

Biting Into the Apple

Interview with Jasmine Dubé

You're an actor, writer, director and singer. Tell us about your multifaceted and versatile self.

There's always someone somewhere who will tell you you can't do everything. And unfortunately, it's true ... For instance, in my own case I know I wouldn't make a very good tightrope walker, mechanic, electrician or scuba diver. But why look on the gloomy side when you could be lighting up the stars? I like to perform, write, sing, play with words and sounds. And when I make up stories, well, then I can do anything: walk along an electrical wire, assemble and disassemble an engine, and more!

I love theatre, I love the stage. I love life: it's a big apple that I bite into, even though I might lose a tooth, bite my tongue or swallow a seed. For me, acting, singing, playwriting—any kind of writing—all belong to the same family, the family of creativity, imagination, art and poetry.

***Ma petite boule d'amour* is the final work in a trilogy about fatherhood (after *Papoul* and *Petit monstre*). What made you choose this subject?**

I wanted to put daddies in the spotlight, to talk about the importance of their role and offset the stereotypes we see on TV and in the movies. When I wrote *Petit monstre*, in 1991, fathers were generally a lot less involved with their children than they are now. Over the years, I've seen definite progress with regard to men's presence in their children's lives.

In *Ma petite boule d'amour*, the theme of fatherhood is paired with the theme of adoption. I started with the character of a frowzy old bear, holed up in his den to tend his wounds. At first, he's a sad character with no self-confidence. Then I introduced a little fly called Tsé Tsé ... a link to sleep and the unconscious. And then a little bear cub calls the big oaf out of his den. Who's really helping whom in this story? Luckily, we're often watched over by a guiding star, and here it takes the form of the Big Dipper, also called the Great Bear ...

And why co-directing ...*

I felt the need to work with a co-director, partly to get some distance from this project in which I was deeply involved, and partly, paradoxically, to be able to immerse myself in it as a performer. I thought Jean-François Guilbault would be ideal. I met him when he was finishing his theatre studies at the Saint-Hyacinthe CEGEP; even then, he was interested in theatre for young audiences and wanted to found his own company. I needed the fresh, inspired perspective of this young artist whose work I admire.