

# THE ANIMAL COURT



TV SHOW ANIMATION  
(26X3.30 MINUTES)  
TARGET : FAMILY

DIRECTED BY  
**JEAN-BAPTISTE BACH**

PRODUCER  
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# SYNOPSIS

The Animal Court is an animated series portraying the trial of animals. Those we love and those we hate. It brings the icons down from their pedestals, it rehabilitates the pariah, challenges the stereotypes shakes up the established hierarchy. At 3.30 minutes long, every episode shows us the trial of a particular animal. To counter the charges, lawyers plead with ardour, passion and humour!



# CONCEPT



"On my left, those who are clawed, crawling or sticky: the PARIAS.  
On my right, those who are soft, adorable, cute: the FAVORITES.  
Blamed for all kinds of ills, worshipped in all kinds of ways, they are:  
THE ANIMALS"

Who would defend the vile snake?

The annoying mosquito or the nasty pigeon?

On the other hand, how can one blame the lovable panda?

And how can one not commend the grace and intelligence of the dolphin? The DOLPHIN!

Two lawyers, one judge: let's bring in the accused !

Each episode introduces at the witness stand a different animal who has to be tried.

They are said to be squatters, thieves, poisoners, serial killers, genocidal tyrants...

But are they?

The Animal Court is a series depicting the trials of the animals.

The defense speeches are full of unusual and genuine facts\*, fascinating and hilarious stories about these animals we think we know so well.

Is the mosquito a lost cause? Is the dolphin as pure as the driven snow?

The verdict falls but...

Can humans be trusted to judge animals?

\* Validated by an officer of the court.



# INTENTIONS

We are facing the sixth mass extinction and this time mankind is the cause.  
One million plant and animal species are threatened with extinction in the coming years.  
It's massive.

So why don't we take action?

Is it due to our cultural heritage?

Our religious heritage?

Whatever the reason, the conclusion is the same and is global :  
humans consider themselves as superior to nature and try to dominate it.

But it's clear that it's not working, quite the contrary : it's destructive.

Due to ignorance or mere disdain, we are destroying nature and ourselves along with it.

Yet, some animals benefit from a good reputation.

Because Disney has turned them into stars or because they're softer than average, some have even become symbols of animal rights.

All this contributes to the strengthening of the concept of speciesism in our minds, an ideology which establishes a hierarchy between species (and places human beings above the rest, of course).

The Animal Court reshuffles the cards. It brings the icons down from their pedestals, it rehabilitates the pariahs, challenges our stereotypes and shakes up the established classification of animals.

Every species is in fact an essential link in the food chain and has incredible qualities: as biotechnology geniuses, ocean police, organic farmers...

They are all vital for life on Earth.

Ultimately, everyone knows that it doesn't make sense to put animals on trial.

For them, concepts of right and wrong do not exist. The Animal Court, despite its name, is not designed to dispense justice but to challenge our relationship with the animal world.





# THE CHARACTERS

The episodes are centred on four characters:

*JEAN-PIERRE MARTIN* : the judge

*AGNETHA DOLORES* : the claimant's lawyer

*CHARLES DE LA GRENADIÈRE* : the defending counsel

*THE ANIMAL BEING TRIED.*







## THE DEFENDING COUNSEL

Charles, the humanist defender.

Charles is the attorney who chose this profession neither for fame nor for money but to defend those who need it most: the little people, the voiceless, the pest, the pariahs despised by everyone without knowing them...

He stands for equality, equity, respect, tolerance, social harmony and organic eggs shampoo to avoid messy hair. 300 % committed, he knows his cases inside and out and while he may be guilty of being too eloquent or carried away, he is quick at repartee and his vigorous defence speeches always influence the judge's final decision...

He's fair... As much as he's annoying. Charles is like our moralizing tree hugger friend who's right but whom we would love to contradict just for the pleasure of shutting him up.







## THE CLAIMANT'S LAWYER

Agnetha is the clever and implacable lawyer.

Called “the court’s shark,” she’s known for her rhetoric skills. She has a no-holds-barred approach to win cases, even if it means fishing in troubled waters.

Strict, cold, unpleasant, she advocates for a clean, neat and orderly world. She uses short sentences and a categorical tone, each of her arguments hits the bull’s-eye and leaves no room for discussion. Agnetha represents the darker side we all have, our vile inclinations, our preconceptions; she is our annoying old aunt, our 7th grade biology teacher, the woman sitting next to us at the hairdresser, she is this delightfully awful character whom we love to hate.





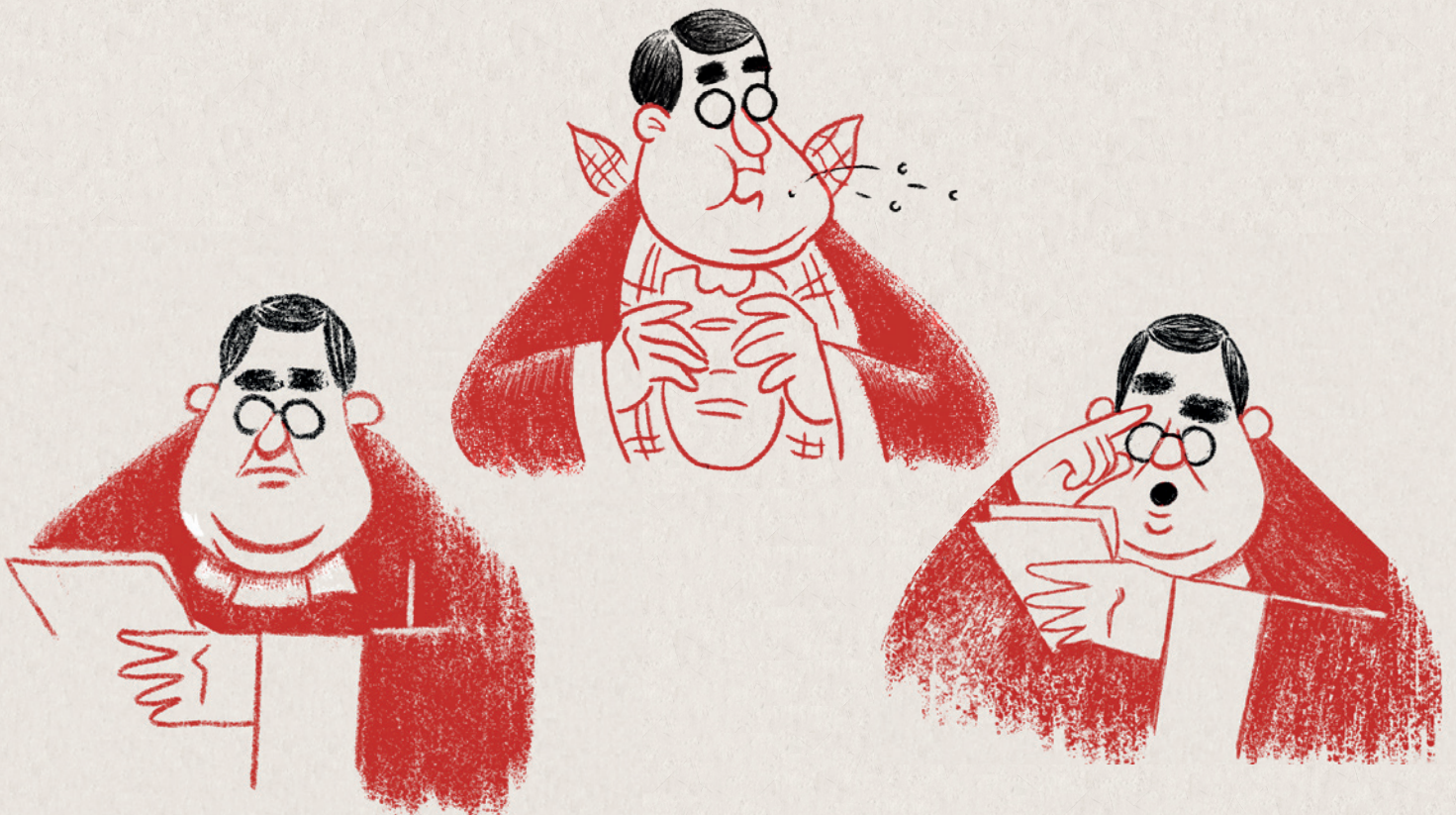


## THE JUDGE

Jean-Pierre is the affable judge.

Close to retirement with 42 years of practice, Jean-Pierre has seen his passion for law wane over the years. Today, he seems more concerned about what he's gonna have for lunch rather than the case he's handling. Not very opinionated, quite easily influenced, Jean-Pierre is often eager to see the trial ending because he's feeling hungry or sleepy. He rarely has clear-cut opinions, he is fickle, he is affable and mostly gives the floor to whoever is more likely to entertain him.

With his airs of dandy, Jean-Pierre represents the soft France, not really mean, not very brave but showing good common sense. Jean-Pierre is a bit of an Everyman.





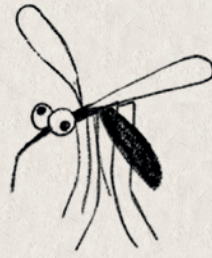
# THE EPISODES

1



THE RAT

2



THE MOSQUITO

3



THE CAT

4



THE BAT

5



THE RACCOON

6



THE SPIDER

7



THE JELLYFISH

8



THE SNAKE

9



THE DOLPHIN

10



THE TORTOISE

11



THE FROG

12



THE SHARK

13



THE PIGEON

14



THE KANGAROO

15



THE KOALA



# THE EPISODES

16



THE FLY

17



THE PENGUIN

18



THE PLATYPUS

19



LA HYENA

20



THE BEAVER

21



THE PANDA

22



THE SEAL

23



THE RABBIT

24



THE FLEA, TICK  
AND LOUSE

25



THE CROCODILE

26



THE WOLF



- 1 THE RAT:**  
Sneaky vermin or wise clearing expert?
- 2 THE MOSQUITO:**  
Killer vampire or vital purifying helper?
- 3 THE CAT:**  
Adorable cuddler or bloodthirsty tyrant?
- 4 THE BAT:**  
Evil creature or productive farmer?
- 5 THE RACCOON:**  
Friendly fluffy animal or deranged kleptomaniac?
- 6 THE SPIDER:**  
Hairy monster or biotechnology genius?
- 7 THE JELLYFISH:**  
Bugbear of the seas or the key of immortality?
- 8 THE SNAKE:**  
The origin of evil or healer god?
- 9 THE DOLPHIN:**  
Superstar of the seas or depraved junkie?
- 10 THE TORTOISE:**  
Zen master or confirmed psychopath?
- 11 THE FROG:**  
Swamp cutie pie or poisonous queen?
- 12 THE SHARK:**  
Terror of the seas or ocean police?
- 13 THE PIGEON:**  
Monument vandal or war hero?



- 14 THE KANGAROO:**  
Olympic champion or sneaky assassin?
- 15 THE KOALA:**  
Easy-going cuddly toy or fearsome sociopath
- 16 THE FLY:**  
Annoying coprophagist or antiseptic creature?
- 17 THE PENGUIN:**  
High North emperor or hopeless flatulist?
- 18 THE PLATYPUS:**  
Nice creature or mysterious felon?
- 19 LA HYÉNA:**  
Giggling scavenger or binman of the savannah?
- 20 THE BEAVER:**  
Brilliant architect or corrupted land developer?
- 21 THE PANDA:**  
Nice ambassador or hopeless slacker?
- 22 THE SEAL:**  
Sweet animal from the ice floe or repeat offender bully?
- 23 THE RABBIT:**  
Lovely ball of fur or evil coloniser?
- 24 THE FLEA TICK AND LOUSE:**  
Vile blood drinkers or delicacies?
- 25 THE CROCODILE:**  
River carnivore or passionate fish farmer?
- 26 THE WOLF:**  
Big Bad Wolf or essential forest ranger?



# SERIES ORIGINS

Back in the Middle Ages, there were actual animal trials during which animals were accused of having committed offences, crimes or damage, just like human beings. Pigs, sows and cows were sentenced to the gallows or to the stake.

Rats, flies, grasshoppers and moles were excommunicated. Even then, the accused had the right to have a lawyer (who was state appointed, of course).

Example: On April 23, 1794, a family from Béthune and their parrot ended up before the Revolutionary Tribunal because the bird had the unfortunate habit of shouting “Long live the King”, making his owners guilty of being anti-revolutionary. They were guillotined and the parrot was trained to shout “Long live the Nation” and “Long live the Republic”.

LONG LIVE THE NATION !  
LONG LIVE THE REPUBLIC !





# TOPE

Justice is a serious matter.

Yet, court can become the theater of the greatest comedies and tragedies.

**Art 1.** : It's precisely because the atmosphere in court is heavy and solemn that humour can take place.

**Art. 2** : Every episode is like a match, or rather a clash. The lawyers' repartee is impressive and the audience is eager to know what the defence could answer to the accusation's punchlines.

**Art. 3** : The passionate lawyers always go overboard. They can be exuberant, become nasty, deceitful, manipulative... But their fervour makes them likeable.

**Art. 4** : Of course, they are never vulgar or offensive. On the contrary, they use polished vocabulary and make popular references. Yet, they don't hold anything back! Their arguments flirt with the limits of morality in a long escalation.

Nota bene: while the cases are fictitious, all the arguments put forward are authentic and scientifically proven. (That being said, one piece of information can be interpreted in different ways...)

## *THE PROCESS OF ONE EPISODE*

The accused walks in the dock, the judge pronounces the charges: this is a serious case! Like gladiators, the two lawyers enter the arena: cutting remarks, low blows, dishonesty, no holds barred from winning.

**THE VERDICT IS COMING!**



I'M HERE TODAY TO DEFEND MY CLIENT:  
THE SNAKE. HE HAS BEEN WRONGLY  
ACCUSED OF ALL EVILS SINCE THE  
DAWN OF TIME!

BEFORE YOU START, MISTER, REST  
ASSURED THAT I HAVE ABSOLUTELY  
NOTHING AGAINST SNAKES.

HALLELUJAH!

I EVEN LOVE THEM.  
THEY MAKE BEAUTIFUL HANDBAGS.



# THE DESIGNS



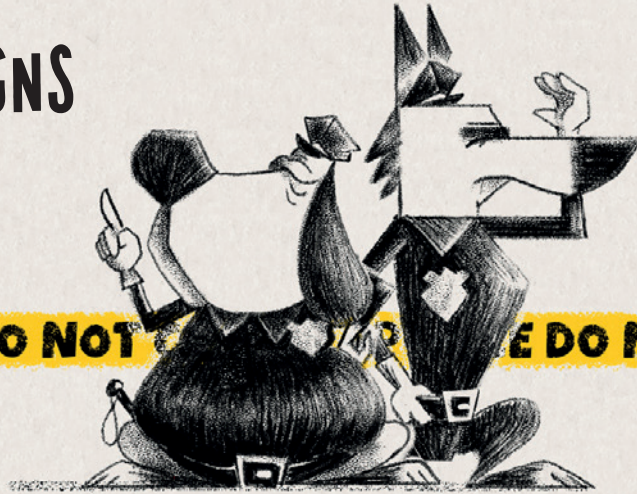


# THE DESIGNS





# THE DESIGNS





# WHERE ARE WE AT?

## WRITING

Key components of the series: scientific soundness and quality of writing. Our ambition is to produce 26 episodes. For each of them, we will need to conduct important documentation work. Historians, scientists and anthropologists will help us in our research. As with all of our documentaries, we want to be as historically accurate and precise as possible. While humour is definitely present, the aim is also to set the record straight on animals.

In addition to the documentation work, we want to strengthen our writing thanks to Antoine Vanderlick, author of three comic books using absurd humour (@big\_vanderbros on Instagram). Other screenwriters will join this duo when the bible has been finalised.

## GRAPHIC DESIGN

"The Animal Court" is a 2D series using traditional animation rendering.

We have opted for a sketchy style. The animation will be cartoonish to emphasise the theatrical postures of our characters. The use of colour will remain minimalist as well as symbolic. It will help highlight an essential narrative element in a scene.

## CAST

To bring this project to life, the actors play a crucial part. In that respect, we have chosen actors who are also writers and familiar with short films so that they can add their personal touch to the writing. Also, in our opinion, it was important to assign these voices to actors who are known and loved by everyone. During our first casting, we found Grégoire Ludig and Lison Daniel.

Grégoire Ludig, a parody and comedy lover known for his iconic duo with David Marsais in *Le Palmashow*, has humorously slipped into the skin of the defending counsel.

Lison Daniel, owner of the Instagram account @les.caracteres and commentator on France Inter radio, is known for her ability to switch personalities in depths and with a lot of derision. The young actress, using multiple voices, perfectly plays an obnoxious but appealing lawyer.

We are currently looking for the actor who will play the judge.





# WHERE ARE WE AT?

## FIRST TESTS

To make the pilot, we have planned the following stages :

A design phase dedicated to characters and settings development according to the pilot's screenplay in addition to our research on the graphic bible.

A testing phase for the animatics in order to find the perfect tone and the right rhythm. A first animatic has been made by Jean-Baptiste.

A testing phase for the animation in order to develop the characters' acting and to define an efficient production pipeline.

A first animation test has been made with Inthebox :

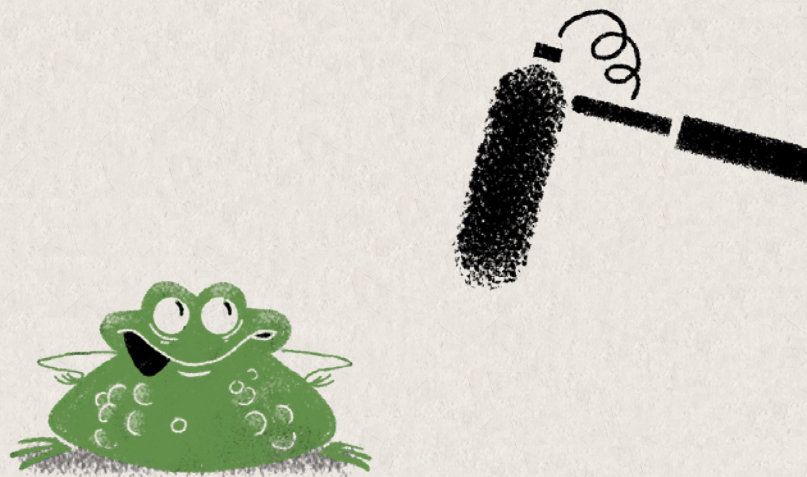


As a result, we have been able to define a style of animation close to traditional animation. But to be more efficient in production, we want to set up “open rigs”: lightened rigs enabling us to draw as much as we want and to create a dynamic animation, namely a tradigital animation.

We still need to choose which software(s) we will use. Toonboom Harmony seems to be the most adequate choice but we still need to think about it, especially regarding the compositing part as we want to use toon line effects to get a hand drawn rendering (with this software, this can be anticipated at the rig stage).

## SOUND DESIGN & MUSIQUE ORIGINALE

Finally, we will have to work on sound effects and soundtrack, final sound mixing and the digital exports. We plan to work with Philippe Wyard, a composer whose original and quirky creative world will perfectly fit the series.





# PRODUCTION NOTE

**ZADIG PRODUCTIONS** was founded at the beginning of the millennium, driven by a future-oriented dynamism. Since 2001, the company has always looked for ways to break new ground. If our core business remains producing documentaries, our team's diversity, energy and curiosity have led us on all fronts to explore every genre. This diversity is also shared by writers. Their desire has often pushed us to reinvent ourselves and to explore new areas.

Animation has long been part of our activities through different documentaries ("Lénine, Gor-ki : la révolution à contre temps" by Stan Neumann or "Une présidente pour l'Amérique" by Ruth Zylberman) and in our cultural magazines. And for three years, Zadig has been working on its first animated series "Cherchez la femme": 30 episodes of 3-minutes long that have recently been finalized.

Julie Gavras has proposed us this series that traces, through the centuries, women whose achievements, work, discoveries or inventions have been deliberately minimized, erased or even stolen by men. Played by Denis Podalydès, this series was co-produced by Arte.

It was selected in an official competition at the Annecy Film Festival and received the "coup de cœur de l'Agraf 2022" prize at the Rennes Film festival this year. Its success has thus enabled us to enter this sector.

We want to continue in this direction with "The Animal Court," directed by Jean-Baptiste Bach, a talented and committed artist. We've been working with him for more than five years on the visual design of the magazine show "Square Idée," broadcast by Arte. We were impressed by his drawing skills, his imagination and his humour.

This series is also concerned with historical truth and animal rights while questioning our society. At Zadig, we have long stood for these values.





# PRODUCTION NOTE

The search for funding is a big part of our development.

Jean-Baptiste lives and works in Bordeaux. He has a special bond with this city and region. This is why it means a lot to him to work with talented artists from Nouvelle-Aquitaine. We have received the support of the French department Charente. To assist us, we have chosen a well-established and experienced partner. « 2 minutes », an animation studio who has made many series and films for both cinema and television, was the perfect fit to become our partner. Jean-Michel Spiner, one of the producers of this prestigious studio, was very interested in our project.

In April 2021, we were selected to pitch our project at the National Animation Film festival under the category “Projects of series in development.” This festival is organized by the AFCA (French Association Animated Films) and was a great opportunity for us to show our project to an audience of animation professionals. At this event, we were contacted by AOP Production, an obvious partner after INTHEBOX, established in Annecy for over 10 years:

Impressed by this project, the team offered us a co-production. Together, we have obtained funds from the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region.

In addition, we have also received support funds from the CNC and PROCIREP.

We are convinced that this project has strong international potential: animal rights and humour have no boundaries.

In order to keep searching for funding to produce it, we would like to find and impress international broadcasters. We already have received Joseph JACQUET’s support as he has been following the project for several months. He is the youth program director at France Télévision (cf. mail attached).

We hope to be able to give this project the outreach it deserves by pitching it at the Cartoon Forum and by finding our future international partners.

We thank you for your attention to our request.



**JULIE PERRIS**

Productrice - Zadig Productions



**MARJORIE BARRAUD**

Co-productrice - AOP Production



# CV JEAN-BAPTISTE BACH

## DIRECTOR

### Publicité

- Lancôme (director)
- France TV SPORT / coupe du monde de rugby féminine (director)
- Dailymotion (illustrator)
- Institut du monde arabe (director)
- Canal + (illustrator)
- L'Oreal (director)
- PUIG (director)
- Nina Ricci (director)

### Série

- Culture Code / canal + / télétoon (director)
- Square idée / Arte (illustrator, animation)
- C Data / c dans l'air / France télévision (illustrator, animation)
- Piasnite / les soirées du label PIAS (director)
- The Gallery / les Inrockuptibles (director)

### Clips

- Grand huit / Philippe Wyart (director)
- Down this way / Sarah B (director)

### Documentaire

- Naissance d'une nation / France ô (illustrator, animation)
- La Story d'Eminem / c8 (illustrator, animation)

