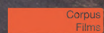


The soul of the bossales

a documentary film by François Perlier

WITH Edris Fortune, Irine 'Foukifoura' Penn, Jean-Eric Ollivier, Charlotte Charles, Yonel Charles, Ramoncite Pierre, Karina 'Michou' Thibaud. DIRECTOR François Perlier. PRODUCED Odile Mendez Bonito. EDITOR Nicolas Contant & François Perlier. SOUND RECORDIST & MIXER Benoit Perraud. EDITOR Coline Guerin. ASSOCIATION Corpus Films & Bleu et Rouge production in association with TV7



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SYNOPSIS

The "bossales" were the African slaves who won the Haitian war of independence. This term now qualifies a rebellious person, like the protagonists of the film. Charlotte, a human rights defender, Foukifoura, a satirical columnist, Edris, a filmmaker of the insurrection, Michou, a worker struggling to survive, Ramoncite, an enigmatic voodoo priest. In the nowadays explosive social situation, they all embody the soul of their rebellious country: an incandescent home of political and spiritual resistance.

TRAILER

DISTRIBUTION FRANCE

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CONTEXT

The shooting of *The South of Bossales* ended in 2021, in an intense revolt situation after the murder of President Jovenel. This film is probably the last film shot in Haiti since the gangs took the power and drowned the country into insecurity that stop any possibilities to do audiovisual and cinematographic work.

The film shows the country on the edge of complete chaos, streets on fire, people resisting to keep their dignity and try not give up facing violence and everyday insecurity.





A CONVERSATION WITH FRANCOIS PERLIER

Where did you get the idea of making a film in Haiti?

I directed a movie in Guadeloupe about resistance culture in the working-class areas. During three years I filmed the Voukoun crew composed of young, lost and very poor people who made happenings in the Carnival. The Voukoun crew call in its actions from Caribbean History, afro-descendant, mysticism and political strikes. Belonging to this crew, these young people realized the importance of their creole culture and gave them more access to empowerment. Haiti, the first country to get independence is a lighthouse for them. Among them they were lot of Haitian migrants. By meeting them I felt very intrigued by this singular country, that remains an example for black-Americans communities.

You met Haiti two years after the earthquake, the situation is disastrous...

Yes. In a festival in France, I met Foukifoura, a young Haitian comedian and radio presenter. He offered me to come to Haiti to discover Jacmel Carnival that mix Voodoo culture with political contest, where people stage in the street the cruel reality of their country. So, I went there to discover this Carnival. The earthquake of 2010 left the country in ruins. The capital Port au Prince and even Jacmel were in ruins. Hundreds of

people were still living in the street, cholera epidemic was growing a lot, rubbles were everywhere in the streets, presidential Palace was falling down in the middle of the capital main square. Despite everything, life got back to 'normal' and the most sacred event in Haiti, the Carnival too.

How did you meet the characters of the movie?

Foukifoura was my guide into Haitian streets. With him, I learned creole, he took me to Voodoo ceremonies, he introduced me to activists' people, their families and also people from the working class. Thanks to all this, I met lot of people and started to become filled of Haitian history and Soul. Among these characters, there is Foukifoura or his friend Edris that I know from the beginning. Then others like Ramoncite or Charlotte that I met on my different trips to Haiti. I had to share their stories to denounce corruption and neocolonialism.

On the last shooting of several weeks, I met Michou, a very poor woman who was breaking stones on the edge of the road. She wanted to share her story in the movie. She moved me a lot. She embodies an Haitian woman struggling for her survival and who get her strength into spirituality. With all these characters, I made longtime and trustful relationships and I am still in touch with them.



What was the process of the production of the movie?

I started to film during my first trip. I wanted to share the mystic experience I assisted to, during the Carnival and in the streets. I wanted to share this magic and chaotic moments. This material helped me to write the movie, as a logbook. Then, the movie entered into production. So, I tried to reproduce scenes I experienced during my first trip but this time, with more technics in order to get the most solid material, a better sound and image quality while staying the closest to people and to the ground. I tried to record clandestine speaking, in the darkness, to get intimate and revolted speech from my characters. Some of these images I shot are in the movie, like these very organic moments in the Carnival shot live. There are also images from Edris, an activist film maker who filmed a lot of riots in the that I could not film by myself. So, we collaborated and shared our images for the movie. Scenes with Foukifoura that come back during the whole movie were written and repeated together. We used Foukifoura as a kind of crazy and angry narrator that embody the rebellious soul of Haitian people.

The South of Bossales is an immersive movie, we follow several characters, we are plunge into a cruel reality while in the voodooos scenes, we are very closed to trance. How did you write the narrative?

I knew that I will not follow one character in the time and make a linear narrative. The movie is a subjective portrait of Haitian people. I wanted to recreate feelings. It is an immersion where we can be lost with only a few markers and characters we crossed by a few times. I made the movie as I traveled in Haiti, meeting people, living some intense moments and questioning a lot. I wanted to reproduce this wandering and these enigmatic feelings. At first, I wanted a narrator character to guide the movie. But the power of the material I shot made me change my mind. I needed to give space to my characters, to these moments we shared that were often not very understandable but that, step by step, created an energy of struggle and spiritual power.

Which intentions you never give up from the beginning of the shooting and writing to the end of the editing?

Since the beginning I knew that I wanted to collaborate with Foukifoura. I knew that he would embody this rebellious voice from the people. There was also the idea that every character would have this mystic and poetic aspect even though their lives are very difficult. I wanted to share this strangeness. Finally, I wanted to shoot these festive moments at the Carnival or during voodoo ceremonies because I think it opens us to a more fluid perception of the world, where borders between the visible and the invisible are porous. So, I really wanted to reproduce this strength situations of anger, trance and hope with my camera.



CREW

Titre: THE SOUTH OF BOSSALES

Director: François Perlier

Year of production: 2024

Length: 81 minutes

Director of photography: Nicolas Contant, François Perlier

Editor: Céline Ducreux

Sound engineer: Benoit Perraud

Production : Odile Mendez Bonito

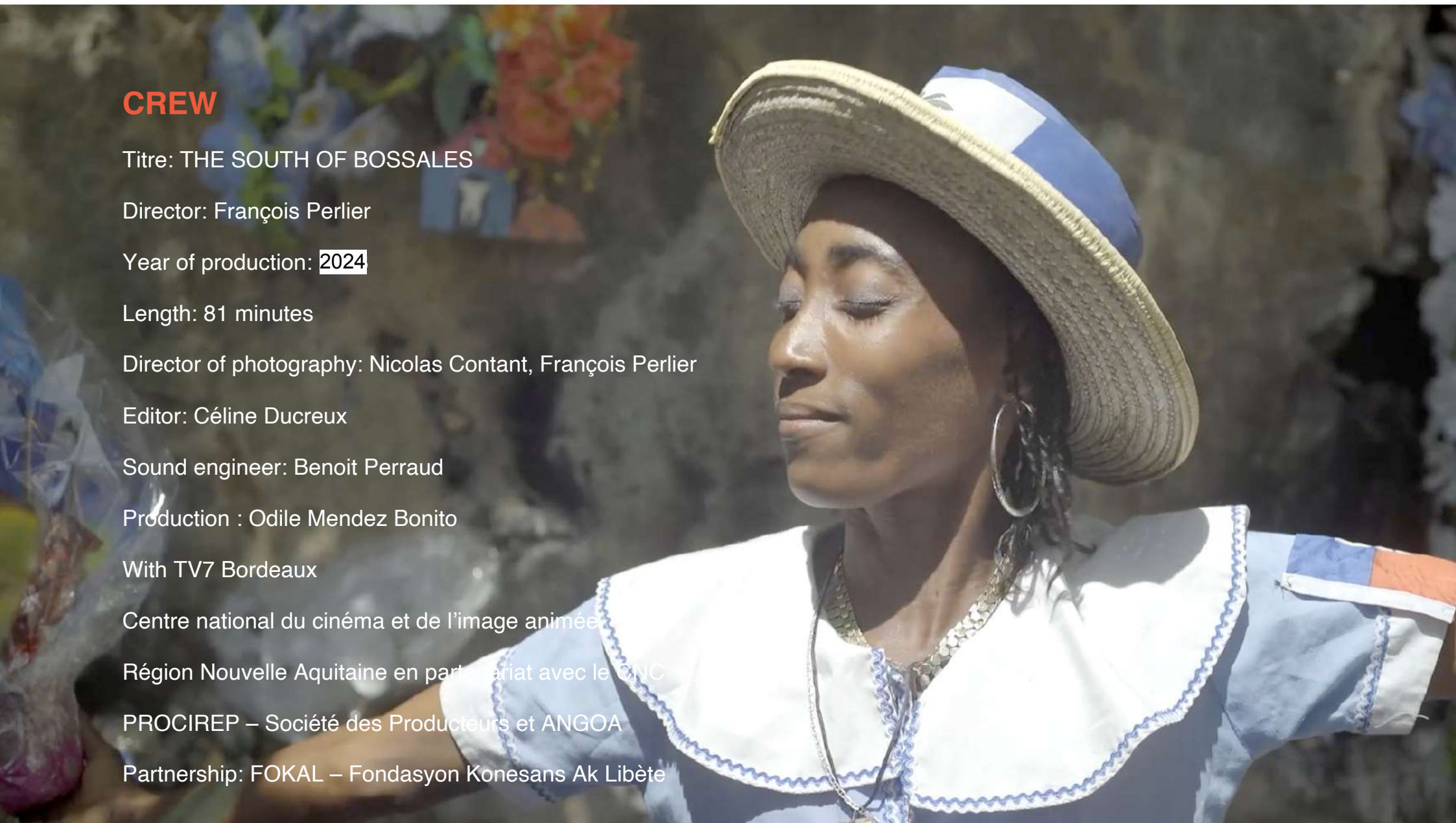
With TV7 Bordeaux

Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée

Région Nouvelle Aquitaine en partenariat avec le CNC

PROCIREP – Société des Producteurs et ANGOA

Partnership: FOKAL – Fondasyon Konesans Ak Libète





FRANÇOIS PERLIER

A graduate of the Master of Documentary Direction CREADOC in 2006, François Perlier pursued a career as a documentary writer. He has directed several independent and television documentary films, including Voukoun, with France Télévision, which has won several awards and has been programmed in numerous festivals in France and abroad.

FILMOGRAPHY

- La Vie Recommencée. 2023. Documentaire. 52min.
- Le Souffle de Martha. 2020. Documentaire 52min.
- Camille Senon, la dame du pays rouge. 2017. Documentaire. 52min.
- Le Cri du Milan Noir. 2015. Fiction. 28min.
- Voukoun. 2012. Documentaire. 52min.