

BELUGA TREE, RTBF AND STARAGARA PRESENT

# STILLTOWN



A SERIES BY MICHÈLE JACOB AND BENJAMIN DESSY DIRECTED BY MICHÈLE JACOB

## ***SYNOPSIS***

***Stilltown*** is set in Gravines, a small industrial town in the 1990s, marked by the closure of the MTLK factory, which had been an economic and social pillar for generations. Clémence Rosier, born into the bourgeoisie and heir to the factory, sees her world collapse when her son Benjamin disappears.

When the child's body is found and the investigation fails, Clémence sinks into despair. Three years later, as she prepares to leave town with her husband and daughter to turn the page, another tragedy turns everything upside down: Stella, Ben's former best friend, vanishes.

This time, Clémence refuses to remain a spectator. Convinced that the two cases are linked, she teams up with Antonio D'Ambrosio, a laborer and once the main suspect in her son's death. Together, they must face their prejudices, unearth the town's buried wounds, and confront a threat that has never gone away.

### ***Format***

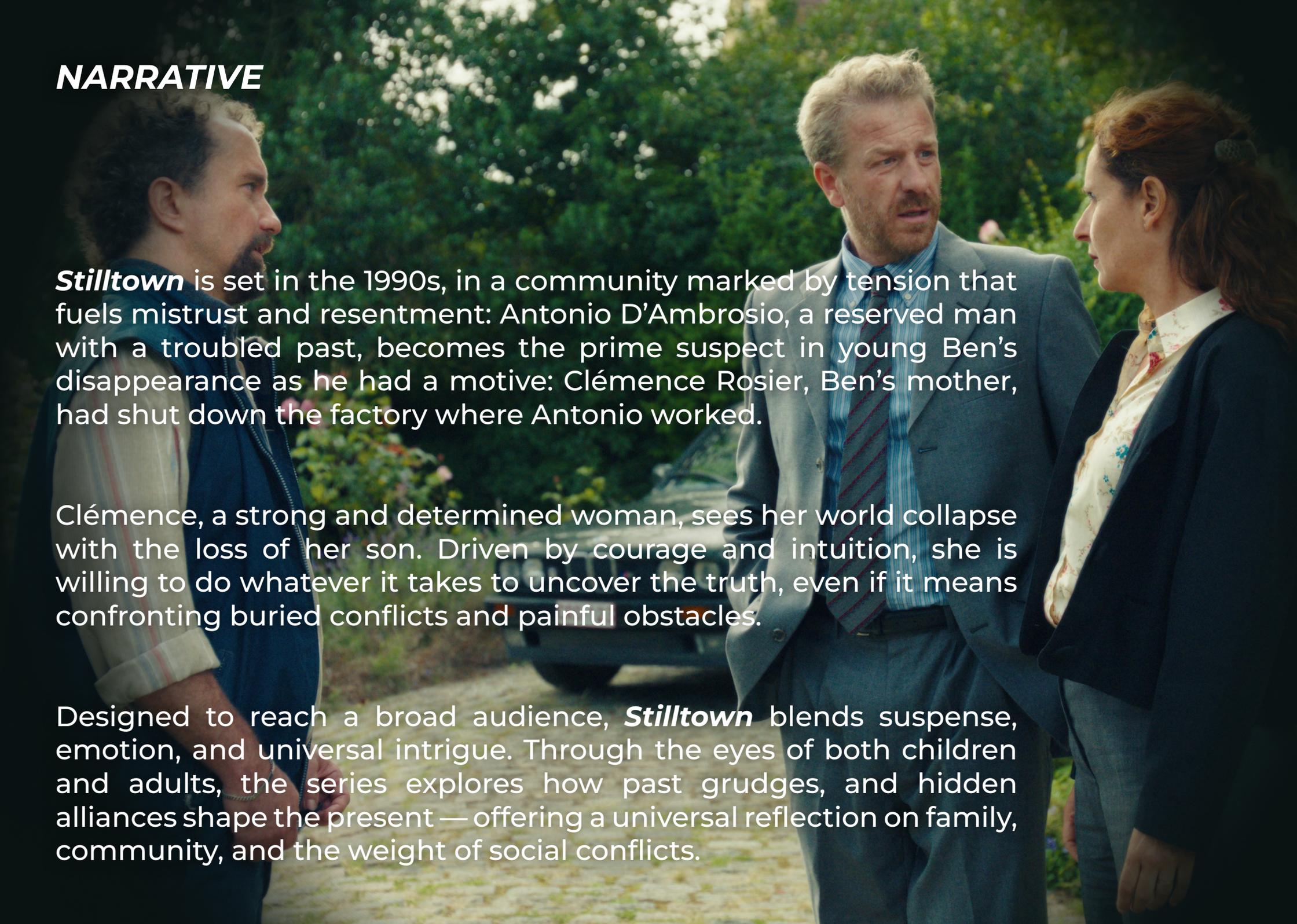
6 x 52'

2025

Murder Mystery

Belgium

## NARRATIVE



**Stilltown** is set in the 1990s, in a community marked by tension that fuels mistrust and resentment: Antonio D'Ambrosio, a reserved man with a troubled past, becomes the prime suspect in young Ben's disappearance as he had a motive: Clémence Rosier, Ben's mother, had shut down the factory where Antonio worked.

Clémence, a strong and determined woman, sees her world collapse with the loss of her son. Driven by courage and intuition, she is willing to do whatever it takes to uncover the truth, even if it means confronting buried conflicts and painful obstacles.

Designed to reach a broad audience, **Stilltown** blends suspense, emotion, and universal intrigue. Through the eyes of both children and adults, the series explores how past grudges, and hidden alliances shape the present — offering a universal reflection on family, community, and the weight of social conflicts.

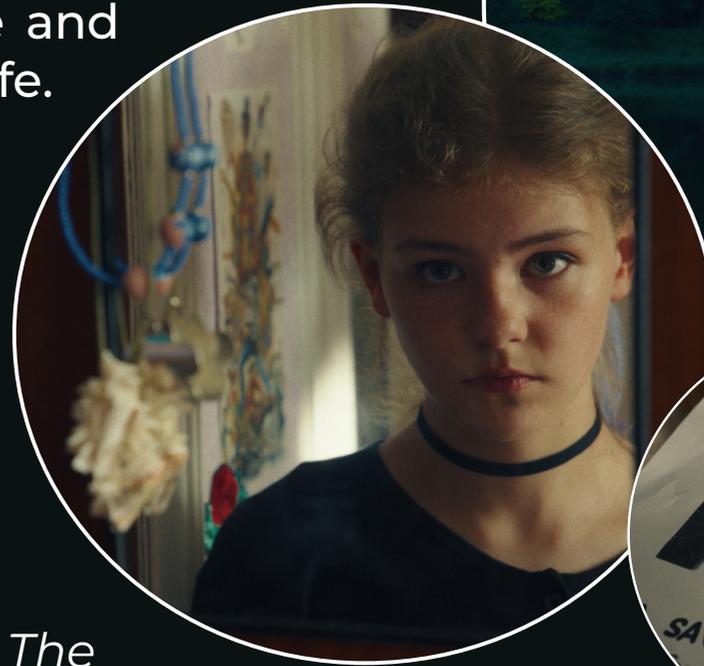
## ***SET DESIGN, PROPS AND COSTUMES***

The sets and atmosphere immerse us in the 1990s. An era evoked through carefully detailed costumes and everyday objects. The production design uses bright tones against a gray, industrial backdrop, creating a contrast between hope and vitality and the harshness of daily life.

The period is also reflected in the absence of questioning around certain behaviors, such as widespread sexism.

At the heart of the mystery lies *The Book of Nessuna*, which guides the investigation of the two main characters. Through it, Clémence learns more about her missing son, while viewers gain access to the children's inner world.

Written like a journal, the book captures Benjamin and Stella's friendship, their codes, and their attempts to make sense of the end of childhood.



# THE CHARACTERS



## ***The Rosier family***

The Rosier family, historic owners of Belgium's largest steel mill, is a typical white, upper-class family of the 1990s. They cultivate a meritocracy marked by social respect. Behind this spotless facade lie grudges and regrets they have learned to keep to themselves.

At the heart of the story is **Clémence Rosier**, who brilliantly fulfilled the destiny her parents had mapped out for her, combining a career at the head of the factory with raising a family. But when her son, Benjamin, disappears amid a wave of layoffs, he takes Clémence's certainties with him and plants the seeds of anger.



## ***The D'Ambrosio family***

**Antonio D'Ambrosio**, Stella's uncle, a quiet and marginalized worker, sees his life turned upside down when his best friend, a leading figure in the MTLK union, commits suicide in the middle of negotiations with management. D'Ambrosio lashes out against the Rosier family. Suspected in Benjamin's disappearance, he is excluded from his community and his own family, leaving him alone with nothing to lose.

Meanwhile **Roberto Savini**, Stella's father, is a former laborer who is popular, cunning, and eager to climb the social ladder. But when his only daughter disappears, he finds himself crushed between his ambitions and the crimes he has committed. Convinced of D'Ambrosio's guilt, he is willing to risk everything to prove it to find his daughter.



## ***The Ciccone family***

**Pino Ciccone**, a widower and father of two adult children, is the union leader of MTLK. He has earned the respect of both the workers and the city's dignitaries. His suicide, carried out in a factory warehouse, inflames the working class and shatters any prospect of economic recovery.

**Maria Ciccone**, Pino's daughter and a dedicated police officer, has spent most of her life fighting to make a place for herself in a man's world. She lives with her younger brother, whom she has cared for like a mother since his childhood. When Stella disappears and Maria is put in charge of the investigation, she seizes the chance to prove she is every bit as capable as the men around her.

# EPISODES



## **01 After Ben**

1995. Clémence Rosier is trying to rebuild her life after the death of her 12-year-old son, Ben. But the disappearance of Stella, her late son's friend, brings back traumatic memories from the past. Clémence fears that the investigation will fail, just like the one in her own son's case. Despite warnings from her family, who advise her to move on and not get involved, she decides to search for the truth herself. Her quest leads her to Antonio d'Ambrosio, the man once suspected in Benjamin's death.



## **02 The Book of Nessuna**

Stella's disappearance shatters the town's fragile balance. While her parents mobilize the community to search for the teenager, the police suspect she has run away. But Inspector Maria Ciccone begins to doubt that theory. Meanwhile, Clémence puts her resentment aside and teams up with Antonio, Stella's uncle, who gives her new leads, including Benjamin and Stella's journal.



## **03 Through Their Eyes**

Clémence gradually deciphers the drawings in the journal, searching for the hidden messages her son left about past tragedies. In the process, she discovers a side of Benjamin she never knew. Together with Antonio, she tries to understand what the children witnessed. As their investigation deepens, Antonio confides in Clémence about his painful past and his ties to the MTLK union leader, who died a few years earlier.

# EPISODES



## **04 *The Forbidden Track***

Tensions erupt within the Rosier family, revealing Clémence's long-buried resentment. Meanwhile, Antonio mysteriously disappears. Clémence and Maria, opposites, are forced to work together to find him. But Antonio carries a crucial secret, hidden for years, that could not only upend the investigation... but also put his life in danger.



## **05 *The Betrayal***

With the key piece of evidence destroyed and Clémence's trust betrayed by a member of her own family, she feels overwhelmed and temporarily halts her search. But the case file on her son's death, along with her husband's support, rekindles her need for answers and her determination to find Stella. On her side, Maria continues the investigation alone and uncovers the last pieces of a long-hidden puzzle, revealing an unsuspected link between the three families.



## **06 *Between Resentment and Forgiveness***

A year later, the families appear to have turned the page and are trying to rebuild a peaceful life. But Clémence inadvertently uncovers new evidence pointing to another culprit in her son's death. This discovery unsettles her: should she protect the fragile peace she has built, or reopen a wound she thought had healed, at the risk of shattering everything?

# THE TECHNICAL TEAM

## **A screenplay by**

Michèle Jacob  
Benjamin Dessy  
Brieuc de Goussencourt

## **Directed by**

Michèle Jacob

## **Casting**

Jasmina Douieb (*La Trêve*)  
Lara Hubinont (*La Trêve*)  
Michelangelo Marchese

Michèle Jacob is a Belgian director, screenwriter, and assistant director with more than 18 years of experience in the film industry. She is best known for her film *Les Enfants Perdus* (*The Lost Children*), which was selected for an international competition at the Karlovy Vary Film Festival.

Passionate about working with young actors, Jacob focuses on how childhood trauma shapes identity and echoes into adult life.

## **A co-production**

BELUGA TREE – RTBF – PROXIMUS – STARAGARA

Beluga Tree is an independent production company founded in 2017 in Brussels by Diana Elbaum. The company develops a wide range of projects, from feature films to series, from local comedies to arthouse dramas, while actively pursuing international collaborations, particularly with African filmmakers. Its recent productions include *Stilltown*, *TKT* (2024), and *Rebel* (2022).

Diana Elbaum has collaborated with major talents such as Chantal Akerman, Mahamat Saleh Haroun, Paul Verhoeven, and Raoul Peck. With Beluga Tree, she continues to champion ambitious and innovative projects, fostering cultural exchange and international co-productions.

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