

# BAYO, BAYO, BABY

Directed by Raúl de la Fuente & Amaia Remírez

(snowglobe)



kanaki  
FILMS



# DOCUMENTARY FEATURE FILM

## RUNNING TIME

85 min.

## DIRECTED BY

Raúl de la Fuente & Amaia Remírez

## PRODUCED BY

Amaia Remírez, Katrin Pors & Giulia Triolo

## PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Kanaki Films (Spain) & Snowglobe (Denmark)

## SHOT IN

HD - 4K

## KEYS

Human interest, coming of age, psychology, surf, friendship, revenge

## LOCATION

Freetown (Sierra Leone)

## COMPLETION

2021





Every night Aminata patrols the streets of Freetown searching for girls being exploited by pimps.

She takes them surfing to Sierra Leone's only Surf Club, to heal their self-esteem on the deep metallic-blue ocean.

Thanks to her friend Chennor, a former gang leader who is now working at Pademba Prison, one day she has the chance to confront Kareem: her tormentor when she was 13.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO OVERCOME A  
LEGACY OF VIOLENCE?



# SYNOPSIS

Bayo, bayo, baby...

Bayo, bayo, baby...

Sleep my baby...

let me take you to the bed...

Mama is coming... Papa is coming...

Mama is coming... Papa is coming...

(sierraleonean krió lullaby)



# BABYLON DON'T LOVE YOU

## Meet Aminata and Chennor

When the lullaby is over, her motherland has no more soothing songs for Aminata.

After the loss of her parents to Ebola at 13 she migrates alone to the capital, Freetown. In this Babylon she loses her power and will to Kareem, the pimp of the orphaned little girls roaming the streets. The White Carpet Club, the Police Station and the Chinese boat few miles offshore become the nightmare of her teen years. She forms a family with sweet girls like her - and turns her child heart to stone to become a woman.

Aminata, rebellious and beautiful, reigns over the streets of the slum during the day, but she is exploited every night.

Her friend Chennor, also an orphan, grows up to be a man in a world of violence. He wields a machete, steals and fights his way up through the ranks of the street gang of the Bloods until he is coronated their leader in a narcotic ceremony on the graveyard. Shortly after he is indicted -age 15- of the crime known as “frequency”: wandering the streets too often to Police’s liking. And Chennor is imprisoned in Pademba’s jail, or hell on earth.

In the feared adult prison of Freetown underage boys cram into tiny cells with adult offenders and lives are under the rule of Mr.Sillah, the commander in chief.

Aminata learns to be a woman, and Chennor a man, in the darkest circumstances. They both have had their childhoods stolen.

At 17, Aminata manages to escape from the labyrinth of these streets to take care of her grandmother in a little coastal village after an ordeal of a life.



# BUT YOU LOVE BUT YOU LOVE EVERYTHING EVERYTHING

## So, what if you made a mistake?

In the village, Aminata becomes an empowered woman who left her demons behind. There is no sign of judgement in the eyes of her grandmother. Bathing in the ocean she feels like herself again.

Sleepless in bed at night she hears the waves roar from the shore and can't stand the thought of little girls living the bad life. Maybe she can help.

Now she's back in Freetown and visits her old friend from the streets, Chennor.

He got out of jail at 19- with a deep imprint of abuse under his skin but determined to make a living.

He spent his first wage paying bail for a friend. But after his daughter is born it becomes an obsession for him. Get them out. The eyes of the boys glow in the dark of his nightmares. Looking at him from the death corridor - right now. Chennor gets out of bed, all sweaty. He throws accurate and violent punches against the grain-filled boxing sack. His pulse is pure rage.

Chennor is now working as prison staff in Pademba. He goes through the security gate and enters. Mr.Sillah eyes him and smiles mischievously. Chennor tries to ignore the fire inside. His body remembers with precision how the man behaved when he was a prisoner.

Chennor is patiently and secretly waiting for the day Mr.Sillah retires and is no longer protected by his rank.



He tries to focus. He looks for children everywhere; in the yard, in the corridors and bent like beasts in the dark cells.

Raps and rhymes with them to offer hope, until he can provide bail or move their cases up in the disastrous court.

He hugs the kids, whispers encouraging words of love

"I'M GOING  
TO HELP YOU,  
I WAS A  
PRISONER HERE  
ONCE, TOO"

BAYO, BAYO,  
BABY







Aminata patrols all night the mean streets of the capital where she had to grow too fast. She seems to be looking for her old self. She also wishes and fears to find Kareem. She's uncertain of what she would do - if one day she would find her tormentor.

Aminata approaches the girls in the dark corners and outside the clubs: Hawa, Fatimetu, they all have a story to share.

**"I LIVED  
THIS LIFE  
AND ESCAPED,  
I'LL GET YOU  
OUT OF THIS"**

After a meal and a chat, the girls get back to street work, and the boys from Pademba easily fall back into crime, because they're hungry and alone. Feels like there's no escape from the streets of Freetown.





I AM WHAT I AM  
I AM WHAT I AM

Aminata knows just the right spot to let it go



There is a Surf School at her little beach, in Bureh, just outside Freetown. A bright blue painted hut presiding a deserted beach, surrounded by the thick mangrove forest. Riding the waves can make girls and boys feel free and reclaim their power. Own their bodies again. She's experienced it herself.

Now Chennor and Aminata have something to offer to the children:

AN EXCITING RIDE TO MAKE THEM  
FEEL THEMSELVES AGAIN.

Aminata and Chennor take the boards and rush into the waves. After them, the street kids bravely follow. Aminata teaches them all of her tricks. Hearts begin to slowly open and confide. The ocean breeze welcomes them.

THE SOUND OF A GIANT WAVE  
TAKES US BACK TO FREETOWN.

One day Chennor sees an old acquaintance of Aminata in the prison yard: Kareem, her pimp, has been indicted for child trafficking. And Chennor can get Aminata a visit alone with him.

THAT'S THE OCCASION TO SET  
FREE OF ALL SHE SUFFERED  
FROM HER TORMENTOR.

Mr.Sillah's retirement is in few days. And Chennor is also avid to find him face to face, no witnesses.



THESE TWO KIDS  
HAVE TRESPASSED  
THE FIRE AND  
FLAMES OF  
VIOLENCE. THEY  
SEEM TO HAVE MADE  
PEACE WITH  
THEMSELVES.  
BUT WHAT WILL  
THEY DO WHEN THEY  
CAN CONFRONT  
THEIR TORMENTORS?



# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

WE CAME ACROSS AMINATA AND CHENNOR  
IN 2017.

The team was filming the story of orphaned street girls when we met Aminata in Kareem's filthy place, crammed with six other girls, some below 10. That day, she was outraged. The night before the Police took them to the station and they all had been abused.

She immediately struck us as driven, determined and strong. Even when she was living under the rule of her pimp. **She said she wanted to share her story.**

In the same trip we met Chennor. He was working as Pademba Prison staff, taking care of the youngest prisoners. And with him, we entered the prison with our camera. It's not a normal prison, it's a hole of oblivion, a blue nightmare, a poisoned space.

We recorded unique, terrible and unbelievable footage inside. **Kids living with the adult prisoners.** We recorded 3 minors sentenced to death. And today, they are still there, in the death corridor.

In March 2020, there was a riot: eight prisoners and one official were

massacred. We have footage recorded by the guards. After this rebellion the prison authorities have banned recordings inside. No one else will be able to make this film.

After 3 shooting trips, we have a **unique access**, great material and a long-standing relationship with our characters.

We have so much confidence with Chennor and Aminata. The viewer gets into their stories and lives like a fly on the wall - almost as if the director wasn't there. And thanks to that the audience enjoys an immersive experience, unique, thrilling and REAL.

With Aminata we will really understand how these street girls feel and if there's anything that can heal them, or how they just find the strength to carry on.

With Chennor we can learn about the problems that take children to jail. Being homeless is a crime, "frequency" is a crime, only the gang can be your family. There's no justice inside, and outside there's no hope for a good life. The film also denounces the horrific situation of these incarcerated minors, including death row sentences.

**Are some societies condemned to brutality?** Freetown is the perfect location to search for the answer. Slavery, civil war, sexual violence, Ebola - years and years have created a twisted model of how men and women should behave with each other. And still our protagonists are able to oppose this idea caring for other kids.

**Criminal, victim, keeper. Chennor and Aminata have turned their lives around. We learn from their transformation. And we witness how it plays out when they confront Mr.Sillah and Kareem. Will they want to inflict pain? Is any retribution possible?**

BAYO, BAYO, BABY presents an **unseen Africa**. By 2050, 2 in every 5 kids born on earth will come to life in the Cradle of Humanity. **Africa is the synonym of future. Aminata and Chennor, so resilient** they can escape generations of violence, are very relatable and their stories will sure touch the heart of our audiences.



THE CINEMATOGRAPHY IS A STRONG DIFFERENTIAL  
POINT OF THIS FILM.

pass: BBBABY

MEET AMINATA



MEET CHENNOR



ENTER JAIL





# ARTISTIC APPROACH

BAYO, BAYO, BABY'S LOOK AND FEEL WILL BE VERY MUCH LIKE A NARRATIVE, DRAMA FILM.

The camera flows shoulder to shoulder with our characters, almost as if it wasn't there, as a privileged witness of the drama. Angular lenses invite the viewer directly to the action. An immersive and vibrant experience to reflect the brave and restless spirit of Aminata and Chennor. We want to stay true to the special beat of life in Africa, feel the frenetic pulse of Freetown and the urgency of its inhabitants. Search for the young spirit that vertebrates the city with an honest and sincere look, always searching for the brightest part of the gazes and their essential feelings of fear, love, pain and hope.

For this, we will shoot with light and small camera and crew to naturalistically capture the saturated light of Freetown. Contrast, saturation and definition will be our mark. A cinematographic plasticity, to enhance the braveness of our characters.

With the same goal of accompanying their feelings - and to target the film to young audiences, the soundtrack will have electronic tracks that perfectly match the mood. Style references are "Teardrop" or "Angel" by Massive Attack to accompany Aminata and "Ya Hey" by Vampire Weekend.

"City Of God", by Fernando Meirelles and Kátia Lund, is a reference for its breathtaking passion and rhythm. Like in this drama that presented life in the slums of Rio, in BAYO, BAYO, BABY we will travel back and forth from Chennor and Aminata's childhood to the present, sometimes relying in their off voice to sustain the narrative pulse.

The feeling of survival defines this film.

Survival and self-respect, just like in the final monologue of Alabama in the film "True Romance" by Tony Scott:

*"Amid the chaos of that day, when all I could hear was the thunder of gunshots, and all I could smell was the violence in the air, I look back and am amazed that my thoughts were so clear and true, that three words went through my mind endlessly, repeating themselves like a broken record: you're so cool, you're so cool, you're so cool..."*



# PRODUCER'S NOTE

This film primarily targets young audiences: a **coming-of-age documentary** that's able to offer hope, find beauty and strength amid the nightmare. This is an opportunity to learn from equals enduring difficulties that many of us can't imagine. A source of **inspiration** in these **times of worldwide uncertainty**.

The surf, the boxing and the rap & rhymes are elements of freshness that will favour the engagement of the primary, young audience.

The clear and direct approach in the storytelling, the carefully crafted cinematography and the music are aiming to a broad audience and not only those interested in documentaries. The story and the images are **too real to be true** and seem like a fiction movie.

None of it is fiction, though, and we're dealing with delicate matters. Since we want to connect with the protagonists and feel in their skin, and to admire their resilience, we will not be using explicit scenes of violence.

**"SURVIVAL" IS THE IMAGE OF THE STREET KIDS RIDING THE WAVES AT BUREH BEACH: FEARLESS, OWNING THEIR BREATH, TRUTHFUL TO THEMSELVES AGAIN.**

**The past of our main characters is already shot and represents around half of the length of the film.**

Participation of all characters is secured. The footage inside jail has already been shot. All locations are real. The next shooting will cover the Surf School and Aminata and Chennor confronting Kareem and Mr.Sillah. The ending of the film is open to **what will happen in these ending scenes**.

During the distribution of Bayo Bayo Baby the social **impact** and engaging strategy will focus on **empowering** women and especially children who have suffered gender-based violence and human trafficking in any country.

The prosperous Surf School is being developed as a model of sustainable tourism, a grassroots project that is inspiring **ambitions among young people**.

Now there's only one surfer woman - but we will sure discover new surfing stars among the street girls! Surfing enthusiasts will discover an appealing and unexploited surfing spot and the opportunity to support the community of kids around the school.

The film crew is composed of a 50-50 of women and men. A Sierra-Leonean script advisor will review the script to better deal with the understanding of our character's psychology and constantly challenge the comfort zone of our European PoV.

2021 will be scarce in new content showing other parts of the world due to CoVid19 travelling restrictions. But the coronavirus is having very little impact in Sierra Leone, with only around 4,000 reported cases since March'20 and frontiers open to travel. Half of the shooting is completed and delivery is expected in 2021.



# PROJECT STAGE PROJECT STAGE & TIMELINE

January to May 2020 - Scriptwriting  
and Preproduction.

Film Delivery: November 2021.

The film is currently in production  
with **50% of the material shot**,  
3 trips in 2017 and 2019: the past of  
Aminata and Chennor and the scenes  
inside jail.

Principal photography May 2021  
4-week shoot.





# KEY TEAM

## Directors

### AMAIA REMÍREZ (Spain)

Director, writer and executive producer

“Bayo, Bayo, Baby” is Amaia Remírez’s directorial debut after executive producing, producing and writing several short films including Oscar shortlisted “Minerita”. Her first feature film as producer and writer was “Another day of Life”.

### RAÚL DE LA FUENTE (Spain)

Director and editor

Raúl is the director of “Another Day Of Life”, an animated drama released in Cannes Official Selection, a Cámara D’Or contender, European Film Academy, Platino Iberoamerican Film Award and Goya Spanish Film Award Winner for Best Animated Feature - also Audience Award at San Sebastian Film Festival.

His debut feature, “Nömadak Tx” was invited by True-False IFF as first-time filmmaker and Winner of Best Young Director at Guadalajara IFF. The film was ranked 2nd in the Top 20 list of Audience Favorites in IDFA’s 20 Anniversary.

## Director's Prior Work

Another Day OF Life, a Cannes Official Selection premiere in 2018.

A live action and animation hybrid film about the role of a journalist in conflicts, based upon the book by Polish journalism master Ryszard Kapuscinski.

“ANOTHER DAY OF LIFE”



pass: delafuente





(snowglobe)

PRODUCTION  
COMPANIES

Snowglobe is a film production company established in Copenhagen in August 2015 by producers Mikkel Jersin, Katrin Pors & Eva Jakobsen.

With its strong international roots, and particularly strong affiliation with Latin America, Snowglobe is a dynamic production company working with feature films across borders. Snowglobe develops, produces and co-produces a nuanced selection of films with an artistic core by new as well as established directors, who all share a great passion for filmmaking.

Snowglobe's most recent work include the opening film of the 50th Directors' Fortnight: BIRDS OF PASSAGE by Ciro Guerra and Cristina Gallego; MONOS by Alejandro Landes (Sundance/Berlinale 2019); WESTERN ARABS by Omar Shargawi (Panorama, Berlinale 2019) and A WHITE, WHITE DAY by Hlynur Pálmason (Critic's Week, Cannes 2019). Our latest release: WILDLAND by director JEANETTE NORDAHL and writer INGEBORG TOPSØE, premiered in the Panorama Section at Berlinale 2020.



Created in 2009, we've travelled the globe looking for stories, directing and writing scripts in Mozambique, Mexico, Italy, India, Angola, Mongolia, Ethiopia, Venezuela, Peru, Cuba, Bolivia, Guatemala, Ecuador, Poland, USA, Canada, Qatar, New Caledonia, Haiti, Benin, Togo, Colombia, Ivory Coast...

We've told stories of little miners in Bolivia, children accused of witchcraft in Togo, children soldiers in Colombia... It is important to us that the voices of our characters are heard.

Raúl de la Fuente and Amaia Remírez, have won 2 Goya awards from the Spanish Cinema Academy, the European Film Award and the Platino Iberoamerican Award. Kanaki Films has over 150 prizes at Film Festivals, such as the Audience Award at San Sebastian International Film Festival.



CONTACT  
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