

GET A WAY**(CAVALCADES)****(FRANCE)**

A Baleine Sous Caillou Prods. presentation. Produced by Noah Nuer, Carole Levy, Mathieu Duboscq. Executive producers, Samy Cohen, Nuer.

Directed by Noah Nuer. Screenplay, Nuer, Carole Levy, from an original idea by Nuer, Levy, Mathieu Duboscq. Camera (color, Beta SX), Duboscq; editors, Pascal Gaugry, Nuer; music, Stephane Pijeat & David Hadjhadj, Xavier Ferran, Rami Mekdachi; sound, Nicolas Dambroise; casting, Sandra Terryn. Reviewed at Cinequest Film Festival, San Jose, Feb. 22, 2002. Running time: 88 MIN.

With: Agnes Roland, Maxime Desmons, Josy Bernard, Julian Lambroschini, Christian Sinniger, Chantal Bronner, Alain Rimoux, Blanche Raynal.

By DENNIS HARVEY

Gallic cinema's ability to turn wafer-thin slices of life into a satisfying meal is affirmed in Noah Nuer's digital feature "Get a Way." Tale of a rebellious young woman and nervous young gay man pushing one another past old hang-ups over several days' course is disarmingly breezy yet grounded, with nary a false emotional note. Unknown lead thespians and writer-director alike should get a real career boost from this serio-comic charmer via fest-circuit travel; item is a bit slight for theatrical sales.

A bicycle-minivan collision throws together early-20s Parisians Anne (Agnes Roland) and Didier (Maxime Desmons). Both are already quite addled: She's just failed university exams, while he's chafing under the pressure of his mentally unstable mom's imminent apartment move.

Anne tags along while Didier runs errands, promising he'll fix her bike. En route discovering they've much in common — especially a sense of entrapment by familial expectations — they become fast friends. Soon they're daring one another to confront long-problematic relationships "as if you had just 20 minutes left to live."

While gimmicky conflict-resolution tactics occasionally push script toward glibness, moment by moment "Get a Way" is sweet-natured and delightful. Scenes were improvised (and shot on Paris streets, sans permits) within a general outline. To credit of all involved, results are fresh rather than indulgent, avoiding Method overkill and Dogme trendiness.

Attractive, ingratiating leads convey a character complexity pic wisely resists spelling out; support casting is equally deft.

Ebullience as well as intelligence is likewise present in Mathieu Duboscq's fleet lensing, Pascal Gaugry and Nuer's frisky editing and soundtracked musical choices.