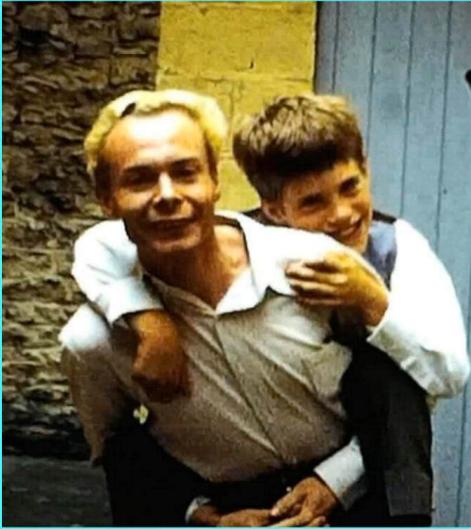


# The Lost Paradise



The dramatic Dutroux affair (Belgium), in 1996, caused a worldwide schism in society: there was a "before Dutroux", and there is now an "after Dutroux", characterized by the definitively broken link between the world of children and that of the "older ones", in particular the "males", all suspected of being potential Dutroux, from 16 to 116 years old...

One consequence is that the child or the young person with problems no longer has anyone to confide in, in particular a neutral and more objective person; here (in France) each year there are 60,000 suicide attempts among children and young people, with 1,300 deaths, in general indifference while it is as much as half of the deaths on the roads.

But let's move on ...

By a phenomenon that I cannot explain to myself (and while I am not very attractive, as you will see in the documentary), all my life, wherever I live, whether in houses, boats, etc., children and young people came to me naturally, + some cats and dogs. They brought their friends, younger or older, and then those from neighboring villages who walked 3 to 5 km to come. I felt like I was Peter Pan among of the "lost children".

But don't make misunderstanding: these children and young people, except the 12-year-old who was beaten with a belt when his father was drunk, and another of the same age who was beaten with a chair (!), they didn't need "affection", they had their families for that. They needed "attention", that I took an interest in their activities, valued by sharing with a "greater". I had to be available to them day and night, and my door was never locked.

They would come and get me to play football with them, or go watch them fishing... or help them with schoolwork.

The little Daniel, going to school in the afternoon, picked me up to accompany him on the simple 400 m trip to school, with his brothers as well.

Yves, who can be seen imitating James Bond, with his pellet gun, asked me to accompany him on the road to football, and when I got into his team's bus, it was a clamor of contentment because that an "older" was interested in their match.

Michel's parents went to play cards with their neighbors every evening; Michel wanted me to come and stay with him in the evening; he fell asleep almost immediately in front of the TV, but wanted me to hold his hand during this time, or his feet, which they put on my

knees. After his unexpected death, at 18, it is his parents that I will keep company every evening, not to be left alone in our sorrow.

I could go with the children by car, visit castles, go boating, and even (especially with Luc and his sister) go from the Ardennes to Paris to see the monuments, stopping in passing in Laon to visit the cathedral. Absolutely unimaginable in our time!

The black cocker spaniel Mirabelle, in the early hours of the morning, passed through his masters' garage, crossed the street, went to the back of my house, slipped with great difficulty through the cat flap (!), and ran upstairs to join me in my bed, where my cat agreed to make room for him ...

Rocky, Samuel's German shepherd, when I arrived at their country maret, went quickly get me a big pine cone that I had to throw for him again and again, or accompanied me for a walk in the surroundings, without a leash, walking at my sides.

I had the good idea to take many photos, and super 8 films of part of these children and young people, but many are missing, often the most important ones, alas.

Some links lasted a very long time. For Renaud, from his 8 to 18 years old. For Sandy, I had known his father when he was 10; when an adult and married he introduced me to his son Sandy, 5 years old, he did not want to leave me and demanded that I came at his house every time I returned from the South of France to the Ardennes; at 13 and 15, he became the multiple award-winning actor in my films; after the shootings, he held on to come at my home on holidays.

All the archival documents in my possession are a nostalgic and moving testimony of a magical time when children and adults could still rub shoulders, appreciate each other, a true "Lost Paradise".

The Kodak Super 8 films have kept their colors, but not the Agfa ... Some photos have suffered from stays at the bottom of not very waterproof boats ...

I still have the small gifts made by these children, letters from Karel, François, Nadine and Alex, Michel's plaster vase and sweater, the clothes given by Samuel and his parents... and a badly welded rib after that André took it out on me for having been beaten to blood by his father the day before... The traces of other "let off steam" disappeared over time. As for the games of 1.000 Bornes, Destiny, Cluedo, Power 4, etc., they are gathering dust ...

Currently, I am ending my life, at 78 years old, with 21 cats, who lived in the wild in the forest, and who take advantage of the "ecological box" left vacant. Three mother cats brought me their 12 babies, and finally left them to me, certain that I was going to take good care of them, as for the children formerly.

Sometimes, in the street or in a supermarket, children still spontaneously say hello to me, quickly called to order by their mother, and one of them took a slap, without understanding why ...

But this documentary ends on a note of hope: one day I will find again "my" children, my cats, Mirabelle, Rocky, in a Next World where taking care of them, even loving them, will no longer be considered a "crime against humanity"... It will be the Recovered Paradise, in all senses of the word.

This documentary film is aimed both at those who regret this time of complicity with young people, and at those too young to have ever known it. It's up to them all to see if it was better before, or not ...

about the director : [https://wikimonde.com/article/Paul\\_de\\_Métairy](https://wikimonde.com/article/Paul_de_Métairy) (most in French)

Awards :

## Festival selections and awards :

- ~ Mindfield - Albuquerque USA ([Bronze Award](#))
- ~ Royal Wolf - Los Angeles ([Best Feature Documentary](#))
- ~ Vegas CineFest
- ~ NYC Film Awards
- ~ Lebanese Movie Award
- ~ The Indie Fest (La Jolla)
- ~ Mont Blanc International Movie Fest Paris ([Outstanding Achievement Award for editing, Best Documentary, Best Family film](#)).
- ~ International Open Film Festival (Dhaka, Bangladesh ) ([Narrative feature Outstanding Achievement Award, Director Outstanding Achievement Award, Best Documentary](#))
- ~ Indus Valley International Film Festival (Shimla, India) ([Outstanding Achievement Award for Documentary Film, Cinematography, Editing & a Special Mention for the Concept.](#))
- ~ Twilight Tokyo Film Festival ([Outstanding Achievement Award for Documentary, Cinematography, Editing](#))
- ~ The Accolade (La Jolla)
- ~ Tripvill TV Global Cinefest ([Best Documentary, Best Director](#))
- ~ Wonderland International Film Festival - Sydney ([Outstanding achievement award for Documentary](#))
- ~ Coimbatore (India)
- ~ Tagore (India) ([Outstanding achievement awards for Documentary and for Family film](#))
- ~ Flickfair (Los Angeles) (finalist)
- ~ L'Age d'Or Calcutta ([Outstanding Achievement Award Post Modern films](#))
- ~ Monthly Online FF (India) ([Best documentary](#))
- ~ Sand Dance IFF (Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, India) ([Best Documentary, outstanding achievement awards for Editing, Sound Design](#))
- ~ Druk International Film Festival (Bhutan) ([Best Family/Children Film](#))
- ~ Calcutta Cult FF ([Best Family/Children Film](#))
- ~ Rosebud IFF (Arlington, USA) ([Outstanding Achievement Award for feature and for documentary](#))
- ~ World Film Carnival Singapore ([Best Family/Children Film](#))
- ~ Panjim International Film Festival ([Best Documentary Film, Outstanding Achievement for the "Director" category](#)).
- ~ La Dolce Vita Cine Roma ([Best Documentary, Outstanding Achievement Award as Director](#))
- ~ Holy Grail (Jerusalem) ([Outstanding Achievement Award for Documentary](#))
- ~ World Cinema Antwerp
- ~ Jaipur (India)
- ~ Green Chilli (Gangtok, India) ([Best Documentary, Outstanding Achievement Award as Director](#)).
- ~ The King Review Festival
- ~ Creator in Crisis
- ~ Wallachia Int'l Film Festival
- ~ International Media Arts Film Festival Awards (Kampala, Ouganda)