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## The ocean seen from the heart | Hubert Reeves, for the last time

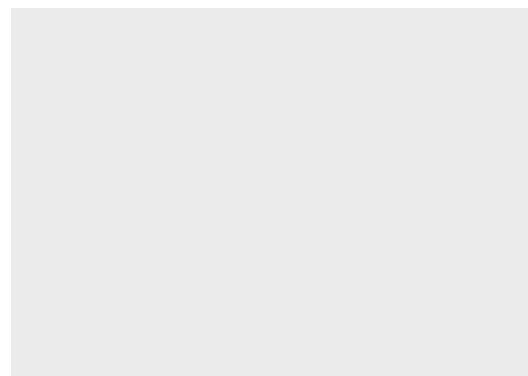
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After *The Earth seen from the heart*, Iolande Cadrin-Rossignol and Marie-Dominique Michaud meet Hubert Reeves in a documentary dedicated to the ocean. An opportunity to see the astrophysicist on the big screen for the last time.

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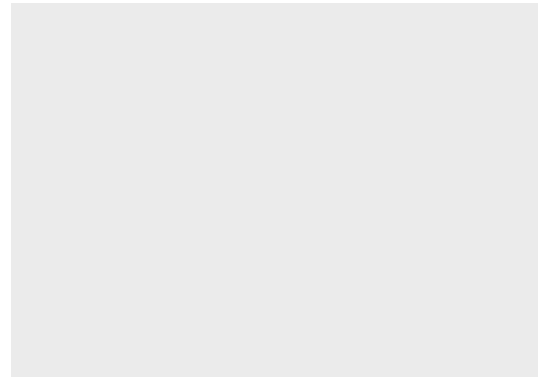
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“Water plays a fundamental role and the ocean is our birthplace. » If he was one of the first to make us understand the link that unites us to the cosmos, the Quebec scientist, recognized for his talents as a popularizer and his love of life, insists in *The ocean seen from the heart* on the link that unites us to water.

Filmed in 2021 in Paris by Iolande Cadrin-Rossignol and Marie-Dominique Michaud, Hubert Reeves will not have had the chance to see the finished work. When the film was released in France in September, his state of health had deteriorated too much for him to be able to see the result. He died on October 13 at the age of 91.



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“It’s a miracle that we got him,” underlines Iolande Cadrin-Rossignol, in an interview. “We spoke on the phone [avant le tournage] and he was prepared,” says the woman who saw him for the last time a few weeks before his death.



PHOTO DOMINICK GRAVEL, THE PRESS

Iolande Cadrin-Rossignol and Marie-Dominique Michaud, directors of the documentary *The ocean seen from the heart*

Hubert [Reeves] never did that, get ready. He could improvise at any time. But there he was prepared to tell the story of the tide and the connection with the cosmos. We are haunted by his death.

Iolande Cadrin-Rossignol, co-director

The departure of the one who had become a friend since their first collaboration (*Hubert Reeves – Star Storyteller* in 2003) also marks the obligatory end of a cycle for Iolande Cadrin-Rossignol.

*The ocean seen from the heart* opens with grandiose images, shot in Brittany, of a fast-moving tide, carried by the quiet voice of Hubert Reeves. It is the beginning of a journey to the surface and into the depths of the ocean whose secrets are only just beginning to be revealed.



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Supported by interviews with around fifteen scientists, activists and thinkers, including Frédéric Lenoir, Claire Nouvian, Daniel Pauly, Lyne Morissette, Mario Cyr and Sheila Watt-Cloutier, the feature film addresses multiple subjects. From the reproduction of corals to the feeding of whales through the underwater art created by a Japanese puffer fish, it firstly testifies to the biodiversity and ingenuity of the underwater world in order to explain the interdependence of life.

Although this aspect was discussed in *The Earth seen from the heart* the two directors wanted to devote an entire film to the ocean, even before the United Nations Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) was proclaimed.

It is France's refusal to give its approval to the deployment, in French Polynesia, of an immense *rāhui* (collective and sacred ban on harvesting a resource to restore it) which was the spark plug for the project.

"It became clear to us that the high seas did not belong to anyone, that they were the common good of humanity, but since no one inhabited them, it was something that was outside of us," remarks Marie-Dominique Michaud, co-director and co-producer of the film. However, they learned, the ocean, through its great capacity for regeneration and climate regulation, has the potential to be an important ally in the fight against climate change and adaptation to it.

## Activist, but not sensationalist

The first moments of the film unfold under the sign of wonder, with images that have nothing to envy of the greatest animal documentaries. Equipped with a budget that they say is "modest", although higher than for *The Earth seen from the heart*, the directors did not skimp on aesthetics, however, pairing real shots with cartoons designed by Eruoma Awashish and Étienne Deslières. The breathtaking images of a humpback whale and its baby were captured by Quebec diver and cameraman Mario Cyr at Banc d'Argent, in the Dominican Republic. After waiting, off the coast of Sept-Îles, for whales which did not come, probably because of the presence of numerous ore carriers, the team joined them at the end of their migration.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY PRODUCTION

The film is rich in underwater images.

"We have a very high ratio of original images," notes Marie-Dominique Michaud, praising the work of the technical team, including the photo direction by Noé Sardet. In total, they had to summarize nearly 115 hours of images and interviews in 1 hour 36 minutes. The filming, which stretched over five years and across several continents, had its share of challenges, including a pandemic and an armed robbery in California. The footage shot there has been lost forever.

Undeniably militant film, *The ocean seen from the heart* avoid falling into sensationalism. In 2021, *Seaspiracy*, a documentary on intensive fishing, came under criticism from scientists who accused the director of misinformation. "Our activism would have no impact if it was not based on scientific thinking," says Iolande Cadrin-Rossignol.

In *Seaspiracy*, there is a narrator who takes the journey, while we give voice directly to researchers, activists, scientists, people in the field. We pride ourselves on not distorting or changing the subject.

Marie-Dominique Michaud, co-director

Marine biologist Lyne Morissette also acted as scientific consultant on the project.

*The ocean seen from the heart* is not a film from which we emerge blissful in the face of the beauty of the world. The rapture at the beginning gives way to a reminder of human domination, images of trawlers scraping the seabed and severed shark fins in support. "To take care, you must first love, but you must also realize what is happening," argues M<sup>me</sup> Cadrin-Rossignol.

Then, the observation gives way to hope, which the film embodies through action. "Hope is part of love, that is to say that when we love, we always hope that things will get better," she concludes.

In theaters this Friday

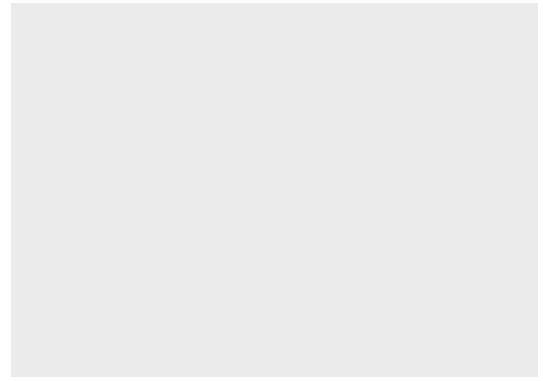
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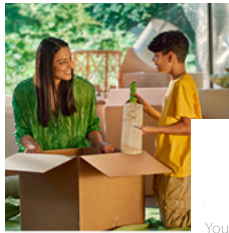
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