



## *Organic tampon stall at Vieilles Charrues*

Rob Now the Vieilles Charrues isn't just about music. It's about all sorts of other things. I've come to a stall here which is held by Miriam. Could you just tell me what it is that you're providing here?

Miriam Yes, so I made a movie about periods, about the thing that comes into a woman's life every month, and it's called 28 Jours, twenty-eight days, because of the menstrual cycle. I'm here to talk about my movie, but Gail is here to talk about a brand of biological tampons because tampons are made up of a lot of bad stuff for women. So we're here to talk about what you can use to live with your period in the easiest way and also to talk about menstrual precarity, because a lot of women don't have enough money to buy menstrual products and so Gail, here, has a brand and if you buy a tampon from her brand, other tampons are given to women that are living in the street. Homeless women.

Rob And is there a particular problem for festival-goers do you think?

Miriam Yeah, because, we don't think about it, but women during a festival have their period and they don't know how to do. If you use a menstrual cup you don't know where to wash it. If you use a tampon you have to remember that you have to change it every four hours. So what we see here is a lot of women coming and asking if they can take some tampons because they forget to bring with them their tampons – so yes I think it is a subject that interests people at the festival.

Rob Particularly women I imagine – it's something we don't really think about when we think about a music festival.

Miriam Yes it's true.

Rob Here on your desk, here on your stand, you've got lots of information about, about the product itself, the tampon itself. Can you tell me something about that?

Miriam Yes. The thing that most strikes my mind when I did the movie is about the Glyphosate Because we talk a lot about the Glyphosate and the fact that it is in what we eat, but actually it is also in the tampons that we use and so you have other solutions to use. Other products that are not made of Glyphosate and stuff but people don't hear about it because big brands are very famous and they have the whole market, and so that's a problem.

Rob You mentioned that you've made a film. Tell me about the film.

Miriam So the film in French – the title in French is 28 Jours – twenty-eight days, because of the cycle, and we made it last year. It's available on Youtube, you can watch it on Youtube and it was very interesting because we talked about the taboo around the subject and how it was created by religion and the fact that religion is still very powerful in our society and that if people are ashamed of periods it's because of religion and because of all these beliefs that we keep from this area of history, and we talk to a woman who is a director of a brand of tampon, Nana, Nana France who told us that everything was perfect in the brand and that there are no bad products in it, and then we met Gail who told us about all the bad stuff that was in tampons and period products, and yes it was interesting.

Rob So people can actually access your film on Youtube.

Miriam Yes. It's free on Youtube. We... at the beginning we wanted to sell it because we met a lot of producers. But the idea was to share it with the most people as possible and it's worked very well actually. So we are proud, as we are almost reaching the million views, so it's kind of a good thing yes.

Rob Miriam, thank you very much for talking to us, and best of luck for the rest of the festival.

Miriam Thank you

Rob And now I am talking with Gail, who is a distributor of these new-style tampons. Tell us about this.

Gaëlle Yes, it's tampons and pads from Natracare it's a British brand, and I sell them in a box. The woman can have them every month in their mailbox. When I sell a box I give one for a woman on the streets. So, voila, it's a new concept.

Rob And what kind of response are you getting at the Vieilles Charrues?

Gaëlle It's great. Yes, yes, yes. We are here to liberate...la parole.

Rob Because it's a subject which is difficult for some people to talk about.

Gaëlle Yes. It's a bit taboo. Yes.

Rob And here it's very, very obvious. You have a big stand with lots of colours and it just says 'Change the Rules'

Gaëlle *Changez les regles.*

Rob *Changez les regles* because 'regle' is actually the name in French for a period.

Gaëlle I asked the Vieilles Charrues four months ago 'what if we had a stand like that?' 'Yeah, maybe'... and then we are here.

Rob The product itself is a bit dangerous, isn't it? There are lots of toxic substances in a tampon. But it's not just that. It's a pollution problem.

Gaëlle Yes. It's a very big problem for the earth because every year 45 billion of pads are thrown away, and if you put them one on top of the other, it's the distance between the earth and moon every year with toxics, with plastics. It's not biodegradable. It's about 500 years to be biodegradable and our products are 100 per cent biodegradable.

Rob It's not always within the reach of many women to be able to pay for their tampons.



Gaëlle Yes.

Rob Is it a big problem in France?

Gaëlle Yes, it's a big problem in France. We also know that 1.7 million of women in France cannot, every month, buy tampons or pads. That's why I decided to give them a box.

Rob And in the year that you have been operating, how many boxes have you been able to distribute?

Gaëlle Oh, in 2018, I gave 1,200 boxes to women in the street.

Rob And whereabouts? In the capital? In Paris?

Gaëlle Yes because it's a French association which is in Paris and in Lille, which gives to women in the streets.

Rob OK. Gail thank you very much for telling us about your product.

Gaëlle Thank you.