely upon the immense talent of Josée Deshaies the cinematographer.

### **– And again, elements of the story where the past lives of characters remain in the shadows...**

Yes. Cinema needs the off-screen. I make it my duty to allow air (call it enigma or mystery) to fill the interstices of the story. The spectator should not see this elliptic architecture as a provocation or narrative posturing. There are holes, jumps, shadowy zones, the pasts of characters remain voluntarily blurred or relatively mute. It is not laziness or haughtiness, it is writing. I am incapable of recounting the perfect story, one that opens in logic, that ends in logic, that apprises me at every detour. That is not cinema. I want to lose myself before the object, and as a spectator I feel intelligent when I am given latitude and when the workings of my own imagination are respected. *Curling* is witness to this preoccupation of mine and surely resembles my other films in this way.

**– You’re a former film critic and very much a cinephile. Which filmmakers or movements in contemporary cinema inspire you presently?**

I am less of a cinephile than I have been. I no longer feel the need to see everything. Films vex me more than before, I am less tolerant and I cannot say why. Now, in three minutes, I know if a film is for me. In ten shots, a film has already revealed its hand and its propos. So I seek that which challenges me and not what entertains. There are certainly strong filmmakers presently, the Romanians, the Filipinos... Along with Jia Zhang-ke, the Thai Apichatpong Weerasethakul is to my mind the most exciting filmmaker of recent years. On my bedside table still though are the works of filmmakers Claire Denis, Maurice Pialat, Robert Bresson and RW Fassbinder.

## **Credits**

**Curling** *was produced with the financial participation of*

Sodec Telefilm Canada Québec Film and Television Tax Credit The  
Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit

Writer, Producer and Director: **Denis Côté**

Producer: **Stéphanie Morissette**

Line Producer: **Sylvain Corbeil**

Director of Production: **Nancy Grant**

Director of Photography: **Josée Deshaies**

Artistic Director: **Marjorie Rhéaume**

Sound Recordist and Designer: **Frédéric Cloutier**

Editor: **Nicolas Roy**

## **Cast**

Jean-François Sauvageau: **Emmanuel Bilodeau**

Julyvonne Sauvageau: **Philomène Bilodeau**

Kennedy: **Roc Lafortune**

Isabelle: **Sophie Desmarais**

Odile: **Muriel Dutil**

Yvan: **Yves Trudel**

Mireille: **Anie Pascale Robitaille**

Rosie: **Johanne Haberlin**

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