

Hôtel-Motel présent

LA CARTOMANCIE DU TERRITOIRE

Foretelling the Land



Productions
HOTEL-MOTEL
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LA CARTOMANCIE DU TERRITOIRE

Foretelling the Land

Philippe: *In winter of 2015, I decided to go and see. See what the system that I have inherited has done to them in my name, with the feeling that through them, I would understand better. Understand what's happening behind the landscape of our modernity, behind the pipelines that we graft, this petroleum that we inject and this memory that we clearcut. And I'll understand the exhaustion of my 80-hour weeks, that modern slavery I have imposed upon myself. Me as a people, me as an artist. Me as a person who is mined and drained, out of resources.*

— *Foretelling the Land (La cartomancie du territoire)*

A French-speaking Quebecker, overworked like many others in our time, sets off on a road trip towards some of Quebec's First Nations communities in search of meaning, of healing, and of a different way of reading the world. He tries to understand the ravages of colonialism perpetrated on these nations by a system that continues to favour him. He seeks to see what has been done in his name, with the intuition that through these people, he will gain a better understanding of what is happening to him. His journey will lead him all the way into the prison system, where the over-representation of First Nations people is symptomatic of the traumas these communities have inherited, and of the systemic racism that persists.

Arising from several stays in First Nations and Inuit communities, ***Foretelling the Land (La cartomancie du territoire)*** is an introspective movie about our relationship to reserves, both Indigenous and natural, and to the colonization of land and of thought.



Mani-Utenam. © Éli Laliberté (2018)

ABOUT FORETELLING THE LAND by Philippe Ducros

We live in Quebec on plundered land. The First Nations and Inuit live in third world conditions in this Canada that is cited as an example of human rights. And the ethnocide is almost complete. We Quebecers, descendants of settlers who were in turn conquered, take refuge in a narrative of victim identity. We tell ourselves that others perpetrated the massacres, in another era. But what is the situation today, with this cultural and economic pillaging of the First Peoples? With this violence?

Systemic racism is rife in Quebec and unfortunately, its repercussions often prove fatal. For reconciliation to be possible, these truths must be unearthed and exposed. I feel the need for some introspection about the heritage we carry.



Philippe Ducros on HWY 138. © Éli Laliberté (2022)

In 2015, I went to visit certain First Nations communities in Quebec, just as I had done in occupied Palestine, Israel, the Democratic Republic of Congo and elsewhere for my other projects. ***Foretelling the Land (La cartomancie du territoire)*** is the result of this research. Composed of testimonies by Indigenous people and texts ranging from intimate thoughts to geopolitical reflections, it takes the form of a road trip on routes 132 and 138, which border the St. Lawrence River.

In various encounters in the communities, before writing the scenario, many Indigenous people told us that healing would require a return to the land and a reappropriation of their language. Through their words, through the vision of the world and the imagination that they carry, through the traditions linked to the land, dignity takes on new life and meaning. It gives shape to the very identity of these nations. The land and the language therefore serve as an axis for the aesthetics of the film.

Always in the foreground, the images of the land immerse the spectators in the northern landscape, allowing us to see the land as a character in its own right. The words are largely delivered in voice-over, in introspective mode. It thus serves as a powerful counterweight to the contemplative aspect of the images: we follow the interior journey of the character, who is tiny in the immensity of the land.



Marco Collin, Ilnu of Mashteuiatsh, in his community. © Éli Laliberté (2022)

Marco: *We have to accept the concepts of privatization and property. The fact that we don't believe in that vision of the world has meant that we exist outside of the system. We threaten its balance and reveal its flaws. It gradually wears us away, forces us, folds us so we fit into the framework. But we have to defend ourselves, and to do that, we have to protect our land. So struggling to save the land, we lose ground in our heads.*

— *Foretelling the Land (La cartomancie du territoire)*

ETHICAL ANGLE

The issues addressed in the movie are delicate and fragile. Numerous ethical challenges marked the creation of this project and dictated its form. Putting myself at the heart of this journey allows me to situate my position: I am a white man seeking another way to see the world, a way that flows out of the land we live on. I am not a member of a First Nation, but colonization is a trademark of my culture. This is not a film about the First Nations, rather, it is about the colonialism specific to Western culture. It is a work of introspection that I believe is necessary.

The script was written following continuous work in various communities, based on respect and with the desire to listen. The text, taken from testimonies, was read and approved by the people interviewed. The result is a film with a mixed aesthetic, influenced by these cultural exchanges. It conveys a desire for contemplation and places emphasis on oral traditions, including an Indigenous language, presents the land as character in its own right, shows the journey of the author as he seeks to understand and listen, and above all, ensures the presence of First Nations artists within the production team (Marco Collin, Innu from Mashteuiatsh, Sharon Fontaine-Ishpatao, Innu from Uashat, composer Florent Vollant, Innu from Mani-Utenam, the Wendat Charles Bender from Wendake, Éli Laliberté, adopted by the Mi'gmaq community of Gesgapegiag). Editing was done by Natalie Lamoureux, sound design by Sylvain Bellemare, sound mixing by Martin M Messier and coloring by Sylvain Cossette.

Foretelling the Land (La cartomancie du territoire) stems from a theatrical and video work created in 2018 at the Espace Libre Theatre in Montreal.



Black spruces, between Mani-Utenam and Ekuanitshit. © Éli Laliberté (2018)

PHILIPPE DUCROS

Self-taught director and playwright, former artistic director of Montreal's Espace Libre, Philippe Ducros draws inspiration from his extensive world travels.

His award-winning play *The Poster* (*L'affiche*, 2009) investigates the occupation of Palestine and the impact of this occupation on both Palestinians and Israelis. To write this play, he travelled to the region on six different occasions, including three trips to Israel and occupied Palestine.

In 2011, he shone an unforgiving light on the role of Canadian mining companies in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo with his project *The Door Of No Return* (*La porte du non-retour*), a narrated photographic exhibition that toured Canada and Europe and was featured in the official program at the 2013 Avignon Festival. In creating this work, Philippe climbed aboard a UN flight to the war zone in eastern Congo.

He is the artistic director of Productions Hôtel-Motel (Montreal).
L'instant même, Atelier 10, Dramaturges Éditeurs and Lansman Éditeur, publish his work.

Foretelling the Land (La cartomancie du territoire) is his first movie.



Philippe Ducros in Tio'tia:ke (Montreal). © Éli Laliberté (2022)

Sharon: *We must re-establish our connection with the infinite. With the immense. Re-learn to speak to our ancestors. Re-learn to speak of the past, to listen to our dreams.*

— *Foretelling the Land (La cartomancie du territoire)*

LA CARTOMANCIE DU TERRITOIRE

Foretelling the Land

A movie by **Philippe Ducros**

Featuring **Charles Bender, Marco Collin, Philippe Ducros** and **Sharon Fontaine-Ishpatao**

With participation of **Kathia Rock, Fanny Michel, Marcello Vollant, Evelyne St-Onge, Philippe McKenzie, Éric Vollant, Stephen Jerome Sr, Moise Dominique, Marie Dominique, Jean-Luc Shapato Vollant, Shikuan Vollant, Anne-Marie St-Onge, Makess Fafard, Rachel Bacon, Kiut St-Onge, Emmanuel Claude "Papess" Vollant, Pascale Cutnam, Loriane Etienne-Verreault, Maina Etienne-Verreault** and **Grégoire Canapé**.

Translation towards innu-aimun **Bertha Basilish** and **Evelyne St-Onge**

Cinematography **Éli Laliberté**

Editing **Natalie Lamoureux**

Music **Florent Vollant**

Musical integration **Larsen Lupin**

Sound **Sylvain Bellemare**

Sound mix **Martin M Messier**

Producer **Marie-Christine André**

Distribution **Hippolyte de Chanlaire**

Subtitles **T & S Coop // Ellen Warkentin**

An **HÔTEL-MOTEL** production

With the precious collaboration of **PRIM**



Sharon Fontaine-Ishpatao, Innu from Uashat. © Éli Laliberté (2022)

TECHNICAL DETAILS

COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION: Canada

RUNING TIME: 77 minutes

FIRST RUN: 14th of September 2024 in the Festival de cinéma de la ville de Québec (FCVQ), at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec.

LANGUAGE: The movie is in French, with some innu-aimun (a First Nation's language) and with one scene in English. All of it is subtitled for a French or English speaking audience.



Charles Bender of the Wendat nation. © Éli Laliberté (2022)

LINK TO ONLINE SCREENER:

<https://vimeo.com/881203683>

Password: CARTO2023

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Mining train towards the nutshimit. © Éli Laliberté (2018)

Sharon: *I have hope. I never thought I would see kushapetsheken, the shaking tent. I thought that knowledge was lost. But I have seen it. Nothing is lost.*

— *Foretelling the Land (La cartomancie du territoire)*



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