



JEAN GENET

Our-Father-of-the-Flowers

a film by
Dalila Ennadre



France



Morocco

Vimeo link: <https://vimeo.com/531683813>

password : Laya1

Laya Prod

Dalila & Lilya Ennadre // frontieres@hotmail.com

Mob france : +33 6 80 63 39 65

La Prod

Lamia Chraibi // prodlamia@gmail.com

www.laprod.ma

Tél : +212 5 22 27 36 02

Fax : +212 5 22 27 34 02

Mob : +212 6 61 23 39 93

Mob france : +33 6 70 28 11 61



Jean

Jean at Mettray orphanage



Dalila

Dalila at Prévost orphanage

// LOGLINE



Under the benevolent shadow of Jean Genet, buried in Morocco, this film is a dialogue between the living and the dead, an invitation to bring those realms together, between silent humanist revolt and poetic elegy.

// SYNOPSIS



A family takes loving care of a white tomb, in a cemetery with a view of the sea. We are in Larache, south of Tangier, where Jean Genet lived the last ten years of his life.

Today, the writer is finally home, among his own. And for the locals of the city, he is a legend. Few of them actually knew him. Still fewer have read him. Most all have reinvented him for themselves. Everyone has their own story to tell. But they all agree on one thing: *Jon Joney* valued them. He was on their side. These simple, poor, quite frankly invisible individuals form the voiceless and futureless people of Morocco. Living incarnations of the characters in his work, they now keep watch over his grave.

// DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

This film started the day I met the guardians of Jean Genet's grave. It was by sheer chance that I found myself in front of this grave, of which I had been ordered to film images. Today, I realize that it was the rather exceptional relationship between the guards and this dead person that led me to open the books of Jean Genet, guided by an unconscious need to uncover a link between this family of simple and illiterate people and one of the greatest authors of the 20th century.

Reading his autobiographical novels bewildered me. When I was eight years old, my mother died. I became a ward of the state and was placed in the Prevost orphanage, in the heart of Picardy, with beet fields as far as the eye could see. As soon as we arrived, I was given a kit: sheets, underwear, blouse, black ankle boots, marked with a matriculation number. From then on, I was number 14. At the Prevost orphanage, we were indeed all fed and washed, but by foreign, brutal hands. We remained among the poor, out of the world, apart, and under close surveillance. When I discovered «The Miracle of the Rose» I was shocked to plunge back into the world of the children of my orphanage. A world forged with hatred, love, violence and genius, treachery and fidelity. Jean Genet had given them a voice, a form of recognition. Better yet, he gave life to all the orphans, all the abandoned of the earth.

«Writing may be what you have left when you are banned from the word» he said.

For my part, I chose to film those to whom this word is precisely not given: the little people, the poor, the prostitutes, the thieves, the mothers, and others. Jean Genet lost his mother and I lost mine. Of course, mine had not abandoned me, but still, she left me. Liberator, founder, her work undoubtedly helped restore my relationship with the world, with the truth, with the one that allows us not to sink into the denial where the guards of our prison confined us. Genet restored a fair, bright but sometimes painful place to my companions of misfortune. I loved them, they were a bulwark against the ferocity of the world. I shared their fears, their pains, their simple ecstasy,

their funniness and, of some, therapy to live. The author bewildered me but the people of Larache allowed me to discover them and his immense humanity. About our respective lives, there will not be much in this film, but they explain certainly why I am sensitive to this family whose house lies in the middle of the cemetery, watching day and night over the graves.

The cemetery is the main territory of the film. It is even a character in its own right, immutable, almost timeless, who survives the stories of so many, and will continue to survive. Clothed in extremely rich organic material, it is every day a little more eroded, despite the constant care of the family, its fight against the assault of time. If there is one place that abolishes our differences, our social distinctions, our smallness and our greatness and where we find ourselves equal, it is this cemetery. White tombs reflect the sun. The cemetery changes colour as the light changes, as the seasons pass, depending on the time of day. The vegetation is perennial and constantly renewed throughout the year, the sea turns from turquoise blue to storm grey in an instant.

Geographically, this territory is at the top of a small cliff, a short walk away from the city centre. It is a piece of coastline beginning to get caught up in urbanization. But it obeys a strong logic: it is where the «path of the bandits» passes, where was the brothel frequented by the soldiers in post. Here was built the prison whose prisoners' cries are overheard. Here, finally, that the smugglers take the migrants bound for Spain. A whole world that directly echoes Genet's books, as if his work were condensed in this space.

The cemetery is first of all this territory caught between the lighthouse, the prison and the harbour. More than a set, it presents itself as a small theatre where paths cross, people meet, stop, and talk. There are the guards and their children, there are Jean's old friends, there are the visitors of Genet, there are the workers who take care of the stones, a whole back and forth of men and women around the grave, a whole flow of words and silences. It is all these lives, contextualized in this space, that I filmed. Starting with the family of Youness and Naima. Their house stands at

the center of the cemetery, of which, every night, they lock the gate. A Muslim family watching over an old Christian cemetery. All have a story about Jean Genet. There are those who rubbed shoulders with him without knowing that he was writing, and those who have not known him, if not by hearsay, but who convey rumours, repeat stories, invent fables. All of them maintain the legend of «Saint Genet» without knowing anything about the actor and martyr. And this is the real tomb. Even more than the white tomb faithfully maintained by Naima, it is the words, the actions, the narratives that it is embedded in.

Finally, there are the visitors, the admirers who come from all over the world to gather for a moment by his grave. They ring at the graveyard's gate, and wait to being taken to his resting place.

More often than not, Naima or Ayoub guide them there. As visitors gather and recollect, they pick up the guest book, a large black canvas book. Visitors are always very moved, often write a few lines, sometimes thank their guests by leaving them a tip. Some of them tell about themselves, relate their reading of Genet to their own lives, testify to how the writer accompanies them. They, too, maintain the legend by echoing the writer's fame - his theatre, his novels, his political writings.

Still, it is the life of the wretched, the left behind, the oppressed that it is about. They are the heroes of his work and of his life. They are also the main characters of this film. They orbit around the tomb of Jean Genet as around a blind spot. But they are not just witnesses, storytellers of legend, a memory of words. They belong to the people of the invisible, those who leave no trace, neither a work, nor a signature, who barely have an existence. Their only good lies in their energy that allows them to overcome dramas, difficulties, submissiveness.

A vital energy, irreducible, even intractable, which is nothing but the desire to live, to live a life other than that to which social inertia assigns them - the servitudes, violence, deprivations from which the youngest dream of tearing themselves apart. This energy is the ferment of the individual revolts of which Jean Genet was the herald. It is the one, which pushes them to flee, to try their luck elsewhere, to «prefer to die as a man rather than live like a dead one» as mentioned by Hamza, a young

worker who came to paint the tombs with lime and eager to embark on the next boat bound for Spain. The point is not to deal as such with the illegal immigration, or the despair of the fishermen who return with empty nets, but to reveal the poetry of this human and universal revolt. Ordinary tragedy is part of the place, of everyday life. None of them identify with it. The great lesson, Genet's great strength, is that he never assigned the behaviour of his characters, thieves, criminals, to a birth, a social heredity, a psychology, a fatality. A man is not just about misery or crime, it has nothing to do with the truth of affect, relationships, exchanges, the gift of one's self.

Filming, for me, is an act of sharing. It's a way of being close, of being at one with what's going on around me, around us, the person being filmed and me. Whether they shell peas, broom, tinker, play cards, I prefer to see my interlocutors live, however humble their lives may be. Life happens, interviews are tales. It does neither proceed from discourse nor from representation. It is an action of oneself, a rebirth of the world, a movement out of oneself, a confidence, discontinuous but repeating itself on a daily basis. It is also the best way to open up to the unforeseen, to live up to what the unexpected offers, the intrusion of an «accident», an event or a new person in the current situation, in the field of the camera.

The sound, too, is of great importance. A sound engineer accompanied me to capture the universe and the sound texture of the place, particularly rich. I preferred the taking of direct, organic sound. The wind in the aisles, the laughter of Doha, the broomsticks of Naima, the Zippo with which Hassan lights his cigarettes. And then the sea in all its states, blue and calm, black and roaring. And of course the dull blows of the waves hitting the back end of the small caves dug at the foot of the cliff, under the tomb of Genet. One day, the cemetery will disappear into the waves. The sound is not only the physical inscription of what we film, it also brings with it the off-field, all the life around that reverberates on what we film. I think of the din of the nearby prison that comes and goes like tides, sometimes with rumors that grow up into

screams. A wild laugh coming out of nowhere. A fickle hubbub mixed with the call to prayer of mosques, as in a canon. Finally, there are the sounds that surround Genet's tomb, the drumming of flies, the hum of bees.

I hope that this film will pay tribute to all those people whose silent brotherhood - addressed in Genet's work - is obvious when we watch them live around the poet's grave. Not to mention the energy, the poetry that often accompanies poverty in the effort to get away from it, not to fall victim to one's living conditions but to rebel against them in order to open up to other possibilities. This portrait from Jean to me, from Jean to the people in which everyone can build their own portrait, is deeply bound to the intimate and universal question that the film to come carries: what do we do with our pains? How can we take advantage of the one who inhabits each of us?

It is a film nourished by compassion, by which cinema brings us together through storytelling, in order to continue living standing up.

// FILM TREATMENT

The film unfolds in a trinity of dramatic movements, following a pattern of echoes in resonance, from yesterday to today, from day to night, from the sea to the land, but also from the living to the dead. The narration dives to great depths to summon all the elegiac power of this world of the invisible.

First Movement.

In the beginning, the story introduces the cemetery and its dead—children swept away by various epidemics, Spanish colonists fallen on the battlefields of the Rif War in the 1920s. Then the main characters of the film: the family of guardians, Youness, Naïma his wife, and their two children, Doha and Ayoub.

They are introduced objectively, meaning that we see them living without direct interaction with the camera. We share their intimacy, the everyday movements of their lives. In this way, little by little, we discover their personalities, their relationships with one another as well as their special relationship with Jean Genet and the dead buried in this cemetery.

The camera captures the surrounding geography, the logic of a space where the sea, the cemetery, and the prison come together. And then the immense sky and the tomb at the dizzying edge of cliff. The life of the cemetery is above all the life of the guardians' home. A white house with blue shutters that rises up from among the tombs.

In the same way, it is essential that the viewer be filled little by little with Jean's presence. His incarnation is possible through point of view shots that I filmed of his tomb. The discrete entrance of a dead man who becomes more and more concrete. Then, we hear his voice through archive recordings that ultimately declare his presence as a character all his own.

The viewers are gently invited to understand that their imaginations are not playing tricks on them, that they are indeed in the presence of an absence, incarnated in image and in sound.

Second Movement.

In the second movement, the story begins to reveal the breadth of the strange allegory that resonates with Jean Genet's destiny: the prison and the former prisoner turned poet. All the little children's graves that surround it — the colonists, the Dead for Spain, and Genet who always rose up against any form of colonialism, the threat of thieves spreading rumors about this old crook being buried with a fortune. This family that cares so tenderly for the orphan that he was.

Naïma spends long periods alone with Jean. She talks to him and confides in him, and Jean responds at night in her dreams. Doha has a particular affection for Jean. She tirelessly flowers his grave, reads him the messages visitors have left him in the Golden Book. Her love of the French language shines through in an expressive scene where she plays teacher for the children's tombs, or when she recites an extract of the *Condamné à mort* to Jean. When she asks her mother about Jean, Naïma, who never knew him, responds with completely improvised assurance. Maternal love drives her to provide an answer to all of her daughters' questions, attesting to the power of real-life poetry, the poetry of love that even death cannot impede. Through this special relationship between this family and the dead man, we can begin to understand all the beauty of the language of the humble. How this poet continues to breathe life into the world from beyond the grave.

We will also see visitors who talk about the great influence of Jean Genet's work on their lives. The meeting of those who knew the author and those who knew the man. Naïma is the one who welcomes the visitors. When the bell rings at the gate, she drops whatever she is doing to answer it. Smiling and discrete, she guides them to Jean's grave and then goes about her business. When they leave, she brings them the GoldenBook.

Everyone writes to themselves at the same time as they write to Jean's imaginary ghost.

“Perfect spot/ where it’d be nice to rest forever.”

“I never get tired of coming back to see you, the world misses you terribly.”

“Dear Jean, I’ve been speaking to you here for twenty-five years, your head is a little towards Africa, your feet towards Europe, your left towards the Atlantic, towards the blue and white of the city that welcomed you. I’m writing you, offering one last cigarette.”

There is Hassan, around sixty years old, who often comes to sit by the grave of his friend Jean. He recalls their shared memories, like improvised pick-nicks in this very cemetery. He talks about how he and all the other people living on the street only discovered his fame after his death.

My presence is revealed in the first movement of the film through my relationship to the family and to Jean Genet. It is marked in this second part through the responses of visitors met at the foot of Jean’s grave.

Marc and Guiloui came to visit me in the cemetery, three years after our first meeting. We were standing by the grave of an author, whom they liked but never met. These two friends are foreign to the cemetery, to the family and to Moroccans.

Another person intimately marks my presence in this film, Jean Brechand. He knows my story, the story of the film to come, and he came to join me in the cemetery. On his arrival, we were three, Jean Genet, Jean Brechand, and me, the filmmaker. From his first words, Jean summoned up Dalila, the little girl from the Prévost orphanage, ward of the French state. His testimony sheds light on what ties me to Jean Genet and to this film. How we both transcended our pain through an act of creation. Through his presence, we also enter into the third movement of the film.

Third Movement.

The story magnifies, it opens up into a depth, onto the bond that unites me with Jean. A slow dramaturgy will expand, like an irresistible surge devoted to the Resistance of the humble. The finale is dedicated to this part of

humanity, the vibrant heart of the film, these ordinary heroes struggling to live in dignity. Revolts thunder around the earth, an insurrection like Jean liked them, one that returns dignity to the human. He considered revolt to be an irresistible sort of poetry, the only way for humans to overcome their submission. This is the point of the film: to express the struggle for survival of these Invisibles of Larache in resonance with the revolts that currently rock the world.

At the foot of the cliff, just across from Jean's grave, filmed like a giant living sculpture, her head and body covered in plastic bags, a woman braves the bad weather, she gathers a few mussels to sell at the souk for pennies. Bent over in the icy water of threatening waves, hands and feet skinned, she radiates dignity. Through wind and high tide, this mother scrambles to feed her children, near Jean who watches over the open sea, also near the rock where Naïma has many times watched clandestine immigrants embark for Spain. This mother has no choice, but the young workers that I met in the cemetery are convinced that they do. They have nothing left except the will and the hope to make it at whatever cost as they embark on fragile boats to Europe, their Eldorado. It is clear in their minds: they prefer to die with dignity, as men with a capital M - that was Jean's expression - than to live in permanent humiliation.

My view through the camera strived to match the spontaneous poetry with which they expressed themselves as they repainted tombs and the crosses with lime and black paint.

Today is Jean and Doha's birthday.

They were born on the same day, about a century apart. This December 19th, 2019, a day of bad weather, with a grey sky and the cemetery whipped by gusts of wind, ends with Doha's offering to Jean, for his birthday. While Naïma repaints the tomb with lime, Doha retraces the erased inscriptions with a black marker:

Jean Genet
19 December 1910
13-14 April 1986

While working, the mother and daughter talk about the poet's fate and it is at this time that Doha, moved to tears, learns that Jean was an orphan.

After honoring him, she goes inside to celebrate her birthday with her family when suddenly the sky clears, becomes red, then pink, invaded by birds. Jean's tomb, immaculate in the light of this sunset, gives a strong impression of renewal: as if, in all its splendor, the possibility of a brighter future returned, a new start with unexpected promises.

At this time, powerful music rises to accompany the impetus from Jean's tomb, shining with hope, it flies over the ocean to embrace the beggars, anchored in their immemorial gestures on the wharfs: a choreography begins, a ritual of survival, between a shady sky and bodies magnified by the cadence: it's the waltz of the beggars who gather sardines fallen from the fish crates unloaded on the docks.

They don't miss a single one, while taking care to share equally among themselves and to avoid the comings and goings of fishermen carrying heavy crates. Night after night, they glean the remainders of a ferocious will to live, while the trawlers unload at regular intervals in the darkness lit up by these faces, these bodies illuminated with an ancestral grace. The beauty of an invisible world magnified by the greatness of its humility.

From the sea, black as night, rise images of the insurrections of people across the world today. These shots are arranged in a surrealist way: a Chilean soprano sings from her window to brave a curfew imposed on the people, the gigantic protests in Colombia to the sounds of cacerolazo, the protestors in Hong Kong marching through the night, their cell-phone flashlights illuminated in their hands, the vibrant chants of Algerians marching together, the Revolt of the Lebanese people, the Bolivians, the Palestinians resisting today and forever... From this black sea rise our current struggles: to revolt to remain free, a thought that Jean proclaimed throughout his life.

// VISUAL ELEMENTS

The thread of my personal story, to weave into the film, opens a rich space of creation for me. The challenge is to create a device of narration that puts forward my "I" while creating the impression in the spectator that this "I" perhaps IS "he" as well. An "I" tied into a collective WE, sensitive, anchored in the present.

Image

The creative process that I am experimenting with in this film has lead me farther in my experience as a filmmaker. The issue is making present in the image that which objectively is not, meaning the presence of this dead poet. I filmed taking the time to choose my frames to make the love between the family and poet visible, but also, through my gaze, permeated, touched by the great sentiment of affection and brotherhood I feel with him. Especially since the time that I understood that he was one of my own, a ward of the state, like me.

Light

All the elements of nature in this place will allow me to create the dramaturgy of my story. The continually changing light is an important element of this.

Organic Matter

Jean had a very intense connection with flowers, a fundamental relationship with plants. They are numerous in this cemetery, like in a vibrant garden. I lowered my camera to ground level to try t o capture all the material that could magnify the organic aspect of the place. I filmed Jean's tomb at times like a prince, at the end of the alley, in beautiful white clothes, immaculate in his solitude against the infinite horizon of the sea, in an enveloping eternity, or at times like a child in his carriage, or like a master on his estate.

// THE SOUNDTRACK

The Soundtrack

Far from following the images, the soundtrack is a foundational element of the film's writing. It is a way of transmitting my intentions to the viewer, with a keen attention to the poetry that fills this world, as much Jean's world as this space exposed to the wind and the sea. It finds the poetry in the gusts of human uproar from the prison, when the winds are favorable, that reach Jean's tomb, as if to let viewers hear what he hears from his grave... It is to film the swarming world of the living earth, its humming, its crackling, its smallest organic racket, insects that crawl around his tombstone, the groaning of waves that crash against the cliff just below him. The uproar of the living things that surround him. The laughter of children, like the sounds of the working-class neighborhood that borders the cemetery, the young fishermen who call out to each other under the high songs of the birds, if they are present. Capturing the emotion, the movement, the silence, the hesitation of all the beings that evolve around his tomb day in and day out, to bring the viewer closer to this powerful exchange between the living and this dead man.

The music is also thought through and used to pay homage to Jean through certain parts of Mozart's Requiem, which he loved dearly and which will be played at timely moments. For me, it is also a question of using music to pay tribute to the causes that he supported and that resonate with our time: I will use those vibrant songs, in rhythm with the sounds of the chains of African Americans to evoke his support of the Black Panthers. As for his support of the Palestinian cause, I will invoke the vibrant voice of Mahmoud Dawish, reciting his poetry of revolt, love, and community. The music, silences, and clamor will carry the beauty of the revolt of women and men.

The Voice of Jean Genet

Jean had a distinctive voice with a unique timbre. At timely moments in the film, his presence is incarnated by passages read from his work, but also sound archives of interviews he gave while he was alive. It would be better to avoid enumerating knowledge, but rather to choose selections carefully and find those that give meaning and body to the story. I would like to test them during editing to judge their relevance according to what they contribute or do not. These political and humanist positions are still very current.

Throughout this allegory, there is also the prison bordering the cemetery. Jean always said that he wrote to get out of prison. His books got him out of jail, and when I go into this prison, so close to Jean, I ask the men what they do with their pain. The film seeks to give voice to the poetry of individual revolt, which is fundamental to humanity. Revealing this poetry by filming as closely as possible these damned of Larache.

// THE CHARACTERS

Youness (the father)

He was born in the cemetery in 1969. His own father was already the grounds keeper. The man is rather a lonely soul, as quiet as his wife is chatty (talkative). He looks after the place, constantly on the alert on his land. Youness remembers his childhood memories alongside of Jean Genet.

Even to this day, he is still astonished to have been chosen to dig Jean's grave, to watch over his rest and, in a way, share his family with him. The writer loved to sit facing the sea, discussing with idle people, paupers, lonely souls. He used to invite them to improvised meals with his companions and appreciated each and everyone's dignified fight to survive. When Youness was chasing away the birds so he could make ends meet, the poet would buy them from him only to immediately restore their freedom: « At that time, the only thing I was thought about obsessed with was the movie theater ticket and the box of candies I would be able to get acquire. But today, my soul is more inclined to linger on gestures: I tell myself, it was thoughtfulness. And God only gives this virtue to those He truly loves. »

I dug a deep grave so he could be safe. His friend, Mohamed brought two big flat stones from the sea, one for his feet, and one for his head. To us Jean Genet was not really French. He was so different. His shoes were never polished and he was often wearing a brown djellaba. He would sit directly on the ground with the neighborhood men to play checkers or dominos. He could speak a few words of Arabic to communicate with us, and he could understand everything he was told.

Naïma (the mother)

Naïma maintains a privileged and close relationship with Jean Genet. She takes care of his grave but even more than that, she talks a great deal with the writer. She confides in him her worries, her doubts, her hesitations. : « It

is not the custom that a woman has a friendly relationship with a man, even if it is simpler with Jean, as he is dead. I have never mentioned the whole thing to my husband. He has no clue the amount of time I spend with him.

» Naïma raises two children. She teaches them the essential values of being good, respecting the dead, devotion to others, and working hard, a job well done. Values that may seem traditional or even abstract, but that cannot be separated from a thought for the common good, of paying attention to others, and of concrete gestures that give them a less agreed sense, less rigid than it seems. Naïma is the incarnation of the motherly figure, master of the domain, respected by all.

The world that gravitates around the cemetery: men of all ages, most of them idle, with no occupation – as it is widely the case in Morocco – these men live on occasional odd jobs and small schemes.

Children

Doha is a young girl of 11 and her older brother Ayoub is 15. Children are always easier to film than adults. They are still living in the universe of games and play. At 11 years old, Doha has the complexion and the good mood of children growing in open country. Mischievous, cheerful, chatty, full of life, she has a passion for the French language. The first letters from the alphabet she learned are those inscribed on Genet's grave. She loves consulting the Golden Book to be able to decipher its messages. When she is coming back from school, Doha throws her bag on the lawn and runs in search of a flower in the wild vegetation that is growing around. She plants it in the red dirt of the grave and then leaves to do something else. Nothing reverential, this is just part of her games. Same as when she teaches French alphabet to a group of small white graves that neighbours Jean's. Same as when she yells the vowels and consonants to the ocean, so loud that the birds fly away. She owns the innocent seriousness of childhood.

« It is like a large garden that belongs to only me. Do you believe that my mom would always let me play outside if we were living in a city? I don't fear the dead. My father has more worries in this cemetery with the living. There are a lot of children buried here. I love all the dead ones buried here but some I love more than others. »

Her brother Ayoub enjoys teasing her on the French class she gives to those tiny dead ones. He is torn between admiration and skepticism. Ayoub is a solitary and reserved teenager. He spends a lot of time in the cemetery where he hunts with self-made traps. He raises rabbits and pigeons on the terrace of his house. He has another hobby: to go fishing for octopus at the bottom of the cliff.

Hassan

Over sixty years old, he was one of Jean's companions. He comes from time to time and lights a cigarette. He is a man inhabited by his memories, a man with a beautiful way of expressing himself. When he speaks, he speaks directly to Jean.

« I may have forgotten what I had to eat yesterday but I never forget what I shared with you... You always were beside the poor ones, but you were telling us: poverty is a state of mind. You were bringing back the spices, the tomatoes, Hakim would get the potatoes. I knew you loved fish and I was doing everything I could to bring you some, even in my pockets... And we were cooking our little tajine in the cemetery. » And then, he said those magnificent words: « We never read your words. We knew you live. No need for books, you are already a great book, and I, am a small book among your books.»

Familiar ones of the grounds... ...are those who didn't know Genet, but are nonetheless familiar with his universe, similar to the ones who knew him, brothers of those characters.

Visitors

Marc and Guilou: Two beautiful encounters, on a personal note, as well as for the film to be. Their spontaneous comments witness when they realized they were on their realisation while they were observing me while as they were visiting the cemetery. This brings an interesting off camera value - but it also offers one another more occasion for men that is given me to put my 'self' into this story.

They are reminiscing about our our first meeting at the foot of this grave – 3 years ago. Now they are returning – where they are coming back again, a second time, to meet with me. Watching me film, they realize that my movie tends to open a passage towards the man and not towards the famous poet that they admire so much. They also express with force and beauty the way that the works of Jean Genet transformed their lives.

Second encounter: Jean Brechand.

I wish to place his presence in the last part of the film, when everything changes tips over with young Doha's birthday - Where everything is possible. Jean Brechand walks into this light at the end of the day, when ere the sky opens in front of the white grave. He is the guardian of my personal journey as well as the history of this much- desired film and ends up evoking what ties me to Jean Genet on a personal note: the orphanage, the confinement and the choice we all have in common to use our grief and sorrow to create. He is the one in the movie to invoke for the first time this important notion: what do we do with the pain?

Anonymous visitors

They come from far away: Spain, Iraq, Egypt, France. They all are emotional when they are mourning at the graveside of the poet. They are an emotional

he comes back to his cell, for then, he reads the word of God. He then takes out his little note book and appeals to his imagination to create a story inspired by a mix of what he observed in the prison court and the scenes from the outside world. He can create in absolute freedom. It is in this space that creation happens offering him a genuine and intimate moment of freedom.

> **Djamel the rapper** : He is young and handsome. He raps. He slams. His arms are tattooed with all his endured suffering. Half of his face is hidden behind his Batman cap. When I ask him how he copes with his pain, he starts rapping for me. What does he do with it? Djamel gives me a performance of his last composition where he screams his rage as much as he screams his hope.

> **Abderrahmane**, former policeman: In his thirties, he has been in jail for a few years. His face also hidden behind a cap, he approaches the notion of time spent in prison with poetry. He never stops doing the countdown of time, always lost in his calculations.

// PRODUCTION NOTE

As a filmmaker committed to my relationship with the humble, I have realized how much more I was to be committed to the making of this film by becoming a producer to be worthy of what is at stakes here.

What do we do with our pain? This is what is in question, under Jean Genet's benevolent gaze, who found in Morocco a land and a people. We have never met. Nonetheless, he is intimately related to me, as he is intimately connected to those who survived pain, abandonment and injustice. His creation saved his life, like filmmaking saved mine. His art serves the oppressed. This is what it is made of, beauty in its relationship with pain. This is what inspired me to tell how Jean Genet keeps on living among the Moroccans who are still taking care of him, there where he was buried.

To produce this film is to be committed to my role as a filmmaker, as a citizen but also financially. The issue here is two-faced: have this film, snatched from Moroccan soil, spring up and meet the viewer in all its splendor and humility and to act as a means of repair. To repair what gets to be insidiously broken on a daily basis and in a violent way: human dignity.

The film is co-produced with Morocco, a country that is dear to my heart and that I have been roaming for a number of years with my camera.

I have been in association with La Prod company (Morocco) for over a year. I am sharing in the commitment of this filmmaking adventure with this dynamic and very productive company in international productions.

My work with Jean Breschand, screenwriter was and still remains essential as he helped open the door for me to write myself even more in the film, lending it a more intimate and universal scope.

Jean Breschand is a renowned and respected author-director, who is known to collaborate to a creation without misrepresenting the author's intention. His kindness and refinement make him a precious contributor.

As this project was essentially filmed in Morocco, and because of my dual citizenship as French and Moroccan, it benefited help to be created by France and Morocco. It received financing from l'Aide à l'écriture et l'Aide au Développement du Centre National de la Cinématographie (CNC - France) as well as l'Aide à l'écriture et l'avance sur recette du Centre Cinématographie Marocain (CCM – Maroc). It is one of the first documentaries to be significantly supported by the Moroccan filmmaking center. A commercial exploitation is expected both in Morocco and in France. Arte France has recently showed a kin interest in the film.

In terms of distribution strategy, we are favouring international festivals (A Category) as well as festivals invested in author filmmaking documentaries. Also we are committed to find a distribution company who would be interested and vested in the knowledge of creative documentaries for the arthouse cinema network.

Dalila Ennadre

// DATASHEET

Title : **Jean Genet – Our-Father-of-the-Flowers**

Duration : 60'

Director : **Dalila Ennadre**

Shooting format : **HD / 16:9**

Shooting area : **Morocco, Larache**

Languages : **dialecte marocain, français et espagnol**

// TEAM

Producer : **Lamia Chraibi**

Coproducer : **Dalila & Lilya Ennadre**

Production director: **Leila Amran**

Chargée de production : **Sophia Menni**

Assistant : **Khalid Tigzidine**

General manager : **Taoufik Bikhairoune**

Assistant manager : **Mourad Ksiso**

Camera operator : **Dalila Ennadre**

Sound operateur : **Mathieu Gasnier**

Editor : Catherine Manton

Mixage : Matthieu Tibi

Translations : **Bill Hamlett**

Esther Russel

Writing consultants :

Marie Dumora

Jean Breschand

// Link

Vimeo link: <https://vimeo.com/531683813>

password : **Laya1**

// PRODUCERS

DALILA ENNADRE - DIRECTOR, CAMERA OPERATOR -PRODUCER

Dalila Ennadre was born in 1966 in Casablanca. After growing up in Paris, she travelled to Guyana, Germany, Morocco, and Canada. As a self-taught filmmaker, she has made several documentaries on the struggle for Human and Women's Rights in Morocco. Her award-winning films have received international attention, distribution, and have been shown at Category A festivals, on television, at universities, and in neighborhood associations. She is a producer at Laya Prod.

Filmography : *Love of each other* - Doc, 52 mn, 2017 - Ali'N Prod / 2 M Tv, *From cinema to possible* - Doc, 83 mn, 2015, Label Vidéo / Walls and people - Doc, 83mn, 2014, Label Vidéo, Djinn / *I loved so much* - Doc, 52 mn, 2008, AYA Films, Cinemada / Cinéma du Réel Paris, / *I'd like to tell you* - Doc, 52 mn, 2005, Play Films /Tarifa, / *Fama, a heroine, without glory* - Doc, 52 mn, 2004, Ognon Pictures/Misr International Films / *Mé Aïcha's Caravane* - Doc, 50 mn, 2002, France 5/ Jem Productions / *El batalett, women from the medina* - Doc, 52mn, 2001, L'Yeux Ouverts RTBF / *Desert Wolves*- Doc, 48mn, 1999, L'Yeux Ouverts / *Idoles in the shadow* - Doc, 52 mn, 1992 / *By Allah's Mercy* - Doc, 26 mn 1987

VIMEO LINKS :

I loved so much / <https://vimeo.com/156844629> / password : anfa

Walls and People / <https://vimeo.com/84334839> / password : anfa

LAMIA CHRAIBI - PRODUCER, LA PROD - MOROCCO

After studying in Parisian production companies where she worked in film publicity and TV projects, Lamia Chraïbi created her own production company in 2007, LA PROD, based in Casablanca, to develop fiction, in the largest sense of the term, and launch ambitious projects with talented young filmmakers from Morocco and elsewhere, broadening its international co-productions.

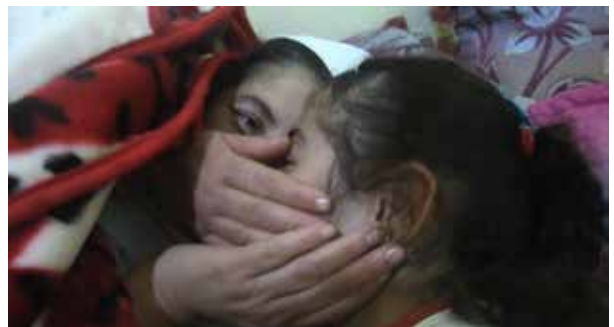
Selective filmography : *Apatrides*, Narjiss Nejjar, Maroc, fiction, 90min,

Sélection Berlinale 2018 / *Jahilya*, Hicham Lasri, Maroc, fiction, 95min, Sélection Berlinale 2018 / *Mimosas*, Olivier Laxe, France- Maroc, fiction, Cannes 2016 /

The end, Hicham Lasri, fiction 2012 / *L'amant du rif*, Narjiss Nejjar, fiction, 2012 /

Carré 35, Eric Caravaca – France – Maroc, documentaire 2017, post- production

// PHOTOGRAPHS





JEAN GENET, Our-Father-Of-The-Flowers // A film by Dalila ENNADRE



JEAN GENET, Our-Father-Of-The-Flowers // A film by Dalila ENNADRE



Laya