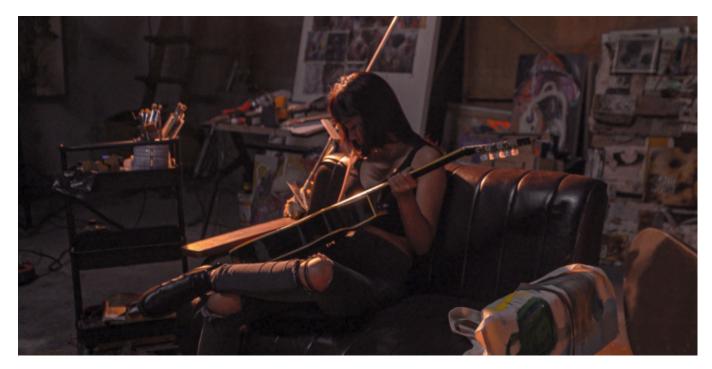
PROJECT PRESENTATIONS SØRFOND PITCHING FORUM 2023





Director: Arvin Belarmino | Producer: Kristine De Leon



Short Synopsis

house bound for demolition, a female folk-punk musician meddles in the illegal porn industry to make ends meet.

Director's Bio | Arvin Belarmino:

Arvin Belarmino is a Filipino filmmaker who was raised both in provincial Cavite and the urban capital of Manila. Arvin directed several experimental and narrative short **Producer's Bio | Kristine De Leon:** films that garnered critical acclaim both on Kristine De Leon, a Filipina producer, began

the local and international stage. He was With a chronically-ill matriarch and a selected for the 2022 Festival De Cannes Cinéfondation La Residence for his first feature project, Ria and won the Centre National du Cinema (CNC) award, further developed at Institut Français' La Fabrique Cinéma . Arvin is an alumnus of Talents Tokyo, Locarno Filmmakers Academy, Produire Au Sud Workshop Nantes.

her career at the Film Development Council of the Philippines, overseeing international co-production funds. She later ventured into producing her own films. Her portfolio includes Arvin Belarmino's feature film project Ria, developed at the 2022 Festival de Cannes La Résidence and Institut Français' La Fabrique Cinéma. She was recently selected for the Asian Producer's Network 2023 happening during the Singapore International Film Festival. Kristine is an alumnus of Produire Au Sud Nantes and Busan Asian Film School specializing in International Business Producing.

Original title: Ria

Contact: kristinejadeleon@gmail.com

Main producer: Kristine De Leon

Director: Arvin Belarmino

Genre: Fiction

Country: Philippines Language: Filipino **Running Time: Production Status:**

Total Budget: EUR 685 905.02

Confirmed Financing: EUR 176 495.62

Director's Note:

Philippines since the late 1970s. It is a radical response to the country's inequities that persists to this very day. As a Filipino punk woman, Ria lives a life of resistance against a violent system that pushes the underprivileged down to the brink of survival. While pursuing her art, she works as a cleaning lady and soon a production assistant for porn - just to provide for her foster mother's medical needs.

My friend, Pong, who started this story with me, also fell victim to the failed medical system, which led to his death. It is a life that many Filipinos are familiar with, an experience that drives anyone towards further on SITIO ROSARIO, Ria subjects defiance.

Anyone can resist violence. Anyone can be punk.

Long Synopsis:

The punk scene has been alive in the RIA is a 25-year-old punk woman who lives in VACHEL'S CAVE, a house and punk she is made to follow orders. commune in the middle of SITIO ROSARIO. an urban neighborhood under the threat of demolition. The commune is owned by OLGA, a 52-year-old woman with a huge wound on her leg caused by diabetes. Due to the financial trouble caused by OLGA's illness and constant extortion from demolition authorities, Ria works at Rayon Hotel as a housekeeper — providing for the family she knows while making ends meet for their household.

> However, as OLGA's condition worsens and as intimidation from authorities close in herself to harder labor and is forced to work at an underground porn shoot in the same hotel to sustain them. This becomes a life-changing struggle for Ria, as she traverses back and forth from her punk

community, where she is in her truest element, to the pornography world, where

Before long, the VACHEL's CAVE community comes to ruin as they fall victim to a ruthless fire demolition. As RIA nurses grief, she learns to radicalize her anger and lead the community of punks into taking a stand against the violence surrounding them.

RIA was selected at La Fabrique Cinéma of the Institut français during the 2023 edition of the Cannes Film Festival.

EVERY STITCH A LONELY THREAD

Director: Jannous Nkululeko Aukema | Producer: Tiny Mungwe



Short Synopsis

worker, Lemohang Mpanza, is possessed by ancestral visions who prophesied that he will begin a new religious faith.

Director's Bio | Jannous Nkululeko Aukema post-coloniality

Jannous Nkululeko Aukema is an award winning inter-disciplinary filmmaker and composer based in South Africa. His past projects as writer-director include the

short narrative film, Until The Silence After a tragic roadside accident that Comes (2018) which featured at SHNIT, sends him into a coma, a young municipal ZIFF and ASFF. His short documentary Deliver Me (2021) won Best South African Documentary Short at AHRFF. His work pivots around the themes of ancestral memory, social-justice, migration and

Producer's Bio | Tiny Mungwe

Tiny Mungwe is a filmmaker and arts manager. She works at STEPS, where Original title: Every Stitch a Lonely Thread Contact: tmungwe@gmail.com & mhar-

perarts@gmail.com

Main producer: Tiny Mungwe

Director: Jannous Nkululeko Aukema

Genre: Fiction

Country: South Africa

Language: isiXhosa and English

Running Time: 80 min

Production Status: Development

Total Budget: EUR 504 760

Confirmed Financing: EUR 4 760

she has produced Generation Africa, a collection of 25 documentary films from 16 African countries. She produced and directed the documentary Akekho uGogo, wrote Evelyn and directed, Daddy's Boy. She was a writer on the TV series Muvhango and Matatiele and director on Uzalo.

Producer's Bio | Mitchell Harper (Irish co-producer)

Mitchell Harper is a filmmaker and cultural producer. He is the producer for the short documentary **Deliver Me** (2021) and is the producer of Womxn Working, a documentary currently in production. He is a current member of Programmers of Colour Collective, a judge of the Durban leg of the 48hr Film Challenge (2015), a project reader for Realness Institute (2019 -2021), and a member of programmes such as Locarno Pro: Under 30 and NFVF's SEDIBA producer's programme. He has spoken on panels at events such as Joburg Film Festival, Third Horizon Film Festival and Marrakech Film Festival.

Director's/Producer's Note

With a magical-realist approach grounded in arthouse cinema, this film tackles questions of historical trauma, spirituality and our connection to this land. It is a telling of us, in our chaotic nuance, scored by the voices of prophecy. I believe cinema can meet the madness of our time with a spell whose name is awe.

Long Synopsis

After a tragic roadside accident that sends him into a coma, a young municipal worker, Lemohang Mpanza, is possessed by ancestral visions who prophesied that he will begin a new religious faith. Awoken by these visions, he abandons his previous life and draws toward him a congregation

of those marginalised by his city.

Alongside this journey, we explore short episodes from his life as a young boy in early 90s South Africa. We meet his mother Ramatla, who works as a domestic worker in a wealthy suburb; his father, Mthetheleli, a sower of garments for the local churches and Bina, his younger sister. We come to learn about the deep-seated loss that has afflicted this family and the ways in which this loss has led to its collapse and Lemohang's formation.

This straddling of past and present is the cinematic language that immerses us in our centralcharacter's narrative: the rise and fall of a radical homeless preacher. Together with his congregation, and accompanied by his ancestral visions, Lemohang grows a church, occupying land to build a makeshift commune embedded in new radical spiritual rituals. They dress themselves in elegant white cloth, creating their own music that expresses the content of their lives and aspirations

for the church; it is gospel protest.

But this movement begins to clash with a hostile city determined to wash away and invisibilize its homeless. Through this clash, we witness the slow demise of the church and Lemohang himself. Unable to cope with his family's past traumas and the violence of his city, Lemohang is driven to a reckless rage that no longer nourishes his church. Blinded by paranoia, Lemohang loses his grip on reality, pushing himself and the church to their utmost limits.

EVERY STITCH A LONELY THREAD was selected at the 2023 edition of the Durban FilmMart in South Africa.

LIBERTINAS

Director: Leslie Ortiz | Producer: Adriana Morán

Short Synopsis

Liz, a 32-year-old mother of a teenage daughter, lives a monotonous life as result of an unwanted pregnancy at 16.

Director's Bio | Leslie Ortiz

Salvadoran filmmaker with a bachelor's degree in journalism and communications and more than 10 years of experience in television and film content creation. She has been selected to participate in various festivals and workshops, like Fantasolab (Colombia, 2022), Creative Production Workshop (Panamá, 2022), Talents Guadalajara (Mexico, 2019 and 2012); etc. Currently developing her first feature film Libertinas as screenwriter and director.

Producer's Bio | Adriana Morán

Groove Productions is a company founded by filmmaker Adriana Morán and cultural manager and musician Manu Groove. We specialize in film production, creative event production, artist management, and cultural management. Our products and services are focused on the pursuit of emotions and sensations, embracing diversity in its multiple manifestations, adapting to the needs of a cross-cutting world.



Director's / Producer's Note

Leslie Ortiz (Director): Since I started making films, my focus has been on telling stories about women. Coming from El Salvador, one of the most repressive countries for women's freedom, I aim to portray characters who break free from the societal patterns imposed on them. In Libertinas, I want to demystify the idealization of the maternal figure. Using a Kafkaesque metaphor, the main character, a mother, feels tiny and insignificant like

Original title: Libertinas

Contact: libertinas2020@gmail.com

Main producer: Adriana Morán

Director: Leslie Ortiz

Genre: Fiction

Country: El Salvador Language: Spanish Running Time: 90 min

Production Status: Financing **Total Budget:** EUR 472 000

Confirmed Financing: EUR 177 468

caregiver and breadwinner. However, she finds her freedom when she realizes that her daughter is no longer her top priority. Through cinema, I can capture realistic situations full of fantasy and imagination. In Libertinas, a fantastic creature appears to guide the main character through a metamorphosis that reconnects her with her true self. This is a theme that I identify with and am eager to explore in this film.

Adriana Morán (Producer): Libertinas is my first collaboration with director Leslie Ortiz. When I read the script and learned more about the project, I could relate deeply to it. It is fascinating how the film connects everyday life, boredom, and confinement with a metamorphic being that feeds on a person's deepest fears. All of this is portrayed in the context of a country which is unfortunately one of the most sexist and misogynistic in the world. Libertinas has had an exciting journey through international industry events. We have also secured Ibermedia relationship with one of the actresses. All

an insect, valued only for her role as a funds for development and coproduction. this makes Liz recover the light she lost in We have a coproduction agreement with Peru and collaborators from Colombia for the music composition and production design. We still seek further international support and European co-producers to close the financing and achieve our plan of shooting in first semester of 2025. We already have an intention letter from the german company Black Forest Films.

Long Synopsis

Liz, a 32-year-old mother of a teenage daughter, lives a monotonous life as result of an unwanted pregnancy at 16. Since then, her life and desires were placed on hold. She works at a thrift store, assisting customers and even dressing up in a ladybug costume to entertain pedestrians at the entrance. Only when she is sent to deliver some clothes to the local theatre, is when her emotional numbness is shaken by the force of a play. She watches to the play behind the scenes, immersing in this new world that leads her to begin a romantic

her adolescence, but causes her problems with her mother, who does not accept the freedom Liz begins to give herself. Her daughter, however, becomes her ally. She joins the theatre as a costume assistant and the desire to change her life fills her with uncertainty and guilt, transforming her into the ladybug character. Liz finds a way to be free allowing a complex metamorphosis to be completed that gives way to an insect-human hybrid being.

LIBERTINAS was selected at Open Doors during the 2023 edition of the Locarno International Film Festival.

Director: Jiang Xiaoxuan | Producer: Zhulin Mo

TO KILL A MONGOLIAN HORSE

Short Synopsis

In a small, mining town, bordering Mongolia and China, Sayna, a skilled Mongolian horseman, tends his family ranch while working as a background performer in a horse show at the local tourist spot. But, contrary to the majestic Mongolian cavalryman he portrays at night for the tourists, Sayna finds his real life as a herder on the verge of disintegration.

Director's Bio | Jiang Xiaoxuan

Jiang Xiaoxuan is an ethnic Manchurian filmmaker born and raised in Inner Mongolia, China. Her works explore themes of femininity, animals, nature, and mysticism, in an Inner Mongolian and global context. In 2020, she received her BFA in Film from the New York University Tisch School of the Arts.

Her latest narrative short, Graveyard of Horses (2022), was officially selected for Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival 2022 and South by Southwest 2023; won a NETPAC Award at Busan International Short Film Festival 2023; and Bronze Dinosaur Award at Etiuda&Anima International Film Festival 2022. Her first feature film in development, To Kill a Mongolian Horse, was officially selected for the Sundance



Ignite Fellowship 2023 and received the Busan International Film Festival Asian Cinema Fund Script Development Fund 2023.

Producer's Bio | Tan Chui Mui & Mo Zhulin

Tan Chui Mui is a Malaysian filmmaker who has won prestigious awards at international film festivals including Busan International Film Festival, International Film Festival Rotterdam, Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival. Original title: To Kill A Mongolian Horse

Contact: amantalik@gmail.com

Main producer: Zhulin Mo Director: Jiang Xiaoxuan

Genre: Fiction Country: China

Language: Mongolian, Mandarin

Running Time: 90 min

Production Status: Development

Total Budget: USD 321 156

Confirmed Financing: USD 205,094

and International Short Film Festival Director's Note Oberhausen. She has been a member of the jury at various international film festivals and a mentor for regional filmmaking workshops like Busan International Film Festival Asian Film Academy, ASEAN-ROK FLY, and Singapore International Film Festival Southeast Asian Film Lab. She also launched the "Next New Wave" initiative to organize workshops for young filmmakers.

Mo Zhulin is a Beijing-based creative producer. She received her MS. Ed and M. Phil in Counseling Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. One of the shorts she produced, I Have No Legs, and I Must Run (Yue Li, 2022), won the Best Short Film Award at the BFI London Film Festival 2022. She also produced Graveyard of Horses (Jiang Xiaoxuan, 2022), which was selected at Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival 2022 and South by Southwest 2023, won Bronze Dinosaur Award at Etiuda&Anima International Long Synopsis Film Festival 2022, and a NETPAC Award at Busan International Short Film Festival 2023. Sukhavati, her first feature film as producer, was selected as a Shanghai International Film Festival 2023 Work in Progress project.

Last year, my friend Sayna, a herder in Inner Mongolia, sold his flock of sheep because of a local grazing ban and started The implementation of a local grazing ban to seek other jobs to plug that financial gap. For months he performed tricks on horseback at a local horse show, where he played a Mongolian cavalryman.

Through this film, I aim to explore the power dynamics between spectators and spectacles, particularly in the mainstream media's obsession with spectacle as seen in tourism, social media, and other contemporary cultural phenomena. I want to contrast this fetishization with the marginalized existence of Mongolian herders caught between the cultural border of Mongolian and Han Chinese communities, the conflict between pastoralism and industrialization, and the gap between traditional and pop culture.

On the vast steppes bordering China and Mongolia, Sayna, a skilled, 32-year-old, Mongolian horseman, tends his family ranch during the day and performs daring feats on horseback at a local horse show at night. In contrast to the majestic, Mongolian cavalryman he portrays at night

for the tourists, Sayna finds his real life as a herder under increasing threat.

has caused immense hardship for the herders, forcing them to sell their livestock and abandon their traditional way of life on the steppes. Many herders have resorted to selling their horses to slaughterhouses. Adding to Sayna's challenges, his alcoholic father recently sold half of their flock of sheep to settle his debts, and his young son from a previous marriage needs money for his education at a Mandarin school.

As Sayna confronts the impending loss of his livelihood and searches for a way to secure his future, and that of his horses, he discovers the combined impact of the grazing ban and local mining activities forcing him towards irreversible exile from his cherished land.

TO KILL A MONGOLIAN HORSE was selected at The Asian Film Market during the 2023 edition of the Busan International Film Festival in South Korea.

Director: Arice Siapi | Producer: Martinel Nemalieu

THE CIRCUIT

Short Synopsis

Bana Manga, alias Big Bana, spent 10 years of his life trafficking motorcycles before settling down and turning to griot wedding music, where he finally found success. To support his family, he decided to launch a modern music album on the market. To finance this project, he has no choice but to ask for help from Séka Séka, an old friend with whom he used to traffic motorcycles. Séka Séka agrees to help, on condition that they make one last trip together. They set off on the perilous journey across the tracks between Nigeria and Cameroon.

Director's Bio | Arice Siapi

Trained as a lawyer, I chose cinema as my medium of expression. I directed **Riskou**, which premiered at IDFA in 2008. After directing several short films, I worked on the film series **Atchaaba** for Cameroonian channels. Currently, I am undertaking my first feature-length documentary project titled **The Circuit**. Furthermore, I am involved in coordinating training programs focused on cinema initiation and image education in Niger, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso. Since March 2022, I have taken on the responsibility of gathering Central African festivals within the Association of

African Film Festivals (AFFA).

Producer's Bio | Martinel Nemalieu

I was born in 1971 on the April 26th, in the 4th District of Paris. I lived in Ngaoundéré for more than 20 years, and did my secondary and higher education there. Very early on, I became interested in photography, and when the opportunity presented itself, I held a camera and that was the beginning of a love relationship that continues to this day. In Ngaoundéré, I set up ONORE, Limited Corporation, with which I produced various standards of movies. At the same time, I'm manager of TIMELINE, Limited Corporation, created by Arice SIAPI, with whom I have cooperated on several productions in the past.

Director's / Producer's Note

Arice Siapi (director): I want to talk about a Cameroonian youth trapped by a system that has marginalised them. I want to show that this deprived youth, who has a code of honour, is courageous and determined to fight until the end. Martinel Nemalieu (producer): Having grown up in Ngaoundéré, Arice, with whom I share a long collaboration since Riskou at IDFA 2008, shares a similar background to mine.



Original title: Le Parcours Contact: nemalieu@live.fr

Main producer: Martinel Nemalieu

Director: Arice Siapi **Genre:** Documentary **Country:** Cameroon

Language: French, Hausa, Fulfulde

Running Time: 52/70 min

Production Status: Development

Total Budget: EUR 362,000

Long Synopsis

Bana is a former motorcycle trafficker who used to buy motorcycles in Nigeria and transport them to Cameroon and the Central African Republic for sale. Seven years ago, Bana got married and left this dangerous and illegal job to pursue a career in making traditional music for weddings and baptisms. However, after his father's passing, he became the head of the family, and the weight of his responsibilities increased.

earning small amounts of money from local trip with the gang. This journey involves phone companies that use his music as a perilous motorcycle journey between

on-hold ringtones, Bana constantly finds himself in debt and unable to lead the life tracks, evading police and customs, and he sees other artists living. Determined to gain popularity and find new sources of income, he decides to seek out popular singers for collaboration and change his repertoire. To accomplish this, he requires funds to record a new album.

Despite his efforts to borrow money from his family and banks, Bana's attempts are in vain. His friend Séka Séka, the leader of the traffickers, agrees to help him on the Despite his stage performances and condition that Bana undertakes one last

Nigeriaand Cameroon, navigating uncharted putting his own life at risk while carrying a heavy load of two-wheelers. Bana sets out once again on the roads with his band, embarking on this journey between Nigeria and Cameroon.

THE CIRCUIT was selected at the 2023 edition of the Durban FilmMart in South Africa.

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