



Mark Frankel Janet Suzman Brian Glover Connie Booth David De Keyser Maryam D'Abo

LEON The Pig Farmer

Produced and Directed by **Gary Sinyor & Vadim Jean**

UK 1992

CAST

Mark Frankel (Leon Geller), Janet Suzman (Judith Geller), Brian Glover (Brian Chadwick), Connie Booth (Yvonne Chadwick), Gina Bellman (Lisa), David De Keyser (Sidney Geller), Maryam D'Abo (Madeleine), Jean Anderson, Bernard Bresslaw, Annette Crosbie, Burt Kwouk, Neil Mullarkey, Sean Pertwee, Vincenzo Ricotta, Thelma Ruby, Barry Stanton, John Woodvine.



GARY SINYOR

Gary Sinyor, aged 29, graduated from Cambridge University in 1983. He worked in Manchester as an assistant producer for 18 months and was subsequently offered a place at the National Film and Television School in 1985. He wrote and produced his graduation film, *The Unkindest Cut*, which was nominated Best Short Film by BAFTA in 1989, and won the Golden Plaque at the Chicago Film Festival. In 1989, he became the first producer commissioned to develop a film for the First Film Foundation under the KORDA Scheme. This scheme was an initiative led by David Puttnam, together with Channel 4 and Granada, to identify producing, directorial and writing talent. Gary Sinyor began working on *Leon the Pig Farmer* in 1990.



VADIM JEAN

Vadim Jean, aged 28, graduated from Warwick University in 1986 with an honours degree in History. Earlier, in 1986, he wrote and directed a winning film for *The Guardian* and HTV's David Horlech Democracy Prize competition. Part of the prize was the opportunity to remake his film with a professional crew; the result was *The Isle of Gorf* (1986), a spoof documentary about a fictional island where a rare breed of frogs is threatened by the island's undemocratic government. His feature film experience started in 1987 when he worked as a runner on *Stormy Monday*, directed by Mike Figgis. In 1988, he was a founder-partner of Jean-Hick Associates, a film and video production company. He directed *On Air*, which is now used by Kodak (Eastmancolor) as a showreel for the use of 35mm for corporate work. Vadim Jean is also an executive director of Fighting Films Ltd. and Adventurous Television Ltd. *Leon the Pig Farmer* is his first feature.

This amusing well-paced comedy is the feature debut of Vadim Jean and Gary Sinyor who both directed and produced. Its modest budget of £155,000 has obviously been spent wisely and an impressive British cast has been assembled on a shoestring.

Leon Geller is a young Jewish estate agent from North London. After resigning his job because he is unable to stand the immorality of his workmates, he accidentally discovers that his father is not Sydney Geller the net curtain king of Golders Green, but a Yorkshire pig farmer (played by Brian Glover, with typical deadpan style).

Meanwhile, the nice Jewish girl he - and his mother - likes isn't interested, and the Gentile girl he ends up with doesn't like estate agents. Thus is the mother and father of all guilt trips placed squarely on the young man's shoulders.

Apparently some of the humour will only be fully appreciated by Jews in the audience, although anyone familiar with Woody Allen and Neil Simon is unlikely to miss much. What is different in Jean and Sinyor's depiction of Jewishness, however, is the way the stereotype is raised to an art form. Whereas Simon's characters seem only to be Jewish because they have to be something, and Allen's references are limited to one-liners, *Leon the Pig Farmer* could be "Everything You Wanted to Know About Judaism But Were Afraid to Ask". Indeed, were the film's production team Gentiles, the coarseness of the caricatures would lead the film open to charges of racism.



P.T.O.

Leon the Pig Farmer



That being said, the excellent cast seem to have a lot of fun with the material which if it is satirical of Jewishness is at least affectionately so. Most notable is the scene where Glover and his wife (Connie Booth) use Portnoy's Complaint to learn to become Jewish in order to make Leon feel at home.

The original budget for the film was supposed to be £3 million, but the producers were turned down by the BFI, British Screen and Channel 4. Eventually the money was raised with the help of Eric Idle and Prominent Features. Gary Sinyor has written another film since Leon called "Proof Positive" which is not yet in production, and is currently writing a romantic comedy called "The Tender Trap".

Ken Hendrickson.

Goldwater Lodge

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Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!



Released from a psychiatric hospital, Ricky (an unstable psychotic) searches out and kidnaps Marina, an ex-heroin addict and porn star with whom he has become infatuated.

Ricky ties his captive to a bed and declares his wish to marry and take care of her. In an attempt to avoid suspicion Ricky forces Marina to write a note saying that she has gone to the country. Whilst Ricky is out procuring black market drugs for his captive, Marina manages to free herself, but by now hate has turned to love.

Almodóvar's bizarre love story combines romance with psycho horror, dealing with the uneasy themes of bondage and battle of the sexes with melodrama and comic he turns this film into a classical farce.

Dir: Pedro Almodóvar
Spain, 1989

pc - Deseo. With financial assistance from the Ministerio de Cultura.
sc - Pedro Almodóvar. ph - José Luis Alcaine. m - Ennio Morricone.
lp - Victoria Abril, Antonio Banderas, Loles Leon, Francisco Rabal, Julieta Serrano, Maria Barranco.
cert - 18. 102 mins. Subtitles.

PLUS

ROSEBUD

Director
Cheryl Farthing
14 mins

Kay is fascinated by the easy physical intimacy of the lesbian couple next door. Images of women and female sensuality begin to take over her erotic fantasies.

'a sexy and uplifting examination of awakening lesbian desire' *Time Out*



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