

POINTE NOIRE

Logline

A rural Cajun community reckons with a 30-year-old double murder: is this folk justice or a travesty of justice?

Synopsis-Short

Filmmaker and crawfisherman Louis Leger (Roy Dupuis) and criminal defense attorney Dolores Arceneaux (Myriam Cyr) join forces in the Cajun prairie community of Pointe Noire to save the life of Joel Richard (Michael Bienvenu), a falsely accused man on Louisiana's Death Row who faces imminent execution. What follows is a search for the truth -- to find out what really happened 30 years ago when two people were killed the night of the traditional *courir de Mardi Gras* on the property of prominent rice farmer and philanthropist Nathan Smith (Zachary Richard). Along the way, Louis and Dolores discover a hauntingly beautiful and isolated rural community suffering from years of secrecy and deceit. Surprisingly, and even reluctantly, they also discover each other. Ultimately, Louis and Dolores and the community of Pointe Noire must reckon with the events of 30 years ago in the hope of achieving a form of folk justice.

The story explores such themes as community and individual isolation, generational secrets, the inevitability of inheritance, self-respect and individual determination, and folk, or community, justice versus the justice of the formal legal system.

Synopsis-Long

Filmmaker and crawfisherman Louis Leger (Roy Dupuis) and criminal defense attorney Dolores Arceneaux (Myriam Cyr) join forces in the Cajun prairie community of Pointe Noire to save the life of Joel Richard (Michael Bienvenu), a falsely accused man on Louisiana's Death Row who faces imminent execution. Dolores agrees to return to her childhood home in the rural Cajun community of Pointe Noire to represent Joel, who is also from Pointe Noire and whose only hope is a stay of execution and clemency from the Governor.

Some 30 years ago, Jay Brasseaux and his wife Grace were murdered on Mardi Gras night in their home on the edge of a rice farm owned by prominent philanthropist and rice farmer Nathan Smith (Zachary Richard). By the following day – Ash Wednesday -- Joel had confessed to the crime, and he was soon convicted and sentenced to death.

Dolores hoped to put together a short film of Joel's life, family and culture in support of clemency and a life sentence for Joel with the help of local filmmaker Louis Leger. Louis eventually agreed to assist her, but only provided they also investigate the circumstances of the crime and Joel's confession.

What follows is a search for the truth -- to find out what really happened 30 years ago when Jay and Grace were killed the night of the traditional *courir de Mardi Gras*. Along the way, Louis and Dolores discover a hauntingly beautiful and isolated rural community suffering from years of secrecy and deceit. Surprisingly, and even reluctantly, they also discover each other. Ultimately, Louis and Dolores and the community of Pointe Noire must reckon with the events of 30 years ago in the hope of achieving a form of folk justice.

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