

# Interview of Sophie Taboni, Co-Winner of Digital Challenge of Angoulême

Mar 7, 2018



When Sophie Taboni contacted us the first time, we were early 2017, and she was writing us from Australia. One year later, she and Nicolas Catherin received the Digital Challenge Award for

Angoulême International Comics Festival for “Ici tout va bien” interactive travel story . Now, with shining eyes and cheerful voice, she tells us their project’s undersides and shares with us some of their sources of inspiration by Skype.

The digital strip cartoon ? After had hesitate for a while, Sophie confesses they chose it a bit at a venture, between her taste for digital telling and drawing and Nicola’s taste for beautiful pictures. From Angoulême they memorize the discovery of new artists and captivating exhibition, meetings with passionate amateur, a hesitating professional world searching its profitability: “Digital strip cartoon offers many new possibilities with narration but, for now, there is no real business model. People have to provide a personal investment except with projects like Phallaina (swipe cartoon) supported by France TV. Or with public channels like the digital creation help of the CNC.”

## Ici tout va bien

That’s during their journey in Australia and New-Zealand that the project “Ici tout va bien” was born, an interactive story available on the web and on tablets (iOS, Android).

At the beginning, they wanted to find an original way to tell their adventures to their family and friends. And both of them like to do things differently. Before they leave, they developed an interactive CV in a few days with an integrator friend’s help: “we like to add storytelling in things we do. With the CV, there was not many

interactions but there was already told things. And the project had a great success !”

They had to choose the format for their travel story: A fiction ? An investigation ? *“We wanted to frame the story upstream but finally we said it would be difficult to anticipate what we would meet and we would not have enough time to develop a constructed story. We decided to let the journey brings us and to improvise. One of the ideas at the beginning was to write the story by two angles to create a comic effect: epic angle, travel’s fantasy side and trivial angle, the true life (for instance, 15000 tourists taking the same wonderful picture than you). People could had to pass from an angle to another one. But even this would been too restrictive.”*

No matter, they meet each other on other principles: horizontal scroll, mix between photographie and drawing, and an artistic direction upstream decided. They choose to stay free on everything else.

They realise the chapter on Melbourne before their departure. That's what allows them to put graphic themes. On the road, roles are well defined: Sophie realise the first paper drawings, the storyboard and drawings on tablet. Nicolas takes the pictures, rearranges compositions and realises vector illustrations of the beginning of chapter. "Project gave a different flavor to the journey. We said "Go on take this picture, it could work". We looked for texture (sand...) and point of view like path for instance which allowed us to encrust ourself in the decor." From the narrative point of view, they try to always renew to not stay neither too straight nor "travelogue". Therefore they choose a mosquito point of view in New-Zealand, to aboard Uluru by a cultural angle and to create a fictive story for Broome.

Has everything really happened ? Sophie confesses some adjusting: "When we came back to Australia, the plane turned around. In the story I'm falling asleep but in fact I was awake ! I have sometimes changed little details, if not it's nut funny."

*Ici tout va bien*

Stories are born from little jokes they do between us. And sometimes reality exceeds fiction: “the story with flies in the cavern is told in a trash way. And it really happened like this. Guide asked us: “Do you want to keep magic or do you want the true story ?” He was very funny so I didn’t change many things”.

*Ici tout va bien*

## Simple and impacting

Sophie has the beautiful stories taste for a while. And she mostly flourishes in digital narrative because she recognizes to have *“much more ideas in animated and sequential image than in motionless image”*.

Since her first project, in 2009, she had a lot of fun by playing with interactivity. *“I filmed my roommate and called it “Tête de Turc”. It was a story with twists and you could lash out on him, interact with the video, throw him tomatoes or glass of water, play with elements*

*encrusted in the decor*". Everything was realised on Flash at that time.

Sophie likes autobiographical stories, reports, new stuff about digital narrative. That's on Uopian or on Benjamin Hoguet's blog she find them.

She found "Enterre-moi mon amour", a story using Whatsapp message of a Syrian girl who's leaving to France, "*very emotional and immersive*". The user choose her way and guide her threw her destiny. She also appreciated Alma's story, a narcos in Mexico "*whose you only see upper torso and her face throughout the web documentary. Not to spoil you but you are surprised at the end.*"

### *Enterre-moi mon amour, L'Info Tout Court visual*

Stay simple and impacting, that's what is the most important for the most beautiful stories, in their view. Avoid the gadget effect and ensure that the form serves the substance.

Today, Nicolas engages on his new hobby, carpentry, and works for a service design agency to make people's life easier and Sophie

wants to deepen drawing during one year, at the same time of her freelance activity. Drawing is for Sophie “a crazy freedom”. She covets it like a “superpower which will allow her to tell everything by herself without material restrictives”. “the loop is looping, all my interest points are meeting to lead to digital stories with drawing and with some “true”, no matter if it’s reports or auto fiction.”

## The power to finish

“Finish but not perfect”. They memorize this sentence from the Youtuber Jake Parker like a mantra which encourages everybody to make personal projects and to go through with it. “We thought all the time of this video. Ok we are perfectionist but we have to finish this project. There is nothing more gratifying than finish a personal work. Even if it’s not perfect. When I watch “Tête de Turc” I think it’s ugly, and I smile but it was helpful. There is none personal project we realised that was not helpful, in a way or in another.”





Le CV en ligne réalisé en 2 semaines leur a permis notamment de décrocher leurs postes en Australie.

Le prix d'Angoulême, c'était la "cerise sur le gâteau", mais ce qu'ils retiennent surtout c'est le retour des gens. "Au début on s'était dit, ce sera pour la famille, les amis et pour nous (et encore, la famille, je me disais "mon papy, il y a des trucs qui vont pas du tout le faire rire"). Mais au final cela a touché un public plus large qu'on ne pensait, et de tous âges. C'est le plus inattendu et le plus cool de toute cette histoire."

Découvrez leur récit en ligne : <http://www.icitoutvabien.net>

Ou téléchargez l'app gratuitement **sur iTunes (Apple)** et **sur Google Play**

The CV on line, realised in two weeks, allows them to be hired in Australia.

The price in Angoulême was "the icing on the cake" but they mostly memorize people's feedback. "At the beginning we said it will be for the family, friends and for us (and still, for the family, I said "there are things that my Grand father won't laugh on it"). But finally it touched a larger public than we thought and with many ages. That's the most unexpected and the coolest about all this story".

Discover their story on line : <http://www.icitoutvabien.net>

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