

IDFA 2013

SONG FROM THE FOREST

by Michael Obert

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• **TRADES REVIEWS**

INDIEWIRE, review by Eric Kohn

<http://www.indiewire.com/article/review-gorgeous-song-from-the-forest-tracks-how-louis-sarno-joined-a-pygmy-tribe-started-a-family-and-returned-to-new-york>

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, review by Neil Young

<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/song-forest-idfa-review-659585>

SCREEN INTERNATIONAL, review by Mark Adams

<http://www.screendaily.com/reviews/the-latest/song-from-the-forest/5064229.article?referrer=RSS>

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REVIEWS

BY ERIC KOHN

NOVEMBER 22, 2013 3:50 PM

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Review: Gorgeous 'Song From the Forest' Tracks How Louis Sarno Joined a Pygmy Tribe, Started A Family And Returned to New York



"Song From the Forest."

The saga of Louis Sarno has never been a secret. In the 1980s, American writer and musicologist visited the remote Bayaka Pygmy clan in the Central African Republic to record their unique music; with time, he settled among them, married a member of the tribe and started a family. In 1993, he published a memoir of his experiences, followed by an

album collecting the Bayaka's earthy acoustic melodies in 1996; in 2010, Lavina Currier's feature-length "Oka!" fictionalized Sarno's journey with Kris Marshall cast as an embellished version of Sarno.

But the true record of his unique tale finally comes together in "Song From the Forest," documentarian Michael Obert's perceptive and utterly gorgeous look at Sarno's life today and his experience returning to his old haunts in New York. Through an elegant juxtaposition of jungle and city life, "Song From the Forest" (which takes its name from Sarno's book) not only shows what drew Sarno to the Bayaka's world, but the impulse that kept him there.

Delicately shot by cinematographer Siri Klug, "Song From the Forest" begins with an abrupt immersion into Sarno's life, where he's surrounded by lush greenery in every direction and the spiritual profundity that the tribe's solitary life has provided him. It doesn't take long to establish why he loves it there, but despite the degree of his integration he remains tied to his earlier roots: a scrappy radio provides him with news from the outside world, and he continues his affinity for classical music, which Obert conveys through a soundtrack that blends the Bayaka's sounds with 16th century renaissance chants.

The resulting portrait of Sarno's existence could form a compelling project by itself, but Obert effectively digs deeper to magnify Sarno's distaste for his old home with an appropriate hook: After his adolescent son Samedi grows ill, a bereft Sarno promises that he'll take the child to see the world if he manages to pull through; once he does, Sarno takes Samedi on a trip to New York, where Samedi seems more curious about the allures of urban life than his father ever was. The resulting odyssey reflects a greater meditation on the value of Sarno's work recording the tribe's sounds by hinting at its newer generation's desire for assimilation.



SONG FROM THE FOREST TRAILER

from [Tondowski Films](#) PRO



02:02



HD

Before it gets that far, however, "Song From the Forest" explores Sarno's desire to abandon his roots with an ongoing audiovisual contrast between civilization and the tranquility of his Central African life. Among those reflecting on Sarno's choices, a key figure is his old pal Jim Jarmusch, who explains how the radicalism of their youth led Sarno to immerse himself in a culture divorced from the complex socioeconomic pressures of the Western world. "You realize how artificial it is," Sarno says. Even so, not everyone around him comprehended the move -- as his suburban-dwelling brother explains, their father only came to accept Sarno's unorthodox life choice on the older man's death bed.

For Sarno, however, the music speaks for itself. He was drawn to the Bayaka after hearing a snippet of their sounds on the radio, and ultimately became their greatest chronicler. His recordings, comprised of over 1,000 hours and 25

years worth of sounds, capture the communal aspect of the music and the way it blends with the natural surroundings. It has a uniquely fragile dimension -- "a sound not to be heard again," as Sarno puts it -- which makes the value of his work to other researchers unprecedented, as several of them interviewed in the movie attest.

Obert also reveals how the level of integration that Sarno experienced as he recorded these sounds has extended to his daily life: The filmmaker reveals snippets of Sarno speaking with his fellow villagers in their native tongue, helping them with their medical needs, and bargaining for local supplies. He seems so fully a part of their world that the prospects of leaving them is unthinkable -- which makes his eventual trip a source of much intrigue.



Louis Sarno in "Song From the Forest."

When the eventual voyage takes place, it confirms Sarno's lack of interest in his past, while showing his consternation with the way the rest of world (particularly doctors) regard him like a museum object. However, by primarily unfolding in the present, "Song From the Forest" leaves Sarno and the Bayaka in the same mysterious state that so many others see them in. The means by which he fell in love and decided to start a family, in addition to the relationship that the rest of the tribe has with the world beyond the jungle, remain somewhat frustratingly unclear.

However, that never detracts from the movie's success as a form of first-rate ethnographic storytelling. By documenting Sarno's worldview, "Song From the Forest" compellingly foregrounds the ephemeral nature of all culture. Additionally, by demonstrating the intrinsically beautiful quality of the Bayaka's ways, it merges with his mission.

Criticwire Grade: B+

HOW WILL IT PLAY? Certain to gather interest on the festival following its world premiere at the International Documentary Festival Amsterdam, "Song From the Forest" should make its way to the U.S. by way of festivals like Sundance and SXSW; it seems well-positioned to wind up with a midsize distributor able to push the film out to an older audience in limited release.

REVIEWS

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Song From the Forest: IDFA Review

12:54 PM PST 11/23/2013 by Neil Young

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The Bottom Line

Quietly resonant documentary on an unusual father/son relationship finds fresh notes among familiar ethnographic themes.

Venue

International Documentary Film Festival, Amsterdam (Feature-Length Competition), Nov. 23, 2013

Director

Michael Obert

Ethno-musicologist Louis Sarno and his son Samedi feature in Michael Obert's German documentary, world-premiering in competition at the Amsterdam festival.

Alternating between the urban jungle of Manhattan and the rain-forest of Africa with metronomic aplomb, award-winning German journalist and author **Michael Obert** effects an belated, auspicious transition to film-making with *Song From the Forest*. An early buzz-title in the main competition section of Amsterdam's documentary showcase IDFA, this likeably modest study of veteran, well-traveled American musicologist **Louis Sarno** will go on to a busy festival and small-screen career and looks a viable candidate for arthouse Stateside distribution, not just in NYC.

A longtime close friend/mentor of **Jim Jarmusch**, who appears in a handful of scenes, Sarno has spent decades living in the Central African Republic recording the fast-disappearing musical traditions of remote forest tribes. Sarno's immersion in these cultures is such that he's in effect become a member of one such people, the Bayaka. While usually referred to as 'pygmies,' the Bayaka we see appear only a little below average height.

Sarno's relationship with a local woman has produced a child, **Samedi**, who at the age of 13 is taken by his father to meet his family in the United States. Audiences expecting the lad to deliver illuminating insights on the differences between these two diametrically opposite places are in for disappointment. Samedi, who we're told is illiterate and who speaks no English, generally seems glumly bemused by what he experiences. And so it's a surprise when Obert finally gets him to open up in such articulate, perceptive and practical-minded fashion about what he expected to gain from his Stateside sojourn.

Indeed, while there's no shortage of talk in *Song From the Forest* (titled after Sarno's 1993 book) some of which veers towards the 'New Age' mystical end of the spectrum, the film mainly operates in terms of striking images and aural impressions. **Siri Klug's** cinematography generally presents Manhattan in terms of its buildings, huge blocky structures which dwarf all else. In the Yandoumbe region, however, it's people who predominate, their lives explicitly presented as being quite literally in tune with the places where they live, play and hunt.

As befits a movie about a man whose life is dedicated to listening, particular attention is devoted to the crafting of intricate soundscapes: **Marian Mentrup** (Special Sound Editing), **Timo Selengia** (Location Sound) and **Daniel Teige** (Sound Design) are arguably the enterprise's unseen MVPs. Himself something of a globetrotter with a particular interest in African subjects, Obert may be a newcomer to cinema but his editor **Wiebke Grundler** has more than a decade of experience under her belt. The pair achieve a delicately seductive flow of scenes, cumulatively conveying the deep connection Sarno obviously feels with the Bayaka and their perilously endangered corner of the world. The soundtrack features numerous haunting extracts from Sarno's recordings from the 80s and 90s, exquisitely counterpointed with the heavenly Renaissance choral polyphony from which he draws inspiration and serenity.

Venue: International Documentary Film Festival, Amsterdam (Feature-Length Competition)

Production company: Tondowski Films

Director/Screenwriter: Michael Obert

Producers: Alexandre Tondowski, Ira Tondowski

Editor: Wiebke Grundler

Director of photography: Siri Klug

Sales: Deckert Distribution, Leipzig

No MPAA rating, 96 minutes

Links:

[1] <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/dont-leave-me-ne-me-659065>

[2] <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/best-documentary-oscar-25-potential-655375>

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SCREENDAILY

Song From the Forest

3 December, 2013 | By Mark Adams, chief film critic



Dir/sr: Michael Obert. Germany. 2013. 96mins

An immersive delight as it follows globe-trotting American musicologist Louis Sarno as he tracks down soon-to-be-lost musical traditions, the elegantly made *Song From The Forest* – and award winner at documentary festival IDFA and a strong buzz title amongst buyers – has the style, tone and look of a film that can crack theatrical distribution as well as being a must for other film festivals.

Song From the Forest succeeds in being a striking and gently haunting film.

Debut German journalist/author Michael Obert – whose friendship with Jim Jarmusch (who appears in a few scenes) helps give the film a cultural and artistic edge – veers between the mean streets of New York and the lush rainforests of Africa as Sarno sets about his absorbing work.

While still a young man, Sarno heard a song on the radio that absorbed him and he followed this musical message to its origin in the central African rainforest, where he found the music's origin with a tribe of hunters and gatherers, the Bayaka pygmies.

Some 25 years later and Sarno lives as one of them, speaks the Bayaka's language and is raising his pygmy son, Samedi. He has collected over 1,000 hours of unique recordings of Bayaka music, which he recently donated to the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford in the UK.

Sarno had promised him to show Samedi where he was from and so takes 13-year-old to see the life he left behind in the US. Amongst those they meet is Sarno's best friend Jim who remembers their college days and how Louis changed after his first visit to the Bayaka.

It is a charming and beautifully filmed story as Sarno – who has immersed himself in the culture of the Bayaka and had a relationship with a tribal woman with whom he has a child – finding the trip back to the US somewhat harder to deal with than Samedi who seems bemused rather than intrigued by his new surroundings.

Where the film is at its very best is when it blends its delightful visuals with Sarno's work) with the film haunting both visually and aurally. And while there is plenty of old-fashioned conversation within the film it is in sound-and-vision that *Song From the Forest* succeeds in being a striking and gently haunting film.

Production company: Tondowski Films, ma.ja.de Filmproduktion GmbH, WDR

International sales: Deckert Distribution, <http://deckert-distribution.com>

Producers: Alexandre Tondowski, Ira Tondowski

Cinematography: Siri Klug

Editor: Wiebke Grundler

With: Louis Sarno, Samedi Mathurin Bokombe

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Interviewee: Michael Obert

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DE VOLKSKRANT- BEREND-JAN BOCKTING (Daily)

Interviewee: Alex Tondowski

■ **NETHERLANDS**

VPRO INSIDE IDFA – MAAIKE DE GRUIJTER (TV)

Interview: Song from the Forest

Louis Sarno not only lived with the Bayaka, but also married into the tribe and fathered a son, Samedi. In the film, he returns to his native New York with Samedi, who has never left the rainforest before. Surprisingly, young Samedi seems to cope better with the alien environment of New York than Louis, who grew up there.



[Song from the Forest](#) opens with long shots of the lush rainforest of the Central African Republic, accompanied by the renaissance splendour of William Byrd's sixteenth-century, polyphonic 'Mass for Four Voices'. American Louis Sarno has lived for 25 years among the indigenous Bayaka people in the central African jungle, drawn there by a recording of one of their songs which he heard three decades ago, in Amsterdam. "So the fact the film is premiering in Amsterdam at IDFA is strangely appropriate," Obert says.

Making *Song from the Forest* proved a remarkably quick process, especially considering it is journalist Obert's first venture into the medium of film. "It all came from an idea while having a beer with [producer] Alex [Tondowski]", Obert explains. "Normally it takes two to three years to get a project like this off the ground, but we were able to raise the finance very quickly. I think because Louis' story is so fascinating. We went from that beer to filming with 600 kg of equipment in the rain forest of central Africa in a matter of months."

As we follow Louis and Samedi on their stay in New York, the difficulties Louis faces through his choice to live with the Bayaka become ever more starkly apparent. "Louis has big problems, like debts from paying for food and medicines for the Bayaka", Obert explains. "He's also getting older, and experiencing medical problems. But Samedi is able to take it all in his stride. So it's like the father learns from the son."

"The Bayaka are currently facing increased threats from the war and poachers, so we have [set up a website](#) to try to help", Obert says. "The site is not ready yet, we've been too busy finishing the film – I never expected it to be selected for competition at IDFA, so we've really had to concentrate on that. If it's not up by now, it will be soon!"

Mark Baker

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See also

[Song from the Forest](#)

• **SELECTED INTERNATIONAL PRESS**

SCREENDAILY.COM by Geoffrey Macnab

<http://www.screendaily.com/news/song-from-the-forest-wins-at-idfa/5064163.article>

C7NEMA.NET by Jorge Pereira

<http://www.c7nema.net/festival/item/40600-song-from-the-forest-venge-festival-internacional-de-documentarios-de-amsterdam-idfa.html>

REALSCREEN.COM by Adam Benzine

<http://realscreen.com/2013/11/29/idfa-13-song-from-the-forest-wins-in-amsterdam/#ixzz2mV5iRdPZ>

FILMLINC.COM by Brian Brooks

<http://www.filmlinc.com/blog/entry/idfa-awards-song-from-the-forest-top-doc-prize>

FANDOR.COM by David Hudson

<http://www.fandor.com/blog/daily-artforums-best-of-2013-and-more>

KINO-ZEIT.DE

<http://www.kino-zeit.de/news/deutsche-produktion-song-from-the-forest-gewinnt-hauptpreis-im-idfa-wettbewerb>

MEDIABIZ.DE

<http://www.mediabiz.de/film/news/deutsche-doku-gewinnt-hauptpreis-in-amsterdam/341118>

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SCREENDAILY

Song From The Forest wins at IDFA

29 November, 2013 | By [Geoffrey Macnab](#)

The awards winners for the 26th IDFA were announced in Amsterdam on Friday night.

Song from the Forest by Germany's Michael Obert won the main prize at IDFA (International Documentary Festival Amsterdam) tonight (Nov 29).

The film won the VPRO IDFA Award for Best Feature-Length Documentary, worth €12,500.

The film tells the story of American Louis Sarno, who has lived for 25 years with a tribe of Pygmies in the jungle of Central Africa and decides to take his son to the US for the first time.

The Special Jury Award went to ***A Letter to Nelson Mandela*** by Khalo Matabane (South Africa / Germany), in which the filmmaker takes a critical look at Nelson Mandela, his status and role in the reforms that took place in South Africa in the 1990s.

Twin Sisters by Mona Friis Bertheussen won the BankGiro Loterij IDFA Audience Award.

The Russian collective Gogol's Wives Productions won the NTR IDFA Award for Best Mid-Length Documentary (€10,000) for ***Pussy Versus Putin*** – a grim record of the struggle by the wild, anarchistic female band Pussy Riot against President Putin, from their first disruptive performances to images shot in police cells.

Audiences were up at what organisers have been describing as "a record year".

Autlook sales

Business was brisk too at the festival's market, Docs For Sale. One sales agent reporting a host of deals on its IDFA slate was Austrian-based Autlook.

Autlook's *The Trials Of Muhammad Ali* by Bill Siegel, currently in US theatres with Kino Lorber, did fierce sales at IDFA, both theatrically and for TV.

DR Denmark, UR Sweden, YLE Finland, VPRO Netherlands, China, Channel 8 Israel all came on board. Theatrical deals include Madman for Australia with several more pending.

Locarno winner and also "best of the fest" selected *Master Of The Universe* had theatrical deals secured ahead of the market to Frenetic Films Switzerland, Arsenal Films Germany and Polyfilm Austria - and has now sold to Kinosmith Canada and Ambulante Mexico, who will organise a theatrical tour with over 30 screenings in Mexico.

Another of Autlook's IDFA titles, *Mercedes Sosa, The Voice Of Latin America* went to Pay TV New Zealand, YES Israel, HRT Croatia, Polish TV and theatrical deal to First Run Features USA.

Buyers have also been grabbing Docs For Sale title *New Boobs* which has gone to Belgium (VRT) and Sweden (UR).

Also in Docs For Sale Penny Lane's *Our Nixon* has sold to ARTE France, SVT Sweden, NRK Norway, EBS Korea, DR Denmark and Yes Israel.

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«Song from the Forest» vence Festival Internacional de Documentários de Amesterdão (IDFA)

• • Publicado por [Jorge Pereira](#) • [Sê o primeiro a comentar](#)



O filme *Song from the Forest*, de Michael Obert, venceu o Prémio de Melhor Documentário no Festival Internacional de Documentários de Amesterdão (IDFA), um dos mais importantes certames mundiais a nível do cinema documental e que este ano apresentou cerca de 100 estreias mundiais.

Em *Song from the Forest* toda a atenção é centrada em Louis Sarno, um homem que viveu durante 25 anos com uma tribo de Pigmeus na África Central e que agora leva o seu filho pela primeira vez ao país onde nasceu: os EUA.

Adicionalmente, o júri decidiu ainda atribuir um prémio especial a *A Letter to Nelson Mandela*, um filme de Khalo Matabane na qual o cineasta lança um olhar crítico ao estatuto de Nelson Mandela e ao seu papel nas reformas que tiveram lugar na África do Sul nos anos 90.

Já o prémio das médias-metragens foi para o coletivo Gogol's Wives Productions, pela obra *Pussy Versus Putin*. Como o próprio nome indica, o filme pega na luta entre a banda Pussy Riot e Vladimir Putin.





No que diz respeito ao prémio de primeira presença no certame, a vitória coube a Farida Pacha por *My Name Is Salt*, um filme sobre a intensidade do trabalho num campo de extração de sal. O júri decidiu ainda premiar nesta secção, com um prémio especial em memória do recentemente falecido Peter Wintonick, *Forest of the Dancing Spirits*, um retrato de uma tribo de Pigmeus assinado por Linda Västrik.

Finalmente, uma última nota para a vitória de *Awake in a Bad Dream*, um trabalho de Petra Lataster-Czisch e Peter Lataster que acompanha três mulheres a lidar com o sofrimento físico e psicológico causado pelo cancro da mama.

O Festival Internacional de Documentários de Amesterdão (IDFA) encerra no próximo domingo. Aqui fica a lista de vencedores:

Vencedores

Melhor Documentário (VPRO IDFA Award): *Song from the Forest*, de Michael Obert

Prémio Especial do Júri: *A Letter to Nelson Mandela*, de Khalo Matabane

Melhor Documentário Holandês (Dioraphte IDFA Award): *Awake in a Bad Dream*, de Petra Lataster-Czisch e Peter Lataster

Melhor Primeira Obra: *My Name Is Salt*, de Farida Pacha

Prémio Especial do Júri em memória de Peter Wintonick: *Forest of the Dancing Spirits*, de Linda Västrik

Melhor Documentário (Média Metragem): *Pussy Versus Putin*, para o coletivo Gogol's Wives Production

Melhor Documentário Musical: *Twenty Feet from Stardom*, de Morgan Neville

Prémio do Público: *Twin Sisters*, de Mona Friis Bertheussen

Prémio para a Competição estudantil: *Final Destination*, de Ricardas Marcinkus

Prémio DocLab para Melhor Narrativa Digital: *Love Your Work*, de Jonathan Harris

Prémio DOC U: #chicagoGirl – *The Social Network Takes on a Dictator*, de Joe Piscatella

IDFA '13: “Song from the Forest” wins in Amsterdam



4 days ago by [Adam Benzine](#)



Michael Obert's *Song from the Forest* (pictured) won the prize for best feature-length documentary at IDFA in Holland, while Mona Friis Bertheussen's *Twin Sisters* took the audience award.

Obert's doc looks at Louis Sarno, an American who decides to take his son to the U.S. for the first time after spending 25 years living with a tribe of pygmies in a jungle in Central Africa.

Twin Sisters, meanwhile, tells the story of Chinese twins who are adopted in two completely different parts of world, before being re-united by fate.

Elsewhere, IDFA presented a special jury award to Khalo Matabane's *A Letter to Nelson Mandela*, which sees the filmmaker taking a critical look at the world statesman, his status, and his role in the reforms that took place in South Africa in the 1990s.

Morgan Neville received the IDFA Melkweg Music Documentary Audience Award for *Twenty Feet from Stardom*; while the award for student competition went to Ricardas Marcinkus for *Final Destination*.

The award for first appearance, meanwhile, was presented to Farida Pacha for *My Name Is Salt*, which observes the labor-intensive process of salt extraction in an Indian desert. The latter film was made with financial support from the IDFA Bertha Fund, and was selected for the IDFA WorldView Summer School in 2009.

The jury also presented an extra award in memory of the late filmmaker Peter Wintonick: the Peter Wintonick Special Jury Award for First Appearance. The award went to Linda Västrik for *Forest of the Dancing Spirits*, a portrait of a tribe of pygmies in Central Africa.

The award for Dutch documentary went to breast cancer doc *Awake in a Bad Dream*, by Petra Lataster-Czisch and Peter Lataster; while the film *A Home for Lydia*, by Eline Helena Schellekens, was voted by a children's jury as the best Dutch youth documentary of the past year.

Meanwhile, the winner of the IDFA award for best mid-length documentary was *Pussy Versus Putin*, from Russian Collective Gogol's Wives Productions. IDFA's jury called the film "a brilliant and important account of the story of the collective group Pussy Riot told through marvelous and precious footage."

Finally, the IDFA DOC U Award, presented by a jury of young people, went to Joe Piscatella for *#chicagoGirl – The Social Network takes on a Dictator*; while the Firestarters IDFA DocLab Award for Digital Storytelling was won by Jonathan Harris's web doc *I Love Your Work*.

The awards ceremony for the 26th International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) took place at Amsterdam's Compagnietheater this evening (November 29).

The awards come as the festival stated today that, although it runs until Sunday (December 1), it can already state that it will have welcomed more visitors than last year, with roughly 222,000 attending screenings – up from 14,000 from 208,000 in 2012.

Next year's festival will take place from November 19-30, 2014.

Tags: [A Letter to Nelson Mandela](#), [Final Destination](#), [IDFA](#), [International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam](#), [Michael Obert](#), [Mona Friis Bertheussen](#), [My Name is Salt](#), [Song from the Forest](#), [Twenty Feet From Stardom](#), [Twin Sisters](#)



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IDFA Awards ‘Song From the Forest’ Top Doc Prize

Posted by Brian Brooks on 11.30.2013



Michael Obert's *Song From the Forest*.

The International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, usually simply referred to by its acronym "IDFA" is typically a launching pad for some of the biggest international documentaries of the upcoming year. The festival annually hosts dozens of premieres from both veterans and newcomers of non-fiction filmmaking and the Dutch city crowds into screenings of films as wide-ranging as aspiring astronauts in

Iran to street kids in Ethiopia (this year's IDFA hosted 220,000 ticket holders). The festival also attracts an international crowd of industry and visitors to the 12 day event, which also awards prizes. This year, the 26th IDFA gave its top prize, the VPRO IDFA Award for Best Feature-Length Documentary to Michael Obert's *Song From the Forest*.

The feature spotlights American Louis Sarno, who has lived for 25 years with a tribe of Pygmies in the jungle of Central Africa. *Song From the Forest* captures his life there and follows him as he decides to take his son to America for the first time, landing in New York.

Also winning prizes, *Twin Sisters* by Mona Friis Bertheussen took the BankGiro Loterij IDFA Audience Award, while Special Jury Award to *A Letter to Nelson Mandela* by Khalo Matabane (South Africa / Germany), in which the filmmaker takes a critical look at Nelson Mandela, his status and role in the reforms that took place in South Africa in the 1990s. And *Pussy Versus Putin* (Russia) won the NTR IDFA Award for Best Mid-Length Documentary.

The 26th IDFA took place November 26 - December 1. The World Premiere of Syrian filmmaker Talal Derki's *Return To Homs*, which follows two men who are fighting in Syria's civil war, opened the festival.



Khalo Matabane's *A Letter to Nelson Mandela*.

2013 IDFA Winners follow:

Best Feature Length Documentary:

Song From the Forest by Michael Obert (The Netherlands) - American Louis Sarno, has lived with a tribe of Pygmies in the jungle of Central Africa for 25 years and decides to take his son to America for the first time.

Special Jury Prize:

A Letter to Nelson Mandela by Khalo Matabane - the filmmaker takes a critical look at Nelson Mandela, his status and role in the reforms that took place in South Africa in the 1990s.

NTR IDFA Award for Best Mid-Length Documentary

Pussy Versus Putin by Gogol's Wives Productions (collective) - a grim record of the struggle by the wild, anarchistic female band Pussy Riot against president Putin, from their first disruptive performances to images shot in police cells.

IDFA Award for First Appearances

My Name Is Salt (Switzerland/India) - a painstaking observation of the labour-intensive process of salt extraction in an Indian desert, where the repetitive actions and events take on a ritual character. The film was made with financial support from the IDFA Bertha Fund, and was selected for the IDFA WorldView Summer School in 2009.

*The jury also presented an extra award in memory of Peter Wintonick: the Peter Wintonick Special Jury Award for First Appearance. The award went to Linda Västrik for *Forest of the Dancing Spirits*, a portrait of a tribe of pygmies in Central Africa.*



Gogol's Wives Productions's *Pussy Versus Putin*.

Also taking prizes:

Jury report IDFA Award for Student Competition

Twenty Feet from Stardom by Morgan Neville (USA, 2013) - Backing singers of superstars reveal what it is like to live in the shadow of fame, and talk about their love of music.

The firestarters IDFA DocLab Award for Digital Storytelling (€ 2,500) went to *I Love Your Work* (USA) by Jonathan Harris. In this web documentary, nine women in the lesbian porn industry reveal not only their bodies, but their thoughts to the camera.

Jury report firestarters IDFA DocLab Award for Digital Storytelling

The IDFA DOC U Award (€ 1,500, presented by a jury of young people)

#chicagoGirl by Joe Piscatella – *The Social Network Takes on a Dictator* (USA / Syria). From a suburb of Chicago, a nineteen-year-old American female student has been coordinating the Syrian revolution since 2011, armed with every imaginable social network.

Jury report IDFA DOC U Award

A Home for Lydia by Eline Helena Schellekens - The film tells the story of Lydia, who was born in the Netherlands but has no residence permit. A special children's jury voted *A Home for Lydia* the best Dutch youth documentary of the past year. Eline Helena Schellekens received €15,000 towards making a new youth documentary.



Daily | Artforum's Best of 2013 (and More)

Plus: a Chabrol primer, a Naruse booklet, and more favorite books of the year.

By [David Hudson](#) December 1, 2013

In keeping with tradition, [John Waters](#) officially launches the best-of-the-year list-making season in *Artforum*. His #1: Harmony Korine's *Spring Breakers*. He's also got two films by Bruno Dumont (*Camille Claudel 1915* and *Hors Satan*) and Catherine Breillat's *Abuse of Weakness* in his top five.

Elsewhere in this "Best of 2013" issue, *Artforum* contributing editor [Bruce Hainley](#) places *Spring Breakers* at #2 on his list. #1 on [Okwui Enwezor](#)'s list is [Schaulager](#)'s exhibition of work by Steve McQueen: "The most rewarding exhibition I have seen in a long time, it confirmed that, at the age of 44, Steve McQueen is already one of the greats. Coinciding with the release of his latest feature film, *12 Years a Slave*, this extensive retrospective brought McQueen's impressive two decades of quiet radicality full circle, showing that to comprehend his powerful and unsparing vision as a filmmaker one must begin with the roots of his practice as an artist." The show comes in at #6 on [Julia Peyton-Jones](#)'s list. Enwezor is the director of the Haus der Kunst, Jones of the Serpentine Galleries.

To revisit the *Sight & Sound* top ten for a moment, the magazine's posted [Carrie McAlinden](#)'s essay on the film voted #1, [Joshua Oppenheimer](#)'s *The Act of Killing*. The "dialectical tensions between competing versions of history"—the death squad's and Oppenheimer's—"call to mind Walter Benjamin's *Theses on the Philosophy of History*. For Benjamin, the past of the 'oppressed' must be wrenched from the historicist concept of history as a 'continuum' of 'homogeneous, empty time' that is defined by 'the victors.' The past must be recognised instead as a 'dialectical image' wherein the past is called forth into the present. Both approaches to history can be found in *The Act of Killing*."

[David Kalat](#) offers a [Claude Chabrol](#) primer at *Movie Morlocks*. At *Nihon Cine Art*, you'll find a booklet with articles on [Mikio Naruse](#) by Audie Bock, Hideko Takamine, and Kihachi Okamoto. [Scott Feinberg](#) interviews [Bernardo Bertolucci](#) for the *Hollywood Reporter*. And, beginning with the November edition, *RogerEbert.com* is the new host of [Glenn Kenny](#)'s "Blu-ray Consumer Guide."

IN OTHER NEWS

"The International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, usually simply referred to by its acronym '[IDFA](#)' is typically a launching pad for some of the biggest international

documentaries of the upcoming year,” writes [Brian Brooks](#) for the Film Society of Lincoln Center. “This year, the 26th IDFA gave its top prize, the VPRO IDFA Award for Best Feature-Length Documentary to Michael Obert’s [Song From the Forest](#).” And he’s got the full list of award-winners.

BOOKS

The [Washington Post](#) has selected its top ten books of 2013, the [Independent](#)’s rolled out its special section, and contributors to the [Financial Times](#) have a few words of praise for each of the books they’ve chosen. Peter Aspden’s overseen the film section, and he’s going for [The Best Film You’ve Never Seen: 35 Directors Champion the Forgotten or Critically Savaged Movies They Love](#), by Robert Elder; [My Lunches with Orson: Conversations Between Henry Jaglom and Orson Welles](#), by Henry Jaglom, edited by Peter Biskind; [The World is Ever Changing](#), by Nicolas Roeg; and Taschen’s “weighty and mean-looking coffee table must,” [The Godfather Family Album](#), by Steve Schapiro and Paul Duncan. Let’s also note that, in the architecture section, Edwin Heathcote recommends [The View from the Train: Cities and Other Landscapes](#), by Patrick Keiller.

“Film and television actress [Jean Kent](#), one of Britain’s biggest stars in the 1940s and 1950s, has died,” reports the [BBC](#). “Kent’s career included regular appearances in [Gainsborough melodramas](#), which were popular with large numbers of newly-independent women following the outbreak of World War II. She made 45 films and during her career starred alongside Marilyn Monroe, Michael Redgrave and Laurence Olivier.”

ENDNOTE

[John Wyver](#) opens a fresh roundup with notes on the BBC’s archives and “the sustainability (or not) of making innovative digital (and other) cultural work.”

For news and tips throughout the day every day, follow [@KeyframeDaily](#) on Twitter and/or the [RSS](#) feed. Get Keyframe Daily in your inbox by signing in at [fandor.com/daily](#). And just for fun, we’re [tumbling](#), too.



Deutsche Produktion "Song from the Forest" gewinnt Hauptpreis im IDFA-Wettbewerb

02/12/13



Regisseur Michael Obert und sein Team durften zum Abschluss des International Documentary Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) die Auszeichnung für den besten Dokumentarfilm entgegen nehmen.

[Song from the Forest](#) erzählt die spannende Lebensgeschichte des Amerikaners Louis Sarno, der sich vor über zwanzig Jahren entschloss, einem Musikstück bis in den zentralafrikanischen Regenwald zu folgen, und schließlich dort zu bleiben. Obert begleitet Louis und seinen Sohn Samedi bei ihrer gemeinsamen Reise in Louis' alte Heimat New York – eine Welt, die dem 13-jährigen Samedi äußerst fremd ist.

Hier der Trailer zum Film, der beim IDFA seine Weltpremiere feierte:

Der Special Jury Award wurde den Machern des Dokumentarfilms **Ein Brief an Nelson Mandela** überreicht. Alle weiteren Auszeichnungen sowie Beiträge des diesjährigen IDFA finden sich [hier](#), auf der Website des Festival.

Das IDFA, das weltweit größte Festival für Dokumentarfilme, fand in diesem Jahr vom 20. November bis zum 1. Dezember statt und zeigte mehr als 250 Kurz- und Langfilme aus über 40 Ländern.

Deutsche Doku gewinnt Hauptpreis in Amsterdam

Auf dem 26. International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) wurde "Song from the Forest" des deutschen Regisseurs Michael Obert (Produzent: Tondowski Film/[ma.ja.de](#)) mit dem Hauptpreis bedacht. Der Film gewann den mit 12.500 Euro dotierten *IDFA-Award* als bester abendfüllender Dokumentarfilm. Obert erzählt von einem US-Amerikaner, der, angezogen von der Musik der Bayaka-Pygmäen, ein Vierteljahrhundert mit dem indigenen Stamm im zentralafrikanischen Regenwalds lebt und eine Familie gründet. Als sein Sohn 13 ...



"Song from the Forest" entführt den Zuschauer in die Welt der Bayaka in Zentralafrika (Bild: Festival)

Mit einem Abo können Sie diesen Artikel kommentieren.

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Ulrich Höcherl, Chefredakteur Blickpunkt:Film
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‘Ne me quitte pas’ grote kans- hebber Idfa

Van onze kunstredactie

AMSTERDAM - De Nederlandse film *Ne me quitte pas* van Sabine Lubbe Bakker en Niels van Kooyden is één van de grote kanshebbers voor een prijs op het 26ste Idfa.

De film over de vriendschap tussen een Waalse en een Vlaamse drinkebroer in de marge van de Belgische samenleving is genomineerd in de hoofdcategorie *Competition for feature-length documentary*.

Hier heeft de film concurrentie van *Al Wehret: the false case* van Andreas Johnson (Denemarken) en *Song from the forest* van Michael Obert (Duitsland). De winnaar in deze categorie ontvangt de VPRO Idfa Award. Daarnaast kan de jury nog een Speciale Jury Award uitreiken.

De film is ook genomineerd in het programma voor beste Nederlandse documentaires. Naast *Ne me quitte pas* komen *Ana Ana* van Petr Lom en *Confine* van Egeraat en *Awake in a bad dream* van Petra Lataster-Crisch en Peter Lataster in aanmerking.

In de competitie voor documentaires tot 60 minuten ('mid-length') gaat het tussen *Kismet* van Nina Maria Paschidou, *Pussy versus Putin* van Gogol's wives Productions en *Soul food stories* van Tonislav Hristov.

De prijzen worden morgenavond uitgereikt in het CompagnieTheater. Het Idfa duurt tot en met zondag. Op zaterdag is er een programma met prijswinnaars in de Kabouaal van de Melkweg.



IDFA-GENOMINEERDEN

Het vriendschaps/alcoholportret *Ne Me Quitte Pas* van twee Amsterdammers met een Vlaamse achtergrond, Sabine Lubbe Bakker en Niels van Koelvorden is genomineerd voor de VPRO IDFA Award voor beste lange documentaire. Dat werd gisteravond door het festival bekendgemaakt. Andere genomineerden zijn het Deense *Al Moleef*, *The Fake Case* van Andreas Johnsen en *Song from the Forest* van de Duitse journalist en documentairemaker Michael Obert. *Ne Me Quitte Pas* werd tevens genomineerd voor de Nederlandse Documentaire Award, waarvoor ook *Ana Ana* van Petr Lom en Corinne van Eijeraat en *Awake in a Bad Dream* van Petra Lataste-Crisch en Peter Lataste kans maken. Vrijdagavond worden de winnaars bekendgemaakt tijdens de slotceremonie in het Amsterdamse Compagnietheater.



SONG FROM THE FOREST VAN MICHAEL OBERT - IVM IDFA/INT. DOCU. FILMFESTIVAL A'DAM

Documentairefestival Idfa blijft groeien

MARK MOORMAN

AMSTERDAM – Het Idfa is populairder dan ooit. De 26ste editie was de best bezochte uit de geschiedenis van het documentairefestival. Dit jaar belandt de teller waarschijnlijk op 220.000 bezoekers, tegenover 208.000 bezoekers vorig jaar.

Het aantal bezoekers is moeilijker te schatten doordat de meeste mensen tijdens het Idfa naar meer voorstellingen gaan. Ook de recita is gestegen, van 1.060.000 euro in 2012 naar 1.252.000 euro dit jaar. Filmfestivals als het IFFR in Rotterdam en het Nederlands filmfestival in Utrecht wisten al een paar jaar met stagnerende bezoekerscijfers, maar daar heeft het Idfa geen last van. Een deel van de groei zit hem in de toename van het aantal festivallocaties, met Tys, dat dit jaar voor het eerst meedraaide, als de meest in het oog springende.

De hoofdprijs van het festival, de VPRO Idfa Award voor Beste lange documentaire, werd gisteravond uitgereikt aan *Song from the forest* van Michael Obert, over een Avenkaan, die 25 jaar tussen de pygmeeën heeft geleefd en voor het eerst zijn pygmeeënmoeder naar New York.

In deze categorie was de Nederlandse film *Ne me quitte pas* van Sabine Lubbe Bakker en Niels van Koev-

den ook genomineerd, maar die gingen naast de prijzen, ook in de categorie Beste Nederlandse documentaire. Die werd gewonnen door Petra Lataster-Czisch en Peter Lataster, voor *Awake in a bad dream* over drie vrouwen met boeshtanket.

De Speciale Juryprijs ging naar *A letter to Nelson Mandela* van Khalo Matibane. Het Russische collectief Gogol's Women Productions won de prijs voor beste korte documentaire (tot zestig minuten) voor *Pussy versus Putin* over de strijd van de Russische vrouwenband tegen het groez van Poetin. Het was één van de sterke Russische documentaires in het programma dit jaar.

De publieksprijs ging naar *Twelve sisters* van Mona Fries Bertheussen uit Noorwegen. De film vertelt het verhaal van geadopteerde Chinese tweelingzusjes die in verschillende delen van de wereld opgroeiden. *Twenty feet from stardom* van Morgan Neville, een film die inmiddels in de bioscopen draait, werd gekozen als beste muziekdocumentaire.

De volgende editie van het Idfa vindt plaats vanaf 19 november 2014. Volgens de organisatie worden in landen als India meisjes verhandeld en gedwongen in bordelen te werken. "Maar in onze achtertuin is het niet anders. Slachtoffers zijn onder ande-

ren meisjes die vanuit het buitenland verhandeld zijn naar Nederland. Maar ook Nederlandse meisjes vallen in handen van mensenhandelaars."

De laatste jaren roept het aantal minderjarige meisjes dat seksueel wordt uitgebuit in ons land toe, zegt Free a Girl. "Van de ruim 1200 bekende slachtoffers van mensenhandel was ruim zestien procent minderjarig." (AAN)

16% van de slachtoffers is minderjarig
Prijs voor Beste Nederlandse film naar 'Awake in a bad dream'



Song from the Forest wint juryprijs IDFA

Van onze verslaggever
Berend Jan Bockting

AMSTERDAM De Duitse journalist Michael Obert heeft vrijdag met *Song from the Forest* de VPRO Award voor beste lange documentaire gewonnen, de belangrijkste juryprijs van het International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA).

Obert, die doorgaans voor diverse kranten en tijdschriften over Afrika en het Midden-Oosten publiceert, won de prijs van 12.500 euro voor een authentiek en sterk tot de verbeelding sprekend documentaire debuut, waarin hij een Amerikaanse man volgt die 25 jaar geleden zijn woonplaats New York verruilde voor een geïsoleerd leven bij een pygmeeestam in de jungle van de Centraal-Afrikaanse Republiek. De jury roemde de film tijdens de prijsuitreiking in het Compagnietheater in Amsterdam om zijn 'rijke geluidsonwerp, tedere fotografie en intimiteit'.

Opvallend: de jury bekroonde daarmee een mooie, persoonlijke documentaire ten aanzien van urgentie of spraakmakender werk, ook dit jaar weer ruim vertegenwoordigd. Het Zuid-Afrikaans-Duitse Altmirio-Nelson Mandela, een kritische terugblik op Zuid-Afrika na de apartheid, kreeg weliswaar de speciale juryprijs, maar het populaire Belgisch-Nederlandse van alcohol doordrenkte vriendschapspotret *Ne Me Quitte Pas* en het geweldloze oorlogsdrama *Return to Home*, de operingsfilm, werden overgeslagen.

Vanwege het huidige drama in de Centraal-Afrikaanse Republiek, waar verschillende plunderende en moor-

dende milities het land de afgelopen maanden in diepe chaos storten, kon de man een wie-

het in *Song from the Forest* draait, de Amerikaan Louis Sarno, het festival niet bezoeken. 'Louis heeft zich met zijn mensen nog dieper teruggetrokken in het oerwoud', zei Obert vorige week in de videobint. Volgens de filmmaker is Sarno blut, maar gezond. 'Hij voelt zich goed. De mbeïlen uit omliggende buurlanden als Tjaja en So-dan kennen de jungle niet.'

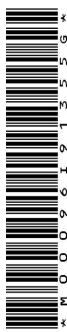
Spannender was de winnaar van de prijs voor beste middellange documentaire (tot 60 minuten), *Pussy Pussy Pussy* van het absurde Russische filmcollectief Gogol's Wives, dat het proces tegen punkband Pussy Riot en hun strijd tegen Poetin politiek vastlegde in een wild verslag.

In totaal werden vrijdag twaalf prijzen uitgereikt. Het aangrijpende *Wulker* is een boze droom, een portret van drie vrouwen met borstkanker, won de prijs voor beste Nederlandse documentaire. 'Opbeurend en inspirerend', vond de jury de film van Peter Latster en Petra Latster-Crisch. Beste debuut was *My Name Is Salt* van Farida Pacha, waarin de zoektocht naar de Indiase woestijn op dromerige wijze in beeld wordt gebracht. Net als *Return to Home* van deze film, via het Bertha Fonds, deels gefinancierd door het IDFA zelf.

Dat de cultuurbezuizingen, die ui-

terdaard ook het IDFA raken, niet ten koste zijn gegaan van de kwaliteit van de programmering, is lowenwaardig. Met de tent op het Rembrandtplein, waar de afgelopen jaren onder meer uitgebreide nabesprekingen met makers werden gevoerd, verdween dit jaar een centrale festivallocatie, maar daar kwam een aantal interviewreunies na de voorstellingen voor in de plaats.

Misvormen zo opmerkelijk is dat het publiek het IDFA opnieuw in groten getale wilt vinden. Men verwacht dit jaar 222 duizend bezoekers, een stijging van 14 duizend ten opzichte van vorig jaar. Waar andere grote filmfestivals, waaronder dat van Rotterdam, de afgelopen jaren kampen met dalende bezoekers, blijft het IDFA aantrekkelijk bij. Vergelijken met vorig jaar waren er minder films te zien, maar door de bezoekerscapaciteit te vergroten (voor het eerst was EYE beschikbaar) waren er meer voorstellingen per film. Gevraagd naar een verklaring voor het succes zegt een festivalwoordvoerder: 'Misschien heeft het publiek meer behoefte aan engagement, reflectie en duiding in tijden van crisis.'



De Amerikaan die een pygmee werd

'Song from the Forest' wint hoofdprijs op festival in Amsterdam

Belinda van de Graaf

'Song from the Forest' is uitgeroepen tot grote prijswinnaar van het internationaal documentairefestival Amsterdam (IDFA). De Duitse productie van regisseur Michael Obert won gisteravond in het Compagnietheater de 'VIPO IDFA Award for Best Feature Length Documentary' ter waarde van 12.500 euro.

Obert, een Duitse schrijver en journalist, werkte voor onder meer Die Zeit en de Süddeutsche Zeitung, volgt in zijn prachtige, tot nadenken stemmende film de Amerikaan Louis Sarno die al vijftig jaar samen met de pygmeë in de Centraal-Afrikaanse Republiek woont.

Sarno raakte als jongeman, luisterend naar de radio, gefascineerd door de muziek van de pygmeë en de geluiden van het regenwoud, en vertrok naar het land in het hart van Afrika. Sarno sloot zich aan bij het Bayaka-volk in het woud, leerde de

Bayaka-taal en kreeg een Bayaka-adoptie. Sarno, die inmiddels dertien nieuwsgierig is naar het land van zijn vader.

De film volgt vader en zoon van het woud naar New York en het is alsof je samen met het jongetje alles voor het eerst ziet: wegen, bruggen, gebouwen, auto's en stoplichten. Voor het eerst televisiekijken, voor het eerst naar de bioscoop. Bestengetoon ontroertend. Sarno's beste vriend blijkt daarbij de New Yorkse regisseur Jim Jarmusch, die vertelt over zijn jeugdjaar, als twee jonge mannen die geen enkel systeem vertrouwden, of het nu om oden, agenten of grenzen ging. "We were not comfortable with what we were told the world was", aldus Jarmusch.

Sarno, die zich in tegenstelling tot zijn zoon zichtbaar ongemakkelijk voelt in de Verenigde Staten, zat daarbij niet stil. Juwelend maakte hij geluidsoptnamen van de muziek en zang van het Bayaka-volk, vermengd

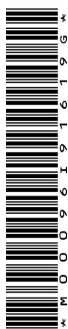
met kinder- en dieren geluiden. Meer dan duizend uur materiaal verzamelde hij, dat inmiddels in handen is van een museum in Oxford.

'Song from the Forest' vertelt het verhaal van een Amerikaan die pygmee werd. De film illustreert de tegenstelling tussen het woud en de volgeboorde westerse wereld en werpt de vraag op naar de oorsprong van de mens, en wat hij nodig heeft om gelukkig te zijn.

Meer prijzen voor films over Afrika

- De prijs voor de beste Nederlandse documentaire ging naar **'Wakker in een boze droom'** van de regisseurende echtpaar Peter en Petra Latster, over drie vrouwen die worstelen met de fysieke en emotionele ellende van borstkanker. De intieme film, gemaakt als ode aan de levenskunst en weerbaarheid van vrouwen, is aangekocht voor distributie en verschijnt begin januari in de bioscoop.
- Ook de dames van het Russische filmcollectief Gogol's Wives wonnen een prijs met hun documentaire **'Pussy versus Putin'**, over de strijd van de vrouwelijke punkrock-groep Pussy Riot tegen Poetin.
- Speciale juryprizen gingen naar **'A letter to Mandela'** en **'Forest of the Dancing Spirits'**, evenals naar de grote prijswinnaar **'Song from the Forest'**, dat zich afspeelt bij de pygmeë in de Centraal-Afrikaanse Republiek.





Jury IDFA bekroont bleke films

Film Het onderscheid 'creatief-niet creatief' heeft dit jaar op het documentairefestival eigenlijk zijn betekenis verloren

Door onze redacteur

Raymond van den Boogaard

AMSTERDAM. *Song from the Forest* van Michael Obert, die gisteren de grote prijs won op het IDFA, is een voorbeeld van het soort documentaire dat steeds meer om zich heen grijpt: de langdurige, zo niet langtradige observatie van iets of iemand, zonder noemenswaardige vide van de filmmaker.

Het Internationaal Documentaire Filmfestival Amsterdam, dat dit jaar zijn 26-ste editie beleefde en gisteravond eindigde met de prijsuitreiking in het Compagnietheater, is ooit opgericht met de bedoeling de 'creatieve documentaire' te bevorderen, die zich onderscheidde van de platte reportages die veel televisiekanalen voor 'documentaire' lieten, en soms nog laten doorgaan. Dat streven heeft, ook internationaal, enorm succes gehad. Het versmolt - op televisiestations en in de bioscoop - tegenwoordig van de originele, leerzame, amuseuze en inventieve documentaire films.

Al Wél Wél, *The Fake Case* van Andreas Johansen, dat ook voor de grote prijs was genomineerd, is bijvoorbeeld zo'n film. En *Kismet* van Nina Maria Paschallidou, een film over de culturele invloed van Turkse soapopera's in het Midden-Oosten en Griekenland, dat was genomineerd voor de prijs voor korte documentaire. Of *Twenty Feet from Stardom* van Morgan Neville, over achtergrondzangers in de muziekindustrie, die gisteren zeer terecht de prijs voor beste muziekdocumentaire won. Het zijn stuk voor stuk slim gemaakte en voor het begrip van onze wereld relevante films, die laten zien dat het onderscheid 'creatief-niet creatief' anno 2013 eigenlijk zijn betekenis heeft verloren.

Maar helaas: de twee voornaamste jury's op IDFA 2013 hebben gekozen voor films die, zowel stilistisch als inhoudelijk, een uitermate bleek karakter hebben. *Song from the Forest* is een stommervelende film over een Amerikaan die al jaren in de Centraal-Afri-

kaanse Republiek bij een pygmeeën-stam woont. Hij kijkt veel somber uit het raam, en gaat daar mee door wanneer hij de zoon die bij een pygmeeën-vrouw verwaakt heeft, meeneemt voor een bezoek aan New York. Politiek correct is deze film zeker, maar vrij inhoudsloos: behalve de spleen van die Amerikaan komt de kijker niets te weten.

Ook betrouwenwaardig is de keuze van de jury van de prijs voor beste 'Mid Length Documentary'. Behalve *Kismet* deed in deze competitie bijvoorbeeld ook *Blood* van Alina Roednikaja mee, over een Russische bloedbank - misschien wel de beste film van het hele IDFA. Maar de prijs ging naar Pussy Versus Putin, over Pussy Riot, dat eigenlijk geen documentaire is, maar een reeks achter elkaar gemonteerde YouTube-filmpjes.

De prijs voor debuutfilms ging dan weer naar zo'n zich voortslepende observatie door een filmmaker zonder inhoudelijke visie: *My Name is Sali* van Farida Pacha, over autoritair in de Indiase woestijn. De publieksprijs ging, zoals vaak op het IDFA, naar een politiek-correct onderwerp, behandeld met sentiment: *Twins Sisters* van Mona Fris Bertheussen.

Maar het belang van de prijzen op het IDFA is maar betrekkelijk. Inmiddels hebben toch maar mooi meer mensen dan ooit gekoken naar bijna 300 documentaires: naar schatting (want de veronningen gaan nog drie dagen door) 222.000, tegen 206.000 vorig jaar. De nemo recette steg naar 1,17 miljoen euro, tegen 1,06 miljoen in 2012. De manier waarop het IDFA de opgelegde kunstbezuinigingen van het Rijk heeft doorgevoerd - niet knibbelen op voorstellingen, maar schrappen van bijzaken als een tent op het Rembrandtplein en het Gesprek van de dag - blijkt een goede keuze: het festival is er niet door geschaad.

DOCUMENTAIRES

Prijzen op IDFA-festival

VPBO Prijs voor beste lange documentaire

Song from the Forest van Michael Obert (Duitsland)

Speciale Prijs

A Letter to Nelson Mandela van Khale Matibane (Zuid-Afrika/Duitsland)

NTR Prijs voor beste middellange documentaire

Pussy Versus Putin (Rusland) van Gogoly's Wives Productions

Prijs voor beste debuut

(First Appearance) (€ 5.000)
My Name is Sali van Farida Pacha (Zwitserland/India)

Peter Wintonick Speciale Prijs

Forest of the Dancing Spirits van Linda Väström (Canada)

Dioraphte Prijs voor Nederlandse documentaires

Awake in a Box (Droom) van Petra Latster-Crooch en Peter Latster (NL)

BankGiro Laterij Publieksprijs

Twins Sisters van Mona Fris Bertheussen (Noorwegen)

Melkweg Muziekdocumentaire Publieksprijs

Twenty Feet from Stardom van Morgan Neville (VS)

Prijs voor studenten

Final Destination van Riccardo Marinkus (Litouwen)

DocLab Prijs voor digitale producties (€ 2.500)

I Love Your Work van Jonathan Harris (VS)

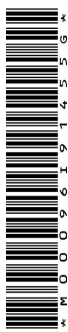
Medialondsprijs Kids & Docs

Lydia blijft van Elise Helena Schellekens





Microbiologist Liubov Serezhko in 'Song from the Forest' van Michael Obert, winnaar van de Grote Prijs op het IFFB.



SONG FROM THE FOREST VAN MICHAEL OBERT - IVM IDFA/INT. DOCU. FILMFESTIVAL A'DAM

AMSTERDAM

IDFA-prijs voor documentaire 'Song from the Forest'

De Duitse documentaire *Song from the Forest* heeft de prijs voor beste lange documentaire gewonnen op het internationale documentairefestival IDFA in Amsterdam. Regisseur Michael Obert kreeg de bijbehorende sculptuur en is 12.500 euro rijker. Het Russische collectief Gogol's Wives Productions won de NTR IDFA Award voor beste middellange documentaire (10.000 euro) voor *Pony Vinnai*.

París. De publieksprijs ging naar *Twin Sisters* van de Noorse Mona Friis Bertheussen. De prijs voor beste Nederlandse documentaire, ter waarde van 5.000 euro, ging naar *Awake in a Bad Dream* van Petra Lataster-Czisch en Peter Lataster. Daarnaast reikte de jury de Special Jury Award uit aan *A Letter to Nelson Mandela* van Khado Matabane (Zuid-Afrika/Duitsland). IDFA duurt nog tot en met morgen.



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Dit artikel komt ook voor in de andere edities. Cumulatieve adv. waarde: € 1.523,00 en oplage 100.196

alleen voor intern/eigen gebruik



‘Song from forest’ beste lange docu

Publieksprijs IDFA naar
documentaire *Twin sisters*

Amsterdam | De Duitse documentaire *Song from the forest* heeft vrijdagavond de prijs voor beste lange documentaire gewonnen op het internationale documentairefestival IDFA in Amsterdam. Regisseur Michael Obert kreeg in het Consipagnie-theater de bijbehorende sculptuur en is 12.500 euro rijker. Zijn winnende film gaat over Louis Sarno die al 25 jaar tussen de Pygmeënen in de Centraal-Afrikaanse jungle woont en nu voor het eerst zijn Pygmeë-noon meeneemt naar Amerika.

Het Russische collectief Gogol's Wives Productions won de NTR IDFA Award voor beste middellange documentaire (tweeduizend euro) voor *Pussy versus Putin* over de strijd van de anarhistische vrouwenband Pussy Riot tegen de Russische president Poetin. Twin sisters van de Noorse Mona Fria Berthelsen won de publieksprijs. Twin sisters is het opmerkelijke verhaal van Chinese tweelingzussen die in twee totaal

verschillende delen van de wereld geadopteerd werden, maar door het lot verbonden zijn.

De prijs voor beste Nederlandse documentaire ging naar *Awake in a bad dream* van Petra Latenser-Crisch en Peter Latenser, over drie vrouwen die zich door de fysieke en emotionele ellende van borstkanker worstelen.

Daarnaast reikte de jury de Special Jury Award uit aan *A letter to Nelson Mandela* van Khulu Matabane (Zuid-Afrika/Duitsland), waarin de filmmaker een kritische blik werpt op Nelson Mandela en diens status en rol bij de hervorming van Zuid-Afrika in de jaren negentig.

De film *Lydia* blijft van Eline Helena Schellekens werd door een kinderjury uitgeroepen tot de beste Nederlandse jeugddocumentaire van het afgelopen jaar. De prijs voor beste debuutfilm, vijfduizend euro, ging naar Farida Facha voor *Mynamir in Salt* (Zwitserland / India), een documentaire over het arbeidsmigratieproces in een Indiase woestijn.

IDFA begon op 20 november en duurt tot en met gisteren.



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• **SELECTED TWITTER REACTIONS**

Eric Kohn – 21.11

Beautiful tale of NYer who joins Pygmy tribe, records their music & starts a family. Jean Rouch would've loved it.

Indiewire – 22.11

Review: Gorgeous '**Song From the Forest**' Tracks How Louis Sarno Joined a Pygmy Tribe & Returned to New York

Screen International – 29.11

Song From The Forest wins at IDFA: The awards winners for the 26th IDFA were announced in Amsterdam on Friday night.