



Official Selection

Colostrum

a film by Sayaka Mizuno



PRESS KIT



Colostrum

On a Swiss mountain pasture, Solène, a volunteer from the city, experiences the harshness of Pascal's daily life as a dairy farmer. Despite their differences, they forge an unlikely bond as they get to know each other, working side by side.

A man wearing a white cap with a green cross, a white t-shirt, and blue gloves is working in a field. He is holding a long wooden pole or tool. The background shows a grassy field with a line of trees under a blue sky.

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Since the death of his father and, more recently, his brother, Pascal, 47, a dairy farmer in the Swiss Alps, is the sole backbone of the family business. Every day, he milks around thirty cows, selling the milk on to dairy companies in the valley.

Over the summer, he receives help from a volunteer. Solène, a 31-year-old city-dweller, gets a taste of the harshness of an alpine farmer's daily life, as she tends to land and livestock and continuously questions our relationship with living beings.

At an altitude of 1580m, Pascal and Solène get to know, open up and really listen to each other, even though they seem worlds apart.

COLOSTRUM offers a unique perspective on dairy farming, where the relationship between humans, animals and nature takes on a special dimension. In this film shaped by contrasts, Sayaka Mizuno immerses us in the day-to-day life of a farmer through touching interactions between the protagonists, contemplative photography and a unique soundtrack combining the sounds of nature, farming machinery and the humming tunes of the Theremin.

Colostrum

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I was already familiar with the region of Dents Du Midi, having spent most of my childhood winter holidays skiing there. I returned in July 2020, right after lockdown, with the Caritas – Mountain Action organisation, set up to provide support to farmers in need. As a volunteer, I was there to help Pascal who had just lost his brother and had to keep the family farm up and running with his elderly mother. The film project was born from that experience of Pascal's world and his herd of cows, learning about his back-breaking work and, also my encounter with Salomé, a city girl looking to reconnect with the land.

I asked Salomé to spend the summer with Pascal, to help out on the mountain pasture. In the film she plays Solène, a fictional character. Largely inspired by the protagonist herself, she provides the film with a different and inquisitive perspective of the dairy farm.

As different climatic scenarios reflect the protagonists' emotions, the duo learn from one another: Solène in a physical capacity, thanks to the farmer's expertise and Pascal in turn from Solène's sensitivity towards all living beings.

One of the film's main focuses is the connection that some of us have lost to nature and the land and consequently our desire to reconnect with it and with some form of spirituality.

In a broader context, the film tackles issues relating to the climate crisis and ecofeminism. Ideas which in turn give rise to greater reflection.

I believe this film creates a space that sheds a spotlight on the concerns we have and pays tribute to the farming world as well as the power of mothers.

Sayaka Mizuno

INTERVIEW WITH SAYAKA MIZUNO

First of all, what does the title of the film mean?

Colostrum is the very first milk secreted by female mammals as they near the end of gestation. When consumed right after birth, colostrum is rich in proteins and antibodies. It thereby immunises a new-born's body against viruses, in both humans and cattle.

Nature, wildlife and Pascal's cows play an important visual and symbolic role in the film. What was your intention behind including them in this way?

From my very first stay with Pascal, I was touched by the surrounding nature, as well as the cows' presence. Solène too had a unique connection with the animals. So in the editing process with Myriam Rachmuth, it seemed natural to have them exist on a par with human beings. Then during colour-grading with Raphaël Dubach, we reinforced the vibrancy and contrasts to emphasise these elements and give them a 'sacred' character. I also wanted to make the cycle of life and death a recurring theme throughout the film. As an evocation and meditation on our existence on earth. This cycle manifested itself in the images of calves being born, conversations surrounding death and the perceptible changes in nature.

Was it the aim for Pascal and Solène's relationship to embody the contrast between city life and rural mountain life?

No, on the contrary, the film takes a fresh, unconventional look at the farming world, focusing on its similarities to urban life rather than its differences. The same problems persist: feeling alienated at work, workaholism, loneliness...

Over the course of recent decades, we've reached a point where we no longer know how to stop or slow down. Are we still capable of living with slowness?

What were the greatest technical or logistical difficulties you faced in making this documentary?

Pascal, besides being present in front of the camera, had to continue his work outside the takes to run his farm. For him, summer is the busiest season, where he's on his feet from 5am to 11pm and he had to take time out for the filming. So, we had to lend him a hand, especially when it came to hay-making. The whole crew pitched in. We put down cameras and microphones and picked up hay forks. This film truly was a team effort. Another challenge were the scenes with the cows, as they weren't used to our filming equipment and were either intimidated by it or curious. In the cow sheds, we also had to be careful the equipment didn't get damaged by manure.

How did you go about creating the soundscape for COLOSTRUM?

During filming, Théodora Menthonnex recorded the ambient sounds such as bells and farm machinery, along with a range of enigmatic sound textures. When it came to sound design and mixing, Vuk Vukmanovic shaped these recordings to give a sense of immersion or, to its contrary, create a distance, a musicality. Finally, the sound effects by Olaf Simon were added along with Theremin compositions by Fhunyue Gao. My aim was for the music to provide access to another world, a dreamlike vision, a world from beyond...

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CRÉDITS

Director and photography: Sayaka Mizuno
With: Pascal Perrin and Salomé Ziehli
Sound recordist: Théodora Menthonnex
Assistant director: Arthur Jaquier
Editor: Myriam Rachmuth
Music: Fhunyue Gao
Sound Mixing: Vuk Vukmanović
Colour-grading and mastering: Raphaël Dubach

Film location: Valais (Val d'Illeiez, Champoussin, Lac de Soi)

A PRODUCTION BY Beauvoir Films, Aline Schmid and Adrian Blaser

In coproduction with RTS Radio télévision suisse

WITH THE SUPPORT OF
Cinéforum & Loterie Romande
Federal Office of Culture (FOC)
Cultural fund Suissimage
Foundation Ernst Göhner
Pour-cent culturel Migros Story Lab
Valais Film Commission
Foundation Engelberts

RTS «Perspectives d'un doc» support to documentary creation prize.

Pour-cent culturel Migros Story Lab.

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Biofilmography Sayaka Mizuno (Director/DOP)

Born in 1991 in Geneva, Sayaka Mizuno studied filmmaking at HEAD – Geneva. Her bachelor's degree film KAWASAKI KEIRIN received several awards, including the Flaherty Talent Award at the Nara International Film Festival and the Jury Prize SSA/SUISSIMAGE for the most innovative Swiss film at Visions du Réel. She went on to study a master's degree at ECAL/HEAD and participated at the Locarno Filmmakers' Academy in 2017. COLOSTRUM is her first feature-length film.



- 2025 COLOSTRUM 75 min, documentary, Beauvoir Films
- 2023 L'HERBE NOIRE 4min, visual poetry, Close poetry
- 2020 DANS LES YEUX D'AKI 10min, short, Le Temps/HEAD
- 2019 ETOILE co-directed with Anaïs Wenger, 18min, art video, Contemporary Art Centre Geneva
- 2019 LE SANCTUAIRE INVISIBLE 30min, documentary, GoldenEggProduction/ECAL/HEAD
- 2016 KAWASAKI KEIRIN 40min, documentary HEAD

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BEAUVOIR FILMS produces documentary and fiction features for festival and theatrical releases as well as TV. We work with directors who have a distinct visual and narrative approach and strive to push the boundaries of storytelling in compelling and creative ways. *THE GIRL AND THE SPIDER* by Ramon & Silvan Zürcher received two prizes at the Berlinale 2021. *LE THÉORÈME DE MARGUERITE* by Anna Novion is in official selection at Cannes and *RIVIÈRE* by Hugues Hariche in Locarno 2023. In 2024 *MY SWISS ARMY* by Luka Popadić wins the Audience Award at Solothurn, *THE LANDSCAPE AND THE FURY* by Nicole Vögele wins the Grand Prix at Visions du Réel and the Doc Alliance Award. *SPHERES* by Daniel Zimmermann premieres at Karlovy Vary.

Filmography doc (a selection)

THE LANDSCAPE AND THE FURY by Nicole Vögele / Doc cinema 138' / Coproduction with SRF / Grand Prix Compétition internationale Visions du Réel 2024 / Doc Alliance Award / Nomination EDA / Distrib. Outside-The-Box / www.landscape-fury-film.com

ECHTE SCHWEIZER / MY SWISS ARMY by Luka Popadić / Doc cinema 78' / Coproduction with SRF, RTS / Audience Award Solothurner Filmtage 2024 / BAFICI (ARG) / Kustendorf (SRB) / Distrib. Ascot-Elite / www.echteschweizer.ch

SPHERES by Daniel Zimmermann / Non-Fiction 90' / Coproduction with Mischief Films Vienna / Premiere KVIFF 2024

THE ART OF SILENCE by Maurizius Staerke Druх / Doc cinema 90' (TV 52') / Coproduction with Lichtblick Film Köln, ZDF-ARTE, SRF, RTS / Festivals: Solothurn, Max Ophüls, HotDocs etc. / release 2022 / www.artofsilence-film.com

DRAGON WOMEN von Frédérique de Montblanc / Doc cinema 83' / Coproduction with Savage Film (B), Seesaw Pictures (South Korea), RTBF et RTS / Première Visions du Réel 2022

SÌRÌRÌ - THE CARDINAL & THE IMAM by Manuel von Stürler / Doc cinema 75' / Premiere at Human Rights Festival Berlin 2021 / cinema release 2021 by Outside-the-Box, www.siriri.ch

CLOSING TIME by Nicole Vögele (2018) / Doc Cinéma 116' / Coproduction with Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg / Léopard (Jury Award Cinéastes du présent) at Locarno Festival 2018, Prix Festival Scope 2018 / Festivals: IDFA, RIDM, Art of the Real / etc. www.closing-time.ch

WALDEN by Daniel Zimmermann (2018) / Doc Cinéma 106' / Coproduction with SRF / Special Jury Prize at Karlovy Vary 2018, Award for best Swiss Film at Zurich Film Festival 2018 / Festivals: Sundance 2019, Viennale, Rotterdam etc. www.walden-film.com

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Colostrum

COLOSTRUM

75'

DCP 1:1.85:1 4K / 3996x2160

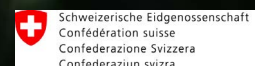
Color

Digital 5.1 Mix

Switzerland 2025

OV French, EN and GE subs

CINEFORUM



suissimage

ERNST GÖHNER
STIFTUNG



stranger
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sales

Valais
Film
Commission



SWISS FILMS



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