

65°

Festival del film Locarno

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Open Doors

focus on Francophone

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Ailleurs (Away)

Leslie Tô

Burkina Faso



Leslie Tô
Director, Producer

Director's Biography

Leslie Tô is an independent writer/director. She associate produced numerous elements for broadcast on *Link TV: Television Without Borders*. Her short films *Redefinition* (2006), *Northwestern University* (2007) and *Release* (2008) have screened at film festivals in Africa, Europe and America.

Filmography

Redefinition (2006)
Northwestern University (2007)
Release (2008)

Production Company's profile

Je t'aime Pictures is a new production company based in Burkina Faso. It was created to produce and distribute original African content. It is currently developing a television pilot called *Taper les divers*, a mosaic of comedy sketches that interpret the quintessential aspects of life in Ouagadougou. *Away* will be its first feature film.

Technical Information

Fiction / 96' / HD / Color

Production Status:
Writing & development

Shooting Language:
French

Shooting Start:
06/2013

Total Budget:
450'757 Euro

Funds Secured:
10'000 Euro

Production Company:
Je t'aime Pictures

Contacts:
je.taime.pics@gmail.com

Synopsis

A man loves a woman. He is a recently initiated member of a powerful pagan brotherhood. She is the daughter of a recently converted Catholic police commissioner. Despite the fact that she is with child, her parents refuse their marriage. In a rage, the man commits an unforgivable crime. The woman is sent to the capital city where she gives birth to a daughter she names Elena. Elena's mother seeks refuge in a newfound love with a French expatriate. He becomes the only father Elena knows.

As Elena inches toward adolescence, she finds herself desperately wanting to be closer to a culture that is not her own. She idolizes the women in her Harlequin novels and dreams of one day finding her very own European lover. From the depths of a world she doesn't yet know, her father senses her growing further away from him and attempts to communicate with her. But Elena doesn't yet know how to listen.

When her mother promises to send her abroad to continue her studies if she passes her exam, she is ecstatic and applies herself. But one of her classmates, Clemence, has other priorities. Clemence is not at all concerned about doing well in school. At home, she is responsible for taking care of her brothers while her mother pursues a career as a diplomat. Because Clemence's home life is so exhausting, school is a time for fun and games. The two girls start off as enemies, one busy defending the principles they are expected to uphold in school, the other defending her right to be the class clown.

Despite their differences, the girls soon become close and realize they complete one another: one in need of a father, the other of a mother. Their friendship gives Clemence the courage to seek a better life for herself. It gives Elena the confidence to connect with a father and a world she has never known.

Director's Note

Having to respond to the demands of the physical world as well as to those of the supernatural is the backdrop to Elena's story. She thus lives two stories simultaneously: her friendship with Clemence and her relationship with her father, one feeding into the other. As her friendship with Clemence teaches her to "let go", she is able to open up to the type of discourse which allows her to discover her unique sense of place. *Away* tells the story of a young girl who embodies a young Africa. Elena represents a youth that is constantly reminded, and thus convinced, of the inferiority of its own traditions. Elena's journey is thus to confront her traditions and allow them to lead her to her own evolution.

Black Sunshine

Akosua Adoma Owusu

Senegal / Ghana



Akosua Adoma Owusu
Director

Director's Biography

From Ghana, Akosua Adoma Owusu received an MFA from CalArts in 2008. She has exhibited worldwide, including Centre Pompidou, Rotterdam, Toronto and London Film Festival. Her films have received awards and nominations around the world. She participated in the Berlinale and Durban Talent Campus, and Produire au Sud. Owusu was a recipient of the Focus Features Africa First award.

Filmography

Me Broni Ba (My White Baby) (2009)
Drexciya (2010)
Split Ends, I Feel Wonderful (2012)



Angèle Diabang
Producer

Production Company's profile

From Senegal, Karoninka wants to encourage African visions of the continent's realities. Full of vibrant stories, Africa is moving thanks to an open-minded and dynamic youth. Its African roots commit Karoninka to be open to cultures from all over the world; going for singular stories about life. Major channels and international festivals have broadcasted Karoninka's productions.

Filmography Production

Le monologue de la muette, Khady Sylla and Charlie Van Damme (2007)
Waliden, enfant d'autrui, Awa Traoré (2009)
Jakob, Benjamin Moritz Gronau (2010)

Technical Information

Fiction / 90' / HD / Color

Production Status:
Writing & development

Shooting Language:
Twi

Shooting Start:
03/2014

Total Budget:
860'000 Euro

Funds Secured:
50'000 Euro

Production Company:
Karoninka

Contacts:
karoninkaprod@yahoo.fr

Synopsis

Black Sunshine tells a story of a promiscuous hairdresser, Effie Konadu, who lives with her 15-year old albino daughter, Adjoa, in a small compound house in Agogo, Ghana. Born albino, Adjoa desires love from Effie. Effie's disaffection for Adjoa is problematic because society has reinforced in Effie's mind that albinos are supernatural beings. Effie is torn between loving Adjoa, as she should, or not. Adjoa, on the other hand, will do anything to win Effie's love both good and bad; which solidifies in Effie's mind that Adjoa is abnormal. Effie's behavior makes Adjoa feel neglected. As a result, Adjoa creates a friend for herself, Shebere (Destiny), in the form of a black boy, who appears during the day to help Adjoa with chores. When Adjoa and Shebere are alone, they visit a sacred crocodile pond where crocodiles co-exist peacefully with humans. Meanwhile, an insecure Effie, who often uses skin-bleaching creams to lighten her skin, encounters a white European tourist, Remy Savant in a passenger car. Effie builds a sexual relationship with him in hopes of escaping her African reality. When the romance dissolves, Effie falsely blames Adjoa. In her anger, Effie tells Adjoa the truth about her birth – she gave Adjoa up because she was born albino, and forced a village midwife to tell Adjoa's adopted mother, Mawuena that Adjoa was her own child, after Mawuena unknowingly gave birth to a stillborn black boy (Shebere). There is a twofold threat in Effie and Adjoa's relationship. The external threat is the love triangle of Effie, her European lover Remy, and his friendship with Adjoa, her albino daughter. The internal one is Effie's secret of Adjoa. Once the external unleashes the internal, both Adjoa and Effie will confront issues of identity to grow and move on. At the crocodile pond, Shebere tries to convince Adjoa to end her life and return to the next world with himself and Mawuena, his mother. Adjoa nearly relents, but at the last moment, she finds her own path. She demands that Shebere leave her and go away. Adjoa surfaces from the river, ready to find her new place in the world. Eventually, Effie discovers the crushing realities of cultural differences.

Director's Note

Black Sunshine explores the otherness of African albinos, which reflects the profound sense of alienation we all often feel. The film is personal as I am a product of Ghanaian and Western cultures. I feel of two cultures and also a member of neither. I identify with my character, who is African and albino. While the condition of African albinos is extreme, we all can feel visibly noticeable yet socially invisible. I wish to show this universal human condition in a compelling drama set in Ghana. Albinos are chastised and killed in parts of Africa and the world because of their skin. My film examines conventional beauty, emotional violence and albinos in family dynamics.

De la rue à l'école (From Street to School)

Pape Tall

Senegal



Pape Tall
Director

Director's Biography

From 1978 to 2008, Abdoulaye Tall (Pape Tall) was engaged in activities which brought him wide-ranging skills as a researcher, dramatist, performing arts producer and organizer, and social worker. From 1985 to 1999 he worked with street children on behalf of the Senegalese non-profit organization ENDA-TM. Since 2003 he has been involved in voluntary work with child beggars.

Filmography

L'artisanat, les laissés pour compte? (Co-direction) (1991)



Gora Seck
Producer

Production Company's profile

Les Films de l'Atelier was set up in 2005 by Gora Seck and Mamadou Sellou Diallo who are filmmakers, producers and arts research lecturers at the department of Civilization, Religion, Arts and Communication of the Université Gaston Berger in Saint-Louis, Senegal. The structure also provides an interface for other young cultural players with a project to pursue.

Filmography Production

Les Aveugles, Mamadou Sellou Diallo (2006)

Les larmes de l'émigration, Alassane Diago (2009)

Mame Diarra et compagnie, Pape Tall (2010)

Technical Information

Documentary / 80' / DVcam / Color

Production Status:
Post-production

Shooting Language:
Wolof

Shooting Start:
10/2012

Total Budget:
41'303 Euro

Funds Secured:
1'302 Euro

Production Company:
Les Films de l'Atelier

Contacts:
lesfilmsdelatelier@yahoo.fr

Synopsis

Mame Diarra (aged 12) decides to enroll for school on her own initiative, in an attempt to alter her destiny as a guide for the blind, chosen for her at an early age by her grandmother. She brings into the struggle her friends, who share the same fate: Ndeye Diop (aged 8), Khady Sall (claims to be 14), Korka Sow (looks 13, but has no birth certificate). This upheaval causes conflict between the old women and the young girls, in the presence of filmmaker and volunteer social worker Pape Abdoulaye Tall, who together with his partners makes a joint effort to help the girls' plans come to fruition, but without upsetting the family life of the group.

Overall, this documentary film is built around Pape Tall's experience as a volunteer social worker, who has been in contact for years with young girls who want to go to school and continue their studies. At the same time, they have to guide their blind and/or impoverished relatives in the daily search for the pittance desperately needed to feed a large family living in the suburbs. And they have to do all this at times of the day and year which make it very hard for them to attend school. Together with partner volunteers and organizations, Pape Tall keeps up a peaceful campaign to make the dream of studying come true for these girls, whom the street has equipped with a moving degree of wisdom and fragility.

Pape Tall sees his role as that of tutor, or better still a mediator who has known both the girls and their parents for over seven years. His intention is to document how they interact with other children, how they fit into class and spend their time at school, their relationship with the teacher. He is keen to film them as they take part in school life, as they reflect and answer questions from the teacher, to see them play with other kids at break time, or as they go to get news from their grandmother, whom they left very early in the morning at a strategic spot. He wants to find out how they are split between their roles as girls and relatives, and their plans as schoolchildren to attend classes and get off the street for good. He films the inner struggle of these kids who are at the very core of deprivation, of parental conflict, of the street and its dangers, but with the carefree happiness of childhood. A dual struggle, unique of its kind, but which shows that all is not lost.

Director's Note

The production of a longer (80 min) version of this documentary, based on a medium-length (52 min) feature entitled *Mame Diarra et compagnie*, provides an opportunity to take a more filmic, effective and developed approach to the issues of child education. This film rejects the fatality, the handing down and the continuity of the poverty which afflicts so many children on the streets of Africa's capital cities. It is a documentary of hope, hope that rises out of poverty, bringing the conviction that children's future are off the streets and that the struggle for human dignity can be carried on through knowledge and education.

Faso Fani, la fin du rêve (Faso Fani, the End of the Dream)

Michel K. Zongo



Michel K. Zongo
Director

Director's Biography

Born on 11 June 1974 in Koudougou, Burkina Faso, Michel K. Zongo is a director, cameraman and screenwriter. In 2010, with the Diam Production company as a partner, he set up a documentary film production concern which, together with Cinédoc films, co-produced his first full-length documentary, *Espoir voyage*.

Filmography

Ti Tiimou (2008-2009)
Sibi, l'âme du violon (2009)
Espoir voyage (2011)



Christian Lelong
Producer

Production Company's profile

Cinédoc Films is a feature-length film production company based in Annecy, France. Since 1995 it has produced documentaries on "society, arts, environment and history". Since 2000 a part of its production efforts have been devoted to Africa. Its most recent production, *Espoir voyage* by Michel Zongo, was selected for the Berlin Film Festival and for the Cinéma du Réel in Paris.

Filmography Production

Ceux de la colline, Berni Goldblat (2009)
La main de Dieu, François Sculier (2010)
Espoir Voyage, Michel K. Zongo (2011)

Technical Information

Documentary / 90' / HD / Color

Production Status:
Writing & development

Shooting Language:
French and Mooré

Shooting Start:
01/2013

Total Budget:
235'000 Euro

Funds Secured:
47'000 Euro

Production Company:
Cinédoc films

Contacts:
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Synopsis

Burkina Faso's first textile factory was named Faso Fani, or "national loincloth" in the local language. It was set up in 1965 in Koudougou, the place where I was born. In its heyday, Faso Fani was the pride of the city, before the factory went into decline and finally closed in 2001 under a Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) imposed on Burkina Faso, as on most other sub-Saharan states, by the Bretton Woods Institutions (the IMF and the World Bank).

Hundreds of workers were laid off without any kind of social safety net. The city bore the brunt of this unfathomable closure and has struggled to recover ever since. A decade after the social and economic catastrophe, I set out to meet some of the workers who were involved, to investigate this factory which loomed so large in my childhood, and to explore this city which, today, is no more than a shadow of its former self.

Director's Note

Koudougou was long regarded as the textile capital of Burkina Faso. And with good reason, since it was the home of the Faso Fani factory, whose name means "national loincloth". Burkinabè people used to say that "Faso Fani calls the shots". Then the factory was shut down. Desolation followed in the wake of the closure, a direct result of globalization. Today, by visiting Koudougou and making these micro-portraits of former Faso Fani employees, to whom I am personally very close, the film will gradually show the connection between the choice of world economic model imposed on my country and the grim realities of life endured by the hundreds of workers who lost their jobs.

Laza



Laza
Director, Producer

Director's Biography

Laza is a Malagasy director who studied filmmaking in Paris. In 2006 he moved back to the Madagascar capital Antananarivo, where he has made most of his films to date. In 2006 he also set up Rencontres du Film Court, the island's only film festival.

Filmography

L'idiot du village (2011)
6h58 (2011)
Même instant de vie (2012)

Production Company's profile

The priority mission of Rozifilms, which was set up in 2000, is to produce full- or short-length documentary and fiction features. Assisting the structural and professional development of the Malagasy film industry is also part of the brief for Rozifilms, which is one of the organizers of the Madagascar short film fest Rencontres du Film Court.

Filmography Production

The pianoman, Andry Ranarisoa (2010)
L'idiot du village, Laza (2011)
Même instant de vie, Laza (2012)

Technical Information

Documentary / 70' / HD / Color

Production Status:
Post-production

Shooting Language:
Malagasy

Shooting Start:
05/2011

Total Budget:
53'334 Euro

Funds Secured:
37'134 Euro

Production Company:
Rozifilms

Contacts:
dir@rencontresdufilmcourt.mg

Synopsis

Pieces of Lives is a 70-minute documentary which examines the music therapy work carried on by Rajery in the Madagascar capital's psychiatric hospital. Rajery is one of the most popular Malagasy musicians, with an international reputation. He lost his right hand at the age of nine months and now plays the valiha using the stump, together with the fingers of his left hand. As a socially aware person, committed to playing a part in improving living conditions for his fellow citizens, Rajery is a generous Malagasy personality and a remarkable man in various ways. But the documentary *Pieces of Lives* is not focused on the career of this fine musician, his handicap, or his engagement in social projects. The film follows Rajery as musician and above all as the man who brought music into the hospital. Rajery visits the Anjanamasina psychiatric hospital two or three times a month to hold music therapy sessions for the patients. There are various reasons behind his efforts to do something for the inmates of this ageing establishment. His sister was admitted to the hospital for a period, but the care she received there did anything but improve her mental health. She died only a few days after being discharged.

This experience left its mark on Rajery, leading him to wonder how he could contribute towards improving living conditions for sufferers from mental illness. Through the one-on-one and group therapy sessions conducted by Rajery, we are taken to the heart of the Antananarivo psychiatric hospital and meet its patients, who live in dreadful sanitary conditions. We follow Rajery's work in his therapy sessions and see how music opens a window of hope and happiness for the men and women who have been confined there, sometimes neglected by their families. The film is an exposure of the abandonment of these patients, the apathy of the authorities and the failure of public health policy in Madagascar. Music is at the film's core. It introduces us to the valiha and to Malagasy traditional music in general, the place of music in society and in the daily lives of Malagasy people. The film also shows us a day in the hospital. Pieces of patients' lives. Touching and generous encounters with various patients who talk about the role of music, and the therapy sessions, in their lives.

Director's Note

I met Rajery in 2010 at a music therapy session in the Antananarivo psychiatric hospital in which my cousin was taking part. He had been hospitalized because of substance abuse. Meeting Rajery changed my life. I saw the power of his music for patients and the fire that lit up in my cousin's eyes. I realized that we can all do something for these fragile people that have lost their way in life, and that every citizen can engage on behalf of their community. As a musician, Rajery brings his music to the patients. As a filmmaker, I take my camera...

Il Faut Quitter Bamako (We've got to Leave Bamako)

Aïssa Maïga

Mali



Aïssa Maïga
Director

Director's Biography

Born to a Malian father and a Senegalese mother, actress Aïssa Maïga has appeared in films such as *One Stays, One Leaves* by Claude Berri, *Russian Dolls* by Cédric Klapisch, *Hidden* by Michael Haneke, *Bamako* by A. Sissako (nominated for a César award for Most Promising Actress) and *Together Is Too Much* by Léa Fazer. She is in the cast of Michel Gondry's forthcoming *Mood Indigo*.



Tom Dercourt
Producer

Production Company's profile

Since its creation in 2007 Cinéma Defacto has produced or co-produced 15 feature films with partners from 15 different countries, through innovative co-productions with up to 4 partners, all selected in class A festivals and sold by major sales agents worldwide.

Filmography Production

Story of Jen, François Rotger (2008)

La Lisière, Géraldine Bajard (2010)

Nos Résistances, Romain Cogitore (2010)

Technical Information

Fiction / 90' / HD / Color

Production Status:
Writing & development

Shooting Language:
French

Shooting Start:
02/2013

Total Budget:
1'400'000 Euro

Funds Secured:
158'803 Euro

Production Company:
Cinéma Defacto

Contacts:
info@cinemadefacto.com

Synopsis

Two young women, a plane, a coffin. Maïmouna, from Paris, aged 30, is coming to Mali, the country of her birth, to bury her father.

After landing in Bamako, she finds herself trapped by a sandstorm. At the other end of Mali, the coffin has been there waiting for her since the night before...

That's when she meets a young African woman called Edith, middle-class but not quite with it, who suggests they ride to Gao on her motorbike. Gentle madness and wild will to live, two women, one motorbike, a road trip that gets out of hand.

Director's Note

I want to show Africa from an angle it's never been seen before, at one and the same time strange and familiar, strong and weakened. Without miserabilism, paternalism, or angelicism.

Maïmouna is motion, life, running ahead of herself. A contemporary gaze on contemporary Africa. She has grown up in France in a virtually imaginary Africa. Her father, in exile, was keen to shed the customs from back home, vestiges of a painful past.

Part escape, part homecoming, *Il Faut Quitter Bamako* will be a Malian road movie, a story about an unusual, irrational friendship between two women on the run... which will bring Maïmouna face to face – headlong! – with her origins.

La prochaine fois, le Feu (Fire Next Time)

Mati Diop

Senegal



Mati Diop
Director

Director's Biography

Mati Diop lives and works in both Paris and Dakar. After training in France at Le Fresnoy (Studio National des Arts contemporains) and the Pavillon (Laboratoire de création du Palais de Tokyo), she has made four short films to date, selected for numerous festivals at which they also garnered several awards. *Fire Next Time* is her first full-length feature.

Filmography

Atlantiques (2009)
Snow Canon (2011)
Big in Vietnam (2012)



Judith Lou Lévy
Producer

Production Company's profile

Judith Lou Lévy set up Les Films du Bal in Paris in January 2011. The company produces and co-produces short and full-length films. Its ambition is to work with filmmaking talent and creativity for French, but also European and international audiences. *Fire Next Time* is the first full-length feature from Les Films du Bal.

Filmography Production

Fort Buchanan, Benjamin Crotty (2012)

Technical Information

Fiction / 100' / 35 mm / Color

Production Status:
Development

Shooting Language:
Wolof

Shooting Start:
10/2013

Total Budget:
1'350'000 Euro

Funds Secured:
100'000 Euro

Production Company:
Les Films du Bal

Contacts:
lesfilmsdubal@yahoo.fr

Synopsis

Fire Next Time tells the story of Adel, a young 17-year old woman from Dakar, whose fast-paced existence – a job as a beautician, going out with friends, drinking, drugs and consuming whatever's going on the free market – is totally upset by the sudden disappearance of her lover, Souleimane.

Soon her boyfriend is counted as missing, believed dead, especially when the bodies of some of his friends are washed up on a Dakar beach. The youngsters must have gone to sea in one of the many canoes that leave the Senegal shores in search of a better life elsewhere.

Souleimane's body, however, is not found. Wildly hoping, Adel is getting out of control. Her family, part of Dakar's devout Muslim middle class, secretly intends to marry the young woman to an old man of some standing, so as to limit the damage from Adel's out-of-line behavior in town. Her father decides to send her to stay with her sister in their village on the coast, south of Dakar to let things quiet down while the marriage preparations begin.

For the villagers, who enjoy the bounty of aid sent home by the city-dwellers of their clan, this is an unlooked for opportunity to benefit from the generosity that surrounds a wedding.

For Adel, it looks like the end of the world – and of her world, too. Not knowing her family's plans, she is aware only of punishment, memories and the possible specter of the man she loved.

A chance encounter with a strange old woman who lives on the margins of the tiny community brings Adel face-to-face with new possibilities. The elder woman readies the younger to confront her life and sublimate her solitude.

A series of odd and fantastical events waken Adel to a new dimension of herself. The relationship between the two women is not viewed favorably by the village, however, and the atmosphere grows tense. Adel feels there is a conspiracy against her. And against the old woman, too, whose liberating words are disapproved of.

On the day set for the wedding, a convoy of cars arrives from Dakar. Adel runs away, heading for the ocean as fast as her legs will carry her.

We finally find her stretched out on the shore of Dakar. She is alone. A new day dawns above the ocean horizon and the vast city. Perhaps Adel is at last free to invent a new existence for herself.

Director's Note

This is the legend of the bird that rises from the ashes. Here, the phoenix is a young woman. After devoting a short film to the men who leave by sea, my current interest is in the women who stay behind, the ones who wait for a brother, a lover, a son to come back.

Fire Next Time is a gothic tale of contemporary Africa, telling the story of a latter day Penelope in Dakar. She cannot while away her time in luxuriant bowers, however, as she awaits his return. She has to save her skin, escape from a dark destiny not chosen of her own free will. At the end of this journey of initiation, the adolescent woman finds her lost treasure. Her freedom.

Le Président (The President)

Jean-Pierre Bekolo

Cameroon



Jean-Pierre Bekolo
Director, Producer

Director's Biography

Jean-Pierre Bekolo first attracted notice at the age of 25 with *Quartier Mozart*, a winner at Cannes and Locarno and a BFI Award nominee. For the centenary of the cinema he made *Aristotle's Plot*. He directed *Africa for the Future* and was the creator of the video installation *Une Africaine dans l'Espace* at the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris. He has taught film at Duke University.

Filmography

Quartier Mozart (1992)

Aristotle's Plot (1996)

Les Saignantes (2005)

Technical Information

Fiction Documentary / 120' /
HD / Color

Production Status:
Writing & development

Shooting Language:
French

Shooting Start:
12/2011

Total Budget:
204'534 Euro

Funds Secured:
50'000 Euro

Production Company:
Jean-Pierre Bekolo SARL

Contacts:
www.jeanpierrebekolo.com

Synopsis

The I've seen poverty in Africa. I went to Kibera, Nairobi, Kenya's largest slum and the biggest in the southern hemisphere. But I also saw a country struck by a "ghost". I watched a president disappear just a few days before the forthcoming presidential elections. I saw an aging president in such a young country, near to the end of his reign. I saw a people that live in ignorance of their history. I saw old people, who till now had remained silent, begin to speak; I saw young people, who till now had made do with just getting by, begin to get angry. I saw intellectuals finally start speaking the truth. I saw foreigners who had stayed away start to come in. I saw a country undergoing metamorphosis. That country was Cameroon.

This film is a blend of fact and fiction, and it shows the end of a system, capturing the early warning signs of an irreversible process in its most anodyne details: a new kind of story.

Vanessa is a 17-year old mother whose baby is stolen by a major child trafficking network in which high-ranking State officials are implicated. She engages in an eight-month sit-in protest at the hospital, until she is forcibly ejected by the authorities. But Vanessa's case becomes an affair of State. The Republic is shaken by a baby.

The old filmmaker Dikongue decides to tell the side of the history of the birth of Cameroon that has been hidden till now by the regime. He goes to see his old primary school classmate Ninga Tjai, who joined the resistance leader Um Nyobe.

The dissident Mboua Massok approaches the statue of Marshal Leclerc in Douala armed with a hammer, intent on destroying it. He gets himself arrested and imprisoned.

A young man is killed in Deido by a gang of Chinese motorbike taxi drivers. The gang has been a law unto itself in a city which has no public transportation. The incident leads to violent clashes between the group and the residents of Deido.

As the specter of the end of his era looms, the lost president, his chauffeur and bodyguard are in the bush looking for the road to the great river and his first wife. In a reflective mood, he takes stock of his life, and the end result is not a positive one. He will not return to the capital, because the process unleashed by his departure cannot be stopped, now that it has begun. The old methods by which he destroyed his people to keep them in check no longer work. He will have to organize his own disappearance.

Director's Note

After the Arab spring, we're still waiting for black Africa to rebel. But heads of State who have been in power for decades will not go easily. Film must use its aesthetic and narrative potential to play a role in the African democratic process. The film takes shape around activism, but without losing its light touch. It asks questions about the responsibility of those in power. *The President* is an allegory about the men who run Africa. We know they all like to see themselves as wild beasts – panther, crocodile, lion – if not as gods of Africa. *The President* tries to clear a place for film in the arena of African politics, where truth is sometimes stranger than fiction.

Lombraz Kan (Shadows of the Sugarcane)

David Constantin

Mauritius



David Constantin
Director, Producer

Director's Biography

David Constantin is a filmmaker and producer in Mauritius. His films are about changes in society and their impact on human relations. He is behind the Caméléon Production company which since 2001 has produced his films. In 2007 he set up the association Porteurs d'Images, which organizes Ile Courts, the Mauritius short film festival.

Filmography

Diego l'Interdite (2003)

Bisanvil (2005)

Made in Mauritius (2009)

Production Company's profile

Caméléon Production is the only Mauritius company involved in film development. Producing a first full-length feature is a logical step forward in the company's growth, following its involvement in a number of documentaries and short subjects. Caméléon Production is also working on the setting up of a regional production network in the Indian Ocean.

Filmography Production

Made in Mauritius, David Constantin (2009)

Ansam-Ensemble, Collections de courts-métrages (2007-2011)

Les Mo'zar de Roche Bois, Gopalen Parthiben Chellapermal (2011)

Technical Information

Fiction / 80' / HD / Color

Production Status:
Writing & development

Shooting Language:
Mauritian Creole

Shooting Start:
12/2012

Total Budget:
464'622 Euro

Funds Secured:
200'000 Euro

Production Company:
Caméléon Production

Contacts:
david@cameleonprod.com

Synopsis

Marco, Bissoon and their friends worked for the sugar factory in Nouvelle Découverte all their lives. The factory is due to close, the cane is being felled for the last time, their horizons will be utterly changed. Caught up in the events, none of them is properly prepared for the all too predictable collapse of their world. Sugarcane is no longer viable, soon there will be only a golf course and luxury villas where it stood.

In this end-of-an-era ambience an enigmatic woman, Devi, moves into a house opposite the old camp where Marco and Bissoon still live. She has come with her husband, the authoritarian overseer of the demolition site. Marco, who has plenty of time for reflection thanks to his enforced retirement, is intrigued by Devi, seeing in her a person to cling to, a lifeline. What is she doing in this sinister, forsaken place? What does her haughty and scornful manner conceal?

For Bissoon, however, the closure of the factory brings bitter realization of the failure of his life. He watches powerlessly as the bulldozers waltz around the fields he was still cultivating only a few months before. Before his very eyes this fertile and once nourishing land is being turned into a playground that will be trodden by the most expensively shod feet on the planet.

Around Marco and Bissoon, their former work mates are also trying to find new ways to make ends meet. Ah-Yan, keeper of the village store, where the whole workforce used to set the world to rights, is departing for the new world. Rosario is putting all the energy of his despair into an attempt at regeneration, Annath prefers to go it alone and count on his political connections, while Zéponz, for all his loud mouth and massive frame, suffers in silence. After fighting for others for so long, after so many struggles for workers' rights, he feels abandoned and powerless.

How can you survive your own history, the humiliation and the disintegration of social relations? How can you re-invent yourself when things are collapsing all around you? Lombraz Kan is not a nostalgic picture, there is no intention of idealizing a past which brought more than its share of suffering and misery. The idea is to tell a story from close up to the people involved, a modern history, that belongs to our time. A portrait of a society lost between tradition and modernity, an untypical view of a country whose enduring image of picture-postcard paradise has so long conveyed the idea that, whatever happens, people here live content.

Director's Note

We wanted *Lombraz Kan* to be far more than an anecdote from a distant corner of the world, we wanted it to speak of a universal reality. The characters find themselves suddenly trapped between inescapable modernity and living conditions they find it all the harder to accept. Through the perfect storm that cuts down the last sugarcane and then tears up the roots of these different lives, a humanity stronger than all before it is revealed. These men were united in their labor, they will stand united as things collapse.

Nyè (The Eye)

Daouda Coulibaly



Daouda Coulibaly
Director

Director's Biography

Daouda Coulibaly studied economics and worked for several years in France as an audiovisual editor before trying his hand at directing. In 2009 he made his first short film. In 2010 he was picked for the Africa First Short Film Program, which helped him to make his second short feature the following year. He lives and works in Bamako.

Filmography

Il était une fois l'indépendance (A History of Independence) (2009)
Tinyè So (2011)



Souleymane Cissé
Producer

Production Company's profile

Set up in 1977, the production company Les films Cissé has gone on to produce all the films made by director Souleymane Cissé.

Filmography Production

Yeelen (1987)
Waati (1995)
Min yè (2007)

Technical Information

Fiction / 90' / HD / Color

Production Status:
Writing & development

Shooting Language:
Bambara

Shooting Start:
10/2013

Total Budget:
170'000 Euro

Funds Secured:
10'000 Euro

Production Company:
Les Films Cissé

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Synopsis

By day, Ladj is a learner driver in a "sotrama" – one of Bamako's ubiquitous minibuses. Checking out the sidewalks for potential passengers, he has an unparalleled view of the human beings all around him. He finds them by turns arrogant, condescending, dishonest and corrupt, as he picks them up and spits them out over the day.

By night, Ladj takes his revenge. He and his accomplice Dramane visit house after house to relieve their victims of the goods they possess: a sheep, jewelry, cash... whatever they can find. Their activities progress from petty theft to bigger jobs that soon have them enjoying a highly comfortable lifestyle.

But there's a price to be paid for their rise in the world of crime. Dramane is the first to pay it: with a fast-growing drug addiction, he is initially beset by paranoia and ends up getting religion. Ladj is forced to eliminate a partner who has become a threat to his business.

By murdering his "brother", Ladj gives up a little more of what it was that made him a man in the Bambara sense of the term: someone who respects the principles of danbé, dignity. Without the burden of the need to exercise the duties of dignity required of every man, he feels free to pursue his quest on a criminal career. Only much later, at the wheel of his luxury car, will he feel his conscience stirring.

Director's Note

The events that shook Mali last March, and their still ongoing consequences, are just the tip of the iceberg of the problems affecting a dysfunctional country. *Nyè* looks at the part of that iceberg which is still submerged. Theft, violence, drugs, corruption, debauchery, clientelism... these are just some of the issues tackled by the film. With aspects of both a report on current affairs and an anticipation of social trends in Mali, this is a film which asks questions about the nature of a country undergoing profound change, where ancestral values are in conflict with the reality of the world we live in.

Pakitalaki, portrait d'une famille (Pakitalaki, Portrait of a Family)

Adama Sallé



Adama Sallé
Director

Director's Biography

Born in Burkina Faso in 1986, Adama Sallé graduated from the ESAV School of Visual Arts in Marrakech. He also trained in documentary filmmaking at George Washington University. He has assisted directors such as Idrissa Ouédraogo and Gaston Kaboré, while continuing, first and foremost, to work on his own projects. In 2006 he published his first novel, *Un mariage oblique*.

Filmography

Le soleil se couche aussi à Marrakech (2009)
L'or blanc (2010)
Chacun sait faire ce qu'il sait faire (2010)



Sophie Salbot
Producer

Production Company's profile

We like films that make us richer through sensitive awareness of others, be they near or far. Films that tell us about the evident unity of the world, with its tensions and contradictions. Athénaïse will soon be engaged on co-productions in Canada, *Les loups* by Sophie Deraspe, and in the Dominican Republic, *The Sand Dollars* by Laura Guzmán and Israel Cárdenas.

Filmography Production

Une fenêtre ouverte, Khady Sylla (2005)
Rêves de poussière, Laurent Salgues (2006)
Notre étrangère, Sarah Bouyain (2010)

Technical Information

Fiction / 90' / HD / Color

Production Status:
Writing & development

Shooting Language:
Mooré and French

Shooting Start:
06/2013

Total Budget:
736'000 Euro

Funds Secured:
85'000 Euro

Production Company:
Athénaïse

Contacts:
athenaises@orange.fr

Synopsis

The Ouédraogo family gets by in a working-class neighborhood of Ouagadougou on the proceeds from the oven-baked pork stand run by Gabi, the father, and his wife.

Luc, the younger son, has given up looking for work and spins out the long days sulking in his room. Marc, the eldest, is finishing his studies in Europe; his beautiful fiancée Maria has stayed home with family in her village to wait for him.

When Marc returns, he marries Maria, gets a job and is able to support the whole family. But just after their first child has been born, he is thrown in jail because of some arbitrary judgment. The Ouédraogo family is forced to go back to eking out a miserable existence by selling baked pork, but the government suddenly introduces a nationwide ban on unauthorized slaughter of animals and the unofficial trade in meat. The family is plunged into utter poverty.

Maria waits, bringing up her child in her new family. Tirelessly, her baby on her back, she gets on the family's old moped to go visit her husband in prison. Luc lies on his bed all day bitterly chewing over his unemployment, despite his qualifications. Gabi sits in his shed with his old radio glued to his ear, going over the same things in his mind, how he lost his civil servant's job and ended up in the suburbs with his family. Father and son argue more and more, the parent criticizing his offspring for being lazy, useless, and for his dirty habit of wearing his brother's clothes since he was jailed.

Their stomachs empty more often than not, the family spend their days in apathy, tension and resentment, intensified by the dry and dusty Harmattan wind.

On one of these long, idle days, Luc and his sister-in-law Maria become lovers. Love can sometimes make you spread your wings and Luc, tired of his own powerlessness, gets back into the business of petty trafficking. He needs money fast, to feel alive at last! But he ends up spending more than his allotted share and soon the bosses want their money back. To get him out of trouble, Maria becomes a prostitute. She also hopes to feed the family. Luc, for his part, is already thinking only of getting out of the country and taking her away from her child.

Servicing clients in squalid places, beset by lies, secrecy and shamming, Maria feels soiled and betrayed. One night, in a crisis of lucidity, she kills Luc, her brother-in-law and lover, and sets off to free her husband Marc from prison.

Can a new day dawn for the Ouédraogo family?

Director's Note

Pakitalaki is, first of all, a sound.

The sound of pakitalaki, which is what we call flip flops in the Mossi language.

When we were kids, our father wore pakitalaki that had a special sound which told us when he was coming home. We'd do our best to tidy up and look like well-behaved children. Pakitalaki! pakitalaki! Here he comes!

With this film I want to show disorder in a family, close up. The disintegration that occurs when you are ill-treated, humiliated, like the old villagers or unemployed youths that get washed up in the poor and dirty districts of Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso.

Toutes voiles dehors (Secret Faces)

Cameroon

Jean-Marie Teno



Jean-Marie Teno
Director, Producer

Director's Biography

Jean-Marie Teno was born in Cameroon. He arrived in France in 1978, studied and graduated in Audiovisual Media Studies in 1981.

Teno has worked as a film critic for *Bwana Magazine* and as a film editor at France 3 Television. Over the last twenty-five years, he has been producing and directing films on colonial and post-colonial history and on current affairs in Africa.

Filmography

Sacred Places (2009)

The Colonial Misunderstanding (2005)

Alex's Wedding (2002)

Production Company's profile

In 1987, Jean-Marie Teno founded Les Films du Raphia to produce and distribute social issue films. Since 1988 the company has produced the following films by Jean-Marie Teno: *Sacred Places*, *The Colonial Misunderstanding*, *Alex's Wedding*, *A Trip to the Country*, *Chief!* and many more. The company also produced *Si-Gueriki (The Queen-Mother)*, a film by Idrissou Mora KPAI.

Filmography Production

Clando (1996)

Chief! (2000)

A Trip to the Country (2001)

Technical Information

Documentary / 90' / HD / Color

Production Status:

Writing & development

Shooting Language:

French

Shooting Start:

05/2013

Total Budget:

573'622 Euro

Funds Secured:

2'622 Euro

Production Company:

Les Films du Raphia

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jmteno@mac.com

Synopsis

Niger is secretive, like a veiled woman.

This country is mysterious, but alluring for those who really know it. In Niger, the women are beautiful. And increasingly veiled. Behind the veil they appear dignified, calm, somehow uneventful. Like the country itself, where the flourishing local newspapers rarely report current affairs. As if to suggest there is nothing happening here. Nothing?

What is really going on behind the veil?

Now, as in the past, the veil is an aesthetic unto itself, a complex language, an array of strategies. In its various avatars – coquettish or austere, classic or Islamically chic – the veil is worn to conform or to stand out, to hide or to reveal, to elude or to take domestic, religious or social power. It is also worn to dance, to present condolences, and to seduce.

Here, as elsewhere, the veil attracts, repulses, raises questions. Not the veil, but veils, in the multiplicity of their discourses and their silences.

This feature-length HD film, shot in Niger and impelled by an autobiographical gaze, frames the veil as garment and as metaphor. It explores the private and public strategies of women and the intimate spaces of an unknown world.

The film is constructed around the character of Antoinette Tidjani-Alou, an African woman in her forties, a philosopher and professor of literature, who has lived in Niger over the last 20 years.

Her search for references in the complex codes of Niger, which has adopted her, takes the form of writing. Her Journal records an in-depth exploration of the intimate folds of the discourses on the veil in the Niger Sahel, revealing the lives, voices and faces of her contemporaries concealed behind the screen of modesty, ignorance, prejudice and clichés. Antoinette Tidjani-Alou invites us into different life-spaces and introduces us to real and emblematic characters in Niamey who accept to disclose facets of their lives and work.

From the variety of veils, discourses and life-styles emerges a film associating free thought, poetry, testimonies and lived experience. This lyrical work immerses the spectator in the heart of Niger society while engaging a more general reflection on the contemporary meaning of the word "universal". Can a woman be beautiful, veiled and modern? Why is the veiled woman so disturbing for some? Can this fear be overcome by discovering the lives of other people, by seeing their faces as unique and yet familiar in their partaking of the human adventure of the 3rd millennium?

Director's Note

Secret Faces is born out of a filmmaker and an academic's shared reflection on autobiography. These veil tales exceed the religious; the veil has become a societal issue whose implications expand far beyond the borders of Niger. By combining two complementary viewpoints – that of a male outsider, the director who accompanies the protagonist, and the latter's, an insider, familiar with this universe of which she offers an analytical, lively and unprejudiced view – this film will broach a range of questions, including freedom and imposed choice. It will thereby encourage viewers to question their certitudes and to open up to the Other in all his/her complexity and humanity.

Festival del film Locarno

1–11 | 8 | 2012

Open Doors

4 – 7 | 8 | 2012

Friday 3rd August

Open Doors Welcome Drink
By invitation only

Saturday 4th August

Meetings one-to-one Cinéfondation (Club Open Doors)
Open Doors Workshop

Sunday 5th August

Meetings one-to-one Open Doors (Club Open Doors)
Carte Blanche Mexico (Palavideo)

Monday 6th August

Meetings one-to-one Open Doors (Club Open Doors)

Tuesday 7th August

Round Table Open Doors (Forum – Spazio Cinema)
Open Doors Award Ceremony (Forum – Spazio Cinema)

To complete the Open Doors program and to create bridges between the Festival's audience and Open Doors, a selection of African films will be presented in the *Open Doors Screenings*.

For more informations: opendoors.pardo.ch

The Festival would like to thank

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Elisabeth Lequeret, Journalist
Nathalie Soldini, External Consultant