

DIRECTORS MORITZ SIEBERT & ESTEPHAN WAGNER CO-DIRECTOR ABOU BAKAR SIDIBÉ  
PRODUCERS SIGNE BYRGE SØRENSEN & HEIDI ELISE CHRISTENSEN CAMERA  
ABOU BAKAR SIDIBÉ EDITOR ESTEPHAN WAGNER SOUND EDITOR AND MIX  
HENRIK GARNOV COLORIST MARIA KLARLUND POST PRODUCTION KONG GULEROD  
FILM GRAPHIC DESIGN NIELS CHRISTIAN KONRAD NIELSEN POSTER GRAPHICS  
LAURA MAIKOWSKI PRODUCED WITH THE SUPPORT OF DANIDA DANISH FILM  
INSTITUTE / FILM WORKSHOP BMU FOUNDATION PRODUCED IN COLLABORATION  
WITH DR PRODUCED BY FINAL CUT FOR REAL WORLD SALES WIDE HOUSE



LES

# SAUTEURS

THOSE WHO JUMP





*THOSE WHO JUMP*, ultimately a film about making a Film, is Abou's portrayal of the human struggle for dignity and freedom on one of the World's most militarized frontiers.

## SYNOPSIS

In northern Morocco lies the Spanish enclave of Melilla: Europe on African Land. On the mountain above live over a thousand hopeful African migrants, watching the land border, a fence system separating Morocco and Spain. Abou from Mali is one of them – the protagonist in front of the camera, as well as the person behind it. For over a year, he has ceaselessly persisted in attempting to jump the fence.

At the fence, they have to overcome the razor-wire, automatic pepper spray and brutal authorities. After every failed attempt, they return to Mount Gurugú, scouring for food in the nearby villages, trying to uphold some sort of order in the camp and building up their

confidence again. Some give up and return home, others never return from the fence. Looking through the lens, Abou gradually finds expression and meaning in his situation. "When filming I feel that I exist". But after 16 months on the mountain, Abou is brought close to a tragic accident at the fence. Returning to Mali is not an option for him, and he becomes more determined than ever to pursue his dream of a better life in Europe.

As Abou portrays the struggle for human dignity and freedom on one of the World's most militarized frontiers, *LES SAUTEURS* ultimately becomes a movie about the empowerment of a man armed only with his camera and his aspirations.

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## Directors' Statement

*“The passport is the most noble part of man,”* a man in Brecht’s *Refugee’s Dialogues* once stated. Seventy years later, with daily news on the migrant situation at Europe’s borders, the statement remains a disturbing truth.

For those of us born on the right side of the fence, impermeable borders are a rare encounter. But for those on the other side, like Abou, who happen to hold a Malian passport, the options are extremely limited.

When reports of the massive attempts to storm fences in Melilla began to spread in 2014, we were deeply struck by the resilience of the mainly sub-Saharan men on Mount Gurugú. Regardless of how often they fell, no matter how painful their failures – they just seemed to stand up, wipe off the dust and carry on towards their goal.

Granted, there is no shortage of stories of the tragedies at Europe’s borders. But our impression is that the circulating images are rather limited. One voice seemed always missing: the voice of the people concerned.

In order to challenge the dominant image of a migrant, we had to first challenge our own approach as filmmakers. We decided to radically take the perspective of our protagonist, and leave him to decide what aspects of life to film. So we passed the camera to Abou. We were curious to learn what he would film, what aesthetic choices he would make, and how these choices relate to the existing images of migrants.

Abou’s approach to the project initially differed from ours. His main concern was to tell the world about the great injustice he and his friends endure at the fence of Melilla. But gradually the filming itself became an interest and form of expression for him. He switched from being the protagonist to the co-director. Ultimately, the film also became a film about making a film.

*Moritz Siebert and Estephan Wagner*

January 2016

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# MORITZ SIEBERT – DIRECTOR



Moritz Siebert was born on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 1973 in Stuttgart.

Moritz has worked on the subject of migration for the last 15 years getting inspired by the manifold stories of people on their search for a new home.

At the same time his interest is to observe the receiving societies' handling of migration which provides a great insight into the self-perception and level of openness of these societies.

Originally trained in Berlin as a medical doctor and cultural anthropologist, Moritz studied documentary filmmaking (together with Estephan Wagner) at the National Film and Television School in the UK. His award-winning films include *Long Distance* (2009), *My Name is Karl* (2008, nominated best UK documentary short at Britdocs, Oxford) and *Belgrade Backspin* (2005, co-directed with Anne Misselwitz, best documentary at Palace Film Festival Balchik).

Education:

1995-1997 - Göttingen Medical School

1997-2003 - Berlin Medical School and Cultural Anthropologie at Humboldt Universität

2007-2008 - National Film & Television School (UK), MA Documentary Direction

# ESTEPHAN WAGNER – DIRECTOR



Estephan Wagner was born on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1976 in Viña del Mar, Chile.

He is Chilean and German.

*Les Sauteurs* is Estpehan's feature debut. He has worked as documentary director for over a decade, always approaching his

themes from the point of view of his protagonists.

Estephan was originally trained as an editor in Germany and his edited work has won several international prizes including at the Berlinale. He has edited both independent films and documentaries, and television at several international broadcasters (ARTE, ARD, BBC, DR).

He later made his MA in documentary direction (together with Moritz Siebert) at the National Film and Television School in the UK. The films he directed have been both successful on the international festival circuit (playing at over 90 festivals and winning 17 prizes), as well as being broadcast on several European

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channels (DR, Channel 4, SVT, TRT, Channel 1 Russia, a.o.)

Studies:

2007 - 2008 National Film & Television School (UK), MA Documentary Direction

2002 - 2005 Northern German Broadcast NDR, (Germany), Film and Television Editor

1995 - 1996 Int. School of Image and Gesture, (Chile), Theater Acting and Direction



## ABOU BAKAR SIDIBE

### CO-DIRECTOR

Abou Bakar Sidibé was born in Kidal, Mali.

He owns a University degree in English and has worked as a teacher, a cell phones seller, a construction worker or a cash carrier between Western Union offices in the Moroccan village and people on Mount Gurugú.

Les Sauteurs is Abou's first film.



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*“A masterpiece of empathy and moral imagination.”*

Joshua Oppenheimer



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# CREDITS

**DIRECTORS** Moritz Siebert, Estephan Wagner

**CO-DIRECTOR** Abou Bakar Sidibé

**PRODUCTION** Signe Byrge Sørensen, Heidi Elise Christensen

**CAMERA** Abou Bakar Sidibé

**EDITOR** Estephan Wagner

**SOUND EDITOR AND MIX** Henrik Garnov

**COLORIST** Maria Klarlund

**POST PRODUCTION** Kong Gulerod Film

**GRAPHIC DESIGN** Niels Christian Konrad Nielsen, nckn

**PRODUCED WITH THE SUPPORT OF** Danida, Danish Film Institute / Film Workshop, BMU Foundation

**PRODUCED IN COLLABORATION WITH** DR - Mette Hoffmann Meyer

**WORLDWIDE SALES** WIDE House

**DURATION** 82 min

**YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2016

**ORIGINAL LANGUAGES** French and Bambara

**COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION** Denmark

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