

LITTLE BY LITTLE

a film by Matias Carlier

A close-up, slightly low-angle portrait of a man's face. He has short, light-colored hair with grey at the temples, and a mustache. His eyes are a vibrant green, looking directly at the viewer. He is resting his chin on his right hand, which is propped under his head. The lighting is soft and natural, suggesting an indoor setting.

PRESS
KIT

SYNOPSIS

Since the age of six, Noah has been navigating between his mother's house, foster homes and problems with the law. But when he loses his footing, he jumps on his bike, hurtles down the slopes of Lausanne and becomes the king of the asphalt. Filmed over three years, *LITTLE BY LITTLE* delicately explores the upheavals of adolescence and paints an intimate portrait of a quest for identity.



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Original title: Toute ma vie

International title: Little by Little

Running time: 69 minutes

Country of production: Switzerland

Year of production: 2025

World Premiere: Visions du Réel, Nyon / Special Mention

Language: French

Subtitles: English, German, Italian

Director

Matias Carlier

Cinematography

Myriam Guyénard

Editing

Brice Cardinal

Sound

Matias Carlier

Music

Yatoni Roy Cantù

Production

Lionel Baier

Bande à part Films



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BIOGRAPHY OF MATIAS CARLIER

Born in Paris in 1998, Matias Carlier studied film at ÉCAL (École Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne) between 2018 and 2021. His graduation film, *FEVER* (2021), was selected for numerous international festivals, including the Berlinale, Palm Springs, Solothurn and Winterthur. *LITTLE BY LITTLE*, his first feature-length documentary, was selected for the national competition at Visions du Réel and honoured with a special mention from the jury.



FILMOGRAPHY

PEAU D'ARGENT (2025)

Short fiction film, 18 minutes

Opening Nights

Festival :

Clermont-Ferrand (2026)

LITTLE BY LITTLE (2025)

Feature-length documentary, 69 minutes

Bande à part Films

Festivals :

Visions du Réel (2025)

Castellinaria, Festival del cinema giovane (2025)

Journées de Soleure (2026)

LES SATELLITES NE TOMBENT JAMAIS DU CIEL (2023)

Short fiction film, 17 minutes

ÉCAL

Festival :

Filmschoolfest Munich (2024)

FEVER (2021)

Short fiction film, 22 minutes

ÉCAL

Festivals (selection) :

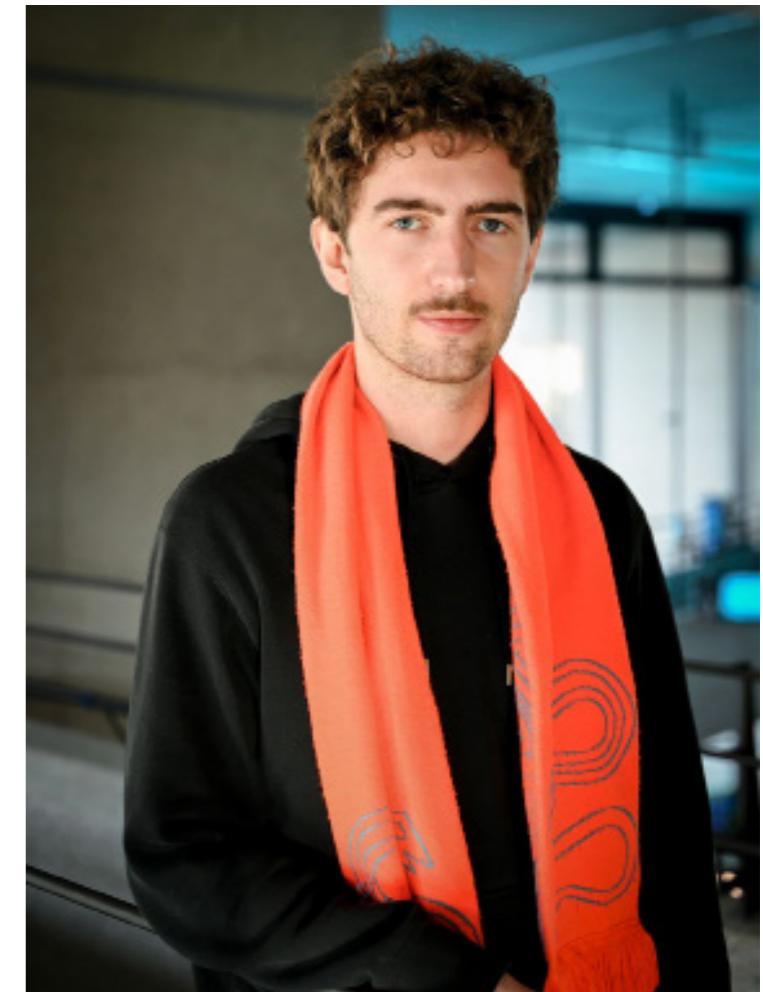
Berlinale Generation 14plus (2022)

Palm Springs International ShortFest (2022)

Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur (2021)

Journées de Soleure (2022)

Geneva International Film Festival (2021)



Ronny Heine © Filmschoolfest Munich

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

LITTLE BY LITTLE was born out of an encounter. Initially, I was working on a series of portraits of teenagers in Lausanne who were passionate about bikelife, an urban rodeo where you ride through the city on a wheelie.

Noah was supposed to be one of these portraits, but from our very first conversations, I sensed that something special was happening: a very natural relationship, a trust that could give rise to a film.

Not to tell a "story", but to accompany a journey, a time of life when everything is changing. I followed Noah from the age of 13 to 16, through an adolescence marked by instability – shelters, returns home, conflicts, dropping out – but also by energy, humour and a zest for life.

His passion for cycling was not just a hobby: it was a need for freedom, a way to breathe. It was this duality that I wanted to film.

The film was built up over time, at Noah's pace, without ever rushing him. Between filming sessions, we would simply meet up to spend time together.

The camera only came later. Some scenes were filmed with very light equipment – camcorder, iPhone – because these tools allowed for a more accurate closeness: Noah forgot about the technology and could be himself. It wasn't a film about him, but with him.

The trust that Noah and his family placed in me was crucial. His mother, his little sister and his loved ones accepted the presence of the camera in their daily lives, both in difficult moments and in lighter ones. This openness made the film possible.

During editing, *LITTLE BY LITTLE* emerged as an intimate portrait: a teenager seeking support in a world that does not always offer it. I wanted to avoid any explanatory stance and let Noah's complexity exist – his humour, his contradictions, his anger, his sometimes astonishing lucidity. Filming Noah forced me to question my place and my limits.

We became friends, and that friendship shaped the film as much as the direction. When I sensed that a form of stability was emerging in his life – his first internships, his desire to work – I decided to conclude.

To continue would have been to tell a different story.



Interview with Matias Carlier published in LA TRIBUNE DE GENÈVE in April 2025

BY ANGÉLIQUE DEVAUD

This young Frenchman, who studied at Swiss art schools, talks about the making of his documentary *LITTLE BY LITTLE* and discusses the profession of film director in Switzerland.

In April 2025, Matias Carlier, a young French director who studied in French-speaking Switzerland, received a Special Mention at the Visions du Réel documentary film festival for *LITTLE BY LITTLE*, a feature film produced by Bande à part Films, which follows the complicated three-year journey of Noah, a young man from Lausanne who is passionate about cycling and at odds with his environment. This is a theme that is dear to him and one that recurs throughout his work.

One year of studying astrophysics at university in Paris was enough for Matias Carlier. After studying the Earth and the planets, he set his sights on his first love: cinema. He headed for French-speaking Switzerland, and more specifically the École Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne. After three years of study, and as is customary at the end of a bachelor's degree, he made his first film in 2021: *FEVER*.



"At first, I didn't know much about the documentary format, let alone the theme of adolescence," explains the young director. "It was during my second year of studies that I discovered both, while making a documentary about a dozen young people."

As I met them, talked to them and, above all, listened to them, I was surprised by their spontaneity." *FEVER* depicts the stories these teenagers told him, talking about both love and loneliness.

This 25-minute short film was selected for screening in Winterthur, Berlin and even Palm Springs. Accompanied by Lionel Baier after this success, Matias Carlier was offered the chance to make a television documentary about a group of young people from Lausanne who ride wheelie bikes.

But things did not go as planned: "The result was very generic and I felt constrained by the TV format," laments the young director. "So we abandoned the project."

But during this experiment, he meets Noah, a young daredevil with a passion for two wheels and a complicated background. A new documentary begins to take shape.

“When I discovered Noah, I immediately understood that he was very sensitive, that he wasn’t pretending in front of the camera and that cycling wasn’t just an activity for him, but something vital,” says Matias Carlier. “I then met his mother and sister, and I felt that there was a story to tell.”

The filming of *LITTLE BY LITTLE*, initially planned to last a few months, ultimately took three years, during which Matias Carlier followed Noah in his daily life.

Between problems with the law and family conflicts, Noah escaped on his bike, dreaming of a simpler life. “Noah had been living in a children’s home since he was six,” explains the director. “What I found interesting about this was that it tells a different story from the picture-postcard Switzerland; it talks about a more marginalised reality that we don’t always see, even though children’s homes are not the focus of this documentary.”

The project suddenly takes on a more intimate dimension. After two years of filming, Matias Carlier receives a call from Noah’s younger sister. “She told me that her family hadn’t heard from him for three days and that he was sleeping on the streets. Their mother had been hospitalised, he didn’t have the key to his home and had been evicted from his house, so he had nowhere to go. So I took him in at my place in Geneva for the evening.”

The next day, the director received a call from Noah’s social worker, who asked him to take him in until a place in a shelter became available. He stayed for a week. “Until then, I had entered Noah’s life to document it. I would meet up with him to film him, but now he was entering mine. So I took out my camcorder, which gave the film a new lease of life, with a more energetic and fast-paced section.”



Captivating, *LITTLE BY LITTLE* was selected for national competition at Visions du Réel, and even won a Special Mention award.

“What touched the audience was the sincere, unfiltered perspective of a teenager who is rarely listened to, and the genuine relationship of trust between a young person and a filmmaker,” says the director.

“And Noah has an incredible screen presence, where he comes across as funny, touching and unpredictable, with all his contradictions. You can’t help but love him and follow him, even if you don’t always understand him. This format leaves room for reflection, and the viewer can really feel the protagonist’s doubts and emotions.”

This new success confirms that he is moving in the right direction. Even if being a director in Switzerland is not that easy. “I can’t make a living from it at the moment, so I’m doing a series of bread-and-butter jobs,” admits Matias Carlier.

However, in a way, I find it rewarding. It’s certainly very restrictive, but it also feeds my inspiration. But the upcoming budget cuts, particularly regarding radio and television licence fees, will make the situation even more complicated.”

Determined and convinced despite everything, Matias Carlier will return in 2026 with two new projects, including his first feature film.

TO FIND OUT MORE :

° AKUTMAG (German)

° BUSINESS DOC EUROPE (English)

