

ATO YANNEY

His Majesty's Sergeant

Mr Ato Yanney was born in 1932 in a fishing town in Ghana. He studied film technique as a private student in Britain, after which he was offered a scholarship by the government of Poland, an opportunity he seized to specialise in film directing and production methods in Polish studios.

Between 1963 and 1970, he worked with the Ghana Film Industry Corporation, where he made a number of documentaries and shorts.

He teamed up with a friend to form a company and His Majesty's Sergeant financed by a group of Ghanaian cinema owners and his company, Vision Motion Pictures, is the result of their efforts and his dream.

He became interested in films when he made a breakthrough in the BBC Home Service with his short stories and came to realise that it could be more enjoyable telling a story in pictures than in words.

AMON SABA SAAKANA

Stolen Image

Amon Saba Saakana is a Trinidadian born writer. He has published poetry, plays and a book on Jamaican popular music. He has worked as a script writer/ interviewer for several documentaries on BBC TV and ITV.

"Stolen Image" is his first short feature and will be premiered in 3rd Eye.

REGINALD HUDLIN

Houseparty

Reginald Hudlin has been one of Harvard's most prominent black artists over the past four years. He says "I think of myself as a black film maker and that's inherently political. Some black artists just want to be thought of as artists, not black artists...." Hudlin makes black films that are in tune with the American tradition and explores what he calls 'Afro-Americana' that is , the part of American culture which is black.

Houseparty, his first film has received high praise in several competitions and has prompted a private foundation to fund Hudlin's next project.

Houseparty, focusses exclusively on black characters yet Hudlin intends it as neither a statement of black separatism nor a paean to racial pride. He states, "This is a film about black youth culture, and when you are dealing with kids, there can't be any compromises. Kids see right through that stuff. I wanted thsi film to be honest. It's fiction: it's a story, but it's accurate".

BILL GUNN

Ganja and Hess

Bill Gunn is almost unknown as a film maker. Only close friends and a few executives at Warner Brothers have seen his first film, Stop (1970), which the studio never chose to release. Only a few thousand people have seen his second film, Ganja & Hess (1973), which had a commercial run of only a week in New York before it was dumped by its distributor, the independent firm of Kelly-Jordan. Yet, in museum showings around the country, Ganja and Hess has over the past few years achieved an extraordinary reputation, especially among Black filmmakers. It is the great underground classic of Black film.

Gunn started as an actor. In the early sixties he worked regularly on television in the minor and secondary parts open to Black actors, managing to save enough to finance a second career as a playwright and screenwriter. He wrote The Landlord (from a novel by Kristin Hunter), which was filmed in 1970 by Hal Ashby with Diana Sands, Pearl Bailey, Lee Grant, and Beau Bridges. The Landlord is a story of a rich white boy who buys a Brooklyn tenement and gets involved with his Black tenants.

Gunn shot Stop in Puerto Rico the same year. It is much more identifiably his own work, full of the mysteries and obsessions that give strange life to Ganja and Hess and the play Black Picture show, which was produced in 1975 by Joseph Papp at Lincoln Center. Stop has still yet to be released.

Ganja and Hess has been described as the most introspective of Black films. Since the film's brief premiere in 1973 and its subsequent disappearance from movie screens Ganja and Hess has acquired enormous, deserved, status as a legendary black film.

Director, born in Havana in 1927. The son of a professor of geography, he was educated in the United States at Harvard. In the early 50s, after returning to Cuba, he became a founder member of the radical cultural society Nuestro Tiempo (Our Times) which was in the forefront of the struggle against imperialism and the Batista dictatorship. A founder member, too, of the Cuban Film Institute, ICAIC, which was set up in 1959 in the first decree on culture of the triumphant Revolution, he had been one of the group which made El Megano (The Megano) in 1956, a film that was made clandestinely and then seized by Batista's police.

A writer as well as a film maker, he is now head of the film and television section of the Union of Writers and Artists (UNEAC), which was established in 1961. He has received a national literary award for a memoir on his experiences filming in Africa in the late 60s and the late 70s.

Filmography

- 1960: Por que nacio el ejercito rebelde? (Why Was the Rebel Army Born?); Los tiempos del joven Marti (The Times of the Young Marti)
- 1962: Historia de un ballet (Story of a Ballet); El maestro del Cilantro (The Teacher of Cilantro); Venimos por amor (We Came for Love)
- 1964: La decision (The Decision) (feature film)
- 1967: Guantanamo (feature-length documentary)
- 1968: Manida-boe (Madina-Boe); Nuestra olimpiada en La Habana (Our Olimpiad in Havana)
- 1971: Paginas del diario de Jose Marti (Pages from the Diary of Jose Marti) (feature film)
- 1973: Laos: 4 reportajes despues de la guerra (Laos: 4 Reports After the War)
- 1974: XV Aniversario (XVth Anniversary) (feature-length documentary)
- 1976: Volibol en Los Angeles (Vollyball in Los Angeles)
- 1977: Angola: victoria de la esperanza (Angola: Victory of Hope) (feature-length documentary)
- 1980: La historia de El Megano (The Story of El Megano)

Grey Area

Monona Wali was born in India and raised in the United States. She has worked actively in film production for the last ten years. Her interests as an independent filmmaker are in dramatizing stories of American minority life that are not often seen in the American showplace.

In 1979, she produced and directed "THIS SIDE OF THE RIVER", a half-hour documentary made in cooperation with the Onondaga Indians of Upstate New York. It was funded by a \$2500 production grant from the New York State Council on the Arts. This program focused on the attempts of the Onondagans to maintain their cultural sovereignty.

Most recently, she completed "GREY AREA", a dramatic featurette about contemporary black issues. A large part of the film was shot in Watts, Los Angeles. "GREY AREA" emphasizes the need for personal commitment to social goals. It was funded in part by a \$5000 fellowship from the Lynn Weston Memorial Foundation. This grant is awarded annually to an outstanding female graduate student at UCLA.

A major part of Ms. Wali's training was received at the UCLA Graduate Film School from 1978-82. In 1979-80 she produced "VIEW", a hour long weekly show for cable television highlighting the work of young artists and filmmakers in the Los Angeles community. In 1980-81 she was selected as a teaching assistant for film production. She was a student supervisor for the Jr. High Apprentice Program at Zoetrope Studios under the direction of August and Francis Ford Coppola. In 1982, she interned as a producing and directing apprentice on "HILL STREET BLUES".

Professionally, she started as a production assistant and assistant editor on numerous films, including "NARCO" a KABC Special Public Affairs program and "MARK TWAIN: BENEATH THE LAUGHTER", a PBS Special. Currently, she is producing two segments for "THE LAWMAKERS", a WETA (PBS-Washington, D.C.) series.

PREMA KARANTH

Phaniyamma

Prema Karanth is a graduate of the National School of Drama, New Delhi, and a famous director of stage plays from Bangalore, Karnataka. She has acted in a number of films and worked as Art Director for G.V. Iyer's Hamsageethe and Karnad/Karant's 'Godhuli'. Phaniyamma is the first film she has directed.

To the spirited little girl of nine, in the film, getting married is all in the day's play - just another novel and enjoyable game. Till the child bride becomes a widow at nine; her husband dead of a snake bite and she, deprived of childhood's pleasures with one cruel blow. The little girl, her face uncomprehending, her cheeks tear-streaked, submits to society's dictates; her bangles are smashed, her 'bottu' smeared, to proclaim to the world that she is now a widow. A few years later, the young adolescent Phaniyamma, is given the official costume of the South Indian Brahmin widow - the shaven head and the white bleak dress.

The film has won three major awards at the Mannheim Film Festival earlier this month:

- The Critics International Award for the Best Film
 - The Gold Medal Dukatert Award (Cash prize of DM 2,000)
 - The Jury Award
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SHYAM BENEAL

Manthan

Shyam Benegal comes from a large, orthodox Brahmin family from Hyderabad. The son of a professional photographer, he made his first home movie at the age of 12 with his Father's hand-cranked camera; films were his passion. He received his post graduate degree in Economics from Osmania University in Hyderabad and moved to Bombay to take up a career in advertising. Starting as a copywriter and film assistant, Benegal worked in advertising agencies for sixteen years, making more than six hundred commercial shorts. While a student at University, he founded one of Hyderabad's first film societies. His apprenticeship in film later included several documentaries and short films and work as associate producer on an American television channel as a Bhabha Fellow.

Benegal shot to fame so fast with his very first film that people forgot the long training and hard struggle preceding it. He made his first feature ANKUR (The seedling) when he was 38. He was prepared to make the film 12 years earlier. He found an unexpected backer in 'Blaze', an advertising - distribution company.. ANKUR, which was made in 1974, won Shyam five film awards. The most controversial aspect of his films is his portrayal of women. Traditionalists find his approach un-Indian while feminists complain that his women are only shown as victims. The truth, perhaps, is somewhere in between.

Today many of the younger film makers come to Shyam with their problems. Shyam is the director of the National Film Development Corporation and the President of the Society which runs the film and Television Institute in Pune.

Shyam Benegal has now made a total of 10 features and many shorts and documentaries. His latest film, which incidentally is his first comedy, MANDI is an invited entry to this year's London Film Festival.

Selected Filmography:

1974 ANKUR, 1975 Charandas Chor, 1975 Nishant, 1976 Manthan, 1977 Bhumika, 1977 Anugraham, 1978 ~~Jun~~ Junoon, 1981 ~~Kalyug~~ Kalyug, 1981 Aarohan, 1983 Mandi.

KING AMPAW

Kukurantumi

King Ampaw was born in Ghana in the village of Kukurantumi, in 1940.

After primary and secondary education in Ghana 1962 he went to East Germany lived there for 4 years and studied at the German Academy for Film Art. He went to Vienna, Austria to continue his studies at the Academy for music and Performing Arts for one year. From there he went to Munich and graduated from the Academy of Film and Television, in 1972.

From 1972 to 1976 he worked as Assistant Director on a number of productions at the Bavaria Film Studios.

In 1977 he returned to Ghana where he now lives with his wife and 2 children. On arrival in Ghana he was employed by Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (television) as a Film Director.

He formed his own Company Afro Movies earlier this year in Accra and scripted, co-produced, Directed the film Kukrantumi. The film was co-produced with I.P. Film Production, Bonn.

Struggles For Black Community

Colin Prescod film-maker, lecturer in sociology at the Polytechnic of North London, chairperson of the Institute of Race Relations. Born in Trinidad, 16th December, 1944. Resident in England since 1958. Formal education at Holland Park School, London; Hull and Essex Universities UK.

Previous films - 1975-1976 'Being Black in Britain' and 'Black youth in Brent, London', with the BBC, Open University.

1978 'Blacks Britannica', with David Koff and Musindo Mwinyipembe.

1980 'Grove Music', researcher/interviewer for Henry Martin (Director)

1981 'Blood ah go run', with a collective, researcher/interviewer.

'Struggles for Black Community', four (40 min) documentary films for Race and Class Ltd and Channel Four TV, 1982. Director Colin Prescod.

'A Town under Seige' (Southall); 'A Common Struggle' (Leicester); 'Tiger Bay is my Home' (Cardiff); 'From you were Black you were out' (Ladbroke Grove, London).

Director and producer, born in Buenos Aires in 1936. Co-founder with Octavio Getino of the film group Cine Liberacion. Co-director and co-author with Getino of La hora de los hornos (Hour of the Furnaces) and the essay Hacia un tercer cine (Towards a Third Cinema).

The latter, which is one of the major theoretical writings of the New Latin American Cinema, is a manifesto which calls for an alternative to both first cinema, Hollywood, and second cinema, the more literary, psychologistic, partly social but bourgeois cinema which, following European rather than North American cinema, the Argentine film industry began to produce after the second world war. It was a manifesto authentically based on the radical practices of its authors. La hora de los hornos was a mammoth, three-part, four-hour experimental film which they describe as "an act before being a film: an act of liberation". It immediately became a paradigm of militant cinema not only in Argentina but through much of the continent. From a Peronist political perspective, it is a film which inaugurates a new way of using cinema, through popular organisations organised in a parallel distribution system. The film was shown widely but clandestinely, in small meetings and in sections, as circumstances permitted. It was constructed in such a way that it could be stopped in the projector to allow for discussion. Its impact abroad reached well beyond Latin America - it reached the Pesaro Film Festival in Italy in 1968, where it caused a sensation. The rigour of its political analysis and its treatment directly demonstrated the potential of the genre.

Solanas then worked on other Cine Liberacion films, like El camino hacia la muerte del viejo of Gerardo Vallejo, and two more documentaries with Getino on General Peron, made in Madrid in 1971.

In 1974 he made his last Argentinian film to date, Los hijos de Fierro, and then in France in 1980 he made Le Regard des autres, about the physically handicapped.

Filmography

Shorts:

1962: Seguir andando (Continuing to Advance)

1963: Reflexion ciudadana (City Reflection)

Long films:

1966-68: La hora de los hornos (Hour of the Furnaces) (with Octavio Getino)

1971: La Revolucion Justicialista (The Just Revolution) and Actualizacion politica y doctrinaria (Modernising Theory and Politics) (with Cine Liberacion)

1976: Los hijos de Fierro (The Sord of Fierro)

1980: Le regard des autres (The Look of Others)

HAILE GERIMA

HARVEST 3000

With the simultaneous release of two highly acclaimed feature films, Harvest 3000 Years and Bush Mama, Haile Gerima has become recognized as a major talent on the Black filmmaking scene. Critics have hailed his films as signalling the emergence of a "New Black Cinema representing the vitality in independent black filmmaking among African peoples."

Gerima sees himself as part of a still developing Third World movement. Unlike Hollywood movies, his films demolish the negative way of perceiving characters or a story and develop a positive language in cinema. His emphasis lies in the role film can play in discussions of contemporary social and political issues and in affecting change. The quality of Haile Gerima's work signals the concreteness, the closeness to life and issues of living in today's "third world" and the world of tomorrow. His films continuously remind us to discover our potentials and seek out our levels of struggles.

His other films include: Child of Resistance (1972); Bush Mama (1976); Harvest 3000 Years (1976) and Wilmington 10 (1979).

His latest feature film Ashes and Embers which won an award in Berlin Film Festival will be in the London Film Festival 1984.

HENRY MARTIN

Grove Music

Henry Martin, was born in London in 1952. He recieved a Dimplom in Film and Television at the West Surrey College of Art and Design, and has worked as an Assistant Editor, Assistant Camerman, and Researcher on a number of Arts documentaries and music films.

He has directed:-

'Open the Closets'

U S C A D

'Grove Music & Grove Carnival'

The Arts Council

The W O M A D Festival

Good News Productions

He has produced and directed:-

Grenada - 'Is Freedom We Making'

Trinidad & Tobago - 'Money is Not The Problem'

I B T for Channel Four

Current Work

Co-directing a 10-part series of multi-cultural children's programmes called 'Everybody Here'.

Telekation,for Channel Four.

He has also exhibited work at various film festivals including Filmex, Edinburgh Film Festival, and Figueira Da Foz.

Director, born Palmilla, Chile, 1942, the grandson of a family of Palestinian immigrants and Chilean peasants. From 1959 to 1962 he studied theatre at the University of Santiago, in the same school where Victor Jara worked, and in 1962 was one of the young Chilean film makers who worked with Joris Ivens on his two Chilean films, A Valparaiso and El tren de la Victoria (The Victory Train). He then went to work as a director in television, made an independent documentary in 1965, appeared in films by Helvio Soto, and took up a teaching post in the Department of Audio-visual Studies at the University of Santiago in 1968. His position as one of the leading figures of the new cinema in Chile was confirmed with his first feature, El Chacal de Nahueltoro (The Jackal of Nahueltoro), completed in 1969, which was seen by the largest-ever audience for a Chilean film in its own country.

Elected President of the television workers' union in the station where he worked in 1969, he was active in the film makers' committee of support for Salvador Allende during his successful election campaign and in 1971 Allende named him head of the State-owned film company Chile Films. Forced into exile by the coup in 1973, he has lived since then in Mexico, and has directed five films, the most recent of them in Nicaragua, in various combinations of international coproduction.

Filmography

1965: Por la tierra ajena

1969: El Chacal de Nahueltoro (feature)

1971: Companero Presidente, Allende interviewed by Regis Debray

1973: La tierra prometida (The Promised Land) (feature)

1974: Actas de Marusia (Events of Marusia) (feature); Cronica de Tlacotalpan (documentary short)

1978: El recurso del metodo (Viva el Presidente) (Recourse to Method, also known as Viva el Presidente) (feature) based on a novel by Alejo Carpentier

1979: La viuda de Montiel (Montiel's Widow) (feature) (based on a short story by Gabriel Garcia Marquez)

1982 Alsino y el condor (Alsino and the Condor)

Alsino and the Condor will be shown at the London Film Festival on Saturday 19th November.

Maila

Salmaan Peerzada studied History, Philosophy and Economics at the University of Punjab. He started working in film from the age of 17 as an assistant editor and assistant director. He directed several plays in Pakistan.

His education and interest in the theatre and film comes primarily from his father who was himself a well known playwright in India.

Salmaan acted in one feature film in Pakistan and later came to England where he began working as an 'extra' on feature films. He acted in 'Emergency Ward Ten' a television series about doctors. Salmaan played one of the doctors. In 1975 he played the lead role in a feature film entitled 'Private Enterprise'.

He returned to Pakistan in 1975 and started making a film on a play Akhiaan written by his father. Due to political reason the film was stopped before its completion. He then acted in the well known film Blood of Hussain. Salmaan is presently acting in a major feature film being produced in India called Janbaaz.

Parcel Post

Oyekunle is a Nigerian who has been studying cinema at the University College of Los Angeles. Before coming to UCLA to study film, Oyenkunle first interest was in theatre which he developed in Nigeria. He wrote two television play, for Nigerian television and his play Taproot was featured in the 1975 Nigerian Festival of Arts.

Oyenkenle won "The Samuel Goldwyn (of the Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer fame) Creative Writing Award for 1980. This was presented to him in recognition of writing excellence, according to the citation. He is the first African to win the award, which is sponsored jointly by the Samuel Goldwyn Foundation and the University of California, since its inception 25 years ago. Past winners of the award include the celebrated Producer and Director Francis Ford Coppola (The Godfather I,II and Apocalypse Now).

Oyekunle won the award for his Pidgin English screenplay of The Broken Cells a play which deals with the theme of poverty in an African setting. He says writing the play in Pidgin English 'is a continuous attempt at solving the language problem in African art. It is the realisation of the need to bridge the gap between popular and elitist dramatic art in Africa.'

Presently at the University of California, Los Angeles, Oyekunle further explains his use of Pidgin English in The Broken Cells and a few other plays that he has already written as stemming from the need for 'the evolution of a lingue franca in Africa. Pidgin is a compromise language commonly spoken along the West Coast of Africa ... and I want to explore its dramatic potential which is still ignored despite the fact that Pidgin is now studied in some universities.'

On the role of films and television in Africa he adds: 'We have to wake up to the strong role motion pictures and television can play in mobilizing ourselves to rise and become respected peoples in the world community. At best, the role which film and television are playing now is that of extolling other cultures and neglecting our own.'

YOUSSEF CHANINE

Saladin

The National Film Theatre presented a retrospective of Yousseff Chanine's key films in January 1981.

Ken Wlaschin, Director of the National Film Theatre wrote the following about the work of this leading film director.

"Youssef Chahine is one of the leading figures in the emerging Arabic cinema and certainly internationally the best-known and most-widely praised of Egyptian filmmakers. Although his work has had little exposure in Britain and thus he is not as well known here as he should be, he has been a major Egyptian director for over 30 years and many of his films have been featured in international film festivals. His most recent film Alexandria ... Why? won the Special Jury Prize at the 1979 Berlin Festival and was shown in the LFF. Chahine, who was born in Alexandria in 1925, began his directing career in 1950 with Father Amine. He acquired international attention as the discoverer of the actor Omar Sharif who made his screen debut in Chahine's 1953 film, Struggle in the Valley, and quickly became the Arabic cinema's major star. It was, however, the 1958 film Cairo Station which first gained Chahine international critical praise following its warm reception at the Berlin Film Festival. He again attracted wide attention in 1963 when he made the first Egyptian epic, Saladin, as a sign of his admiration for Nasser. His political commitment grew stronger in the late 1960s with films like The Land and Return of the Prodigal Son and he experienced censorship problems. Since the 1973 The Sparrow he has made his films in co-production with Algeria, while admiration for his work has grown enormously throughout the Arabic world.

The Sparrow and Saladin will be screened in the festival.

Yousseff Chahine will also be presenting a paper on the "The Displacement of African Cinema by Foreign Films" on Tuesday 1st November

GASTON KABORE

Mr. Gaston J.M. Kabore was born in 1951 in Bobo Dioulasso, Upper Volta and studied history and film in Paris. He has been Director of the National Film Centre, Ouagadougou since 1977. He also teaches at the Institute of the African Film School. He has made three short films. His first feature film, Wend Kuni was awarded a prize at the Carthage Film Festival and was shown at the Nantes Film Festival.

FERID BOUGHEDIR

Camera D' Afrique

Born at Hammam-Lif (Tunisia) of a father who was a writer and a journalist, Ferid Boughedir gained experience in cinema as assistant-director to the french director Alain Robbe-Grillet and the spanish playwright and director Arrabal.

Boughedir is one of the most brilliant hopes of Tunisian cinema. Director of numerous short-feature films, he is also a film critic and a lecturer at the University of Tunis. He acquired his P.H.D. with a thesis from the Sorbonne in Paris, devoted to African and Arab cinema, and will publish soon an "Encyclopedia of African Cinema" (published by Jeune Afrique in Paris).

With his inventive and original ideas and his passion for everything to do with cinema, Boughedir has animated several film Festivals in Europe and Africa, such as "Carthage cinematographic days" Mediterranean Film Festival" and the "Francophone Film Festival". He has also participated in the conception and organisation of various international film symposiums in Florence, Tunis, Niamey, Ouagadougou, Mogadiscio and Mexico.

Author of several long feature films, scripts, such as Straight to the heart of Tunis, The house of my mother he was also co-author of such films as Mokhtar (with Sadok Ben Aicha) and La Mort Trouble (with Claude d' Anna). His short films Paris-Tunis (1967) and Pic-Nic (1972) won first prizes at the international festivals of Louviere (Belgium) and Dinard (France). Camera d'Afrique which is devoted to Black African Cinema, will be completed by another full length film on "North African Cinemas". After that, Ferid Boughedir will direct his first long feature film: a comedy set in the most popular neighborhood in Tunis: Halfaouine.

H.O. NAZARETH

Talking History: C.L.R. James & E.P. Thompson

H.O. Nazareth was born in Bombay, India, and has lived in London since 1965. He has worked at a variety of jobs, from advertising executive and shipping clerk to computer programmer and telephone operator.

Most recently he has been working as a freelance journalist, writing mainly for London papers, and occasionally for magazines in Europe, the U.S. and India. He writes frequently for the London weekly listings magazine, City Limits, on theatre, books, films

In March 1981 his television play 'The Garland' (co-written with Horace Ove) was broadcast as a BBC Play for Today. He has since produced a number of programmes for Channel Four like 'The C.L.R. James Lectures', a series of six programmes, four of which were broadcast in July 1983. He has also produced a concert programme 'Music Fusion' for Channel Four, recorded live on video at St. John's, Smith Square.

A collection of his poems, 'LOBO' is due out this winter, published by a publishing house in Bombay, in co-operation with Penumbra Productions in London.

His first involvement with film directing came with 'TALKING HISTORY' which he has also researched and produced. This 52 minute 16mm film was partly funded by the Greater London Council for whom Nazareth works part-time as Peace Year (1983) Film co-ordinator.