

# NEON

Presents



## NIGHT OF THE KINGS

A Film by  
*Philippe Lacôte*

93 Minutes | Ivory Coast | 2020

## **Synopsis**

A young man is sent to "La Maca," a prison in the middle of the Ivorian forest ruled by its inmates. As tradition goes with the rising of the red moon, he is designated by the Boss to be the new "Roman" and must tell a story to the other prisoners. Learning what fate awaits him, he begins to narrate the mystical life of the legendary outlaw named "Zama King" and has no choice but to make his story last until dawn.

## **DIRECTOR'S INTERVIEW by Christopher Vourlias**

**“Night of the Kings” is built around a memory you have of a childhood visit to Abidjan’s notorious MACA prison. Can you tell us about that memory?**

As a child, I'd go once a week along the edge of Banco Forest in a shared taxi to go visit my mother who was incarcerated there for political reasons. As there are no visiting rooms at MACA, I waited among the prisoners who freely circulated amid the visitors. I was listening to this prison’s language. It was a world that I loved to observe, even if I wasn't able to decode everything. I had the impression of being at the court of some archaic kingdom with all its princes and lackeys... MACA is therefore a prison which left me with strong images and memories. Night Of The Kings is fed with these images to expose the prison from the inside, from the inmates’ point of view.

**The film certainly looks like it’s shot inside a correctional facility. Did you use an actual prison (or former prison) as the setting of the film? If so, what sort of cooperation did you need from local authorities to shoot there?**

The outside sequences of the prison have been shot at the actual MACA. This prison being a very sensitive place with political prisoners still being incarcerated, we wouldn’t have been able to shoot the film without a real cooperation with the penitentiary administration and the ministry of Culture which always supported the project.

As for the inside of the prison, it has been reproduced in two colonial buildings of Grand-Bassam, a city located one hour from Abidjan.

Along with my set designer, Samuel Teisseire, we wanted to keep the spirit and some very distinctive things about the MACA, like the very peculiar shape of the windows, but we didn’t try to reproduce the prison exactly as it is. Many African prisons inspired me for the inside sequences. For example, the paintings on the walls are reproductions of existing paintings. I didn’t want décoration or anything superfluous because the elements from the prison world have to be useful. This is certainly why it feels like a real prison.

**The movie offers a very realistic portrait of prison life--a world with its own histories, hierarchies, and rituals. What was the research process like? Did you speak to many prisoners about their experiences?**

Night Of The Kings originally comes from a discussion I had with a childhood friend coming out of the MACA prison. He’s the one who told me about the “Roman” ritual where they choose a prisoner who has to tell stories. So the story of the film is definitely based on a real tradition there is at MACA. I immediately pictured the setup and imagined a character in the middle of this arena. Prison always got me interested as a place where the balance of power we can find in our societies is being experimented. It’s even more true when it comes to unequal societies. Being sent to prison today in Africa is something which can happen easily, either because you are poor or because you are being made an example to ensure the laws are respected. African prisons are full of young people being incarcerated for years in collective cells without being tried. But beyond this social reality, my researches have been centered around the prison as a place where narratives are being created.

What stories are told in prison? What fantasy can be developed when your body is locked up? I defend the idea that every human group living in the same place for a certain duration of time creates a culture. And every culture generates poetry.

**Your first feature, “Run,” followed a young man on the run after assassinating the country’s prime minister. “Night Of The Kings,” tells the story of a crime boss who comes to power at the end of civil war. Neither film is overtly political, but they draw on political events. What role do politics play in how you tell stories?**

*Run*, like *Night Of The Kings*, depicts young men evolving in a territory in crisis. I want to show how these individual paths collide with collective history. *Night Of The Kings* says that Africa is perhaps the very last ancient theatre of today, where tragedy and stakes of power unfurl in a raw, frontal, and eminently visual manner. The interesting part of politics is the narrative side of it.

**The pickpocket who’s been chosen as the Roman, or storyteller, in the prison is the narrator of his story. But he’s part of a larger prison ritual that involves poetry and song and dance, as the other prisoners join in the performance. How would you say that ritual is connected to the broader West African tradition of the griot, and what influence has that tradition had on your work?**

Before answering this question it’s important to say what a griot is. In West-African societies, the griot is named “Djéli” meaning blood. In an essentially oral culture, he’s the one nurturing the social fabric. The griot acts as a storyteller, historian, and praise singer but these three things can’t exist without each other. That’s what my narrator “Roman” does when he transforms the life of a real character into a myth. Throughout his story, he goes from realism to magic, from political fact to legend. Roman’s storytelling in the middle of the prison resonates with the art of the griots. Like them, his story is punctuated by songs. Additionally, the setup of *Night of The Kings* also draws its inspiration from urban cultures. It is close to battles or stage performance.

**The Roman’s story about the origins of Zama King travel back to a pre-colonial time of kings and queens—something that one of the prisoners recognizes couldn’t possibly be drawn from the 19-year-old gangster’s actual life. Why did you want to connect your story, which is set in modern-day Cote d’Ivoire, to this other, mythical—even mystical—pre-colonial history?**

What fascinates me in contemporary Africa is how different times live in the same space. For example, some Dozos hunters playing their own role in the film are wearing traditional costumes full of amulets with Puma shoes! I’m using these time clashes to go from one world to the other and to show the beauty of pre-colonial Africa through processions, majestic costumes...without falling into some sort of idealism. For Roman, these anachronisms show how he shapes his story with diverse fragments like a modern-day Shéhérazade.

**Koné Bakary makes his big-screen debut in “Night of the Kings” as the protagonist Roman. How did you find him, and what was it like working with a newcomer to play the lead role in your film?**

We arranged castings in different low-class areas of Abidjan. Koné Bakary came to the one at Attécoubé which is the neighborhood of the Microbes gang leader Zama King whose story is told in the film. After that, we did a two-month workshop with thirty young actors starring in the final film. We also cast dancers, slammers, and martial artists. Ivory Coast is a breeding ground for great raw talents. That’s how we found Koné Bakary. It was his first acting experience. The birth of an actor on screen is both risky and

fascinating. Besides me, there were some doubts among the crew of the film about this choice. But as soon as the shooting started he established himself as an obvious Roman. On the set, he had to lay low because the other actors were so involved in the story that they wanted to get him.

**The Roman accepts that it is his destiny to be the prison storyteller, without understanding why he was chosen; Blackbeard, the chief of the prison, likewise accepts his fate when it becomes clear to him. For you as a filmmaker and storyteller, do you believe that we are free to make our own choices? Or are we part of a larger system that defines us?**

The notion of destiny is underlying all my characters' journeys. Almost like an invisible thread running through their lives. But it doesn't mean they don't have free will. It actually reflects my personal vision. Roman does not feel trapped by his fate, he freely accepts his fate. This situation will give him the strength to free himself with his own words and allow him to reveal himself as a storyteller. This is why Roman starts his story by repeating a sentence read on a prison wall: "If God says yes, no one can say no".

## A Brief History of Côte d'Ivoire

Côte d'Ivoire is a country located in West Africa, on the Atlantic Ocean. It has 26 million inhabitants with a very young population. Its peculiarity is that it is very diverse, with many ethnic groups, half Christian and half Muslim, its vegetation being made of forests but also Sahelian savannahs.

Côte d'Ivoire is a former French colony. It had its independence in 1960. It is therefore a young country with a facade independence insofar as France remains omnipresent in the economy and in the politics of the country.

The history of Côte d'Ivoire is built around its first president, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who remained in power for 33 years, from the beginning of independence until 1993. He was a loyal ally of France and a pillar of Françafrique.

After the death of Houphouët-Boigny, a war of succession that continues today, will break out between 3 leaders:

- Henri Konan Bédié, runner-up to the first president
- Alassane Ouattara, the only Prime Minister of President Houphouët-Boigny
- Laurent Gbagbo, historical opponent, the only one who ran in the elections against Houphouët-Boigny.

These three leaders appeared on the Ivorian political scene in 1990. They are still there today. They are the leaders of the three main political parties. In 2002, their rivalries led to an armed rebellion and a split-up of the country, followed by the start of a civil war in 2010.

The ethnic origins and religions of these leaders make the Ivorian crisis often perceived from afar as a religious or ethnic conflict. Although each leader relies heavily on his or her community, we are rather facing an economic conflict. Since Côte d'Ivoire has taken in many people from neighbouring countries fleeing drought, there is a real shortage of agricultural land.

In this context, having a leader in power means that this part of the population is likely to have access to positions of officials (police officers, customs officers). This means that each election is strongly contested, and the results often contested.

Presidential elections are held on 31 October 2020. Alassane Ouattara, the current president, is running for a third term. The opposition is challenging this nomination. There are already 30 dead.

Meanwhile, Côte d'Ivoire is impoverished, and its social fabric is breaking up, despite a cultural and economic influence that remains strong in Francophone West Africa.

## Filmmaker Bios

### Philippe Lacôte | Director, Writer

PHILIPPE LACÔTE grew up in Abidjan near a movie theater – the “Magic”. His work as a director has taken on several forms, before focusing in 2002 on the recent history of his country with CHRONICLES OF WAR IN THE IVORY COAST, a film on the edge between a documentary and a diary. It is followed by the feature film RUN, the story of a wandering madman, selected in Cannes Un Certain Regard 2014. This selection confirmed his talent as a filmmaker and revealed a new voice from the African continent. NIGHT OF THE KINGS (original title “La Nuit Des Rois”), his second feature, is a dive into the largest prison in West Africa, during a night of red moon.

### Delphine Jaquet | Producer

Delphine Jaquet is a graduate of the Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts in Paris. She is the co-founder and manager of Banshee Films (2003), a Paris based company which defends original writing in cinema. From 2008 to 2012, she is general coordinator of Europa Film Treasures, a leading VOD platform dedicated to European heritage films (produced by Lobster Films in partnership with 30 European film archives). Within Banshee Films, she produces with Claire Gadéa the features BURN IT UP DJASSA (Toronto 2012, Berlinale Panorama 2013) and RUN (Cannes Un Certain Regard 2014). During these years, she develops an artistic collaboration with the director Philippe Lacôte. She is the lead producer of NIGHT OF THE KINGS, of which she also contributed to write the script.

### Yanick Létourneau | Producer

Yanick Létourneau is the owner and cofounder of PERIPHERIA, a film production company established in Montreal dedicated to bringing director driven stories to international audiences. He has been focusing the last ten years on feature films and international coproductions with Europe, Latin American and Africa, his company becoming, according to Variety, one of Canada’s most cosmopolitan producers. His recent producer credits include Côte d’Ivoire’s NIGHT OF THE KINGS, directed by Philippe Lacôte and acquired by NEON after the world premiere in Venice and Toronto. Other recent producer credits include Ioana Uricaru’s feature LEMONADE (Berlin, TIFF 2018), a Romania/Canada/Germany/Sweden coproduction lead produced by Palme d’Or winner Cristian Mungiu as well as Juan Andrés Arrango’s X500 (TIFF, San Sebastian 2016), which he lead produced in coproduction with Colombia and Mexico. He is currently producing Robert Guédiguian’s historical drama set in Mali, BAMAKO TWIST, a France/Canada/Senegal coproduction and is completing financing on Maxime Giroux’s first English-language feature, IN COLD LIGHT, in coproduction with Lithium Studios (Toronto) and Ireland.

### Ernest Konan | Producer

With a degree in management and marketing, Ernest Konan co-founded Ivorian company Wassakara Productions in 2002. In 2012, he produces BURN IT UP DJASSA by Lonesome Solo, shot in 10 days in the ghettos of Abidjan (Berlinale, Toronto). He is the co-producer of two films presented at Cannes Un Certain Regard: LAMB by Yared Zeleke (2015), and RUN by Philippe Lacôte (2014). With international experience, Ernest Konan is an actor in the renewal of Ivorian cinema. In 2018, he is one of the 10 producers selected at La Fabrique Cinéma during the Cannes Film Festival, for Lacôte’s sophomore feature NIGHT OF THE KINGS, which he co-produced.

## **Yoro Mbaye | Producer**

Yoro Mbaye lives in Dakar where he is taking care of the development of the Centre Yennenga as an Executive Director. After few co-directions within student programmes, in particular with ECAL in Lausanne (Switzerland), he directs in 2019 his first two short films between Senegal (JOURNEE NOIRE, fiction) and France (FAMARA, documentary). In 2020, he co-produces for the first time a feature film directed by Philippe Lacôte. While currently taking part of the Atelier Ludwigsburg-Paris, a one-year programme specialised in Film Production and International Sales organised by the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg and La Fémis, he keeps developing new film projects.

## **Production Companies**

### **BANSHEE FILMS - France | Production Company**

Banshee Films is a French independent production company, which defends original styles in filmmaking and contributes to the emergence of new talent. Since its creation in 2003, the company has produced about a dozen shorts and documentaries, and two feature films selected in international festivals, including Philippe Lacôte's first feature RUN (Cannes Un Certain Regard 2014).

### **WASSAKARA PRODUCTIONS - Ivory Coast | Production Company**

The objective of Wassakara Productions is to support films by directors from West Africa. The company first of all initiated production workshops before producing documentaries. It took a further step with the production of BURN IT UP DJASSA, a low budget feature shown in major international festivals (TIFF, Berlinale). Then the production of RUN, which premiered at Cannes 2014, and represented Ivory Coast at the 88th Oscars.

### **PERIPHERIA - Canada | Production Company**

Peripheria is a film production company cofounded by Yanick Létourneau with a mission to produce inspiring and entertaining director-driven stories for local and international audiences. The company has been focusing since 2009 on feature films and international coproductions, recently completing LEMONADE (Berlinale 2018) by Ioana Uricaru, lead produced by Cristian Mungiu from Mobra Films (Romania), in coproduction with 42Film (Germany) and Filmgate (Sweden) as well as X500 (TIFF 2016) by Juan Andrés Arango, lead produced by Peripheria in coproduction with Septima in Colombia and Machette in Mexico. Peripheria is currently coproducing Robert Guédiguian upcoming feature, "Twist in Bamako" with Agat Films in France, to be released in 2021.



## Cast Bios

### **Koné Bakary | Roman**

Koné Bakary was born in 1998 in Ivory Coast. He is a linguistics student at Houphouët-Boigny University in Abidjan when he is approached in the street to participate in a casting for the film NIGHT OF THE KINGS. After two months of acting workshops, he gets the first role, that of Roman. This role is his first appearance on screen.

### **Steve Tientcheu | Barbe Noire (Blackbeard)**

In 2010, Steve Tientcheu was trained at Cours Simon for three years. During these years, the author-director Alice Diop followed him in his apprenticeship and directed a documentary film entitled LA MORT DE DANTON, which retraces Steve's atypical journey. On television, he signed his first contract for the Canal+ TV show BRAQUO by Olivier Marchal. In 2016 he has a role in TRANSFERTS directed by Olivier Guignard and Antoine Charreyron (Best TV Show Award at the Festival Séries Mania 2017). More recently we find Steve in the Canal+ TV show LES SAUVAGES, directed by Rebecca Zlotowski, and in the 6x52' for TF1: YOUR HONOR directed by Julius Berg. Steve also distinguished himself in several feature films ; RENGAINES by Rachid Djaidani (Directors' Fortnight at the 2012 Cannes Film Festival), LES COMBATTANTS by Thomas Cailley, Clément Cogitore's NI LE CIEL NI LA TERRE, RÉPARER LES VIVANTS by Katell Quillévéré, Thomas Ngijol's BLACK SNAKE. He played the character of the Mayor in Ladj Ly's first feature LES MISÉRABLES, selected at the Cannes Film Festival 2019 where it was awarded with the Jury Prize and nominated at the Oscars 2020. The same year he was given one of the main roles in Philippe Lacôte's NIGHT OF THE KINGS, which Premiered at Venice Mostra and TIFF in 2020. He is currently shooting the TV series GERMINAL for France2, adapted from the novel by Emile Zola.

### **Rasmané Ouédraogo | Soni**

Born in 1958, Rasmané Ouédraogo is a Burkinabe actor best known for his roles in the films by Idrissa Ouédraogo. A passionate for image and cinema, Rasmané Ouédraogo studied film in Paris, where he graduated from ESEC (École supérieure d'études cinématographiques). He then turns to acting and plays in many African and international productions, among which YAABA by Idrissa Ouédraogo in 1989, TILAI, also by Idrissa Ouédraogo in 1990, LA PROMESSE by Luc et Jean-Pierre Dardenne in 1996, VACANCES PROLONGÉES by Johan Van der Keuken in 2000, MOOLADE by Ousmane Sembene in 2002, LA COLÈRE DES DIEUX by Idrissa Ouédraogo in 2003, LA NUIT DE LA VÉRITÉ by Fanta Régina Nacro in 2004, RÊVES DE POUSSIÈRE by Laurent Salgues in 2007, L'OEIL DU CYCLONE by Sékou Traoré in 2015, BIENVENUE AU GONDWANA by Mamane in 2016. NIGHT OF THE KINGS is his second collaboration with Philippe Lacôte after RUN, in 2014.

### **Issaka Sawadogo | Nivaquine**

Born in 1966 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, Issaka Sawadogo gets passionate abouts everything related to the stage and plays in many shows between his hometown and Norway. In Norway, he works as a cultural consultant at the Oslo theater. In Burkina Faso, he is a founding member of Cito, an international theater hub where he leads various types of workshops. In 2000, Issaka Sawadogo takes his first steps in front of a camera in BALLE N I OYET. He continues with several films, such as SVIDD NEGER, EXOTICORE or OUAGA SAGA. In 2006, the actor is chosen to be the main character of SI LE VENT SOULÈVE LES SABLES, a drama directed by Marion Hänsel. Alternating between European and African cinema, he plays several secondary characters in L'ENVAHISSEUR, DIEGO STAR, LE FOULARD NOIR and LE DERNIER DIAMANT led by Yvan Attal and Bérénice Bejo. In 2014, his notoriety accentuates when he plays a rather striking character in SAMBA by Eric Toledano and Olivier Nakache, alongside Omar Sy. Issaka Sawadogo reunites

with the famous French actor for the comedy LE FLIC DE BELLEVILLE in 2018. At the same time, he is also active on the small screen, notably in the series HOTEL CAESAR, DAG THE MISSING and GUYANE where he plays one of the main characters, the colossus Louis. In the comedy WALTER (2019), Issaka Sawadogo plays the title role. The feature film directed by Varante Soudjian includes in its cast Alban Ivanov but also Judith El Zein, David Salles, Alexandre Antonio, Samuel Djian, Karim Jebli and Nordine Salhi.

### **Digbeu Jean Cyrille | Demi Fou (Half-Mad)**

Digbeu Jean Cyrille, alias Denco, was born in 1988 in Ivory Coast. At a very early age, he settled in the capital, Abidjan, and more precisely in the popular suburb of Yopougon. After the death of his father and economic challenges, he experiences life on the street. This is where he perfects his slang. Subsequently, his older brother, a “coupé-décalé” (Ivorian urban music) artist very well known in the country, included him into his staff. Today Denco is a nightclub manager and dreams of becoming a movie actor. NIGHT OF THE KINGS is his first screen appearance.

### **Abdoul Karim Konaté | Lass**

Abdoul Karim Konaté was born in 1980 in Treichville (Abidjan), Côte d’Ivoire. In 2005, he plays for the first time for the cinema as an extra in N’goh Raymond’s LE CLASH. In 2007, he plays in Lonesome Solo’s first feature UN CRI DANS LE GHETTO, with whom he then shoots BURN IT UP DJASSA as main actor. It was his meeting with director Philippe Lacôte. This film, released in 2012, was screened in many international festivals such as TIFF, Berlinale, New Directors/New Films, and broadcast on TV5. Abdoul Karim then plays in several films including short TO REPEL GHOSTS by Philippe Lacôte, BRAQUAGE A L’AFRICAINNE by Owell Brown, NATIONAL SECURITY by Andy Melo and the main role in RUN by Philippe Lacôte again, in 2014, which earned him best male interpretation at the Third Francophone Film Trophies 2015. RUN was shown in renowned festivals around the world and in Africa (Cannes, Toronto, FESPACO, Ecrans noirs Yaoundé, Louxor). Abdoul Karim then works with several Ivorian directors including Alain Guykou for TV series LE GRENIER, Bleu Brigitte for TV series LES LARMES DE L’AMOUR (seasons 1, 2), Hyacinthe Hounsou for TV series APHASIE, Samuel Ouédraogo for short film AKANAFO, Ana Balo for LE MARCHAND DE RÊVE series, Erico Sery for SOEURS ENNEMIES 2 series, Alex Ogou for the INVISIBLES series, broadcast on Canal+ International. In 2019, Alex Ogou calls him again to play in the CACAO series, broadcast on Canal+ International. The same year, he plays the role of Lass in Philippe Lacôte’s sophomore feature film NIGHT OF KINGS (Venice Orizzonti). In 2020 he participates for the first time in a comic series, SERY ET SORY, by young director Raymond Kanga. The series is broadcast on RTI, the leading television channel in Côte d’Ivoire. The success of this series also affects the web and the African diaspora.

### **Anzian Marcel | Lame de rasoir (Razor Blade)**

Born in 1998 in Ayamé (Ivory Coast), Anzian Marcel is a young Ivorian actor. He started in theatre in 2018 with the play LA SORCELLERIE (Compagnie Ivoire). He then trained in cinema (Le Paraclet, Abidjan) and participated in the TV show UN DEJEUNER AVEC AURELIE ELIAM directed by Khady Touré (Diffusion A+). Anzian Marcel was spotted among 500 young people following a casting in the different neighborhoods of Abidjan to play the role of Razor Blade in Philippe Lacôte’s feature NIGHT OF THE KINGS.

### **Laetitia Ky | La Reine (the Queen)**

Laetitia Ky is an artist born in 1996 in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. After earning a degree in business, she turned her attention to art. Inspired by photos of hairstyles worn by women in pre-colonial African tribes, she started doing sculptures with her own hair and sharing it on Instagram. With time she decided to make her art more overtly political, raising awareness notably on global women’s issues. Today Laetitia Ky has

359,000 followers on Instagram and 1,900,000 on Tik Tok. In 2018 she was rewarded by the Francophonie Youth Award as one of 35 most influential young people in the French-speaking world under 35 years old. In 2019 she won the Elite Model World Digital Creator Contest and received a two-year contract with the prestigious modeling agency's newly created EWG-Culture division. She makes her film debut with the role of The Queen in NIGHT OF THE KINGS, by Ivorian filmmaker Philippe Lacôte.

### **Denis Lavant | Silence**

Trained at the National Conservatory of Dramatic Art, Denis Lavant is an original and powerful figure in French cinema. A great theater actor, he has notably worked with Pierre Pradinas, Hans Peter Cloos, Bernard Sobel, Dan Jemmett, James Thierrée or Jacques Osinski ... Having acquired a taste for poetry very early on, he is also the spokesperson for many poets who are too little known or heard, whose works he regularly reads publicly. In cinema, he is the emblematic actor of director Leos Carax, from BOY MEETS GIRL in 1983 to HOLY MOTORS in 2012, a phenomenon film of the 65th Cannes Film Festival, in which Denis Lavant takes on eleven roles all by himself. He has also played, among others, under the direction of Patrice Chéreau, Diane Kurys, Jean-Pierre Jeunet, Claude Lelouch, Claire Denis, Harmony Korine, Arnaud des Pallières, Wolfgang Becker, and more recently Dominique Rocher in THE NIGHT EATS THE WORLD, Emiliy Atef in 3 DAYS IN QUIBERON, Pierre Schoeller in ONE NATION, ONE KING, and Philippe Lacôte in NIGHT OF THE KINGS. In 2020, he is to be seen in GAGARINE by Fanny Liatard and Jérémy Trouilh, selected at the Cannes Film Festival, and the Larrieu brothers' musical, TRALALA.

## Crew Bios

### **Tobie Marier Robitaille | Director of Photography**

Tobie Marier Robitaille was born in Quebec City, raised in Montreal and is the father of two children. After playing with 35mm photography since the age of 14, he began his career as a self-taught cinematographer, shooting documentaries around the world. He quickly turned to fiction, filming mostly feature films and television series. His work has been presented in many film festivals, including the Venice Film Festival, Toronto Film Festival, Sundance, Raindance, Busan, New York Film Festival, Chicago International Film Festival and Karlovy Vary. Most recently, his work on the acclaimed film NIGHT OF THE KINGS won Best Cinematography at the Chicago International Film Festival and OUR OWN, won Best Feature Film at the Brooklyn Film Festival and the Santa Fe Film Festival. He is currently working in Canada and internationally.

### **Olivier Alary | Original Music**

Olivier Alary is a French composer based in Montreal. Trained in architecture, sonic arts and instrumental composition, Olivier is interested in exploring the grey area between music and noise. For the past ten years, he has provided soundtrack for over forty feature-length fiction films and documentaries, including UP THE YANGTZE, CHINA HEAVYWEIGHT (Sundance), CORBO (Berlinale), THE GREAT DARKENED DAYS (TIFF), LA FEMME DE MON FRÈRE (Cannes), FELIX & MEIRA (Locarno) amongst others. In parallel of his film work, he has released several albums on Rephlex, FatCat Records, 130701 and has also collaborated with Björk, Nick Knight, Doug Aitken, and Cat Power.

### **Aube Foglia | Editor**

Aube Foglia has been an editor for more than twenty-five years, recognized as much in fiction as in documentary. She began her career as an assistant editor at the legendary Pathé Studio in France before returning to Montreal to become a feature film editor. She began her career working alongside iconic Canadian filmmakers such as Gilles Carle, André Forcier, Robert Lepage and Micheline Lanctôt. Many of the films and documentaries in which she has participated have won multiple awards in Canada and internationally, earning her numerous nominations and prizes for the quality of her work. After NIGHT OF THE KINGS by Philippe Lacôte, she is editing Marianne Farley's first feature-length fiction film AU NORD DE L'ALBANY.

### **Pierre-Jules Audet | Sound Designer**

Pierre-Jules Audet has been working as a sound designer, re-recording mixer and sound supervisor for over 30 years. His experience and his pursuit of excellence have led him to become Head of Mel's Studio's sound department in Montreal. He is recognized for his work by the industry and has received multiple Awards for his work on films such as Jesse Owens' portrait RACE (2016), Denis Villeneuve's ARRIVAL (2016), and Philippe Lacote's NIGHT OF THE KINGS (2020).

### **Emmanuel Crosset | Re-Recording Mixer**

Emmanuel Crosset is a French sound engineer. Trained at the Louis Lumière school in Paris, he began his career as a re-recording mixer in the mid-1990s. He has since been credited on more than 300 French and foreign films. He was noticed or rewarded for his work with filmmakers Catherine Breillat, Valeria Bruni-Tedeschi, Raymond Depardon, Bruno Dumont, Hirokazu Koreeda, Nadine Labaki, Mäiwenn, Lucrecia Martel, Lucia Murat, or Frederick Wiseman. He has participated in the sound creation for Philippe Lacote's films for almost 20 years.

### **Samuel Teisseire | Set Designer**

Raised by a father who was a decorator and a mother who owned a restaurant, Samuel Teisseire is an authentic Parisian who enjoyed a bohemian childhood. At the age of 16, he follows his mother's footsteps, becoming a sommelier in renowned restaurants such as "Fouquet's". A few years later, he leaves everything behind to and travels in Africa and Asia whilst finding work in decor workshops - for example in 1992, for the opening of Philippe Decouflé's Albertville Olympic Games - to subsidize the next trip. He progressively takes up jobs and ends up a props master and subsequently production designer. He is the production designer of HARD-S.1,2,3, "BXL-USA", DE L'ENCRE, LA NUIT DES PARISIENS, BABYSITTING, TAXI 5, NICKY LARSON, LUCKY, 30 JOURS MAX, NIGHT OF THE KINGS and others. Today, he works for television, cinema and alternates between action and author films.

### **Hanna Sjödin | Costume Designer**

Hanna Sjödin is a Swedish costume designer, based in France. After studying scenography at the Lecoq's International school of theatre in Paris, and several years of autodidactic sewing, she is introduced to costume design by assisting Valérie Pozzo di Borgo on a few productions of cinema and opera. She will soon be making both contemporary and historical costumes for various theatre directors and companies such as Philippe Adrien, Gabriel Garran, Clément Poirée, Frédéric Sonntag and Footsbarn Travelling Theatre and was also brought to the opera with directors as Lilo Baur, Volodia Serre and Clément Poirée. She has got a few long time collaborations with choreographers such as French Marion Lévy and Swedish Kajsa Sandström and circus companies as "Les Colporteurs". On various occasions she has also been making costumes for sports events, advertising and design for Cartier's hostesses of "Le salon international de la haute horlogerie" in Geneva. For the cinema Hanna Sjödin has been working with French directors such as Samuel Benchetrit, Xabi Molia and the Swedish director Sofia Norlin. NIGHT OF THE KINGS is the second collaboration with Philippe Lacôte, after RUN (2014).

### **Soussaba Kouyaté | Make-Up Designer**

Born in a family of griots, Soussaba is the daughter of actor Sotigui Kouyaté. She studies at the Direction for Cinema in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, where she is trained in storytelling, acting, direction and staging with several directors. In 2001 she then obtains her diploma as professional make-up artist at the 'Ecole technique privée de maquillage artistique Christian Chauveau' (Paris). From 1994 to 2020, Soussaba works as a makeup artist on numerous short films, documentaries, as well as several feature films including BAMAKO by Abderrahmane Sissako, LE MONDE EST UN BALLET by Issa de Brahima, LES MANUCRITS DE TOMBOUCTOU by Zola Maseko, NOTRE ETRANGERE by Sarah Bouyain, SOLEILS by Dani Kouyaté and Olivier de Lahaye, ZIN&#39;NAARYA by Rahamatou Keïta, WULU by Daouda Coulibaly, ODYSSEE by Issa de Brahima, NOGOCHI by Toumani Sangaré, DUGA LES CHAROIGNARDS by Abdoulaye Dao and Eric Hervé Lingani, SHOTGUN by Elliot Ilboudo, NIGHT OF THE KINGS by Philippe Lacôte, LA TRAVERSEE by Irène Tassambédo. Make-up artist for the theater on OEDIPE by Sotigui Kouyaté, she was also costume assistant on LA FLUTE ENCHANTEE by Peter Brook, and on L&#39;AFFAIRE ELF by Lucas Belveaux. Soussaba has been working with DFA communication (advertisements, films, events) since 2011. She participated in the Caravan Africanintegration project with Africable in 2010.

## CREDITS

Banshee Films  
Wassakara Productions  
Périphéria  
Yennenga Production  
présentent

Produced by  
Delphine Jaquet  
Yanick Létourneau  
Ernest Konan  
Yoro Mbaye

With the support of  
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In association with  
Memento Films International  
Axia Films  
E2C

A film by Philippe Lacôte

The MACA prison is a world with its own codes and laws.  
The first law is that the Dangôro, the supreme master, rules the prisoners.  
When the Dangôro falls ill and can no longer govern, he must take his own life.

## **NIGHT OF THE KINGS**

Roman Koné Bakary  
Blackbeard Steve Tientcheu

Half-Mad Digbeu Jean Cyrille  
Soni Rasmané Ouédraogo  
Nivaquine Issaka Sawadogo

Lass Abdoul Karim Konaté  
Razor Blade Anzian Marcel  
The Queen Laetitia Ky

With the participation of Denis Lavant

Written and directed by  
Philippe Lacôte

Written in collaboration with  
Delphine Jaquet

Cinematography  
Tobie Marier Robitaille CSC

Original Score  
Olivier Alary

Editing  
Aube Foglia

Sound Design  
Pierre-Jules Audet

Re-Recording  
Emmanuel Croset

Production Design  
Samuel Teisseire

Costume Design  
Hanna Sjödin

Makeup Design  
Soussaba Kouyaté

Production Manager  
Christian Lambert

First Assistant Director  
Franck Heslon

**In order of appearance**

Roman	Koné Bakary
Policeman	Zunon François Lopez
Blackbeard	Steve Tientcheu
Lass	Abdoul Karim Konaté
Rascal bosses	Christopher Kaké Traoré Ismaël Brou Daboiko Jean Marcel Drabo Arouna
Policewoman	Digbeu Sandrine
Policeman	Diomandé Mamadou
Nivaquine	Issaka Sawadogo
Konan	Cissé Vadieneka
Sexy	Gbazi Yves Landry
Half-Mad	Digbeu Jean Cyrille
Razor Blade	Anzian Marcel
Lookout	Ange Eric N'Guessan
Koby	Stéphane Sébime
Silence	Denis Lavant
Soni	Rasmané Ouédraogo
Griot Prisoner	Ousmane Camara
Zama	Goneti Oscar
Rocky	Sozehoué Ninon
Albino Girl	Umar Aïcha Lola
Head Cook	Lago Woroka
The Queen	Laetitia Ky



General of the Queen	Yohan Richmond
Soldier of the Queen	Narcisse Aféli
Friend of the Queen	Aïcha Latifah
Hélène	Marie Josée Néné
Young Zama	Traoré Aboubacar
Henchmen	Koko Shaka
	Traoré Ibrahim
Prisoners	Kocola Prince Romain
	Aka Kpalezo
	Coulibaly Yann Kevens
	Konaté Abdoulaye
	Gbazé Aubin Brice
	Moustapha Shabany
	Kassim Kébé
	Camara Rodrigue
	Kouamé Jean Jack
	Ahmed Fah
	N'Zi Laurent
	Bamba Ibrahim
Singers	Bah Kpazaï Marcel
	Kambou Sié
	Kramo Koffi Eric
	Kombasséré Jacques
	Essan Constantin
Dancers	Guy Ange NK
	Zehoua Bi Yves
	N'zi Tanoh Wilfried
	Koui Thierry Emmanuel
	Yao Attoungbré
	Tangara Moctar
	Baho Gnonsihan Ulrich
	Gnawe Daninho
	Yavo Amèrè
Guards	Emmy Siagbé
	Akan Madingo
	Assétou Traoré
	Kadjo Chantal Reine
Rebel Soldiers	Bamba Mohamed
	Drabo Arouna

Koné Zakaria

Casting Yohan Richmond  
Casting Coordinators Issouf Ouattara  
Naminata Traoré

Assistant Directors Ghislain Hounkpatin  
Abdou Khadir Ndiaye  
Assistant Director Trainee Aimée Lacôte

Choreographer N'Zi Laurent

Production Coordinators Fanny Lehmann  
Leslie Dabit

Production Manager Christian Lambert  
Production Administrators Tatiana Kachoutina  
Katia Roizes

Production Accountant Amal Hage  
Assistant Production Accountant Emanuela Righi  
Production Secretary Laurentine Bayala  
Production Manager – Preliminary  
breakdown Claire Trinquet  
First Assistant Director – Preliminary  
breakdown Nicolas Aubry

First Assistant Camera Maxime Boutin  
Second Assistants Camera Issouf Kaboré  
Camille Durand

Steadicam Operator Thomas Burgess  
Drone Operator Gary Bialas

Production Sound Mixer Michel Tsagli  
Boom Operator Elhadj Maguette Thiam

Art Director Marius Tagba  
First Art Director Assistants Jean-Marc Delahaie  
Marc Schons  
Construction Coordinator Emmanuel Teisseire  
Head Carpenter Nicolas Meunier]  
Head Painters Jean-Noël Delalande

	Benoît Oliviero
Set Decorator	Eric Chemel
Set Design Assistants	Roland Blé Stella Gogoua
Labourers	Paul Mognin Frédéric Kakou Wilfried Okon
Mural Painter	Daniel Abouo
Production Assistants	Nestor Alle Ezaluy Guy Hervé Awogni Athanase Ahoulou Jocelyn Akesse Guy Aka Paul Okon Paul Tiémé Tanoh Konaté Losseni
On Set Prop Persons	Bill Mamadou Traoré Zunon François Lopez
Wardrobe Supervisor	Karamoko Chérif / K-ras
Wardrobe	Camille Lamy Léa Delmas
Wardrobe Assistant	Vanessa Vanié
Wardrobe Trainees	Canelle Charlanes Avéline N'Djoré
Wardrobe Labour	Aka Nancy Zan France Athéna
Additional Makeup Artist	Assétou Traoré
Gaffer	Hugo Ferland Dionne
Best boy	Olivier Racine
Electricians	Jean Nikiéma Seydou Ouédraogo Abdoulaye West Ismael Traoré
Electrician Assistants	Konan Jean Marc Habib Sall
Key Grip	Roland Naba
Best Boy Grip	Emmanuel Ouyia

Data manager	Kanga Vincent
Additional Assistant Camera	Niamké Gilbert
Location Manager Bassam	Sam Niamké
Location Manager	Clément Kouassi
Assistant Location Manager	Victoire Aby Say Thomas Spony
Unit Trainees	Kouassi Bienvenue Ismaël Cissokho Engelbert Semi Jonas Lacôte

#### Unit Dailies

Gnangouin Valentin - Kouassi Kouadio Alexis - Bah Alexis - Koffi Alexandre - Naminta Coulibaly - Aka David - Florent Haba - Kouakou Richard - Djénéba Coulibaly - Flora Koné Aifal - Sami Diarra - Ibrahim Cissokho - Touré Cissokho - Koné Yaya - Amadou Douko - Jean Noel Koudou - Hermann Moh - Sékou Kamara - Mme Ayébi - Athanase Awogni - Faliru Dosso - Donald Miézan - Aresse Guy Arnaud - Bamba Sindou - Kodjo Yzo - Torsy Kouamé - Assouan Kodjo - Touré Alassane - Sidiki Konaté - Ouattara Adama - Guei Bernard

#### Drivers

Khalil Camara - Léon Gnagbo - Issouf Diomandé - Kassoum Tou - Anoh Anoh - Fama Konaré - Konaté Issouf

#### Cleaning

Oumar Koné - Koné Amidou - Mme Torsey - Mme Rosalie - Koffi Alexandre - Yao Stéphanie - Kalou Kalou - Kouassi Amino Stéphanie - Konan Banko - Gouletti Stéphanie - Naminata Coulibaly

#### Security

Virgil/Royal Guard - Zamblé Médard - Abdoulaye Traoré - Amadou Douko - Oumar - Traoré Akim - Jacques Issac - Moussa Koné

Post-Production Supervisors	Pierre Thériault Jonathan Lester
Lab and Digital Postproduction	MELS
MELS Vice-président – Sales	Paul Bellerose
MELS Projects Manager	Richard Bélanger
MELS Studios Coordinators	Celia Perrier Julie Bourdin
Assistant Editors	Marilyn de Billy Véronique Choquette

	Andréanne Cousineau Geneviève Roberge
Dailies Data Management	Jean-François Gravel Mathieu Thellend
Digital Color Grading	Jérôme Cloutier
Digital Cinema Technicians	Yamin Ronzani Maxime Taimiot Raphael Demers
Online Editing Assistants	Eric Losier Kevin Bussièrès Stéphanie Frégeau-Pasquale
Sound Supervisor Dialogue Editor Sound Effects Editor	Pierre-Jules Audet Marie-Miel Lacasse-Hevey Pierre-Jules Audet Danny Rodrigue
Foley Artist Assistant Foley Artist Foley Recordist Foley Editor	Nicolas Gagnon Louis Duranleau Daniel Bisson Jean-Philippe St-Laurent
Assistant Editor	Stéphanie Mercure Davie-Stanley Pierre Maxime Vermette
ADR Supervisor ADR Editor	Pierre-Jules Audet Michelle Cloutier
ADR Recordists	Maxime Vermette Hubert Teissèdre Abdelaziz Koly Diabaté Kanga Wilfried Kablan Louis Duranleau
VFX VFX Supervisor VFX Manager VFX Post-Production Manager VFX Art Director	autreCHOSE Rodrigue Lenain Stéphane Bidault Matthias Weber Christophe Chanvin
VFX Artists	Simon Binaut Alice Damy

Vincent Dutour  
Zahi EL Habach  
Colin Journée  
Delphine Mandin  
Arianne Pacibé  
Charline Racamier  
Christian Rouvier  
Isabelle Tchoungang

Re-Recording Studio PolySon  
Technical Manager Charles Bussienne  
Sound Projects Manager Charles Vallette Viillard  
Sound Mix Recorders Guillaume Camboly  
Clément Berthou  
Diane Prieur

Sound Studio Technicians Matthieu Lasausa  
Lucas Le Néouanic

Studio Management Laetitia Noblet  
Executive Management Nicolas Naegelen

Additional VFX Vincent Scotti

Storyboard Artist Miguel Vieira Da Silva  
Graphic Designer Sylvie Astié

Additional Editing Barbara Bossuet

Set Photographer Ekpalé Nianzou

Making-of Grand Poucet Centre Yennenga

Legal Counsel Marion Grignou  
Pierre-Emmanuel Mouthuy  
Cédric Monnerie

English Translation Jonathan Gontar

Archival Research Isabelle Czerwonka

Audiovisual Archives Ina - Institut National de l'Audiovisuel  
TCI  
Droits réservés

Original Scory  
Conducted by Olivier Alary

Cello	Jean-Christophe Lizotte
Alto Violin	John Corban
Alto Saxophone, Clarinet, Flute	Erik Hove
Baritone saxophone, bass saxophone	Jason Sharp
Trumpet	Lex French
Tenor Saxophone	Thomas Gauthier-Lang
Tam tam, slide guitar	Olivier Alary
Gongs	Andres Vial
Gongs, percussion	Alexandre Ducharme

### Songs

“Avec toi”

(Lyrics by Marthe Zambo)

Performed by Gbazi Yves Landry

© Marthe Zambo

“Zama”

Lead vocal : Bah Kpazaï Marcel

Choir : Kambou Sié, Kramo Koffi Eric, Kombasséré Jacques, Essan Constantin

© Banshee Films

“C’était l’enfant Koby”

Lead vocal : Kambou Sié

Choir : Bah Kpazaï Marcel, Kramo Koffi Eric, Kombasséré Jacques, Essan Constantin

© Banshee Films

“Adieu Barbe Noire”

Lead vocal : Kombasséré Jacques

Choir : Bah Kpazaï Marcel, Kambou Sié, Kramo Koffi Eric, Essan Constantin

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E2C

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Presented at Venice Production Bridge 2019

Shot in Côte d'Ivoire



The Director would like to thank

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Bandaman - Khady Diallo - Sékouba Doucouré - Marie-Pier Dupuis - Giacomo Durzi  
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France

Régine Vial - Sandra Mirimanoff - Laurent Hassid - Laurent Sicouri - Sylvie El Sayegh - Magalie  
Armand - Myriam Hacène - Rafaële Garcia - Thomas Sonsino - Nadia Brossard - Anne Olivet -  
Magali Jammet - Caroline Cor - Jean-Pierre Guerrieri - Tara Maurel - Emilie Georges - Tanja  
Meissner - Mathieu Delaunay - Alexandre Moreau - Sata Cissokho - Morgane Le Dissez -  
Sylvain Lagrillère - Polina Zdravkova - Sophia Jabrane - Fatim Camara - Gaëlle Palluel - Naïma  
Abed - Diane Cesbron - Damien Barday - Marie Besançon - Iris Cadoux - Jean-Baptiste  
L'Herron - Ivan de Labbey - Florence Charmasson - Daniele Segre - Letizia Caspani - Greta  
Nordio - Riema Reybrouck - Emilie Pianta Essadi - Gabrielle Béroff-Gallard - Fanny Aubert  
Maurie - Marine Coatalem - Association Aurore - Le Groupe Ouest - Marie-Noëlle Boyer,  
Théâtre La Tempête - Jean-Christophe Magnaud, Big Bang SFX - Marion Schulz - Zaza - Irène  
Oki - Guy Beaujoint - Cécile Salin - Isabelle Fauvel - Claire Diao - Sophie Bourdon - Laurence  
Vendroux - Coralie Gourdon - Yov Moor - Eugénie

Deplus

Côte d'Ivoire

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et de la Francophonie

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Boubakar Coulibaly, Claude Yao - Direction de l'Administration pénitentiaire

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Jean-Luc Moulot, maire de Grand-Bassam et son cabinet

Romarc Djoko, directeur de la maison du patrimoine de Grand-Bassam et son  
cabinet

M. Tizié-Bi, directeur du musée des costumes de Grand-Bassam et son  
administration

Nanan Gnoan M'Bala, chef du village de Bassam et conseiller du roi Nanan Awoula

Tanoé Désiré, roi des N'Zima Kôtôkô de Côte d'Ivoire et sa notabilité

Nanan Bognan V, chef du village d'Azuretti et sa notabilité

Nanan N'Dédé Prosper, chef du village de Mondoukou et sa notabilité

Daniel Kouao, chargé de la cour royale de Bassam

Commission Nationale de la Francophonie, Abidjan - Fédération nationale des

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And all the extras in this film

A very special thought for Thierry Kafando and Amara Traoré

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Johanne Larue - Nicole Baillargeon - Alexandra Beaulieu - Marie-France Godbout - Marielle Poupelin - Michel Pradier - Marie-Christine Jean - Paul Bellerose - Ministère des Relations internationales et de la Francophonie Québec - Bureau du Québec à Abidjan, Marly Bah, Adam Kalapo - Ambassade du Canada en Côte d'Ivoire, Julie Shouldice - Pierre Villepelet - Armand Lafond - Linda Dubuc - Josée Turcot - Alex Moussa Sawadogo - Charlène Biragoye - Fatim Létourneau - Kamila Létourneau

#### Sénégal

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Camera	Vantage Paris
Lighting Material	Panalux
	Aréel
Sound Equipment	DC Audiovisuel
Grip Equipment	Cinémachines
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	ATR
Post-Production Services	Mels
	VFX autreCHOSE
Sound Mixing Studio	PolySon
ADR Studios	Yellow Cab

Technical Services Studio1  
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l'Institut Français) (LOGO Orange Studio) (LOGO VENICE PRODUCTION BRIDGE)

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