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FINAL CUT INVENIOR

Market for selected projects



VENICE 3-5.09.2023





FINAL CUTINGENIAL CUTINGENIAL

3-5.09.2023

LABIENNALE.ORG VENICEPRODUCTIONBRIDGE.ORG





La Biennale di Venezia Director General

Andrea Del Mercato

Artistic Director of the Cinema Department

Venice Production Bridge

Alberto Barbera

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finalcut@labiennale.org cinema@labiennale.org labiennale.org veniceproductionbridge.org Final Cut in Venice **Alessandra Speciale**

With the kind support of **Thierry Lenouvel**

Marie-France Aubert Thierry Jobin

La Biennale di Venezia and its collaborators for Final Cut in Venice

Tara Alalu Allegra Bell Erika Giorgianni Gaetano Gualdo Mariachiara Manci Chiara Marin Alessandro Mezzalira Nikolas Montaldi Daniela Persi Laura Pinto Zosia Stoklosa

















Main Broadcaster



With the additional support of











Thanks to **MAMMUTMEDIA**



A programme to support films in post-production from all African countries and five countries in Middle East: Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria. The goal of the project is to enhance the role of the Venice International Film Festival as a bridge builder supporting the production of independent quality films coming from Africa and Arab countries; providing concrete help to film production, and promoting the competitiveness of their audiovisual products on the international market. This year, in the framework of the VPB Focus on Germany, supported by German Films, one additional film has been selected. The work-in-progress prints of 7 films from different geographical and cultural areas will be presented.

Access is reserved exclusively to Gold and Trade badge holders. The one-to-one meetings session between the selected projects and the professionals attending the Venice Production Bridge will be organized on September 5th. The entire Final Cut in Venice programme including the screenings, workshop and one-to-one meetings, will only take place on site.

Final Cut in Venice will conclude with the awarding of prizes in kind or in cash, the purpose of which is to provide economic support for the post-production phase of the films.

For the **seventh year**, **La Biennale di Venezia** will give a prize of € 5,000 to the best film in post-production. The **La Biennale di Venezia Prize** will be attributed by a jury composed of three members named by the Festival Director, while the other prizes will be awarded by final and irrevocable decision of the Festival Director, in conjunction with the project supporters, the heads of the institutions, and the service companies providing the following prizes:

- € 15,000 for the colour correction of a feature-length film offered by **Laser Film** (Rome) for up to 50 hours of work (technician included);
- € 15,000 offered by **Studio A Fabrica** (Ajaccio) for the sound mixing of a feature length film (up to 12 days of work, sound mixer not included);
- one of the selected projects will benefit from the film composers represented by **Oticons** and the original score that they will create. The production of the original score will include all relevant services, such as spotting sessions / composition / orchestration / mock-ups / final production, of a total value of € 12,000;
- for a feature-length fiction film a \$ 10,000 MG or for a feature-length documentary a \$ 3,000 MG for marketing, publicity and distribution in the Arab World offered by MAD Solutions for one Arab project (except for projects already funded by MAD Solutions);
- Titra Film (Paris) will offer up to € 5,000 for colour-grading; up to € 3,000 for the production of a DCP master, or the creation of i-Tunes, Google or Netflix files; up to € 2,000 for French or English subtitles (translation not included);
- up to € 7,500 for the creation of the DCP master with Italian or English subtitles, offered by Sub-Ti Ltd. (London);

- up to € 7,500 for the accessible contents of the film for audiences with sensory disabilities: subtitles for the deaf and hearing-impaired and audio description for the blind and visually impaired, including audio subtitles in voiceover, in Italian or English (the subtitles and the audio-described soundtrack for the DCP will be provided) offered by Sub-Ti Access SrI (Turin).
- € 5,000 offered by **Red Sea Fund** (**Red Sea International Film Festival**);
- € 5,000 for a first negotiation right for the acquisition of Free TV exploitation rights in the Italian territory and obligation to mention "in collaboration with Rai Cinema S.p.a." in the credits of the work;
- \$5,000 awarded to an Arab project offered by the **El Gouna Film Festival**;
- € 5,000 offered by Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)/ACP/EU as a refund for post-production services delivered by societies based in one of the EU or OACPS countries (except South Africa) of a feature-length film realised by a director from one of the ACP countries and produced or co-produced by a society based in one of the ACP countries;
- "Coup de cœur de la Cinémathèque Afrique"
 Prize, offered by Cinémathèque Afrique of the Institut Français (Paris). The prize consists in the acquisition of the non-commercial and non-exclusive broadcasting rights for 7 years for a value of € 4,000 € 6,000 depending on the genre and length of the film and the number of available territories;
- participation in the production costs of a DCP (€ 2,500), offered by the Festival International du Film d'Amiens;
- participation in the production costs of a DCP (€ 2,500), offered by the Festival International de Films de Fribourg;
- One of the selected projects will benefit from the Eye on Films label, which will present the film to distributors and festivals affiliated with EoF and will contribute to the communication of the film for a value of € 2,500 on the occasion of its world premiere in an A-category festival.

For the second year in a row, the FCV workshop will benefit of the additional support of the Red Sea International Film Festival.





































SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3 and MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2023

Screenings of the films in post-production followed by a Q&A session reserved for Gold and Trade accreditations.

The schedule will be available from mid-August.

ALLAH IS NOT OBLIGED

ALLAH N'EST PAS OBLIGÉ

(France, Luxembourg, Canada, Belgium, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, USA)

DIRECTOR Zaven Najjar

PRODUCTION Special Touch Studios

GENRE Animation

LOGLINE When ten-year-old Birahima's mother dies, he leaves his native village in the Guinea to search for his aunt Mahan with the sorcerer and cook Yacouba. When they cross the border into Liberia, they are seized by rebels and forced into military service. Birahima becomes a child-soldier.

CARISSA

(South Africa)

DIRECTOR Jason Jacobs and Devon Delmar **PRODUCTION** Na Aap Productions

GENRE Fiction

LOGLINE In a small mountain village about to be developed into a luxury golf estate, a young woman has to make the choice: go to the city to become a 'success' in life, or take over her grandfather's rooibos farm.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

(Palestine, Germany, France, Qatar, Italy)

FOCUS ON GERMANY

DIRECTOR Scandar Copti

PRODUCTION Fresco Films, Red Balloon Film **GENRE** Fiction

LOGLINE Rami's Jewish girlfriend changes her mind about getting an abortion. Her sister, Miri, wants her to terminate the pregnancy by any means necessary. At the same time, Rami's mother seeks compensation for her daughter Fifi's car accident to alleviate her own economic troubles, while Fifi struggles to hide her non-virginity to save her family's reputation.

HOTEL EXCELSIOR 3° FLOOR FOYER

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 5, 2023

9:30-13:00 / 14:30-16:30

One-to-one meetings with the 7 selected projects to find funding, distribution possibilities, and festival selection. Industry delegates (Gold and Trade) will be able to schedule the meetings via the FCV area on the VPB website.

www.veniceproductionbridge.org

LIFE IS A RAILROAD

LA VIE EST UN CHEMIN DE FER

(Democratic Republic of Congo, France, Germany)

DIRECTOR Kevin Mavakala, Manassé Kashala, Isaac Sahani, Tousmy Kilo

PRODUCTION Kiripifilms, Luchafilms

GENRE Fiction

LOGLINE Viya flees her home after the death of her father. On her journey, she meets Mukanya, a night taxi driver, who dreams of leaving the country; Christine, the head of the maternity ward in Kintambo; and Kenny, a schoolboy who is trying to save his father's reputation amidst a sex tape scandal.

SUDAN, WHEN POEMS FALL APART SOUDAN, RETIENS LES CHANTS QUI S'EFFONDRENT

(France, Tunisie)

DIRECTOR Hind Meddeb

PRODUCTION Echo Films

GENRE Documentary

LOGLINE This film is a portrait of Sudan as a poem as well as a love letter to the country. Shajane, Muzamil, Maha, Rufaida. As their stories unfold and intertwine, the film reassembles fragments of an ongoing revolution and the unfair battle of the voices of youth pitted against military might.

SHE WAS NOT ALONE

(Iraq, Saudi Arabia, USA)

DIRECTOR Hussein Al-Asadi

PRODUCTION Ishtar Iraq Film Production

GENRE Documentary

LOGLINE A poetic meditation on the life of Fatima, a nomadic woman who lives alone in Iraq's wetlands with her animals. As ecological collapse forces migration to the city, our collective fates become intertwined with hers: will she stay or be dispossessed of everything she knows and loves?

ZION MUSIC

(Senegal, France, Ivory Coast, Germany)

DIRECTOR Rama Thiaw

PRODUCTION Boul Fallé Images

GENRE Documentary

LOGLINE Zion Music is a musical, political, and spiritual odyssey in the heart of the African continent. It goes back to the 1970s and travels through the political history of Africa through musicians, songs, and hidden meanings in the songs.



THE VENICE PRODUCTION BRIDGE WELCOMES THE 7 SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS FILMS TO THE 11TH EDITION OF FINAL CUT IN VENICE

The signs from the Arab and African film industries this year are positive. We received no fewer than 74 work-in-progress films, an increase of 27% compared to last year. The cinemas in these regions are recovering a good rhythm of production and the projects are finally concretized on the set and reach the fateful and delicate last phase of post-production. This year, we are adding to the usual 6 titles of our selection a seventh film in co-production with a guest country of Venice Production Bridge 2023, Germany.

The FCV 2023 line-up thus presents a total of 7 films in post-production. The selection is, as usual, based on the essential criteria of quality and originality of the films, a good balance between fiction and documentary, and with an eye on the presence of women and films by directors making their debut.

For this eleventh edition, we have selected films by directors from seven different countries: Congo, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Senegal, Tunisia, and South Africa with the particularity that two of them were shot in other countries, which is the sign of an interesting movement and exchange between countries in this area. I am referring to the film by the Tunisian Hind Meddeb, *Sudan, When Poems Fall Apart*, and the one by the director of Lebanese descent Zaven Najjar, *Allah Is Not Obliged* which I would also like to underline is the first film of animation selected at FCV, inspired by the successful book of the same name by the Ivory Coast writer Ahmadou Kourouma and set in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

In the Sala Pasinetti we will be screening, at the stage of rough cut or assembly of sequences, four first works: the aforementioned animated film by Zaven Najjar, *Allah Is Not Obliged*; the documentary by the Iraqi Hussein Al-Asadi, *She Was Not Alone*; the fiction film in episodes by four young Congolese under the artistic supervision of Dieudo Hamadi, *Life Is a Railroad*, by Kevin Mavakala, Manassé Kashala, Isaac Sahani and Tousmy Kilo and another co-directed fiction film, *Carissa*, by the South Africans Jason Jacobs and Devon Delmar. In addition to these first works, there is the second film by the Palestinian director Oscar-nominee Scandar Copti, *Happy Holidays* (included in the Focus on Germany) and two documentaries by female directors, *Sudan, When Poems Fall Apart* by Hind Meddeb and *Zion Music* by the Senegalese Rama Thiaw.

We are delighted to be able to reconfirm all our supporters, many of whom have been with us since the creation of FCV, while others have joined us over the years and we thank all of them in particular for their loyalty to the project: Laser Film, A Fabrica which replaces Mactari but keeps the invaluable collaboration of Jean-Guy Veran, Oticons, MAD Solutions, TitraFilm, Sub-Ti Ltd, Sub-Ti Access Srl, Rai Cinema, El Gouna Film Festival, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, Cinémathèque Afrique/Institut Français, Festival International du Film d'Amiens, Festival International de Films de Fribourg and Eye on Films. We also welcome the Red Sea International Film Festival for the second year running which, as well as awarding a prize, is also a special supporter of FCV.

In these eleven years of its lifetime, the FCV programme has positioned itself in the industry world as a platform for the encounter of African and Arab cinemas and has brought to the light filmmakers who have subsequently had important careers. I mention here only some of the award-winning directors who have presented their works in embryo at FCV in the past years: Alain Gomis, Tala Hadid, Kaouther Ben Hania, Soudade Kaadan, Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese, Suhaib Gasmalbari and Karim Ainouz and some debuting directors who have recently had international successes with their first films: Amjad Al Rasheed (*Inshallah a Boy*), Asmae El Moudir (*The Mother of All Lies*), Ahmed Yassin Al Daradj (*Hanging Gardens*) and Erige Sehiri (*Under the Fig Trees*).

We invite all Trade and Gold pass holders to take an active part in the screenings and the Q&A sessions to discover the new films that are coming from these areas but also to have the experience of a live presentation of a film in post-production which is often the first public screening of the film: it is a moment of great intensity and emotion which generates a deep and authentic level of understanding the film.

Alessandra Speciale

Curator of Final Cut in Venice

FRANCE, LUXEMBOURG, CANADA, BELGIUM, SAUDI ARABIA, SLOVAKIA, USA

ALLAH IS NOT OBLIGED ALLAH N'EST PAS OBLIGÉ

ZAVEN NAJJAR



SYNOPSIS

Birahima is a ten-year-old boy living in Guinea. When his mother dies, he must reach his tutor, Aunt Mahan, who will take care of him. However, Mahan lives in Liberia where a fierce civil war is raging. Yacouba, a great grigriman and bandit, will guide him to Mahan – and sell some anti-bullet lucky charms in the process. But the travelers are attacked as soon as they cross the border. To save his life, Birahima has no other choice than to become a child soldier. "And, as tells us Birahima in his strong, ironic voice, to "seize the opportunity to become a great someone and earn good dollars, Faforo!"

LOGLINE

When ten-year-old Birahima's mother dies, he leaves his native village in the Guinea to search for his aunt Mahan with the sorcerer and cook Yacouba. When they cross the border into Liberia, they are seized by rebels and forced into military service. Birahima becomes a child-soldier.



Zaven Najjar,
Director and Writer



Sébastien Onomo, Producer

Editing and all post-production

GENRE / SPECSAnimation / Color

French / English

CURRENT RUNTIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME

80' / 90' **LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES**

BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED

€ 6.572.719 / € 225.521

MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANY

Special Touch Studios

CO-PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Paul Thiltges Distributions, Need Productions, Yzanakio, Lunanime

CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT

Rough cut

SALES

MK2

FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED

Red Sea Funds

CNC, SOFICA, PROCIREP ANGOA, Region Grand Est, Eurometropole Strasbourg, Region SUD, Haute Savoie Departement, Region Reunion, Pictanavo, Ciclic, Film Fund Luxembourg, Eurimages,

CREATIVE TEAM

Zaven Najjar,
Director, Writer
and Graphic Author
Karine Winczura, Writer
Thibault Kientz Agyeman,
Original Music
Isabelle Manquillet, Editor
Nadine Mombo, Line Producer
Yukiko Meignien,
First Assistant Director

DELEGATE PRODUCTION COMPANY

Special Touch Studios

ADDRESS

3 - 5 rue Saint Ferréol 13001 Marseille, France

DIRECTOR'S CONTACTS

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PRODUCER'S CONTACTS

Sébastien Onomo +33 609461028 sonomo@ specialtouchstudios.com

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Liberia, has a dark history marked by exploitation and civil war, being a country founded in the 19th century as a place for freed American slaves. The novel Allah is not obliged by Ahmadou Kourouma explores the atrocities committed during the Liberian civil war, particularly by child soldiers. The author's unique style, combining rawness and humor, captivates readers and sheds light on the conflict. Inspired by my personal experiences from the Lebanese civil war, I intend to adapt the novel into an animated film that highlights the plight of child soldiers while maintaining a darkly comedic tone. Animation allows for a broader perspective on the conflict and enables viewers to engage with the characters' courage and flaws. I see animation as a medium that can evolve and express different perspectives. Despite its mythological elements, the story retains strong roots in reality. Through animation, the audience can be immersed in the diverse world of Liberia and gain a deeper understanding of the conflicts plaguing the world. The film aims to provoke reflection on the complex processes that lead to civil wars rather than simply showcasing violence.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Zaven Najjar is a French director and artistic director of Lebanese. He studied animation at ENSAD and then cinema at SAIC in Chicago. After his studies, he built a career as a commercial film director, graphic designer and illustrator, notably for the Arab World Institute, the Grand Palais, the Cinema Paradiso, Arte, Canal or IWC Schaffhausen, Baume & Mercier or Roger Dubuis. Najjar started shining on the web with the illustrations *Rapposters* in 2013, continuing his career by designing for clothing collections with the brand Quatre Cent Quinze, seen at Colette, Miami Art Basel, etc. In 2015 he released the short *Un obus partout*, which has gained awards in several festivals (Caimans Productions and Arte). In 2016, he directed the opening animated credits of the film Demain tout commence, a film by Hugo Gélin, with Omar Sy and Clémence Poésy. He is the graphic author and art director of the animated feature La Sirène, directed by Sepideh Farsi (Les Films d'Ici - Sébastien Onomo). He is the illustrator of the football magazine After Foot and has worked for many institutions and brands as director and illustrator.

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2015 Un obus partout short animation

2013 Rapposters webseries

CARISSA JASON JACOBS DEVON DELMAR



SYNOPSIS

Carissa, a young woman living with her grandmother Wilhelmiena in a small village nestled in the Cederberg mountains, leads a stagnant life. Wilhelmiena disapproves of Carissa's lack of ambition and incessant phone use, which fuels their constant bickering. In an attempt to steer Carissa in a different direction, she drags her to a presentation by Mont Royale, a business conglomerate taking over the rooibos tea land to build a new luxury golf estate. The company offers education programs for young applicants, which Wilhelmiena sees as an opportunity for Carissa. Unexpectedly, Hendrik, Carissa's long-absent grandfather, visits one evening. As a rooibos farmer affected by Mont Royale's takeover, Hendrik offers Carissa the chance to spend time with him in the mountains before the land is gone. Wilhemiena opposes the idea. Nevertheless, Carissa causes trouble for herself and as a result, is driven out of the house by Wilhemiena one evening, compelling her to seek refuge in the mountains as her only available escape. In the mountains with her grandfather, Carissa is faced with a different way of life. Working on the rooibos fields without modern conveniences and distractions, Carissa discovers there is more to life than her grandmother's expectations, after finding solace and purpose in the mountains under the sun and stars. The journey that she then goes through is fundamentally about her re-enchantment and identification with a world she has always known.

LOGLINE

In a small mountain village about to be developed into a luxury golf estate, a young woman has to make the choice: go to the city to become a 'success' in life, or take over her grandfather's rooibos farm.

Final Cut in Venice • Carissa 12



Jason Jacobs and Devon Delmar, Directors and Writers



Deidre Jantjies, *Producer*



Annemarie Du Plessis, *Producer*

Editing and all post-production

GENRE / SPECSFiction / Color

90' / 90'

CURRENT RUNTIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME

LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES
Afrikaans / English

BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED

€ 151.800 / € 60.000

MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANY

Na Aap Productions

Offline edit

CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT

FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED

National Film and Video Foundation of South Africa

CREATIVE TEAM

Jason Jacobs,
Director and Writer
Devon Delmar, Director,
Writer, and Editor
Gray Kotze, DoP
Gretchen Ramsden, Main Cast
Cleveland Hopp, Costume
Designer and Set Designers
Lubabalo Bozo, Sound
Frazer Barry, Composer

DELEGATE PRODUCTION

COMPANY

Na Aap Productions

ADDRESS

5E1 Springfield Terrace, off Roger Street, Zonnebloem, Cape Town, 8001, South Africa

DIRECTORS' CONTACTS

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PRODUCERS' CONTACTS

Deidre Jantjies +27 72 461 7792 info@diegeesindiemasjien.co.za

Annemarie Du Plessis +27 82 312 0988 annemarie@meria.co.za

DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

Carissa began development in 2017. Over the years, Carissa as a character and as a woman took on many faces and narratives. Although they didn't make it through to the final screenplay, these detours in our writing process were nevertheless essential. We as writers had to first discover who Carissa is not, so as to find who Carissa is. Underlying all the discarded narratives was that Carissa ultimately goes one step closer towards embracing who she is. Out of years of hurt, anger, and confusion, Carissa begins the journey of accepting herself; this is a journey we as directors deeply empathize with.

Through close collaboration with the Wupperthal community (Cederberg, South Africa) over six years of development, we recognised the impact the film would have there. Having endured a devastating fire that brought significant changes to their lives gave the film a crucial role in restoring spirit, fostering unity, and strengthening faith in the community.

The making of *Carissa* was a humbling experience, notably

The making of *Carissa* was a humbling experience, notably when the women elders organised a community gathering for the film which also served as a fundraiser for the church. To enrich the film with authenticity and truth, we cast community members in leading roles drawing from their own experiences as mothers, herders, harvesters, and elders – individuals deeply connected to the sacred force that defines the community.

We are honoured to be in Venice this year.

DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES

Jason Jacobs and Devon Delmar are co-writers and co-directors on multiple projects in film, theatre, animation, and series. Their first feature *Carissa* (filmed in Wupperthal, SA) and short film *Brakwater* (filmed in Kharkams, SA) are currently in post-production. With *Carissa*, they were selected for Durban FilmMart, Gotham Film Week in New York, and IFFR CineMart in Rotterdam. They have also been selected for the Drama International Short Film Festival in Greece, the Franconia Writers' Residency in Minnesota for a non-human animation project in development, the 2022 NFF-NFVF Thuthuka Fund, and are also fellows of the 2022 Oxbelly Screenwriters & Directors Lab in Greece and the CTIAF Incubator in Cape Town.

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2023 Brakwater short fiction

2018 Nama Swaan short fiction

2018 Under the Static short fiction

2017 Never a Next Train short fiction

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PALESTINE, GERMANY, FRANCE, QATAR, ITALY

HAPPY HOLIDAYS SCANDAR COPTI



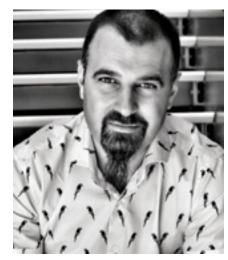


SYNOPSIS

Rami, a Palestinian citizen of Israel, is dealing with his Jewish girlfriend's sudden disappearance after changing her mind about their planned abortion. As a last resort, he confides in his close friend Dr. Walid, who also admires Rami's sister, Fifi. Hanan, Rami's mother, faces financial difficulties. To save their home, she plans to file a compensation claim for Fifi's car accident injury, adding complexity by involving Dr. Walid, a trusted confidante who may help rectify an error in Fifi's medical file. Miri, an Israeli nurse, grapples with the depression of her adolescent daughter Ori. Miri's complications intensify when she learns about her sister's pregnancy with Rami. Firmly against the pregnancy, Miri embarks on a journey to terminate the fetus through any means necessary. Fifi, Rami's sister, works as a schoolteacher in an Israeli preschool. A minor car accident threatens to expose her most profound secret of not being a virgin. To protect her secret, she enters a relationship with Walid, a practicing doctor, and their bond grows. Torn by guilt, Fifi contemplates revealing the truth, jeopardizing her family's reputation and her sister's wedding.

LOGLINE

Rami deals with his Jewish girlfriend's opposition to abortion. His mother complicates things while seeking compensation for her daughter Fifi accident. Miri plans to terminate her sister's pregnancy with Rami, who's Arab. Fifi struggles to hide her non-virginity to save her family's reputation.



Scandar Copti, Director and Writer



Tony Copti, Producer



Dorothe Beinemeier, Producer

Editing and all post-production

GENRE / SPECS

Fiction / Color

CURRENT RUNTIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME

120' / 120'

LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES Arabic / English

BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED

€ 1.231.512 / € 50.000

MAIN PRODUCTION **COMPANIES**

Fresco Films, Red Balloon Film

CO-PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Tessalit Productions, Intramovies

SALES

Indie Sales

CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT

Still editing, plan to picture lock by December 2023

FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED

Eurimages, MOIN Film Fund Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Doha Film Institute, Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, NYUAD Research Enhancement Fund, MIC Italy

CREATIVE TEAM

Scandar Copti, *Director*, Writer and Editor Mona Copti, Editor Tim Kuhn, DoP Salim Shehadeh, Stella Rossié, Set Designers

DELEGATE PRODUCTION

COMPANY

Fresco Films

ADDRESS

Manara Square, Betuni B, Ramallah, Palestine

DIRECTOR'S CONTACTS

+971 563799694 sounbol@gmail.com

PRODUCER'S CONTACTS

Tony Copti +9 72544822255

Dorothe Beinemeier +49 1637266344

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dorothe@redballoon-film.de

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Happy Holidays explores the profound impact of norms, values, and expectations on individuals, particularly women in patriarchal societies. The film tells the story of four interconnected characters that bring forth their unique realities, highlighting the complexities between genders, generations, and cultures. As the film unfolds, shifting perspectives and traversing time, the events gain unexpected and thought-provoking significance. The film invites viewers to critically examine the larger societal structures that shape their lives by showcasing the struggles of relatable individuals trapped within a corrupt system. The viewers are encouraged to reflect on their own realities and consider how they may be complicit in constructing such systems. To maintain authenticity and capture the rawness of actual events, I have chosen to work with non-professional actors who share similar backgrounds with the characters. Visually, *Happy Holidays* draws inspiration from the social-realism approach of filmmakers like Ken Loach. The film was shot with handheld cameras in real locations, capturing the unfolding events with natural lighting to enhance the realistic style.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Scandar Copti is an Oscar-Nominated filmmaker and visual artist. His first feature film Ajami (co-directed by Yaron Shani), won the Camera d'Or Special Mention at the Cannes Film Festival and was nominated for the 82nd Academy Awards in the Best Foreign Film category. Scandar is the only Arab ever to receive the prestigious Sutherland Trophy. His video art projects were exhibited worldwide at venues such as the Nahum Gutman Museum, Herzliya Museum, NYUAD gallery, b_tour Foothold Festival, Beit Hagefen, and the Oslo Kunstforening Art Gallery, among others. Scandar was part of the team that launched the Doha Film Institute, where he headed the DFI's Education department until 2011. He then headed the Film and New Media program at NYU Abu Dhabi from 2014 to 2017. Currently, he is teaching filmmaking at NYUAD, working on the post-production of his upcoming feature film Happy Holidays, and developing his forthcoming documentary A Childhood.

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2022 Testimonies From May 2021 short documentary

2018 Affix short mockumentary

2018 Coptico: The Corporate short mockumentary

2018 iAshgar short mockumentary 2018 Shishette short mockumentary

2017 Now That the Streets Have Names feature

mockumentary

2010 Ajami feature fiction

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO, FRANCE, GERMANY

LIFE IS A RAILROAD LA VIE EST UN CHEMIN DE FER

KEVIN MAVAKALA, MANASSÉ KASHALA, ISAAC SAHANI, TOUSMY KILO



SYNOPSIS

Christine is the head of finance at the maternity hospital in Kintambo. Her job is to make sure that all of the patients have paid their hospital fees. Remy is the CEO of one of the country's largest mining companies. His attraction for women will tarnish his relationship with his family, especially his 12-year-old son. Mukanya, a night taxi driver, dreams of reaching the Schengen area but life does not make it easy for him. Viya, who just lost her father unexpectedly, will cross the path with each of them.

LOGLINE

Viya fled her home after the death of her father. She hits her own road. On her way she meets Mukanya, night taxi driver, who dreams of leaving the country; Christine, head of the maternity ward in Kintambo; and Kenny, a schoolboy who is trying to save his father's reputation, involved in a sex tape scandal.



Kevin Mavakala, Director



Manassé Kashala, Director



Isaac Sahani, Director



Tousmy Kilo, Director



Dieudo Hamadi, Producer and Writer



Jeanne Basset, Producer

Editing and all post-production

GENRE Fiction

CURRENT RUNTIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME 90' / 90'

LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES
Lingala / English

BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED € 288.000 / € 77.500

MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Kiripifilms, Luchafilms

CO-PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Bärbel Mauch Film, Inzo Ya Bizizi

CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT

First stage editing

FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED

OIF, World Cinema Fund

CREATIVE TEAM

Kevin Mavakala, Manassé Kashala, Isaac Sahani, Tousmy Kilo, *Directors* Dieudo Hamadi, *Producer*, *Writer, Editor and Sound* Fanon Kabwe, *DoP* Cedrick Mbongo, *Sound*

DELEGATE PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Kiripifilms

Luchafilms

ADDRESS

Kiripifilms 12 avenue Sonabata, C/Barumbu Kinshasa RD Congo

Luchafilms 285 route du col des près 73230 St Jean d'Arvey France

DIRECTOR'S CONTACTS

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PRODUCERS' CONTACTS

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DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

A new generation of Africans is coming. One who has not known colonization, nor repeated wars (for some), who has known the "Arab Spring", who communicates via Facebook or WhatsApp, and who feels an irrepressible desire to claim their history, to speak, to tell their story, to exist.

We are part of this rising generation.

We are a group of four young Congolese directors based in Kinshasa. We have different backgrounds; some of us have worked in documentaries, others in music videos, commercials, or television series. Yet, for all of us, this is our first work of fiction. Thus, we all thought to take inspiration by our own lives and our immediate surroundings.

Tousmy will explore the problem of inheritance within certain Congolese families today, a system that is as archaic as it is revolting. Tradition dictates that after the death of the father in a family, with or without a will, the children and their mother are dispossessed of everything.

Isaac will tell the story of a taxi-man, who, tired of working during the day because of police harassment, decides to work at night.

Kevin will talk about the strange and widespread practices in many hospitals in Kinshasa, where babies are held "prisoners" after delivery, until their parents pay the hospital fees.

Finally Manassé will address the thorny subject of "sextapes" that wreak havoc in many families.

Despite the seemingly different features and characters of these four stories, they have several points in common. First, obviously, they are all set in the Democratic Republic of the Congo today. Second, these four short films are all linked by a character who crosses through all the stories: Viya, a young woman with a destiny full of mistreatment and torment (a bit like the Congolese people) but who nevertheless refuses to sink into fatality.

DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES

Kevin Mavakala was born in 1997 in Kinshasa. Graduated in Dramatic Art (Cinema Option), he is an author and director. His film *La Star* won the prize for best international short film at the Festival Ecrans Noirs 2021 Cameroon, and was selected for the Short Film Corner of the 75th edition of the Cannes Film Festival.

Manassé Kashala was born in Kinshasa in 2000. After starting as an actor, he keept studying Dramatic Art. His film *Promesse* won the prize for best international film at the Brèves d'images Festival in France 2019 and the revelation of the year prize at the Aspiring Youth in India 2021.

Isaac Sahani was born in 1992 in Boende. With a Degree in Plastic Arts from the Institute of Fine Arts in Kinshasa, he is the creator of the collective "Bokutani Artistes Réunis". His committed practice is centred around the visual arts, photography, performance, and cinema.

Tousmy Kilo is an actress, author and director. She studied Dramatic Arts at the National Institute of Arts in Kinshasa. She worked as a production assistant on *Augure* by Baloji Tshiani (Un Certain regard, Cannes 2023) and *Ima* by Nils Tavernier. In 2021 she directed *TFC*, her first short film.

DIRECTORS' FILMOGRAPHY

2021 La Star by Kevin Mavakala, short fiction

2021 TFC by Tousmy Kilo, short fiction

2019 Goua by Isaac Sahani, short fiction

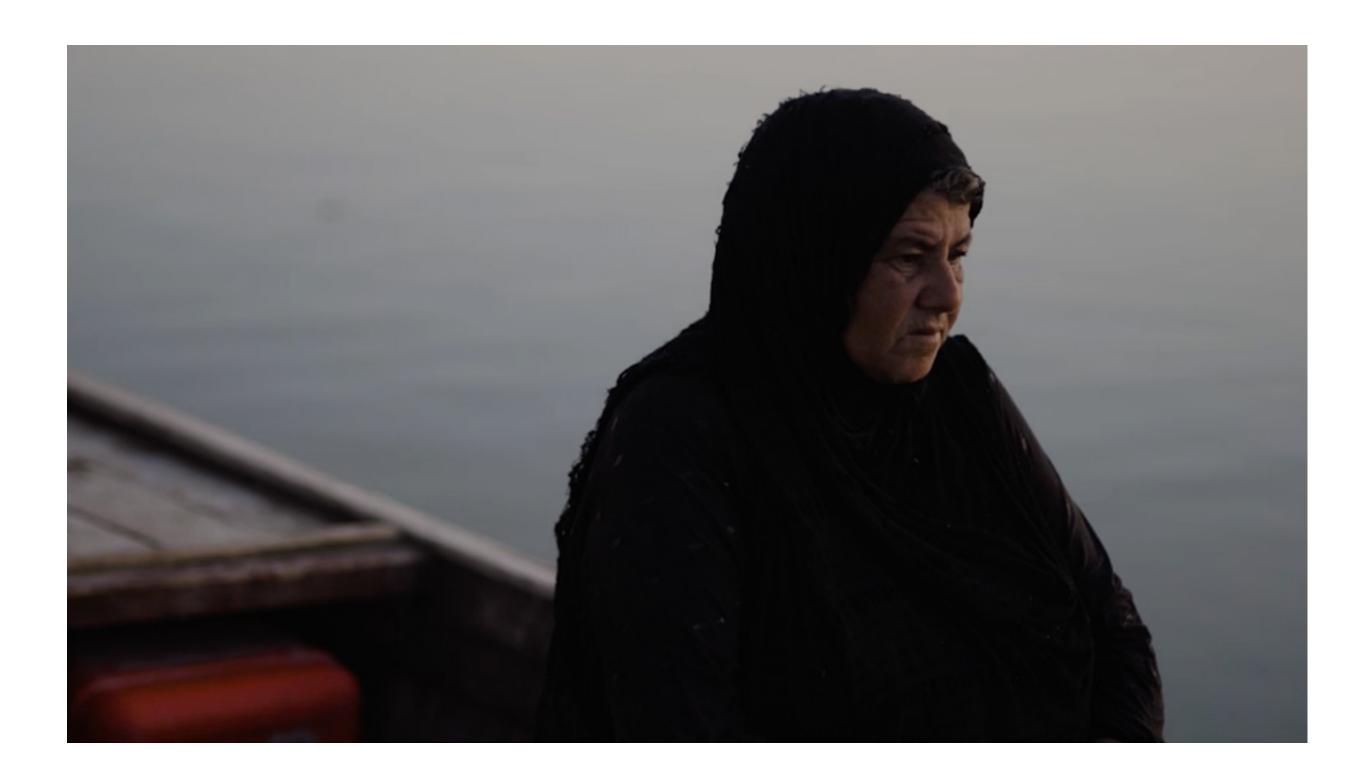
2019 Promesse by Manassé Kashala, short fiction

2018 Insaisissable Saisi by Isaac Sahani, short fiction

2018 Les Devoirs by Kevin Mavakala, short fiction

IRAQ, SAUDI ARABIA, USA

SHE WAS NOT ALONE HUSSEIN AL-ASADI

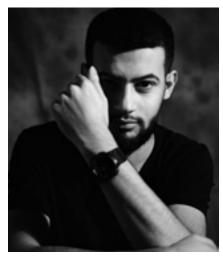


SYNOPSIS

She Was Not Alone is a film about the inner, poetic world of Fatima, an inspiring and independent 60-year-old semi-nomadic woman who has chosen to remain in Iraq's southeastern marshlands despite facing ecological collapse. She lives alone with her beloved animals on an island enclave of reed-mat and mud brick dwellings. This observational documentary follows Fatima for an entire year as she faces obstacles produced by prolonged seasons of drought and flooding, which are troubling markers of climate change in the delicate wetland ecosystem she inhabits. It visually narrates her daily rhythms as she navigates this thick, lush waterscape populated by islands of reed, migratory birds, and buffalo herds to conduct her rhythms of care, stewardship, and play with her non-human kin, which immediately endear her to the viewer. While her community has faced countless challenges and shrunken over the past century due to military occupation, nearby oil refineries and oil flares, the draining of the marshes, and persecution, Fatima fights to hold on to her life and her buffaloes amidst the existential threat posed by climate change. But she may have to migrate to the city and lose her dearest possessions: her animals and her independence.

LOGLINE

A poetic meditation on the life of Fatima, a nomadic woman who lives alone in Iraq's wetlands with her animals. As ecological collapse forces migration to the city, our collective fates become intertwined with hers: will she stay or be dispossessed of everything she knows and loves?



Hussein Al-Asadi,
Director and Writer



Huda Al Kadhimi, Producer



Huma Gupta, Co-producer

Editing and all post-production

GENRE / SPECS

Documentary / Color

CURRENT RUNTIME /

ESTIMATED RUNTIME 60' / 90'

LANGUAGE

LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES
Arabic / English

BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED

€ 300.000 / € 100.000

MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANY

Ishtar Iraq Film Production

CO-PRODUCTION

COMPANIES
Huma Gupta

CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT

Rough cut

FUNDS OR AWARDS

RECEIVEDAFAC - Arab Fund for Arts and

Culture, Culture Resource -Al-Mawred Al-Thaqafy, Red Sea Film Fund

CREATIVE TEAM

Hussein Al-Asadi,
Director, Writer and Producer
Mohanad Al Sudany, DoP
Noura Nefzi, Editor
Zayra as Fatima, Main Cast
Hassan Aleidani, Sound

DELEGATE PRODUCTION COMPANY

Ishtar Iraq Film Production

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The Station Foundation Building, Karada, Baghdad, Iraq

DIRECTOR'S CONTACTS

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PRODUCER'S CONTACTS

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CO-PRODUCER'S CONTACTS

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I was born and raised in the city of Basra in southern Iraq. People often refer to us as "Shurugi," which means those who are from the east, and constitute what urbanized people call the primitive migrants who came from the marshes to the city and could not keep pace with modern civilization. When I was 18 years old in 2015, I was a bit innocent and curious to learn more about my tribe – Bani Asad. The environment of the marshes fascinated me due to its natural beauty and colors. At one time, these marshlands covered 20,000 square kilometers across three of Iraq's southern provinces - Basra, Dhi Qar, and Maysan – and inundated the Iran-Iraq border. However, due to environmental mismanagement, persecution, and impoverishment, many people from the marshes were forced to migrate to cities from the 1920s onwards. Moreover, this was exacerbated in the early 1990s, when Saddam Hussein began a devastating large-scale campaign to drain the marshes after an uprising began in the area and nearly deposed him. By 2003, less than 10 percent of the wetlands still remained. While some marsh inhabitants began to return and helped reflood the site with the support of international organizations and local government agencies, the marshes never returned to their pre-1990s state. Four years later, in 2019, I visited the marshes again and met a number of people. But I was particularly captivated by the story and spirit of Fatima, who seemed content with her life in the wilderness of the marshes and caring for her animals. Her ability to commune with nature and create her own world, revealed a loving intimacy. It reminds us of our potential to restore our own relationships with nature. Her positive energy and perseverance is a model for all Iraqi people and Arab women in particular who have faced innumerable obstacles in their lives.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1997, Hussein Al-Asadi is an emerging director, producer, and cinematographer from Basra, Iraq. He began his career working as the Director of Photography for several short films. Soon after, he began to write, direct, and produce his own films. His first short film *Eye of the Mountain* was released in 2019 and premiered at the Ismailia International Film Festival in Egypt. In 2020, he produced and directed his second short documentary film *She Was Not Alone*. The film won several international awards and awards in the Arab world for the best short documentary film. Al-Asadi has also participated in Doha Film Institute's First Cut Lab, Close-Up Documentary Lab and Red Sea Film Festival Market for this film project.

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2020 She Was Not Alone short documentary

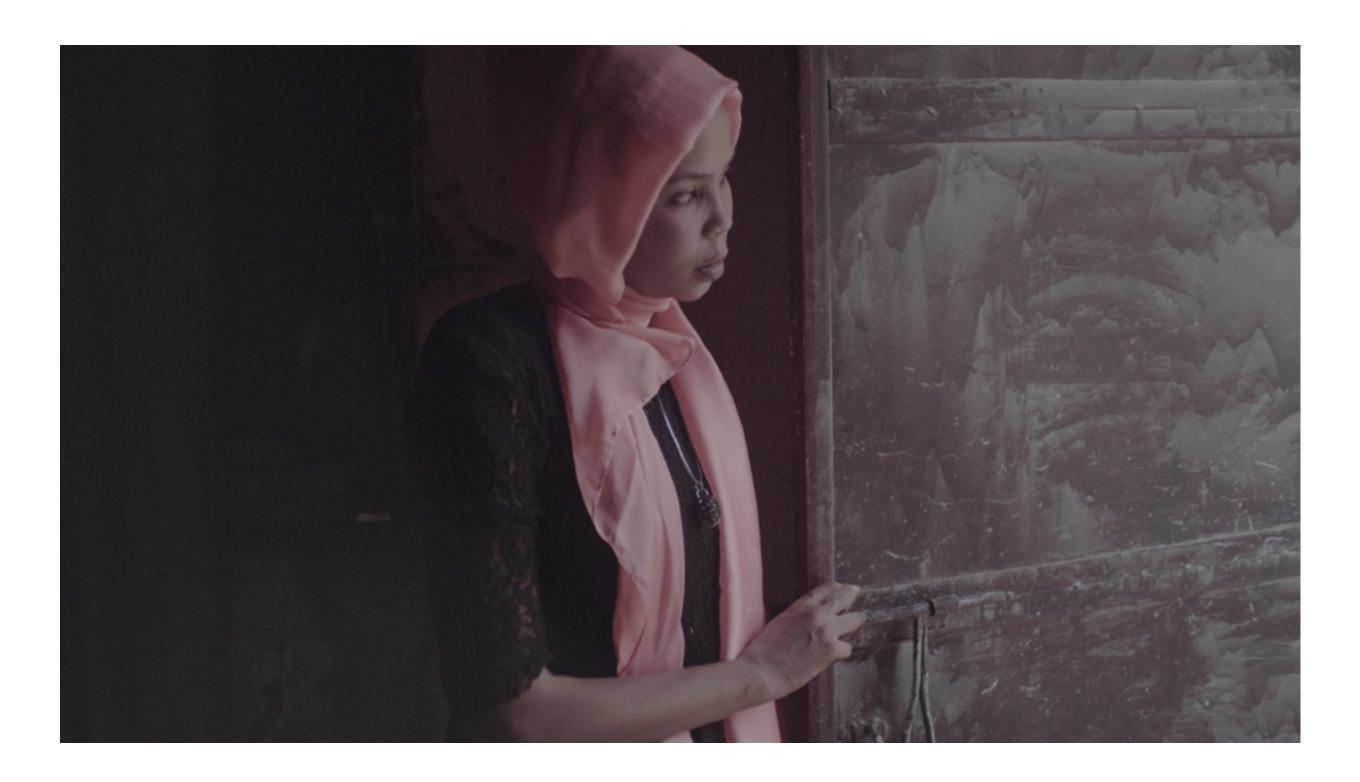
2020 The People's Play short documentary

2019 Eye of the Mountain short documentary

FRANCE, TUNISIA

SUDAN, WHEN POEMS FALL APART SOUDAN, RETIENS LES CHANTS QUI S'EFFONDRENT

HIND MEDDEB



SYNOPSIS

Shajane, Maha, Muzamil, Rufaida, and the voice of the poet Chaikhoon are the characters in the film. They are Sudanese in their twenties, politically active and artistically creative. This film is a cinematic chorus, the collective portrait of a generation fighting for freedom with their words, poems and chants. Faced with a corrupt army guilty of war crimes in Darfur, Kordofan and Blue Nile, these individuals had every reason to lose faith. Without the dream guiding them and the might of poetic discourse, they could never have overthrown the former regime.

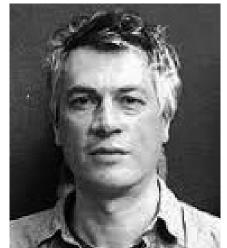
Since I met them on the revolutionary sit-in that lasted 57 days at the Army headquarters in Khartoum, I've been filming every step of their journey. They survived the 3rd of June 2019 massacre - when the army attacked the sit-in, killing hundreds of people in just a few hours. They resisted the military coup of October 2021, until the war started, causing death and destruction everywhere, forcing them to take the roads of exile.

LOGLINE

This film is a portrait of Sudan as a poem as well as a love letter to the country. Shajane, Muzamil, Maha, Rufaida. As their stories unfold and intertwine, the film reassembles fragments of an ongoing revolution and the unfair battle of the voices of youth pitted against military might.



Hind Meddeb. Director and Writer



Abel Nahmias. Producer



Michel Zana, Co-producer



Alice Ormières, Co-producer

Editing and all post-production

GENRE / SPECS

Documentary / Color

CURRENT RUNTIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME

90' / 90'

LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES Arabic / English

BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED

€ 388.791 / € 105.000

MAIN PRODUCTION **COMPANY**

Echo Films

CO-PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Blue Train Films, My Way Tounès

CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT

Image editing

FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED

Avance sur Recettes CNC France, French-Tunisian Co-production Fund CNC-CNCI), AFAC, Quiet Foundation Wend Programme, Development Prize (Cairo Film Connection)

CREATIVE TEAM

Hind Meddeb, Director, Writer, DoP Gladys Joujou, Editor

DELEGATE PRODUCTION

COMPANY

Echo Films

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In Sudan, people recite poetry as easily as they breathe. For the Sudanese it's a tool of resistance. Poetry emerges in conversations, in demonstrations, on walls. These "epic poems" are written as history is made. As a filmmaker, I am a translator. As I pursued my quest to translate this beautiful poetry, I perceive the outlines of a new post-Islamist era. During Sudan's thirty years of dictatorship, religion was used to control daily life. The Sudanese revolutionaries in the film and hundreds of others now reject this. They believe that faith is a private matter. The new generation is campaigning for freedom of conscience as described in this famous poem: "They kill us in the name of religion. But Islam tells us: rise up against tyrants! A bullet does not kill. Silence does." Sudan is at the crossroads of worlds that I have frequented since childhood. My mother left Morocco and my father Tunisia in the seventies to escape dictatorship, searching for freedom in France. It's been three generations of attempting decolonization to change oppressive regimes in Africa and Middle East, largely still in vain. This film is about how to face this impossible change.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Citizen of both sides of the Mediterranean, Hind Meddeb represents people and territories in their complexity. She alone holds the camera which creates an intimacy with the characters. She reveals historic events through individual paths. Between 2011 and 2013, she directed *Tunisia Clash* and Electro Chaabi, two feature documentaries on musical creation as a revolutionary act. Her latest film, Paris Stalingrad was selected in numerous festivals including Cinéma du Réel, TIFF, PSIFF, CPH:DOX. It was theatrically released in France in May 2021.

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2020 Paris Stalingrad feature documentary

2015 Tunisia Clash feature documentary

ZION MUSIC RAMA THIAW



SYNOPSIS

I am music that crossed the Atlantic, she is poetic lyrics. You are a political struggle, they are a spirituality from the cradle of humankind. We are the African Reggae.

My film is the tale of the African Reggae' Spirit. I do not tell a single story but stories forming a coherent whole, from 1976 to the present day, where songs and hidden meanings allow us to travel through the political history of Africa.

From one conflict to another, one spirituality to another, one mythology to a film... A collective epic like the African continent. Welcome to Zion.

LOGLINE

Zion Music is a musical, political, and spiritual odyssey in the heart of the African continent. It goes back to the 1970s and travels through the political history of Africa through musicians, songs, and hidden meanings in the songs.



Rama Thiaw, Director and Writer



Yanis Gaye, Producer

Editing, all post-production

GENRE / SPECS

Documentary / Color

CURRENT RUNTIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME 60' / 105'

LANGUAGE / SUBTITLESFrench / English

BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED

€ 747.539 / € 253.764

MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANY

Boul Fallé Images

CO-PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Les Films d'Ici, Blinker Films, Ksm Films

CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT

Beginning of the editing

FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED

FOPICA, CNC-Monde, WFC/ACP, SACEM, Africalia, OIF, FONSIC/ACP, Hot Docs, Red Sea, Sophie Dulac Distribution, RTI

CREATIVE TEAM

Rama Thiaw. Director, Writer, Editor, DoP and Producer Alexandra St. Blanqua, Amath Niane and Jeremiah Lemohang Mosese, DoP Mpilo Masuku, Ivan Broussegoutte and Jupiter Moumouni Sodre, Sound Engineers Wei Song, Assistant Editor Niels Pagh Andersen, Consultant Editor Tiken Jah Fakoly, Lucky Dube, Alpha Blondy, The Trinity High, Ras Kabinda, Ras Kiwnteseb,

DELEGATE PRODUCTION COMPANY

Boul Fallé Images

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DIRECTOR'S CONTACTS

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PRODUCER'S CONTACTS

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Since 18th April 1980, celebration of the independence of Zimbabwe, Reggae Music spread in Africa by supporting political and social struggles for justice and democracy. Within 43 years, African reggae evolved, bringing through its instruments and rhythms, a freshness, and a singularity. But for me, reggae is a family story, a political and spiritual awareness.

The story of my father and of a small blue room, and a K7 radio in 1989. Following the Senegalese-Mauritanian conflict, he was stripped of his Mauritanian citizenship. As he remained Senegalese, he returned to Pikine, one popular suburb of Dakar. Ruined and exiled, in this blue room with no windows, Toots' rocking voice echoed, while my father mumbleds lyrics to *Pressure Drop*. I first encountered reggae at the age of five when my aunty, brought back Blondy's album *Jah Glory* from Ivory Coast. I remember the emotion felt when I danced to *Brigadier Sabari*. Quickly, I learned and discovered with it the history of African independence and emblematic men such as Marcus Garvey.

This music was meaningful because its message and political and social demands were the same as my parents. Reggae changed our lives like no other music.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Ras King, Main Cast

Senegalese writer, director and producer, Rama grew up between Africa and Europe. She studied Cinema in Paris 8 after graduating with a Master of Economy in Sorbonne University. She directed two feature-length documentaries: Boul Fallé in 2009 and The Revolution Won't Be Televised in 2016; awarded at the Berlinale and the JCC amongst others. In 2010, she created Boul Fallé Images - BFI, a Senegalese production company. In 2019, she launched a multidisciplinary art event dedicated to Black Women and Feminism, The Artistic Sabbar of Dakar. She worked for the selection committee of the Berlinale in the Panorama Section between 2020 and 2022. She is currently working on two other film projects, The Vanishing (documentary) and La vie en spirale (fiction).

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2016 The Revolution Won't Be Televised feature documentary

2009 Boul Fallé: La voie de la lutte feature documentary

2007 Boul Fallé short documentary

Editorial Coordination

La Biennale di Venezia

Editorial Activities and Web

and Venice Production Bridge

Design **Leonardo Maraner (Headline)**

Layout **Riccardo Cavallaro**



VENICE PRODUCTION BRIDGE

Market for selected projects

labiennale.org veniceproductionbridge.org