

Nicolas Philibert was born in 1951 in Nancy (France). After studying philosophy, he turned to film and became an assistant director, notably for René Allio y Alain Tanner.

In 1978, with Gérard Mordillat, he co-directed his first documentary feature, « His Master's Voice » (La voix de son maître, 1978) in which a dozen bosses of leading industrial groups (L'Oréal, IBM, Thomson, Elf...) talk about power hierarchy and control, gradually sketching out the image of a future world ruled by the financial sector...

From 1985 to 1987, Nicolas Philibert shot various mountaineering and sports adventure films for television, then started making documentary features that would all obtain a theatrical release: « Louvre City » (La Ville Louvre, 1990), « In the Land of the Deaf » (Le Pays des sourds, 1992), « Animals » (Un animal, des animaux, 1995), « Every Little Thing » (La Moindre des choses, 1996), as well as a film essay pitched between documentary and fiction : « Who Knows? » (Qui sait ?, 1998)

In 2001, he directed « To Be and to Have » (Être et avoir), about daily life in a "single class" school in a mountain village in Auvergne (France). Screened as part of the Official Selection at the Cannes Festival, Prix Louis Delluc 2002, the film was a huge success in France and around forty other countries.

In « Back to Normandy » (Retour en Normandie, 2007), he returns to the settings of another film, shot thirty years earlier in a rural environment with local country people in the main roles: « I, Pierre Rivière, Having Slaughtered My Mother, My Sister and My Brother... » by René Allio. A young assistant director at the time, Nicolas Philibert spent three months hiring them, going from village to village, farm to farm...

With « Nénette » (2010), he takes us to the Menagerie of the Jardin des Plantes, in Paris, for a strange confrontation with the oldest resident of the place, a female orang-utan aged 40, in captivity for 37 years.

With « La Maison de la radio » (2013) he plunges us into the heart of Radio France, to discover what usually escapes our gaze: the mysteries and the wings of a media whose very matter, sound, remains invisible.

His last film, « Each and Every Moment » (De chaque instant), shot into a Nursing Training Institute, is released in August 2018.

Since 2002, more than one hundred of tributes and retrospectives of his films have been set up all over the world, from London (BFI) to New York City (MoMa), Mumbai, Calcutta, Damascus, Séoul, Tokyo, Beijing, Shanghai, Sidney, Melbourne, Moscow, Warsaw, Zagreb, Berlin, Vienna, Milan, Amsterdam, Helsinki, Vilnius, Copenhagen, Edinburgh, Barcelona, Madrid, Lisbon, Thessalonica, Tel Aviv, Mexico City, Bogota, Santiago, Buenos Aires, Sao Paolo, Chicago, Berkeley, Harvard, Montréal.