

Everybody loves...

# BABIES

MPAA PARENTAL STRONG CAUTIONED  
SOME MATERIAL MAY BE OFFENSIVE FOR SOME  
CHILDREN AND REQUIRES PARENTAL GUIDANCE

[BabiesTheMovie.com](http://BabiesTheMovie.com)

FOCUS  
FEATURES  
A DIVISION OF PARENT PARTICIPATIONS

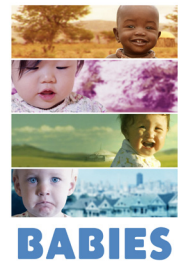
## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Developed by Heartland Truly Moving Pictures to accompany *Babies*, recipient of the Truly Moving Picture Award, an honored distinction given to films that unlock the vast potential of the human spirit and enable us to view stories that display courage, integrity and hope, taking entertainment to a higher level.

[www.TrulyMovingPictures.org](http://www.TrulyMovingPictures.org)

[www.BabiesTheMovie.com](http://www.BabiesTheMovie.com)





## Introduction

### One Film Can

Heartland Truly Moving Pictures, a non-profit organization, recognizes and honors films and filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by expressing hope and respect for the positive values of life. We believe that one film can move us to laughter, to tears or to make a difference. *Babies* is a movie that demonstrates that **One Film Can**.

### Synopsis

The adventure of a lifetime begins...

Directed by award-winning filmmaker Thomas Balmès, from an original idea by producer Alain Chabat, *Babies* simultaneously follows four babies around the world – from birth to first steps. The children are, respectively, in order of on-screen introduction: Ponijao, who lives with her family near Opuwo, Namibia; Bayarjargal, who resides with his family in Mongolia, near Bayanchandmani; Mari, who lives with her family in Tokyo, Japan; and Hattie, who resides with her family in the United States, in San Francisco.

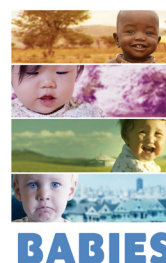
Re-defining the nonfiction art form, *Babies* joyfully captures on film the earliest stages of the journey of humanity that are at once unique and universal to us all.

A Focus Features presentation of a Chez Wam/StudioCanal co-production with the participation of Canal +. *Babies*. Executive Producers, TBC Productions, Chez Wam. Original Idea, Alain Chabat. Adapted by Thomas Balmès. Edited by Craig McKay, A.C.E., Reynald Bertrand. Produced by Alain Chabat, Amandine Billot, Christine Rouxel. Music by Bruno Coulais. Directed by Thomas Balmès. A Focus Features Release.

**Make plans to see *Babies* with someone you love!**

Call 1-800-4-Babies or log on to

18004BABIES.com for group sales information



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## Meet the Babies



*Babies* introduces four different babies from four different countries and captures the remarkable universality children experience growing up. It also captures the vast differences that various locations and cultures present when raising a child.

The following section takes a brief look at the babies in the film and the countries in which each was born.

**Find more information about the babies at [www.BabiesTheMovie.com](http://www.BabiesTheMovie.com)**

### **Ponijao\***

Ponijao lives in Namibia with her family, including her parents and eight older brothers and sisters. Ponijao's family is part of the Himba tribe, and lives in a small village with other families.

Opuwao, Namibia \*\*

Namibia is located in Southern Africa, bordering the South Atlantic Ocean, between Angola and South Africa.

Namibia is mostly high plateau with the Namib Desert along the coast and the Kalahari Desert to the east. Permanent crops and arable land make up only one percent of land usage in Namibia.

Its population is over 2 million.

### **Mari\***

Mari lives with her mother and father in Shibuya, a busy metropolitan area within Tokyo, at the center of all the city's noise and excitement. Mari is an only child and lives a contemporary urban lifestyle.

Tokyo, Japan \*\*

Japan is located in Eastern Asia in an island chain between the North Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan. It lies east of the Korean Peninsula.

Japan is mostly highly rugged and mountainous. Permanent crops and arable land make up 12% percent of land usage in Japan.

Its population is over 127 million.

\* Bio information courtesy of Focus Features

\*\* Information about each country is excerpted from the CIA World Factbook  
[www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html)



## Meet the Babies

### Bayarjargal\*

Born in Mongolia, Bayarjargal, usually called “Bayar” for short, lives with his mother, father and older brother Delgerjargal (“Degi”) on their small family farm.

Bayanchandmani, Mongolia \*\*

Mongolia is located in Northern Asia, between China and Russia.

Mongolia is a vast semidesert and desert plains with grassy steppe, and mountains in the west and southwest. The Gobi Desert is located in south-central Mongolia. Permanent crops and arable land make up less than one percent of land usage in Mongolia.

Its population is over 3 million.

### Hattie\*

Hattie lives in San Francisco, born to very ecological, “green” parents. Both of Hattie’s parent are equally involved in her day-to-day life, fixing her meals, taking her to play groups and spending time with her around the house.

San Francisco, California, United States \*\*

The United States is located in North America and is bordered by both the North Atlantic Ocean and the North Pacific Ocean. It lies between Canada and Mexico.

The large area of the United States allows for a range of climate and topography. The United States is made up of vast central plain, mountains in the west with hills and low mountains in the east. There are rugged mountains and broad river valleys in Alaska and rugged volcanic topography in Hawaii. Permanent crops and arable land make up 18.22% percent of land usage in the United States.

Its population is over 307 million.

\* *Bio information courtesy of Focus Features*

\*\* *Information about each country is excerpted from the CIA World Factbook  
[www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html)*

## Exploring the Film



Capturing the intimate portrait of each family at such a delicate time in their life was a major feat for *Babies* director Thomas Balmès and producer Alain Chabat. Over the course of two years more than 400 days of filming took place and 80% of that footage was captured directly by Balmès (Dawson, 2). However, not each day was spent filming hours of footage. Much of the time the crew spent was simply staying with the family and observing, making sure to capture the most impactful and unique moments (Dawson, 3).

Use the following points to discuss your personal experience with this unique film.

### Discussion Points

- What the filmmakers capture on film provides a unique perspective on the upbringing of each of the babies. While each story is unique, what are some universal themes that run through each child's story?
- In what way did this movie most impact you? What is the central theme you walked away with after viewing this film?
- Different individuals might have different take aways from this film. Find someone with a different experience than you to discuss the film, (e.g. mothers and fathers or mothers and women without children discussing impressions from this film).
- There are a multitude of different philosophies about raising children. After watching this film have your thoughts on how to raise children changed at all? How and why?
- What impact did not inserting dialogue or subtitles have on your appreciation of the film? How would narrative have altered the film?
- Beyond exploring the remarkable early stages of life for four babies, what did this movie help you explore and understand about all humans?
- Are there any additional cultures you would have liked to have had explored on film? Why?

Dawson, Nick. (2010) *Bringing up Babies: Director Thomas Balmès and Producer Alain Chabat Talk*. Web site: [www.focusfeatures.com/article/bringing\\_up\\_babies\\_\\_director\\_thomas\\_balm\\_\\_s\\_and\\_producer\\_alain](http://www.focusfeatures.com/article/bringing_up_babies__director_thomas_balm__s_and_producer_alain)



## Motherhood



*Babies* provides an in-depth look at the ways babies are raised by their mothers across different cultures. There is a lot to learn in the film simply by watching the mothers interact with their children. However, you can find more information about each of the families in the film by reading the interviews at [www.BabiesTheMovie.com](http://www.BabiesTheMovie.com).

After watching the film and exploring the article *Babies: Meet the Parents* at [www.BabiesTheMovie.com](http://www.BabiesTheMovie.com), discuss your impressions on motherhood by using the discussion points below.

### Discussion Points

- What was the common thread that connected all the mothers in the film?
- What are the shared stages that all the babies and mothers experience in the film?
- Were you able to relate to a particular mother and child more than others? Why?
- Did this film make you consider the support system you have raising your child? How did the support systems among each of the babies differ?
- The families of each of the babies was selected before the child was born so the sex of the child was a surprise to not only the families, but the filmmakers. With three girls and one boy featured, did you notice any differences between the development of the boy and the development of the girls?
- As a mother or father, what are some of the shared experiences with your child in which you find the most value?
- In the article, *Babies: Meet the Parents*, did any of the mother's reactions to the film surprise you? How?



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## Get Involved



*Babies* presents an in-depth look at the diverse environments around the globe into which babies are born each day. While the babies featured in the film were born into healthy and loving homes, there are babies everywhere who need some extra care.

Use the following suggestions to help develop additional ideas to get involved in your community and world, and make sure every baby has the best health and happiness a baby can have.

### Suggestions:

- March of Dimes

March of Dimes' mission is to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth, and infant mortality. The organization carries out this mission through research, community services, education and advocacy to save babies' lives. March of Dimes researchers, volunteers, educators, outreach workers and advocates work together to give all babies a fighting chance against the threats to their health: prematurity, birth defects, low birthweight.

**Learn more about March of Dimes and what you can do to help at:**  
[www.MarchofDimes.com](http://www.MarchofDimes.com)

- Give handmade

If you don't have the money or time to spend volunteering away from your home, consider some projects you can work on from home to make sure newborns are wrapped in love. Take the time to knit caps and booties for infants, as well sew swaddling blankets. There are a number of free tutorials online for these patterns and many hospitals have programs in place to send newborn babies home with something handmade. Do some research to find a hospital to volunteer with in your area.



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## Moving Moments



*Babies* has been honored as a Heartland Truly Moving Picture Award-winning film. This award was created to honor films released theatrically that align with Heartland's mission to recognize and honor films and filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by artistically expressing hope and respect for the positive values of life.

These award-winning movies are made up of moving and inspiring moments – those moments that cause you to think, see something in your life differently or be inspired to do something. These movies are what make the movie and its message remain with you well after you've left the theater.

Think about *Babies*. What were the moments that stood out to you? How did they make you feel? How will they cause you to think about things differently in the future? Share those moments with others at [www.TrulyMovingPictures.org](http://www.TrulyMovingPictures.org). Simply login and then search the movie list for *Babies*. You can leave your review of the movie or thoughts about this Truly Moving Picture Award-winning film in the "Reviews" section.



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