

L'Arbre de Noël

("The Christmas Tree"; aka: "When Wolves Cry")

France / Italy : 1969 : dir. Terence Young : Corona / Jupiter

: 110 min

prod: Robert Dorfmann : scr: Terence Young : dir.ph.: Henri Alekan

[Brook Fuller](#)

William Holden; Virna Lisi; Bourvil; Madeleine Damien

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	□	€	Z	⚡	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
5277	1½	6	1	621	3	-	-	-	-	No	unseen

Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001 review:

"Sappy tear-jerker about relationship between young boy and his wealthy father when the father learns his son's death is imminent. Cast is divided between those who overact and those who don't seem to care one way or the other. Aka: "**WHEN WOLVES CRY**". *½ "

Speelfilm Encyclopedie review – hamfisted translation of the above

Halliwell's Film Guide review

"The small son of a millionaire widower is fatally infected by radioactivity. Painfully sentimental and overdrawn weepie, the most lachrymose film of the sixties. Wr: Terence Young, from a novel by Michel Bataille."

"Depending on your taste threshold, there may not be a dry eye – nor a full stomach – in the house."
– **Judith Crist**

Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89 review:

"A strained lunge for the tear ducts, in a tale of a father's attempt to make the last days happy for his son, dying of leukemia. Aka: "**WHEN WOLVES CRY**". ** "

TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995 review:

"Terence Young, who made several of the James Bond action films, got right away from all that when he wrote and directed this king-sized weepie about a young boy dying from radiation poisoning. The child acquires two tame wolves to ease him through his dying days, and they're very appealing. The script, however, could have been stiffened by draining away some of its unnecessary sentiment. * "

Video Movie Guide 1993 review:

"A 10-year old boy is diagnosed as being terminally ill. Originally titled "**THE CHRISTMAS TREE**". Rated "G". **Turkey**"

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Fuller:

"Brook's part in "**IL GATTOPARDO**" is a tiny one; in "**L'ARBRE DE NÔEL**" it is large and extremely maudlin, an early entry in the Dying Boy genre later to be dominated by Renato Cestié [qv].

The unfortunate Pascal expires (of radioactive contamination) serenely and in the utmost comfort, in a château bought by his millionaire father, and in the company of two tame wolves. The American release title: "**WHEN WOLVES CRY**", might have been amended to "When Critics Howl".

[no listing in "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time

No further information currently available. Not to be confused with the 1996 US TV film "**THE CHRISTMAS TREE**" with Sally Field. A self-evident europudding this, complete with fading American star to guarantee a foothold on the US market – twin curses of late sixties/early seventies cinema. They're a bit of an oddity, these man-and-boy tearjerkers. Whatever the sentiments in Latin countries, there was never any real constituency for them in the English-speaking world – which shrinks from lachrymose male bonding scenes since the days of Wallace Beery and Jackie Cooper, or Chaplin and Jackie Coogan. It seems so at odds, what's more, with the prevailing mood of its day (69 was the year of "**MIDNIGHT COWBOY**", "**TRUE GRIT**", "**THEY SHOOT HORSES, DON'T THEY?**"). It rings more like a mid-eighties TV movie. What did Terence Young have in mind exactly?

Brook Fuller was 10. He had his modest appearance in "**IL GATTOPARDO**" ("The Leopard") six years earlier.

See subject index under **ANIMALS, DEATH / DYING CHILDREN** and (presumably) **CHRISTMAS / THANKSGIVING**.