



REBEL VZN

STS
PICTURES

MÉBÉT

A REBELVZN production

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“ In The Gambia, about 9 percent of female children are married before the age of 15. Furthermore 30 percent of Gambia girls have been married or in a union before the age of 18. ”



UNICEF Global Databases: Child Marriage (March 2018)





DIRECTOR: OUSMAN JARJU | **CINEMATOGRAPHY:** SHIEKH TIJAN SECKA
PRODUCERS: OUSMAN JARJU - MUHAMMED HAKEEM MAHONEY
PRODUCTION MANAGER: MARIAMA COLLEY
SOUND: PA MANJAI SEY | **STORY:** JAMA JACK

RUNNING TIME: 33 MINUTES
LOCATION: THE GAMBIA
ASPECT RATIO: 16:9 | 1.78
SHOT ON: HDV 1080/24fps
LANGUAGE: WOLOF



SYNOPSIS

Njillan is one of the top students in her class, and has just been awarded a government scholarship to pursue secondary education. Excited to share this achievement with her family, she is welcomed with bad news: her father has given her away in marriage to Sengan, despite the protests and pleas from her mother.

At her tender age, Njillan is forced to let go of her dreams and fulfil her marital duties. She falls pregnant and faces complications while giving birth to her son, Modi. She doesn't survive.

Modi grows up and is initiated into manhood by his grandfather, Njillan's father. Now a man, he has the opportunity to carry forward the culture of child marriage or reverse the trends and protect his future daughters. For the first time in his life, he has an encounter with the spirit of his mother, telling her story and pleading with him to break the cycle.

Mébét tells the story of one girl's attempt to turn the tragedies of the past into lessons for the future. It is a conversation across generations to deliver positive change. The film showcases aspects of African culture to counter the negative narratives about the continent, and portray the reality of our journeys through stories of resilience and hope.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



A sister and a dear friend of mine was forced into marriage as a child to someone she did not choose – in fact, she was too young to make a choice at all. She had to endure unimaginable pain and challenges during this period, but her resilience saw her triumph over all adversity.

Mébét deals with a serious subject matter that continues to be a challenge in the lives of many young girls. The motivation for child marriage in a lot of households and families may include economic challenges and/or a strong desire to uphold certain traditions and cultures. We present this film in a way that values the good aspects of our cultures and traditions, but going further to pose a crucial question: what happens to our community if all promising, ambitious and intelligent young girls are married off forcefully?

My sister and friend was lucky to come out of it alive and turned around her life to become an example of resounding success – many others are not so lucky!





PRODUCTION TEAM

Ousman Jarju - Director | Producer

Ousman Jarju is a director, editor and screenwriter, with almost two decades of experience in producing, directing and editing TV commercials, programs, music video and other material for TV. He developed a passion for film and storytelling at a very young age and started acting on stage and writing skits on issues that affect young people in his community. He collaborated with his friend Muhammed Hakeem Mahoney to produce their first feature film, Calabash (2005), which he directed and acted as the lead character. Ousman took filmmaking courses at the London Film Academy (LFA), after which he wrote and directed a short film – Darkness Under The Sun (2012).

STS Pictures - Director of Photography

Sheikh Tijan Secka is an Artistic Director, Cinematographer, Photographer and Editor, and has gained stellar recognition in The Gambia's creative industry for his work. He leads the creative process at STS pictures, and has become a household name. He has won the award of Best Video Director of the Year for four consecutive years.

Mariama Colley - Production Manager

Mariama Colley is the founder of Studio 411, a medium which aims at creating impactful screenplays and films. She is also a stage and film actress, whose passion is rooted in utilizing art as a platform to effect change within her community. She doubles as the lead character in this production.

Jama Jack - Story

Jama Jack is a writer, communications professional and feminist leader who has developed a niche for herself through her creative writing which focuses on addressing social issues. She wrote A Mother's Plea, the original story for Mebet in 2014, and also delivers on communications and PR for the production.

Pa Manjai Sey - Sound

Pa Manjai Sey is a musician, composer, graphic designer and broadcast manager. He has composed music for numerous artistes in The Gambia. He created the score and foley for Darkness Under The Sun (2012). In his work, he is particular about capturing and conveying the very essence of the story and characters' emotions.



CAST



Mariama Colley is a radio personality, gender rights activist, stage and film actress, whose passion is rooted in utilizing art as a platform to effect change within her community. In 2013, she was nominated for the African Oscars Award. She is also the founder of Studio 411 Production, a medium which aims at creating impactful screenplays and films.

Jainaba T Sarr is a development worker, a Human Resources and Professional Development Specialist, a freelance writer of folktales and the environment, and an advocate for cultural preservation in The Gambia. Jai studied Political Science and African Cultural Area Studies during her undergraduate years at the College of Wooster, Ohio. She initiated and manages the SLA Cultural Choir. Jainaba makes her debut as a screen actor in Mébét.

Sheik Tijan Sonko began his journey as a screen actor in 1998, and his work has been recognised through various awards including Best Male Supporting Actor in The Gambia (2012); Best Documentary Film (2016).; and a distinguished Certificate of Achievement by the Chapel Recording Company (USA). He is also a trained filmmaker following completion of the Motion Pictures Arts Certificate (MPAC) programme, and is the Vice President of the Screen Actors Guild- Gambia.

Rohey Camara is an actress and singer, and has starred in productions like The Hidden Fantasy; Love Confusion; Twisted Mind; and The Mirror Boy. She was the winner of the Best Female Supporting Actress Award in 2016, and was also nominated for the award of Best Actress in 2018.

MUSIC

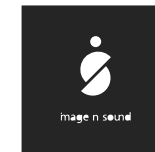
All the music in Mébét was created originally by Image n Sound, solely for this film, and is the property of RebelVZN



About REBELVZN

REBELVZN is an independent production company founded by Ousman Jarju and Muhammed Hakeem Mahoney, specialising in multimedia production, cinematography and audiovisual concepts. The company hopes to inspire a renaissance of the film industry in The Gambia, telling stories that highlight our rich cultures and traditions, while addressing and hoping to remedy various ills in our society.

The company has worked on several productions including Calabash (2005) and Darkness Under the Sun (2012).



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