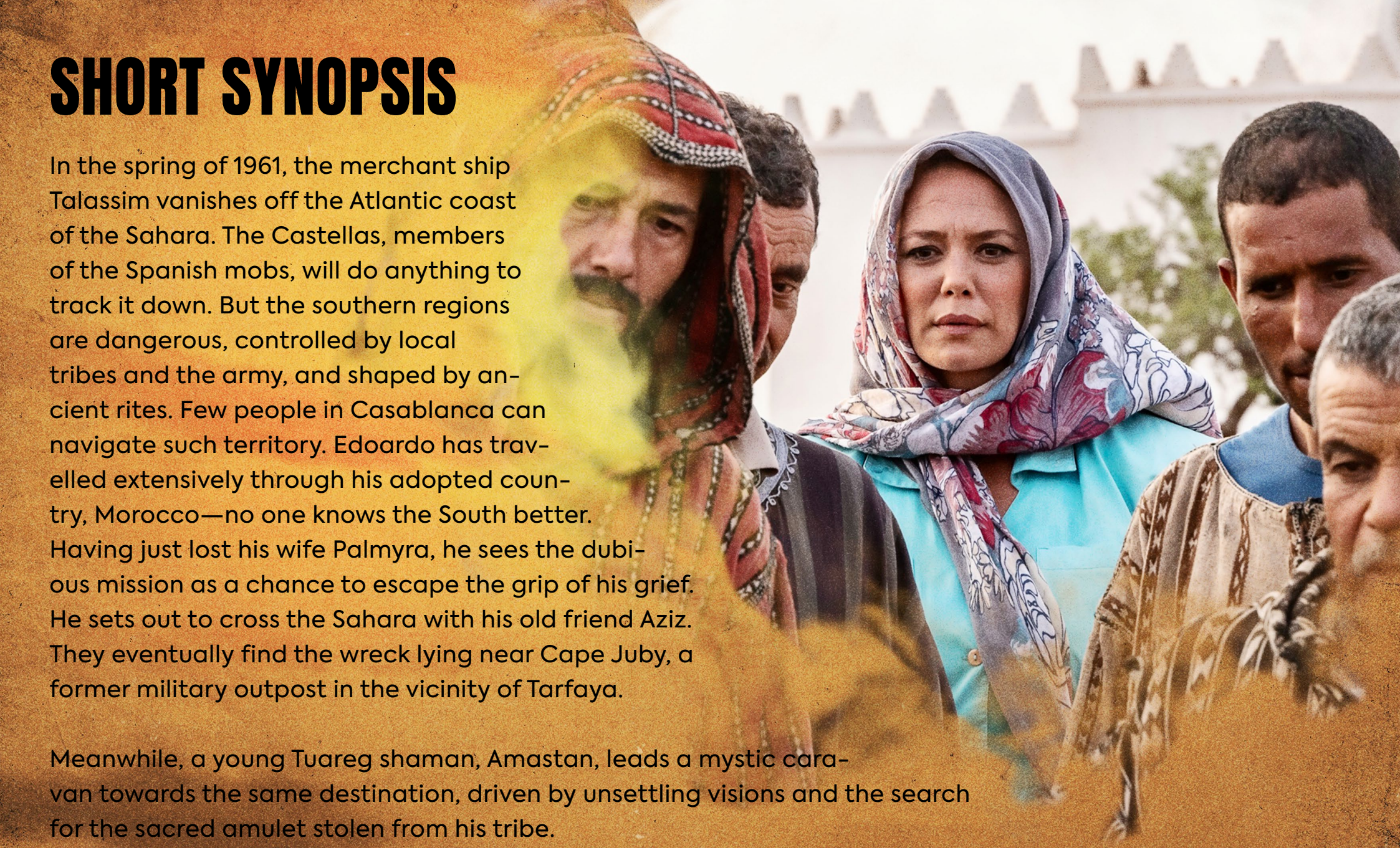

A FILM BY
YASSINE MARCO MARROCCU
MARRAKECH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
WORLD PREMIERE
MARRAKECH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL - COMPETITION
PRODUCTION
MOROCCO | HUNGARY | QATAR
2026 | 130 MINUTES
GENRE
ADVENTURE | DRAMA | MYSTERY
LANGUAGES
ARABIC | BERBER | FRENCH | ITALIAN
SUBTITLES
ENGLISH | FRENCH
ALKEBULAN
AN ECLIPSE FILMS MIRAGE FILM PRODUCTION ALKEBULAN BASED ON THE DIARIES OF EDOARDO MARROCCU STARRING MOHAMED ZOUAOUI, SONIA OKACHA MOURAD HMIMOU ALIOU BA SCREENPLAY BY YASSINE MARCO MARROCCU ANDREA TASCHLER CO-WRITER ALESSANDRO CONTE
DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY MARK GYORI DJORDJE ARAMBASIC GERGELY PALOS EDITORS JULIEN FOURÉ LÁSZLÓ DUNAI AYOUB CHTIOUI MUSIC COMPOSER ANDRÁS TÓTH SOUND DESIGNER FRANCK RUBIO PRODUCTION DESIGNERS YASSINE MARCO MARROCCU MÓNIKA ESZTÁN COSTUME DESIGNERS KRISZTINA SZAKOS AMAL EL ATRACHE
CO-PRODUCERS KAMAL EL KACIMI JULIEN FOURÉ ABDESSELAM BENABDELJELIL MEHDI BELHAJ JANO FEKETE PRODUCED BY ANDREA TASCHLER DIRECTED BY YASSINE MARCO MARROCCU
NFI
DOHA FILM INSTITUTE
ECLIPSE
Rif Film
FREE MONKEYZ



LOGLINE

Edoardo travels across Morocco, from Casablanca deep into the Sahara, to find a missing ship, while Amastan, a young Tuareg shaman, searches for the sacred amulet stolen from his tribe. Their paths cross at a tribal sanctuary on the Atlantic coast, where secrets of the present awaken shadows of the past.

SHORT SYNOPSIS



In the spring of 1961, the merchant ship Talassim vanishes off the Atlantic coast of the Sahara. The Castellas, members of the Spanish mobs, will do anything to track it down. But the southern regions are dangerous, controlled by local tribes and the army, and shaped by ancient rites. Few people in Casablanca can navigate such territory. Edoardo has travelled extensively through his adopted country, Morocco—no one knows the South better. Having just lost his wife Palmyra, he sees the dubious mission as a chance to escape the grip of his grief. He sets out to cross the Sahara with his old friend Aziz. They eventually find the wreck lying near Cape Juby, a former military outpost in the vicinity of Tarfaya.

Meanwhile, a young Tuareg shaman, Amastan, leads a mystic caravan towards the same destination, driven by unsettling visions and the search for the sacred amulet stolen from his tribe.

Dark secrets surround the ship, and those who approach it must pay a high price. As Edoardo becomes trapped in a world of haunting memories, the true purpose of his mission begins to reveal itself.

LONG SYNOPSIS

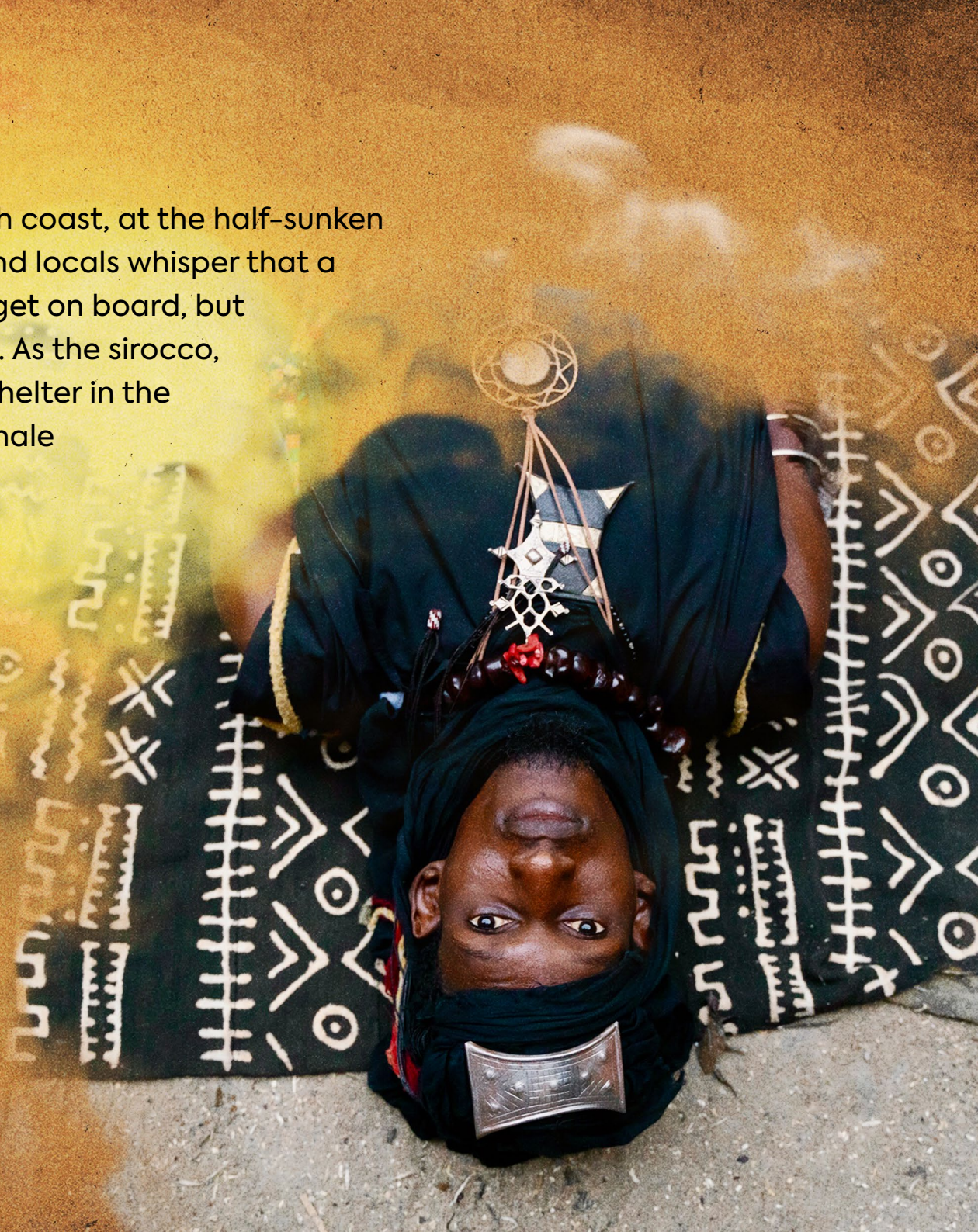
Morocco, spring 1961. The merchant ship Talassim and its crew disappear off the Atlantic coast of the Sahara, in a remote region controlled by tribes and the army. An exceptional mechanic, Edoardo was once known as a great adventurer who travelled throughout these southern regions, earning him the nickname “Redoando” among Moroccans. The local Spanish mobs, whose members own and operate the ship, always relied on him for their riskiest assignments. Now they want to send him in search of their missing vessel.

At this moment in history, independence movements are reshaping Africa. Authorities are losing control, armies are gaining power, and former colonists are leaving with vast amounts of treasure. The death of King Mohammed V only deepens the chaos. Strangers face suspicion in the South, and such a journey could easily prove fatal. But Edoardo is driven by more than the promise of adventure and financial reward. He is driven by unbearable pain over the unwitting role he played in his wife’s recent death. Palmyra had been by his side since childhood. She followed the man she loved when he fled fascist Italy for a new life in Morocco. Seeking an escape from aimlessness and depression, Edoardo accepts the high-risk mission of searching for the Talassim. Together with his old friend Aziz, he prepares to cross the Sahara in a modified Renault 4. They must pass through military checkpoints, gain the support of regional leaders, and survive punishing roads and desert weather. Their destination is Cape Juby, a small southern port town near Tarfaya and a former Spanish military base.

Meanwhile, a mystic caravan sets out from the depths of the Sahara, guided by Amastan, a young Tuareg shaman. He is on a sacred mission, and visions of a stranded ship with a secret cargo lead him towards the same destination as Edoardo.

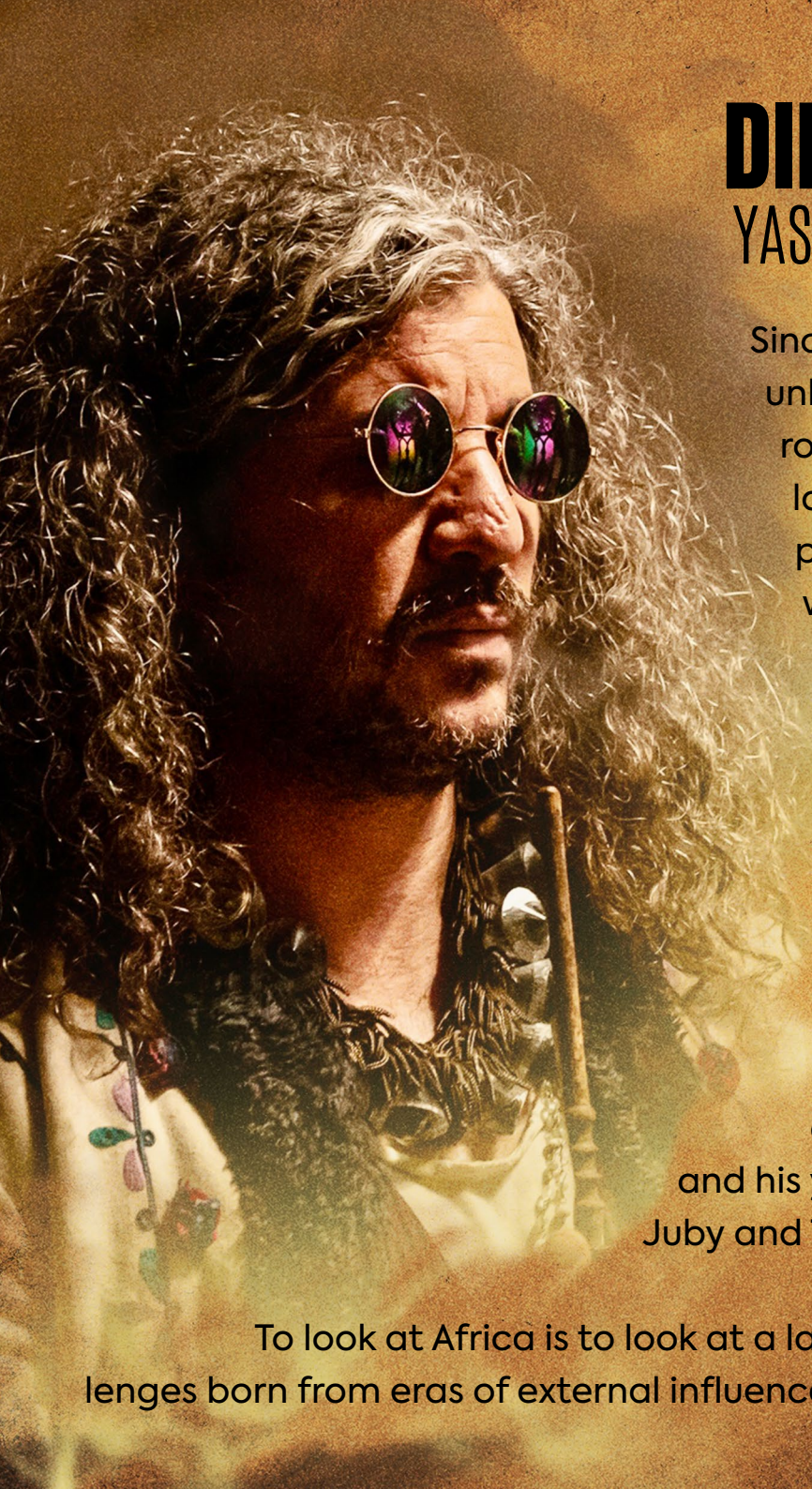
The travellers' paths eventually cross on the harsh coast, at the half-sunken Talassim. No one has yet managed to reach it, and locals whisper that a curse hangs over the ship. Edoardo manages to get on board, but Aziz is injured while trying to swim out to the ship. As the sirocco, a hot desert wind, rises, they are forced to seek shelter in the local sanctuary, where Tala, the community's female leader, offers help. The region is struggling with a prolonged drought: there is no water left. Edoardo must try to repair the community's only well. His past haunts him in nightmares. As events spiral out of control, he finds relief only in henbane, a powerful hallucinogenic substance used locally.

Under the spell of ancient rites and the Magic Box of the illusionist Captain August, Edoardo can finally face the consequences of his choices. He comes close to solving the ship's mystery and discovers that he alone can save an invaluable possession of Amastan's tribe. But everyone must pay a high price.









DIRECTOR'S NOTE

YASSINE MARCO MARROCCU

Since childhood, I have felt a deep connection with the unseen and unheard people whose stories are rarely told. My journeys across Morocco—along its coasts and plains, through its mountains and villages, its dunes and rocky landscapes—and my encounters with its people have shaped my understanding of the world and my place within it. Morocco has been a place of adventure, human warmth, solitude and spiritual discovery for me. This relationship lies at the heart of Alkebulan, which is the original name of Africa before waves of colonisation.

Through my Italian relatives, I discovered that my grandfather had shared this attachment. His search for solitude and adventure took him along some of the remotest roads in North Africa. His diaries, kept over forty years, are the basis of the film. In telling this story, I wanted to give the individual's mystical presence a dominant place in the narrative. I also thought of Saint-Exupéry and his years with the Aéropostale, particularly his connection to Cape Juby and Tarfaya, the central setting of our story.

To look at Africa is to look at a landscape deeply marked by its history, by the long-standing challenges born from eras of external influence and partition. I am profoundly sensitive to how these historical

currents still weigh on the destinies of ordinary people. Filming in Morocco allows me to gently touch upon these sensitive memory layers, grounded in a past that continues to echo through the present day. I wanted to approach this history through adventure, with the sense of transcendence found in stories from the South. Encounters between local people and European outsiders create situations that can be both tense and absurd. This is how cinema can bring a human perspective to conflict.

Edoardo—whom Moroccans call "Redoando"—offers a particular way into this world. Over forty years in North Africa, this Italian expatriate who fled Mussolini's fascism has put down deep roots until he got "Moroccanised" through time and experiences. He knows the country intimately, yet he remains an outsider. Through his quest, we experience the tension between belonging to a place and being excluded from it. His determination to pursue an almost impossible expedition, despite the tensions around him, gives the story its momentum.

The year 1961 is crucial to the film. The accession of King Hassan II, the bloody war in Algeria and the struggles for independence across the countries of Alkebulan form the background to Edoardo's journey. The looting of African treasures to Europe is central to the plot: the missing ship Talassim carries an invaluable cargo, and the search for it sets the adventure in motion. The historical context is present in the confrontations and dangers along the way, even when Edoardo is absorbed in his own mission.

I invite audiences to enter this complex history by letting the journey carry them. As the pieces come together, the adventure offers a way to look more closely at a continent and at the people caught within it, whose resilience and shared humanity ultimately transcend the lines of division.

YASSINE MARCO MARROCCU

BIOGRAPHY

Yassine Marco Marroccu is a Moroccan-Italian writer and director working between Morocco and Europe. A graduate in Audiovisual Arts from the University of Udine, he has worked in film since the early 2000s, combining directing with extensive experience in international productions.

Based in Casablanca, where he founded Eclipse Films, he has developed and produced numerous projects and trained young filmmakers. His work has taken him across North Africa and Europe, including humanitarian projects in refugee camps in Greece, Macedonia, and Serbia.

His short films include Gnawas (2001), presented at international festivals including Clermont-Ferrand, and Entropya (2013), which received the Grand Prize at the Festival du Cinéma Maghrébin in Algiers, among other awards.

His feature film Catharsys or The Afina Tales of the Lost World (2018), a co-production between Morocco, Serbia, Italy and Hungary, premiered in the First Feature Competition at Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival and received awards in Morocco and internationally.

His latest feature, Alkebulan (2026), is a co-production between Morocco, Hungary and Qatar set in the Sahara in 1961. It continues his interest in stories shaped by cultural encounters, history and the landscapes of North Africa.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

2026 ALKEBULAN | 130 min
Writer and director

2018 CATHARSYS OR THE AFINA
TALES OF THE LOST WORLD | 97 min
Writer and director

2014 ROUGE AILLEURS | 16 min
Director

2013 ENTROPYA | 24 min
Writer and director

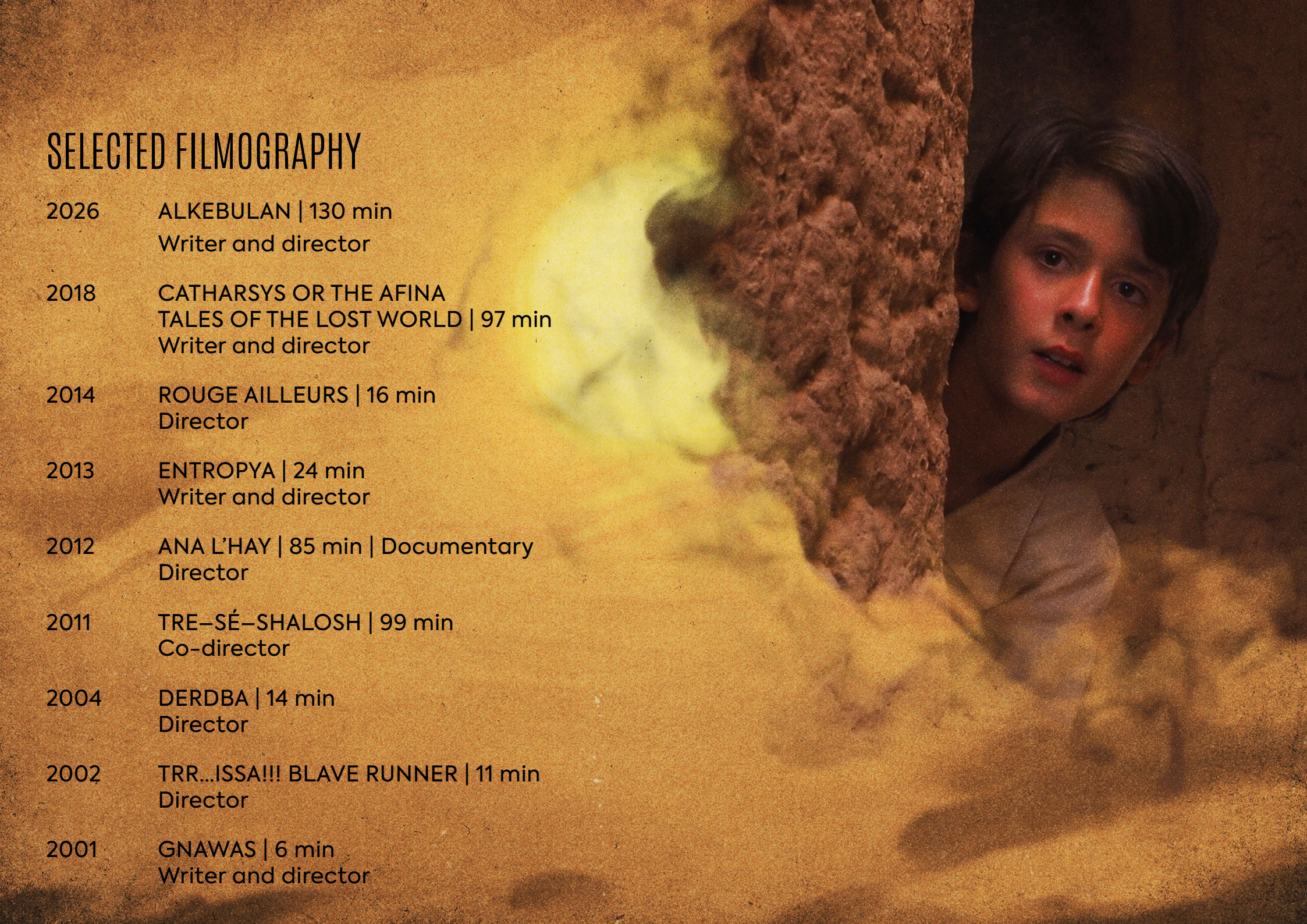
2012 ANA L'HAY | 85 min | Documentary
Director

2011 TRE–SÉ–SHALOSH | 99 min
Co-director

2004 DERDBA | 14 min
Director

2002 TRR...ISSA!!! BLAVE RUNNER | 11 min
Director

2001 GNAWAS | 6 min
Writer and director







PRODUCTION HISTORY

ANDREA TASCHLER, PRODUCER

In 2017, writer-director Yassine Marco Marroccu brought us his grandfather's manuscript, which he had translated from Italian into French and English. Its literary quality and rich symbolism convinced us to develop it into a film. We were putting the financing together when COVID-19 interrupted our plans. Travel restrictions limited location preparation and participation in co-production markets, and we could not bring in the Italian and French partners we had initially counted on. Support from the Moroccan Film Centre and the National Film Institute Hungary allowed us to go ahead, making Alkebulan the first official co-production between the two countries.

The story took us from 1920s Italy to 1960s Morocco. We divided the shoot into four blocks between May 2022 and September 2023, filming along Morocco's Atlantic coast and inland, from the dunes of M'hamid to the sanctuary of Amtoudi. Edoardo's childhood scenes were recreated in Hungary.

Our crew members come from Hungary, Morocco, Italy, France and Serbia. The main actors worked alongside Sahrawi and Tuareg non-professional performers. Over sixteen months, we faced harsh desert weather, recurring financial difficulties and the loss of a principal cast member because of immigration issues. Each setback forced us to rethink how to keep filming and complete the story.

On our last day of principal photography, we were in Casablanca filming our earthquake scene when the September 2023 earthquake struck Morocco, including the Chichaoua region, where we had filmed our main scenes. It was one of several inexplicable events during the production that made us wonder about our connection to the film's spiritual subject.

We completed filming at remote locations with a skeleton crew. By the very end, it was just the director, the cinematographer and the main actor, with one camera, travelling in a single vehicle.

Editing and post-production continued between Hungary and Morocco as we worked towards the film's world premiere in Marrakech. Bringing that family manuscript to the screen took years of work. We are deeply grateful to everyone across the countries involved whose dedication and persistence made it possible.





CREDITS

DIRECTOR YASSINE MARCO MARROCCU

PRODUCER ANDREA TASCHLER

SCREENPLAY YASSINE MARCO MARROCCU · ANDREA TASCHLER

CO-WRITER ALESSANDRO CONTE

BASED ON THE DIARIES OF EDOARDO MARROCCU

ASSEMBLED BY GIGLIOLA MARROCCU AND PIER SQUILLERO

CINEMATOGRAPHER MÁRK GYŐRI · DJORDJE ARAMBASIC
GERGELY PÁLOS · HAMZA BENMOUSSA

EDITOR JULIEN FOURÉ · LÁSZLÓ DUNAI · AYOUB CHTIOUI

MUSIC RICHARD HOROWITZ · ANDRÁS TÓTH

SOUND DESIGNER FRANCK RUBIO

PRODUCTION DESIGNER YASSINE MARCO MARROCCU · MÓNIKA ESZTÁN

COSTUME DESIGNER KRISZTINA SZAKOS · AMAL EL ATRACHE

CO-PRODUCER KAMAL EL KACIMI · ABDESSELAM BENABDELJELIL
MEHDI BELHAJ · JULIEN FOURÉ · JANÓ FEKETE

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER MEHDI EL KHAOUDY · AMINE BENADDI

MAIN CAST

MOHAMED ZOUAOUI EDOARDO MANIDORU

SONIA OKACHA PALMYRA

MOURAD HMIMOU AZIZ

ALIOU BA · BOUBACAR NIANG AMASTAN

MICHELE VENITUCCI MARIO

ATTILA MENSZÁTOR-HÉRESZ EFISIO

EDDY LEDUC LOPEZ

ABBA KHADAM ALLAH TALA

YASSINE MARCO MARROCCU CAPTAIN AUGUST

AARON EZEKIEL HORNECKER VAN ECH CHILD EDOARDO



PRODUCTION INFORMATION

PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Eclipse Films (Morocco)
Mirage Film (Hungary)
In co-production with Rif Film Morocco

FILMING LOCATIONS

Filming took place across Morocco and Hungary in four blocks between May 2022 and September 2023.

Morocco: Casablanca, Essaouira, Chichaoua, Bou Tazoult (Ouarzazate), Zagora, Bounou, Amtoudi, Layoune and Tarfaya.
Hungary: Skanzen (Szentendre), Budapest and Tárnok.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Shot digitally | DCP | 24 fps | 2.35:1 | 5.1 sound | Colour

DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRY PROGRAMMES

2025 — CineLink Work in Progress, Sarajevo Film Festival
2023 — Meeting Point Vilnius, Work in Progress
2023 — Sofia Meetings, Work in Progress
2020 — Atlas Workshops, Marrakech International Film Festival
2020 — Apulia Film Forum
2020 — Forum de Coproduction en Méditerranée
2019 — Méditalents Scriptwriting Lab

SUPPORTED BY

Centre Cinématographique Marocain
National Film Institute Hungary
Doha Film Institute
Organisation internationale de la Francophonie



PRESS AND PRODUCTION CONTACT

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miragefilm.hu

FILM AND MEDIA LINKS

FILM WEBSITE

alkebulanthefilm.com

TRAILER WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

vimeo.com/946343397

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