

SIMMON

A FILM BY CAMILLE DE GALBERT



FILM INFORMATION

t. +1-646-649-3600
e. Aria@LHFNY.com



FILM TITLE

Simon

LOG LINE

A man prepares for his final entry onto the grand stage, only to be confronted by his inner self.

SYNOPSIS

A man prepares for his final entry onto the grand stage, only to be confronted by his inner self. SIMON is a genre-crossing, dizzying dive; an inside-outside passage through dance. Passage from the imaginary to reality, from childhood to adulthood. No one is more alone than the actor who enters the stage. No one is more alone than the child who's about to join adulthood. And when the imaginary joins reality, the figure of childhood explodes.

CONTACT INFORMATION

LIGHTHOUSE FILMS, LLC
Thibaut Estellon | Producer
115 West 29th Street, Suite 903, New York, NY10001
t. +1-646-649-3600 f. +1-646-398-7122 e. Aria@LHFNY.com

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Type: Short Film
TRT: 11 minutes and 58 seconds (11:58)
Genre: Experimental | Drama | Narrative
Exhibition Format: DVD, Blu-Ray, DCP, Quicktime
Aspect Ratio: 2:40
Shooting Format: RED
Production Year: 2015
Country of Production: U.S.A.
Color

FILM WEBSITE

www.AriaFilmSeries.com

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

t. +1-646-649-3600
e. Aria@LHFNy.com



SIMON is a genre-crossing, dizzying dive; an inside-outside passage through dance.

Passage from the imaginary to the real, from childhood to adulthood. **SIMON** is therefore an inevitable redemption: a meditation, the initiation ritual of a character who faces his own accidents. The body is inhabited by the constant movement of the imbalance into the fall. The gloves drop, multiply, pour, and fall. Hackneyed gestures, infinite shifts from the body. From the camera. From the inside outwards. Incessant inside and outside. An actor prepares for his final entry onto the grand stage. We follow him on his inner journey, from the dressing room to the stage.

The opening scene is a tribute to Pina Bausch. The dark chairs draw on the floor as human shadows. These chairs are us; our humanity, our fragility, our clashes, our excesses. The man falls, gets up, falls again. The man dances with his own life, with his desires and surprises. He dances with the elements, with his fears and inner impulses.

Music is the central axis of my work. It is my primary source of inspiration. It is the music that sets my creative process in motion and gives it its rhythm.

The figure of childhood appears through the character of the little dog. This dog is the benevolent soul, the reassuring angel that accompanies us and who we care for. And the rampart to solitude, or to the sense of abandonment.

Here is the pillow that consoles. Feathers, flakes. It is also the animalistic part of the dancer who rises and falls, gets up, and finally stands up to face his own life.

No one is more alone than the actor who enters the stage. No one is more alone than the child who's about to join adulthood. And when the imaginary joins reality, the figure of childhood explodes.

~ Camille de Galbert

FILM PHOTOS

t. +1-646-649-3600
e. Aria@LHFNY.com



DIRECTOR'S FAQ

t. +1-646-649-3600
e. Aria@LHFNY.com



How did you get into filmmaking?

From a young age, I wanted to become a dancer. After 10 years of dance conservatory in France, I moved to New York to attend the Merce Cunningham Studio when I was 19. I had to undergo a knee surgery, which stopped my dance career and forced me to reorient. I always drew and painted in my spare time, so film was a logical choice as it merged both the visual aspect from painting, and the movement aspect from dance. After having been on stage so many years I also wanted to go behind the camera in order to collaborate with other artists and talents to merge writing, dancing, visual arts.

Thus making movies is necessary for you?

Yes. It is crucial for me, as it allows me to express and exteriorize my ideas and feelings.

Does dance guide your style of filmmaking, and if so how so?

I'm not doing dance films, but dance has a strong influence on my work. Music also is key in my creative process. I've been trained to play musical instruments, violin in particular, from a young age. My grandfather was a musical instrument collector, and there was always a piano where I grew up.

What can you tell us about SIMON?

SIMON is the first of a 3 short film series called the Aria Series. SIMON is a journey between dream and reality; the journey of an actor and the loneliness that he can experience

before entering on stage. With that being said, there are multiple levels of interpretations and readings to SIMON, and each viewer will find their own meaning and understanding of the film.

How did you come up with the title for the film?

I chose SIMON not only because it resonates strongly, but also because I wanted to show the intimacy of the character. It's his inner-life that interests me. The titles of these three films will all feature the name of the principal character.

How did you direct Simon Courchel, the main actor?

Simon is a friend. I wrote the film with him in mind, so he was an obvious choice for me. We rehearsed the dance parts, and there was also a lot of improvisation to find the right direction. I wanted him to contain his rage and anger so that he could better expel it during the shoot.

How did you work with the rest of the crew?

The collaboration with Michael Belcher, our DP, was crucial. I admire his work and consider him as more of a poet than a technician. He's guided and pushed me all along this project. Frank and Haruka, our set designers, did an amazing job in bringing this film to life and added an extra dimension. The collaboration with the rest of the crew and the production was fantastic, I felt supported from the start. Everyone's motivation was a real drive all along the shoot.

DIRECTOR'S FAQ (CTD)

t. +1-646-649-3600
e. Aria@LHFNY.com



Can you tell us about the post-production process?

We managed to get most of the shots I wanted for the film during the 2 days of shooting. I started by creating a rough cut, and then developed it further with Thibaut Estellon, our executive producer. We decided to change a few scenes, and modify the original beginning and end of the film. Our editor Chris Shimojima took over and focused on the scenes with movement; the rhythm, and pacing of the cut, and also worked on the music and sound effects. Kevin Peters from Gigantic Studios did phenomenal work on the sound mix and design. Sound and music were crucial and his work was spot-on, it complements the cut and brings another dimension to the story. During color correction, Michael Belcher and our colorist Nick Levanti worked on creating two very specific atmospheres for the interior and exterior scenes. The end result go beyond what I was expecting.

What were some of your aesthetic decisions?

I wanted to work with a dancer, but I didn't want to do a dance film or a film about dance. Everything is very subjective in his movements. For the cinematography we decided to use a lot of wide angles with few camera movements or unnecessary effects. The interior dressing room is rather warm and reassuring, whereas the exterior location is cold and somewhat anguishing.

Simon is a very melancholic film, where do your influences come from?

I think I'm a somewhat melancholic person, and my creative approach is always linked to music. From a young age when I was dancing, I was pushed to improvise, always alone by myself. The spirit leaves your body and looks at yourself. When this happens, I think a certain melancholia can appear, as I'm totally naked in front of others.

SIMON is your first film, what did you learn and what were some of the challenges?

I learned to work with a real team, to share and compromise. This film couldn't have been made without the help and support of my producer and all the crew.

What are you hoping the film will trigger in the audience?

I would love for the audience to feel lost for a few minutes and let themselves sail in this journey between dream and reality.

In your film, there is imaginary and minimalist language. Do you prefer the language of the body?

Sometime we don't have words to express what we feel and think, and indeed in the film the body language is more important than everything else.

CREW

t. +1-646-649-3600
e. Aria@LHFNY.com



CAMILLE DE GALBERT

Writer / Director

Camille is a graduate of the Conservatoire National de Région de Grenoble, France, in contemporary dance (2000). She continued her dance training in New York at The Merce Cunningham Studio. As a result of a knee injury, she renounced a dance career and turned her artistic attention to drawing and video projects as a self-taught artist. She then applied her interests to cinema and moving image techniques at the NY Film Academy. Through the years Camille's craft has grown to blend moving images into a choreography of light, music, and words. She carries-out experimental videos impregnated with the unconscious, the oneiric, her journey as a dancer, as well as her life in the U.S., where movements, expressions, sounds, shapes, and faces collide.



THIBAUT ESTELLON

Executive Producer / Producer

Thibaut is a partner and producer at LightHouse Films, LLC, a New York based production company and director's agency focusing on high-end digital work. A native of France, Thibaut has nearly 15 years of experience in the arts and entertainment industries. Prior to LightHouse Films, he worked in a variety of creative management positions in the music, art, and fashion industries for EMI, Sony BMG, Urban Institute of Contemporary Arts (MI), Sara Meltzer Gallery, Comite Colbert. His diverse background, combined with his education (MBA / Arts Organization Management) and experience, allows him to supervise both the creative and managerial aspects of LightHouse's productions.



SIMON COURCHEL

Talent / as SIMON

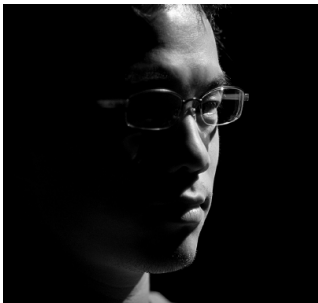
Born in Paris, Simon studied dance and graduated from the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris. He then worked for the Opéra National du Rhin and the Centre Chorégraphique National-Ballet de Lorraine where he interpreted choreographies of William Forsythe, Michel Keléminis, Jean-Claude Gallota, Dominique Bagouet, Karole Armitage, Yuval Pick to name a few. In 2006, he joined the Belgium choreographer Frederic Flamand in Marseille as a principal dancer. Since 2010, Simon lives in New York and is currently collaborating and dancing with John Jasperse, Yanira Castro, Jon Kinzel, Rebecca Lazier, Tere O' Connor and Paul-André Fortier.



MICHAEL BELCHER

Director of Photography

Michael was born and raised in the Endless Mountains region of Pennsylvania and studied experimental filmmaking at Ithaca College. He came up shooting music videos in New York for Busta Rhymes, Metric, Fabolous, and Danny Brown, whose "Grown Up" video, directed by Greg Brunkalla, won an MTV Woody Award for Best Music Video. He also shot the music video for Bob Dylan's "Like A Rolling Stone," which won TIME Magazine's #1 Video of the Year distinction as well as 4 Gold Lions, 4 Clio Awards, and a UK Music Video Award. Belcher has also shot four feature films and many short. His list of commercial clients includes Pepsi, AMEX, Versace, New Balance, and many more.



CHRIS SHIMOJIMA

Editor

Chris has worked on short films as a writer, director, and editor, which have screened at several international festivals. He is also a commercial director whose work has been shortlisted by the AICP. Shimojima is the cinematographer and editor of the webseries "Downsized," one of YouTube's Top 10 Made-for-the-Web shows. He received his BFA in Dramatic Writing from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and is preparing his debut feature film. Chris really likes to swim. And he hates holding umbrellas in the rain.

CREDITS

t. +1-646-649-3600
e. Aria@LHFNY.com

SIMON Part of the "Aria" Series

Writer-Director: Camille de Galbert
Produced by: LightHouse Films, LLC
Executive Producer: Thibaut Estellon
Starring: Simon Courchel as Simon
Director of Photography: Michael Belcher
Editor: Chris Shimojima
Production Designer: Frank Baran
Art Director: Haruka Kawasumi
Costume Designer: Jevyn Nelms
Hair and Make-up Artist: Rachel Hevesi
1st Assistant Director: Rick Rosset
Special Effects Supervisor: Bohdan Bushell / J&M Special Effects
Gaffers: Rob Fattorini / Bob Blankemeier
1st Assistant Camera: Kyle Clark
Crane Operator: Brandon Sumner
Swing: Ryan Geffert
Location Sound: Andrew Reardon
DIT: Daniel Haney
Stunt Double: Bob Blankemeier
Animals: Bastian (dog) - Provided By William Berloni Theatrical Animals, Inc.
Owned and trained by Kristen Sobanski
Production Coordinator : Maricela Reyes
Production Assistants: John Ludas / Erick Majano
Administrative Assistant: Anne-Sophie Tisseyre
Art Production Assistant: Vincent Rodriguez
Behind the Scenes Photographer: Erick Majano
Colorist : Nicholas Levanti
VFX artist: Jay Garrison
Audio Post-Production Services: Gigantic Studios
Executive Producer: Steven Tollen
Sound Design and Sound Mix: Kevin Peters
Additional Sound Editorial : Robert Syvret
Poster and Titles Design: Marion Bizet

MUSIC

"Mother", Composed by Alexander Balanescu, Performed by The Balanescu Quartet, © Doina Limited
"Aria", Composed by Alexander Balanescu, Performed by The Balanescu Quartet, © Doina Limited
"The Young Conscript and the Moon", Composed by Alexander Balanescu, Performed by The Balanescu Quartet
© Doina Limited
"Prelude op.11 n.8", Licensed via iStock, © Scriabin
"One and Only", Licensed via Marmoset, © Ramova

SPECIAL THANKS

AbelCine / Brooklyn Film Co / Anne Calas / Stephanie and Diego Castillo
Frank Defalco / The Invisible Dog Art Center / Antoine de Galbert / Marmoset /
Anne Mourier / Steven Ungureau / Kevin Waldron / Lucien Zayan

CREW FAQ

t. +1-646-649-3600
e. Aria@LHFNY.com



MICHAEL BELCHER / DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

How did you come to filmmaking & cinematography?

I grew up in working-class rural Pennsylvania, within a community of mostly laborers, so I had very little exposure to art and to ideas that went beyond face value. As a teenager, I relied on movies to give me access to ideas and culture that I was interested in but didn't have access to. I decided to study film in college, and afterwards I moved to New York where I started at the very bottom, working mostly for free, learning as I went. The more I learned about the craft, the more I identified with cinematography.

SIMON was the first time you worked with Camille de Galbert. Tell us about this collaboration?

To me, one very important thing about Camille is that she is more interested in ideas than technique. In this way, she dedicates herself to subject matter that she does not already understand. Making SIMON felt like we were investigating a little piece of the unknown and trying to capture the moment of discovery. That's the kind of filmmaking I'm most excited about, and it's hard to find a collaborator like Camille who is willing to push into the darker corners.

What did you think when you first read the script?

I felt like there was a strong tone. The specifics of each scene and the overall structure were still being formed, but the film had a soul. Some projects have all the technical specifics at the beginning, but they never find their heart. Camille's film had this from the

beginning, and I think that's why all of the collaborators came on board.

What was your choice for camera and lenses?

On SIMON, we paired the new RED Dragon with old Russian Lomo anamorphics from the late 70's. The RED Dragon generates an extremely robust and flexible digital image, but the camera can easily look sharper and cleaner than the human eye. The Lomo's pair nicely with the Dragon, because the imperfections of the vintage optics break up the fidelity of the sensor and add flavors of history and magic. These qualities felt right for the film.

What was your approach for lighting and movement?

For lighting, I had two locations to consider: interior and exterior. For the interior location, I did my best to collaborate with the art department to build the lighting into the set, so that practical sources could be used almost exclusively. In my opinion, that's the best way to make an honest image. And there were only a handful of shots inside that location that required additional lighting and manipulation. For the exterior location, we wanted overcast, shadowless light. We didn't have the resources to control the sun over that large of an area, so it was a matter of good fortune that we had a mostly cloudy day.

For camera movement, we asked ourselves...When? And why? Camille and I paid close attention to the meaning and effect of the camera movements we employed.

CREW FAQ (CTD)

t. +1-646-649-3600
e. Aria@LHFNY.com

We tried to be disciplined, because we didn't want to communicate to the audience that we were simply capable of camera movement. It's too easy to clutter films with meaningless visual flair. We wanted to create a more restrained visual language, so that when the camera did move, it was a purposeful and more powerful choice.

What are your influences as a cinematographer?

Mostly real life. We can observe a huge spectrum of lessons for filmmaking, and of course it's an exercise in paying attention to how we feel about things. It's a cumulative practice.

How would you characterize your cinematographic style?

It's hard for me to speak about my style, because I do my best to approach each

project with fresh eyes and adapt to its unique needs. I have to look backwards to see patterns, and when I do that, I notice that a lot of my work is an effort to be natural and truthful - but with a sense of wonder.

What was the most challenging on this movie for you?

The biggest challenge was figuring out the arch of the images. The film bounces back and forth between two locations, and we put a lot of thought into how each space would be revealed and how they would relate to one another. We had to find a rhythm, an arch, and a vocabulary that remained interesting and coherent. The options are nearly endless, and it takes time to boil out every option except the best one.

SIMON COURCHEL / TALENT - AS SIMON

Can you tell us about yourself?

I was born in Paris in 1979, and I moved to Brooklyn in 2009. I have been dancing most of my life, I still do, but I am now also trying to make my way in photography.

What was your feeling at the first reading of the script?

Excitement! Also understanding everything seemed pretty clear and comfortable even though I don't have any training or experiences as an actor.

Can you explain the director/actor relationship during the shooting?

Camille was really sure about the general atmosphere of the movie since the beginning, and it appeared to me that I just simply needed to be inspired by it. We understood each other pretty immediately, and the strong background of Camille as a contemporary dancer made us connect very easily. We talk the same language.

Was it challenging being the only human actor?

No.

One of the sequences was shot outside during the winter. Did the weather complicate things for you on set?

Well yes, I was really freezing, but I was not the only one! I had time to figure out how to manage the snow, and how to adapt the movements and initial ideas if needed. So all was fine.

How would you describe your character's psyche?

Anxious but not afraid.

You're a contemporary dancer, how did you prepare for this shoot?

I actually prepared myself the same way I get ready before I perform on stage; meaning being sure that my body is ready to do what is required. I have danced in some choreography where acting, or at least being in a specific state of mind, was part of the work; so I didn't feel like I was in an unknown field. But the fact that I did not really know what was captured in the camera, and how things were translated through this specific eye was unnerving to me at the beginning of the shooting.

CREW FAQ (CTD)

t. +1-646-649-3600
e. Aria@LHFNY.com

THIBAUT ESTELLON / EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

What was your first feeling when you read Camille's script?

I've known Camille for many years, and have been following her work for a while now. We represent her as a director, and have always been extremely supportive of her work. She has a truly unique sensibility and approach to filmmaking that combines elements of contemporary art, dance, performance work, and experimental video art. Until now, her work was closer to the contemporary art circuit rather than the movie industry, and I was extremely excited to read the script for SIMON. I could visualize the film instantaneously as she had a strong idea of the world and story she wanted to develop. For me it was just a matter of bringing the best talent on board to collaborate with her, and help push the script even further. Camille used to work almost exclusively in isolation, or with only a few collaborators, and it was important to have a talented team that was supportive and understood the ideas she was trying to achieve.

How did you approach the production?

The initial script was strong, and Camille already had visual references for the set design, music, character, and world that she wanted to develop. We worked on the script to make it stronger, and started to look for collaborators who would understand her vision and help bring this film to life. Camille wrote the script with Simon Courchel in mind, a talented and experienced contemporary dancer who was essential to the success of this film. We also brought Michael Belcher on board (DoP), who understood Camille's vision, pushed her creatively, and was extremely supportive from the start. This Director/DP collaboration was key, as Camille lacked the experience of directing larger shoots and crews. Bringing on Frank and Haruka (our set designers) was also essential, as they too understood Camille's vision, and created a set that was not only credible but almost acted as a character by itself. As the film was very experimental, my main objective from the start was to make sure Camille was surrounded by a team and crew of people who would understand her vision, believe in the

film, and support her from the start. I think it shows in the film.

What about locations?

We had two days of shooting. It wasn't easy to find our locations with such a tight budget. We used our network to find the exterior lot and were fortunate to have a beautiful mantle of snow and a cloudy sky the day of the shoot. For the interior, we used a very unique bar in Bushwick, Brooklyn called The Keep. It had some vintage decor elements and props that we used in addition to the set design created specifically for the film.

What was the most challenging?

This short was fully self-funded, so we needed to be efficient with our resources and time. We didn't have much time to shoot, so we had to shoot fast and make quick choices on set. The exterior days were limited by natural light, and we had to rely on pure luck on a few other things. It was Camille's first film and Simon Courchel's first performance as an actor on camera, so we needed time to prep. But these challenges are just part of filmmaking; you need to compromise without sacrificing the artistic value of the film and story. The crew and everyone involved in the film believed in it, and this was key to the success of this film.

Any interesting stories from the set?

Yes, several: when the crane operator was asked to do 360s with his jib for the first time in his life, when Bastian our lovely dog was so excited by the snow he couldn't walk and wanted to run instead, when Simon Courchel who froze to death and had to throw himself repeatedly on the ground, and when the location owner freaked out when she saw her place right after we wrapped and before cleaning.

What's next?

We're in development for MARIE, the next chapter of the Aria Series. The story is more complex and developed, and will require a much larger production and some very technical and mechanical effects. It will be an even stronger film!

CREW FAQ (CTD)

t. +1-646-649-3600
e. Aria@LHFNy.com

HARUKA KAWASUMI / ART DIRECTOR FRANK BARAN / PRODUCTION DESIGNER

As a set design team, how do you work and collaborate with each other?

We simply start by discussing our initial interpretations of the script. Afterwards, we search for a middle ground, in which we both feel satisfied. Through every step, we use each other's sense to gauge whether or not we are heading in the right direction.

How did you approach SIMON from a set design perspective?

SIMON was very exciting because Camille possessed a very strong vision for her film, and at the same time allowed us freedom to experiment, and expand upon her initial ideas. She sent us some visual references along with the script, and she had a good sense of the world already. The look of SIMON came from these long and passionate discussions with Camille during pre-production. Imagery from Bohemian culture, surrealist art, and eastern european cinema were some of her initial references. Our goal was to create two drastically contrasting environments for our protagonist to inhabit. Our collaboration with DOP Mike Belcher during pre-production

also had a dramatic effect on our work. Mike's initial insights prompted us to re-envision the way we thought about our locations and helped us concentrate our aesthetic. In the end, we looked for a nostalgic and timeless feeling for the interior, and went for a sense of confusion and a disorienting feel for the exterior.

What has been the most challenging for you on this film?

After talking with Camille, we all agreed that we wanted to create an environment that was not confined to any specific time period or geographical location. This was particularly challenging when designing the set and choosing the set dress. We also paid attention to every small detail. This included building vanity, aging the mirror with Muriatic acid, hand stenciling out all of our flats, etc. It's always challenging to develop great sets on limited time and budget, but Camille (director), Michael (cinematographer), and Thibaut (Producer) were extremely supportive of our creative choices and really pushed us forward.

CHRIS SHIMOJIMA / EDITOR

How was collaborating with Camille?

It was very smooth. She had the basic structure down already, but was really open to experimentation. She had some great ideas for how it should sound, too, and trusted me to capture that.

How did you approach editing a film without dialogue?

I think whether or not it has dialogue, it still needs to feel like music. So not too differently. Dialogue is great when it works rhythmically, so here, it was just music with one less type of rhythm.

What did you enjoy about working on this project?

I don't usually have the opportunity to work on experimental types of content. So I really wanted to test myself to see if I could think in a different way, or

rather, in ways that were less logical.

What are your influences as an editor?

Martin Scorsese and his editor Thelma Schoonmaker have always been favorites of mine. Their work is bold, but at the same time efficient and not too over-the-top. Somehow, as a director, he captures a similar cadence to someone verbally telling a good story, and the editing becomes a character in its own way.

How do you characterize your editing style?

Emotional, but in an atypical way. I feel like it should flow, but if it flows too naturally then you're in danger of making something feel like it's on autopilot. Each cut, or series of cuts, should create some sort of meaning.

LIGHTHOUSEFILMS

SIMON
PART OF THE "ARIA" SERIES

DIRECTED BY CAMILLE DE GALBERT / PRODUCED BY LIGHTHOUSE FILMS, LLC
T. +1-646-649-3600 E. ARIA@LHFNY.COM WWW.ARIAFILMSERIES.COM