

## PRESS KIT



# I LIKE GIRLS

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**Diane Obomsawin**

2016 | 8 min 12 s

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**Technique : Computer animation  
and rotoscoping**



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# Prizes and awards



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# Synopsis

First love is an intoxicating experience, but with it can come excruciating awkwardness, unrequited emotions, and confusing issues of identity. In her trademark playful style, Quebec cartoonist and animator Diane Obomsawin, a.k.a. Obom, adapts her latest graphic novel for the screen, using endearing anthropomorphic figures to tell poignant real-life stories of love.

Charlotte, Mathilde, Marie, and Diane reveal the nitty-gritty about their first loves, sharing funny and intimate tales of one-sided infatuation, mutual attraction, erotic moments, and fumbling attempts at sexual expression. For them, sexual awakening comes hand-in-hand with discovering their desire for other women—and a joyful new self-awareness.

Obom's visually whimsical stories deftly weave together these youthful memories, resulting in a powerful and tender work with universal appeal. Evoking all the raw intensity and heart-pounding excitement of falling in love for the very first time, this uplifting film will resonate with lovers everywhere.

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# Interview with Diane Obomsawin

Quebec painter, illustrator, cartoonist and filmmaker Diane Obomsawin—a.k.a. Obom—recently brought her latest comic book to the screen. In the NFB’s studios, the panels of ***I LIKE GIRLS***, published in 2014 by Éditions L’oie de Cravan, have been transformed into a delightful animated short film about first love between women. With finesse and humility, Obomsawin has crafted a universal story that is at once comical, sensual, poetic, feminist and enlightening.

## **What changes when adapting a comic book to film?**

Pretty much everything. The sets, the shape of the characters, you name it. The film is really different from the comic book; it’s a completely different universe. In one respect, an animated film loses something in the “horizontal” or linear dimension because, unlike a comic book, there’s no time to really tell or develop the stories. If I had adapted all of the stories from my comic book, the film would have been at least two hours long. But on the other hand, the film is more “vertical.” The soundtrack and sound effects, the colours and sets all add depth to the stories. In the end, I think the film gains much more than it loses; it may even be more evocative than the comic book.

## **What technique did you use for the film?**

Rotoscoping. I wanted to create a sensual movie, so we filmed two dancers in the NFB studios and I drew on the filmed images. ***I LIKE GIRLS*** is not a psychological film. The decision to work with dancers instead of actresses became clear when my producer, Marc Bertrand, asked me about the psychology of the characters. It occurred to me that I never “do” psychology; it just doesn’t interest me. So instead we turned to dancers, who are very comfortable with their bodies, to achieve a more physical or embodied result rather than a psychological one.

## **In this respect, a lot of work in the film was done on the characters’ bodies and how they move...**

I initially wanted my film to be sexy. People often think that women aren’t intimate, which is not true. I wanted the audience to see their complicity and pleasure in making love and in their loving embraces and gestures. But my drawing style is very simple; my pencil stroke only captures what’s essential, which is not sexy on screen at all. So I mixed my naive drawings with more realistic ones that I had traced on paintings or photographs of naked women’s bodies. And it worked! For the characters’ way of walking, I practised in the country and found a way of jogging that’s amusing on screen. But the most important thing was the girls’ bodies together—their caresses and hands. I was very happy with how it turned out.

## **Were there any specific challenges in transposing the nudity in the comic book to the screen?**

There was one shot in a love scene that just didn’t work. The mattress was too soft and the result looked awkward after rotoscoping. In the end, I took it out and replaced it with two grasshoppers making love on a twig at night in front of a lit window. Sometimes challenges can lead to ideas that are even more beautiful and evocative.

**The title of the film and French version of the comic book refers to the famous song by Jacques Dutronc. Why that particular song?**

The idea of women being able to appropriate typically male cultural references really appeals to me. Like sex, drugs, and rock n' roll.... and girls! I thought it would be fun to make a nod to one of pop culture's most iconic heartthrobs.

**How did you choose the four stories that ended up in the film?**

Instinctively. I included my own story because I wanted to be in the film with my friends. I also used Charlotte's story because it was the most romantic, and Mathilde's because it was the most "out there." Marie's, because it was the saddest. I used extremes to get a pretty wide spectrum, although I do have some minor regrets. I think the film needed one or two more stories—the eight minutes seem to go by too quickly! But like I said, it's only a minor regret. I think it's normal after finishing a film to second-guess yourself and think about everything you'd change if you had to do it all over again.

**Why did you give the characters animal features?**

My drawing style isn't realistic. I decided to use animal features to differentiate the characters, such as long ears or a snout. I think it adds an endearing and playful touch, a little something special. And funnily enough, the girls who shared their stories loved being depicted as a cat or dog. Plus it created a certain detachment. They were able to recognize their stories without recognizing themselves.

**Who is the film ultimately for?**

It's not really something I thought about during the creative process. It was only after the film was finished that I realized it was especially for young people struggling with their sexual orientation. But from a broader perspective, I think the film is also for lovers everywhere.

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# Team

## Diane Obomsawin

Script, Animation, Direction



Photo : R. Nazari

Diane Obomsawin is a cartoonist and animator of Abenaki descent who calls Montreal home. Born in 1959, she grew up mainly in France, where she began her career as a graphic artist. She returned to Montreal in the early 1980s and made the natural leap to comic books, illustration and painting. For the next two decades, she would be a mainstay of Quebec's underground comic book scene, during which time she became better known under the pseudonym "Obom." In 1992, she created her first animated short, *L'abominable microbe*, launching a long and wild adventure in filmmaking.

Obom's first comic book, *Plus tard*, was published in 1997 by L'Oie de Cravan, a small Montreal publisher specializing in works of poetry. During this time, she also directed a number of films commissioned by the NFB: *The Worm* (2000), *The Coat* (2000) and *Elbow Room* (2002) proved her to be a gifted storyteller and honed her unique perspective on the world.

In more recent years, Obom has focused heavily on her own personal projects. In 2007, she made *Here and There*, her first auteur film for the NFB. It was nominated for Genie and Jutra awards and won Best Narrative Short Animation at the Ottawa International Animation Festival. Later that same year, Obom created *Kaspar*, a moving and poetic comic book about the documented story of "Europe's child" Kaspar Hauser, who was allegedly raised in a dark cellar. The book won the Grand Prix de la ville de Québec and the Best French Book prize at Montreal's Expozine in 2008. Shortly after, Montreal's Festival international du film sur l'art honoured her work with a tribute award, while 2010 saw the release of Obom's *Pink Mimi Drink*, a comic book collection of dreams. In 2012, the NFB produced the animated adaptation of *Kaspar*, which was nominated for a Jutra Award in 2013 and awarded a Silver Pegasus at the Animator Festival in Poznan, Poland.

In 2014, L'Oie de Cravan published her comic book **J'AIME LES FILLES**. This first printing was quickly followed by an English version by publishing house Drawn & Quarterly. The long-awaited film adaptation of this original work marks the eighth collaboration between this influential filmmaker and the NFB.

Throughout her prolific career, Obom has participated in numerous shows, installations and performances. She has also frequently lent her illustration talents to the Montreal daily newspapers *Le Devoir* and *La Presse*, and contributed to the best years of humour magazines such as *Croc* and *Anormal*, along with *Clin d'œil*, *Châtelaine*, *Le temps fou* and *La vie en rose*. More recently, she was interviewed on *BD QC*, a French-language show on ICI ARTV dedicated to Quebec's comic book scene.

A master of storytelling and framing, Obom has made a name for herself worldwide with her uniquely naïve, minimalist style and her distinctive creations: human characters with animal heads. Ever striving for simplicity, this multidisciplinary artist depicts humanity in a profoundly perceptive and earnest way that is both captivating and bewitching.

**Marc Bertrand**  
Producer (NFB)



Photo : NFB

Marc Bertrand joined the French Animation Studio as a producer in 1998 and has since produced more than 100 films, including such notable successes as the award-winning series *Science Please!* (2001), and *Noël Noël* (2003) by Nicola Lemay, which won Géméaux Awards for Best Animated Series or Film in 2002 and 2004 respectively. He also co-produced with Marcel Jean the *Norman McLaren Master's Edition* (2006), an award-winning DVD box set featuring digitally restored masterpieces by McLaren, a pioneer in the fusion of music and animation. Bertrand's interest in new technology has led him to become involved in working on 3D films. In 2008, he coproduced *Facing Champlain: A Work in 3 Dimensions*, directed by Jean-François Pouliot, and produced *Private Eyes*, a new 3D film by Nicola Lemay. Among his other productions are acclaimed films such as *Imprints* (2004) by Jacques Drouin and works by Theodore Ushev: *Tower Bawher* (2006), *Drux Flux* (2009) and *Lipsett Diaries* (2010), winner of a Genie for Best Animated Short and a Special Mention at the Annecy International Animated Film Festival. Bertrand has worked on numerous productions, including the Studio GDS/NFB co-production *Romance* (2011) by renowned Swiss animator Georges Schwizgebel, winner of the 2012 Genie Award. In 2011, he produced *Sunday* (2011) by Patrick Doyon, which earned an Oscar® nomination and won the 2012 Jutra Award for Best Animated Film. In 2013, Marc became an AMPAS (Academy of Motion Picture, Arts and Sciences) member and completed the co-production *Hollow Land* (Michèle and Uri Kranot) and *Gloria Victoria* (T. Ushev), which won the FIPRESCI award in Annecy 2013. In 2014, it was another of Marc's production, *No fish where to go*, that received the same honor. The same year, the film *Jutra* (Marie-Josée St-Pierre, a co-production with MJSP Film) was selected at the Fortnight of directors in Cannes and in February 2015 won a Jutra and a Canadian Screen Award for best short animated film

## Julie Roy

Executive Producer (NFB)



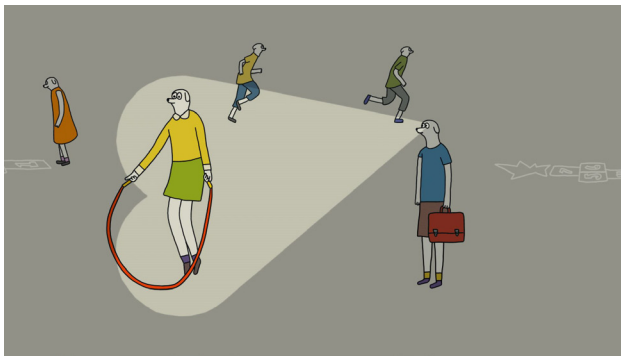
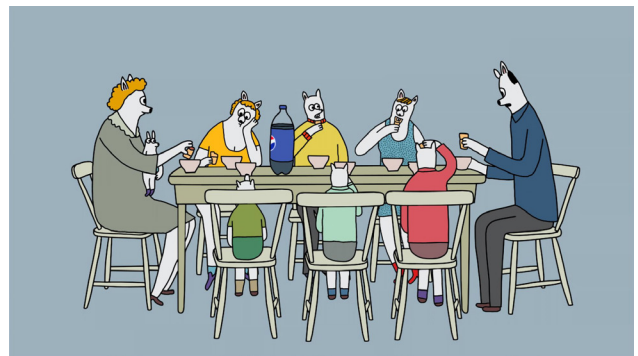
Photo : ONF

Julie Roy has been the Executive Producer of the National Film Board of Canada's French Animation Studio since 2013. She holds an MA in Film Studies from the Université de Montréal, has written extensively on women in animation and has served as guest programmer at film festivals around the world. From 2000 to 2006, she was responsible for marketing some 60 NFB animated shorts and became a producer in 2007. She was also in charge of the marketing campaign for the NFB's 65th anniversary, coordinating the presentation of a Norman McLaren retrospective in some 15 countries and overseeing the marketing of the DVD box set *Norman McLaren – The Master's Edition*.

She began by producing *Hungu* (2008) by Nicolas Brault, which won three awards, *The Necktie* (2008) by Jean-François Lévesque, which garnered 10 awards, and *Mamori* (2010) by Karl Lemieux, which took the Grand Prix Award at the 25 FPS Festival in Zagreb. In conjunction with France's Folimage studio, she co-produced animated shorts for its Artist-in-Residence program, including *Rosa Rosa* (2008) by Félix Dufour-Laperrière, *Rains* (2008) by David Coquard-Dassault, *The Banquet of the Concubine* (2012) by Hefang Wei and *The Circus* (2010) by Nicolas Brault, which won her first nomination at France's prestigious César awards. *Paula* (2011) by Dominic-Étienne Simard received the award for best film at interfilm Berlin and the Canadian Screen Award for best animated short. Roy added to her award-winning productions with *Here and the Great Elsewhere* (2012) by Michèle Lemieux (Grand Prix at Wissembourg), *Bydlo* (2012) by Patrick Bouchard (best animated film at Clermont-Ferrand and best animated short at the Gala du cinéma québécois) and *Carface* (2015) by Claude Cloutier (best animated short at the Gala du cinéma québécois). Remaining active on the international scene, she also co-produced *Kali the Little Vampire* (2012) by Portuguese animator Regina Pessoa, *Edmond Was a Donkey* (2012) by French animator Franck Dion (Special Jury Prize at Annecy and nomination for a César award) and *In Deep Waters* (2015) by French animator Sarah Van Den Boom. In 2016, she completed her second collaboration with Franck Dion, *The Head Vanishes*, winner of the Cristal Award for best short film at Annecy.



# Images



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# Credits

Script, Animation, Direction  
**Diane Obomsawin**

Voices  
**Rosalie Daoust**  
**Alice Tougas-St. Jak**  
**Catherine Perron**  
**Éliane Préfontaine**

Translation  
**Kathleen Fee**

Sound Design and  
Original Music  
**Judith Gruber-Stitzer**

Compositing and Animation  
**Janet Perlman**

Offline Editing  
**Augustin Rioux**

Musicians  
**William J. Gossage**  
**Judith Gruber-Stitzer**  
**Christine Tassan**

Voice Editing  
**Pierre Yves Drapeau**  
**Catherine Van Der Donckt**  
**Tristan Capacchione**

Foley  
**Monique Vézina**

Enregistrements sonores  
**Geoffrey Mitchell**  
**Padraig Buttner-Schnirer**

Re-recording  
**Jean Paul Vialard**

“Le temps de l’amour”  
Composed by Jacques Dutronc,  
Lucien Jean Morisse,  
André Michel Charles Salvét  
Éditions musicales Alpha and  
Les éditions Ad Litteram Inc.  
Performed by Françoise Hardy  
By arrangement with  
Sony Music Entertainment  
Canada Inc.

Copyright Clearance  
**Lucie Bourgouin pour**  
**Permission Inc.**

Technical Director  
**Pierre Plouffe**

Technical Coordinator  
**Daniel Lord**

Production Coordinator  
**Michèle Labelle**

Online Editing  
**Yannick Carrier**

Live-Action Shoots  
and Rotoscoping

Actors  
**Marie-Ève Carrière**  
**Marie-Gabrielle Ménard**  
**Marie-Hélène Montpetit**

Director of Photography  
**Éric Barbeau**

Production Manager  
**Khoa Lê**

Production Assistant  
**Patrick Bouchard**

Props Person  
**Nancy Belzile**

Thanks to  
**Laura Babin**  
**Lou Babin**  
**Lili Rose Babin**  
**Lou Beaulieu**  
**Martin Bellemare**  
**Anne-Marie Cadieux**  
**Marie Charlebois**  
**Renée Cossette**  
**Helge Dascher**  
**Mathilde Geromin**  
**Fanny Jane**  
**Alice Moreault**  
**Mylène Savoie**  
**Élise Simard**  
**Laurie St-Jacques**  
**Hélène Tanguay**

Marketing Manager  
**Geneviève Bérard**

Administrator  
**Diane Régimbald**

Administrative Team  
**Diane Aytte**  
**Karine Desmeules**

Executive Producer  
**Julie Roy**

Producer  
**Marc Bertrand**

Animation Studio /  
French Program



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# Press Relations

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# About the NFB

The National Film Board of Canada (NFB) produces groundbreaking animation at its studios in Montreal and at NFB centres across Canada, as well as via international co-productions with many of the world's leading auteur animators. The NFB is a leader in developing new approaches to stereoscopic 3D animation and animated content for new platforms. The NFB has created over 13,000 productions and won over 5,000 awards, including 18 Canadian Screen Awards, 17 Webbys, 12 Oscars and more than 90 Genies. To access acclaimed NFB content, visit [NFB.ca](http://NFB.ca) or download its apps for smartphones, tablets and connected TV.

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# Electronic Documents

## **Press Kit**

Including stills, trailer and making-of  
<http://mediaspace.nfb.ca/epk/i-like-girls>