

BARDSONGS

Triptych of filmed folktales

An ode to the outward differences and hidden similarities of different worlds.

Shot on location in Rajasthan, Mali and Ladakh.

a Sander Francken film (director and producer)

www.bardsongs.com

<http://vimeo.com/10772679>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7bnINOBB-0Q>

Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same (Emily Brontë)

Dutch filmmaker Sander Francken directed the musical feature film BARDSONGS in India and Mali.

At the basis of this film are three folk tales from respectively Rajasthan, Western Africa and Ladakh, put to music by musical celebrities from those regions and interpreted by local actors who knew these tales from their youth. The film focuses on the similarities between three totally different worlds.

The world of Sahir, whose father refuses to pass judgement on his fate... the world of Bouba, a pupil at a Koran school who has to find the largest part of all knowledge... and the world of Sonam, who has to sell his dzo (a crossbreed between a yak and a cow) and therefore journeys to town through the Himalayas with his daughter.

The filmed tales provide the viewer with a glance at universal wisdom and music.

Synopsis

Jodhpur / Rajasthan / India

Part one of BARDSONGS tells the story of a father and his son. On a daily basis they collect waste plastic in the streets of an old Indian city. The father distinguishes himself from other people by never judging occurrences around him – however much fate tempts him to. His posture meets with a lot of incomprehension and annoyance by people around him. When a dramatic occurrence reveals its true significance after some time, the wisdom of the plastic collector is unveiled for everyone.

Djenné / Mali

Part two is set against the magnificent backdrop of Djenné, a city in Mali, considered to be the center of Islam in Western Africa. The story is about Bouba, a scholar at a coranic school, who must the answer to the question: 'What is the greatest part of all knowledge?..' When, after a six day journey of discovery in and around Djenné, he still does not come up with the right answer, it appears to be quite simple and overwhelming at the same time.

Lamayuru / Ladakh / India

The last part of this triptych of folk tales is about a father who travels through the Himalayas together with his daughter in order to sell their dzo. Everyone they meet on their journey has some sort of criticism or advice, about how they should treat their dzo, how they should treat each other, how to get a place to sleep in a monastery, which route to take, etc. The father is by nature inclined to lend an ear to one and all, this to the mounting indignation of his daughter. When the daughter, the end of their journey being in sight, confronts him he finally changes course...

I have made BARDSONGS to show that the ancient wisdom of the African also holds true for the Indian and vice versa – but also for you and for me and anyone else. When it comes down to it we all seem to think alike about the essence of our existence, whether you are a Hindu or a Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish or anarchist, atheist or animist. Emily Brontë summed it nicely up like this *'Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same...'* The understanding that the old wisdom of any given people is of universal importance, was a great starting point for me, especially in an age in which we more and more are at each other's throats on account of cultural differences.

Biography Sander Francken

Sander Francken has been writing, directing and producing films and television programs since 1980. His work was awarded with approximately 35 national and international film and television awards – among which three Gold Calves (the so called 'the Dutch Oscar')

A brief selection:

DEALING AND WHEELING IN SMALL ARMS (2007) Director / co-writer / producer
Documentary about the selling and uncontrolled spread of small arms.

BOMB BRIEFING (2004) dir. / prod.
Reconstruction of a bomb scare with dramatic consequences.

FIGHTING WEAPONS FOR DEVELOPMENT (2001) Co-script, dir. & prod.
Documentary for the United Nations about a disarmament project in Cambodia, commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

THE BIOGRAPHER (2000) script consultant

English language feature film for HBO, starring starring Brian Cox, Paul McGann, Faye Dunaway. Posey Films, Ireland.

PAPA'S SONG (1999) co-script & dir.

Feature film about a Dutch magistrate who gets caught up in the secret past of his Antillean wife. Thriller. Aves Film Production.

EEN ZAAK VAN NATIONAAL BELANG (1997) dir.

Short feature film. Produced by Landauer Films.

STOLEN HOURS (1995) co-script & dir.

TV film about an orphan who discovers that his father is still alive.
NCRV production.

THIS THING CALLED LOVE (1993) co-script

Feature film. Thriller. Praxino Pictures.

PLEIDOOI / CALLED TO THE BAR (1992) production design & dir.

TV drama series. Pilot + first episodes. IDtv film & television production, commissioned by the AVRO Television. Gold Calf best director TV drama series + honourable mention Nipkow.

BARDSONGS – Netherlands, 2010, 94 minutes

Director and producer: SANDER FRANCKEN – Screenplay : JOOST SCHICKX with the collaboration of SANDER FRANCKEN - Photography: SAL KROONENBERG, MELLE VAN ESSEN, BERT POT - Art Direction: DIGAMBAR TALEKAR – Music: SAKAR KAHN & FAMILY, AFEL BOCOUM, TSIRING STANZIN, MORUP NAMGYAL, ADITYA BHASIN, RAINER MICHEL - Editing: GYS ZEVENBERGEN - Line Producers: KARIN S. DE BOER, JOEP BANNENBERG - Production: SFFILM