

Kato De Boeck about PROVENCE

“That summer I turned silent”

Every summer vacation Camille's family sets off on a camping trip to the French Provence. This year her brother Tuur is paying extra attention to a couple of girls at the campsite. Camille's admiration turns into jealousy: what if Tuur meets a girl that he will love more than he loves her? Over the last year, PROVENCE has collected festival awards as if they were autumn leaves. When meeting director Kato De Boeck in Amsterdam, in a moment she will, once again, have to be on stage to collect another film award.

Kato De Boeck: It is a part of the game, but it is not what excites me most. This afternoon, I was working on a new script in my hotel room and found a scene that might connect my two main story lines. These are things that make me deliriously happy.

What is it that you will remember most from one year of intensive festival exposure?

De Boeck: That young children look for concrete storylines, that you can't al-

ways find in PROVENCE. In one scene, when Camille tries to find out who her brother is in love with, he doesn't respond to a certain (boy's) name. That is an answer in itself. But children expect something more explicit. That is why I consider PROVENCE primarily as an adult film, but it is great that children get something out of it in their own way.

PROVENCE is a farewell to things that will never come back.

De Boeck: Has not everyone experienced that summer when you felt dejected? When for the first time you realised there was a world out there that you didn't know about? In the opening scene, the film makes you slide into a child's world, but that's where the farewell starts. I usually summarise the film as “a fall from a childlike paradise.”

Which for you is connected to the summer season?

De Boeck: Because of one lively memory. During a camping trip in France something was wrong with my broth-



er and I was so upset that I couldn't sleep nor eat. I was a babbler, but that summer I was silent because I couldn't find the right words. Sometime later we had the conversation on which this film is based. That was my personal fall from paradise. I cannot express my brother's pain, so I held on to my own point of view: the little sister's. I'm glad I dared to tell this story.

Saying goodbye is hard for you?

De Boeck: I'm extremely sensitive to that, I have a problem dealing with changes. Which often made me the laughing stock at home. My parents have a furniture store, so now and then the interior changes. They had to tell me one month in advance so that I could properly say a last goodbye to a cupboard or table.

Do you have specific camping memories of the Provence?

De Boeck: I'll tell you a secret. My parents told me recently that we actually spent our holidays in the Dordogne, not in the Provence... But everywhere in the world people know what the Provence stands for. The word has strong connotations. I remember carefree holidays when parents didn't ask where we were going, the campsite was the whole world and it was ours. That's why adults in this film don't come into the picture. It is about children dealing with things their parents know nothing about. With a summery setting that adds extra poetry to the story – a childhood melting away under the sun.

–
Gert Hermans