



Presents  
An Almega Projects and O2 Filmes Production

# WASTELAND

Directed by Lucy Walker

Co-directed by João Jardim and Karen Harley

**\*\*WINNER – IDA Best Documentary 2010\*\***

**\*\*WINNER — IDA Pare Lorentz Award 2010\*\***

**\*\*Audience Award World Cinema Documentary – Sundance Film Festival 2010\*\***

**\*\*Panorama Audience Award – Berlin Film Festival 2010\*\***

**\*\*Amnesty International Film Award – Berlin Film Festival 2010\*\***

**\*\*Audience Award for Best Documentary – IDFA 2010\*\***

**Running Time:** 98 minutes

**Rating:** Unrated

**Language:** English and Portuguese with English subtitles

**For More Info:** [www.wastelandmovie.com](http://www.wastelandmovie.com)

[www.arthousefilmsonline.com](http://www.arthousefilmsonline.com)

<http://www.oscars.org/awards/academyawards/83/nominees.html>

**Distribution Contact:**

Erin Owens

**Arthouse Films**

902 Broadway, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor

New York, NY 10010

Phone: 646.259.4123

[erin@arthousefilmsonline.com](mailto:erin@arthousefilmsonline.com)

**Publicity Contact:**

David Magdael

**David Magdael & Associates, Inc.**

600 W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 704

Los Angeles, CA 90015

Phone: 213.624.7827

Cell: 213.399.1434

[dmagdael@tcdm-associates.com](mailto:dmagdael@tcdm-associates.com)

## FILMMAKERS & FEATURED SUBJECTS

**Directed By** Lucy Walker

**Co-Directed By** João Jardim  
Karen Harley

**Produced by** Angus Aynsley  
Hank Levine

**Co-Produced by** Peter Martin

**Executive Produced by** Fernando Meirelles  
Miel de Botton Aynsley  
Andrea Barata Ribeiro  
Jackie de Botton

**Music by** Moby

**Edited by** Pedro Kos

**Cinematography by** Dudu Miranda

**Co-cinematographers** Heloisa Passos  
Aaron Phillips

**Featuring**  
**(In Order of Appearance)** Vik Muniz  
Fabio Ghivelder  
Isis Rodrigues Garros  
José Carlos da Silva Baia Lopes (Zumbi)  
Sebastião Carlos dos Santos (Tiao)  
Valter dos Santos  
Leide Laurentina da Silva (Irmã)  
Magna de França Santos  
Suelem Pereira Dias

## **AWARDS & ACCOLADES**

Audience Award, Best World Cinema Documentary - Sundance Film Festival 2010

Panorama Audience Award, Best Film – Berlin Film Festival 2010

Amnesty International Human Rights Film Award - Berlin Film Festival 2010

Audience Award, Best Documentary – IDFA 2010

Audience Award, Best Film - Full Frame Documentary Film Festival 2010

Target Filmmaker Award, Best Documentary – Dallas International Film Festival 2010

Best Documentary Golden Space Needle Audience Award – Seattle International Film Festival 2010

HBO Audience Award, Best Documentary Feature – Provincetown International Film Festival 2010

Audience Award, World Cinema Best Documentary – Maui International Film Festival 2010

Audience Award, Best Film – Paulinia Film Festival 2010

Jury Award, Best Film – Paulinia Film Festival 2010

Best Documentary – Durban International Film Festival 2010

Audience Choice Best Film – Durban International Film Festival 2010

Amnesty International Durban Human Rights Award – Durban International Film Festival 2010

Human Spirit Award – EcoFocus Film Festival 2010

Audience Award Best Feature Film – EcoFocus Film Festival 2010

People's Choice Award Best Documentary Film– Trinidad & Tobago Film Festival 2010

Jury Award – Flagstaff Mountain Film Festival 2010

Crystal Heart Award – Heartland Film Festival 2010

Roger's People's Choice Award – Vancouver International Film Festival 2010

Itamaraty Award for Best Documentary – São Paulo International Film Festival 2010

Special Jury Prize Best Feature – Amazonas Film Festival 2010

Silver Audience Award – Stockholm Film Festival 2010

Best Documentary – IDA Awards 2010

Pare Lorentz Award - IDA Awards 2010

Golden Tomato Award, Best reviewed Documentary – Rotten Tomatoes 2010

Best of Festival – Wild & Scenic Festival 2011

Jury Award – Frozen River Film Festival 2011

Best of Festival - Princeton Environmental Film Festival 2011

Nominee – British Independent Film Awards Best Documentary 2010

Nominee – Academy Awards® Best Documentary Feature 2011

“The moment when one thing turns into another is the most beautiful moment. A combination of sounds turns into music. And that applies to everything.”

--Vik Muniz, WASTE LAND

‘What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow  
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,  
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only  
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,  
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,  
And the dry stone no sound of water. Only  
There is shadow under this red rock,  
(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),  
And I will show you something different from either  
Your shadow at morning striding behind you  
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;  
I will show you fear in a handful of dust.’

--T.S. Eliot, ‘The Waste Land’



## SYNOPSIS

Filmed over nearly three years, WASTE LAND follows renowned artist Vik Muniz as he journeys from his home base in Brooklyn to his native Brazil and the world's largest garbage dump, Jardim Gramacho, located on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. There he photographs an eclectic band of "catadores" -- self-designated pickers of recyclable materials. Muniz's initial objective was to "paint" the *catadores* with garbage. However, his collaboration with these inspiring characters as they recreate photographic images of themselves out of garbage reveals both the dignity and despair of the *catadores* as they begin to re-imagine their lives. Director Lucy Walker (DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND, BLINDSIGHT and COUNTDOWN TO ZERO) and co-directors João Jardim and Karen Harley have great access to the entire process and, in the end, offer stirring evidence of the transformative power of art and the alchemy of the human spirit.



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I have always been interested in garbage: What it says about us. What in there embarrasses us, and what we can't bear to part with. Where it goes and how much of it there is. How it endures. What it might be like to work with it every day. I read about one woman's crusade to show her appreciation for all the sanitation workers in New York by hugging each of them, and I applauded the sentiment ... and yet ... there had to be some other way for me to show my appreciation.

Then when I was a graduate film student at NYU, I started training with the NYU Triathlon Club. As we endured the most grueling 6:00 a.m. workouts imaginable, I bonded with fellow triathlete Robin Nagle, a brilliant professor who was teaching about garbage. Listening to Robin talk about her work was so fascinating that I began sitting in on her PhD seminar, and loved deepening my thinking about the sociology and implications and revelations and actuality of garbage.

So when Robin took her grad students to visit Fresh Kills, the landfill on Staten Island, I was curious and gatecrashed. These days it is best known as the resting place of the debris from the World Trade Center, but this was back in March 2000. It was a shocking place, with chainlink fences clad with teeming nightmare quantities of plastic bags making the nastiest noise imaginable, and pipes outgassing methane poking up at regular intervals through the exaggerated contours of the grassed-over giant mounds of garbage. It's a parody of an idyllic hyper-landscaped city park, with garbage hills 225' high – taller than the Statue of Liberty. We looked at the rats and seagulls and dogs, and at the palimpsests of layer upon layer of discarded possessions. And we tried to ignore the putrid smell.

I love great locations in movies, and I couldn't believe I'd never seen a landfill on-screen before. It was the most haunting place. And all of the garbage I'd ever generated living in New York City was in there somewhere. This was the graveyard of all my stuff. Along with everyone else's. I immediately knew that I wanted to make a movie in a garbage dump.

Cut to 2006, and I met producer Angus Aynsley and co-producer Peter Martin at BritDoc and again at the London Film Festival, and instantly liked them enormously and wanted to work with them. Talking about possible projects, Angus mentioned that he had met Vik Muniz and been impressed by his highly entertaining slideshow about art history and the social projects he was working on. Angus and Peter were already working on a short film on Vik but realised there was potential for something bigger. I had seen and loved Vik's work, and I was hugely excited about the possibility of working with him. So I read some of Vik's writing and set off with Angus and Peter to meet Vik in Newcastle, England when he had an opening at the Baltic in January 2007.

When we met up again in Vik's studio in New York two months later the conversation turned to garbage, and I suddenly thought about my trip to Fresh Kills seven years previously. That was the lightbulb moment. Vik had previously done a beautiful series using junk, and he had also done projects with street sweepings and dust. His creative use of materials is his signature -- whether chocolate sauce, sugar, or condensation trails from planes -- so this project would very much be an extension of his earlier work. After we'd started talking about it, no other ideas were interesting anymore. I knew that a collaboration between Vik and the *catadores* would be potentially very dramatic. Vik had previously done some brilliant social projects with street kids in Sao Paolo and had a wonderful ongoing project in Rio which employed kids from the *favelas*, and I was totally inspired by him.

A month later, Angus and I got exciting news that Fabio had found one landfill where the drug traffic was under control, and the *catadores* were being organized into a co-operative by a charismatic young leader who might be open to collaborating with Vik. We were all very nervous -- there were so many

things to be afraid of, from dengue fever to kidnapping -- but we all wanted to go. We arrived in Rio de Janeiro in August 2007 -- Vik, Angus, Peter and me. Seeing the extremes of poverty and wealth so ostentatiously displayed through the car window ... the contrasts of mountains and oceans, black and white, garbage and art, art stars and *catadores* ... the contrasts couldn't be more starkly drawn than in Rio de Janeiro, and I realized that it wasn't a coincidence that we were tackling this particular topic in Rio. It was perfect.

For me this film, as with all of my work, is about getting to know people who you do not normally meet in your life. And, if I'm doing my job, I aim to create an opportunity for the audience to feel they are getting under the skin, to emotionally connect with the people on the screen. But you need people you can care about. And so when Valter first cycled into my line of sight, I knew for sure that we had a movie. That day I had gone on my first recce to the landfill and was dressed head-to-toe in protective layers fit for a moon landing. His bike was decorated so creatively with odd trinkets from the trash and he honked his eagle horn with such sweet wit that I was totally smitten.

I am Vik's biggest fan. And this idea of "the human factor," about scales in portraiture, and distances in getting to know people, is what the movie is about for me. I'm not sure anyone will notice this unless I tell them, but there are three references to ants in the movie: Vik says that when he is flying over Gramacho, the people look like "just little ants, doing what they do every day"; then Isis talks about the ant that she saw crawling over her dead son's face; finally we see Vik playing with an ant with his paintbrush in the studio. That play of being so far away that people are just ants, with no "human factor" is the opposite experience of being so deeply connected to your son that you will never forget "not the tiniest detail, not a single single detail," not even an ant on his face in a single moment.

And Vik, as an artist, plays between these levels of proximity and distance, between showing the viewer the material and showing them the idea, revealing the relationship between the paintstrokes and the scene depicted by the paint. The portrait is Isis, it is a Picasso, it is a bunch of garbage, and it is a work by Vik Muniz - all at once. You can view things close in or further away. Likewise you can fear people from afar or you can go interact with them. I love the Eames's POWERS OF TEN and I wanted to create a social analog. To start with we see the place from GoogleEarth, then from a helicopter, then from a car, then from a safe distance, then from a first meeting, then from a growing friendship, then from it having changed you fundamentally and permanently.

Just as Vik wants the portraits to serve as a mirror in which the *catadores* may see themselves, so I hope the movie serves as a means for us to see our journey to becoming involved with people so far from ourselves. To zoom all the way in to caring about someone who was previously as far away as it's possible to be.

Questions poke through the fabric of the movie as things get messy. In WASTE LAND Vik and his wife start to argue on-camera about whether the project is hurting the *catadores* by taking them out of their environment and then, when it's over, expecting them to return. Likewise, should documentary filmmakers interfere with their subjects' lives? But how could they not? I don't believe in objectivity. I observe the observer's paradox every moment I'm filming. Your presence is changing everything; there's no mistaking it. And you have a responsibility.

My heartfelt thanks to the *catadores*. I can't help seeing WASTE LAND as the third in a triptych with my earlier films DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND and BLINDSIGHT, and not least in the awe and gratitude I feel for the group of people who were courageous enough to share their stories with us -- and to live lives so rich in inspiration for us all. We dedicate the movie to Valter, and remember him saying that 99 is not 100. A single can, or a single catador, can make the difference.

Lucy Walker, January 2010



## DIRECTOR'S BLOG FROM LOCATION AT THE LARGEST GARBAGE DUMP IN THE WORLD, JARDIM GRAMACHO. AUGUST 2007

Just when you get used to the smell they find a human body, or mention a leprosy epidemic, and the sound man passes out. But at least it's at sea level - after the hell of 23,000' for BLINDSIGHT I'm relieved to look across at the ocean at all times.

Across the bay you can see Christ The Redeemer reaching his arms out to the wealthy in Rio's south zone - Copacabana, Ipanema, Leblon. They say even Christ turns his back on the north of Rio, where we are.

Don't worry, we have kidnap insurance, the producers tell me -- from their desks on Ipanema beach. But seriously, everyone is wonderful. O2 Filmes, and Vik Muniz, the fantastico Brazillian artist who got me into all this, and our crew - our sound man's dad wrote PIXOTE, one of my favorite movies, and especially our producer Angus Aynsley. It's the most enjoyable shoot, notwithstanding the garbage.

Vik describes Rio as St. Tropez surrounded by Mogadishu. The garbage is the only place in Rio where the social extremes get mixed in together. The posh rubbish from the south zone with the cheap trash from the favelas. Garbage is the negative of consumer culture, it's everything that nobody wants, and when it disappears from everyone's lives, rich or poor, it doesn't disappear at all, it appears here, like a conjuring trick gone wrong.

Garbage is a matter of opinion, say the *catadores* who work here, sifting through. Tread carefully, because you are treading on money. On a bad day they make twice minimum wage salvaging cans, bottles, plastics, paper. Then somebody finds R\$30,000 cash -- while somebody else finds two headless bodies. After Carnival they pick out the discarded costumes and wear them as they work. When the airline Varig did a dump everyone dressed up in the air steward outfits and served each other recycled drink bottles.

That's the most striking thing, the good humor, the sheer fun. These people are having a good time. When we film The Governor, a grinning old-timer with a boombox strapped to his belly - he calls out "I'm gonna be on TV." "Yeah, the animal channel," comes right back.

And they are honest. They don't touch each other's piles of pickings. Many *catadores* had limited career choices: prostitution, drug traffic, or garbage, and they chose garbage, where the only person you hurt is yourself. There is a lot of pride.

Zumbi is the resident intellectual. We hear about him before we see him - we hear that when he sees a book, he doesn't see just recycling paper. He has kept every book he's ever found on the landfill, and he has a lending library in his shack. He's handsome, like a young Sam Jackson, with a white towel tied around his head and a paperback bulging in his shorts.



Half of the *catadores* sleep in the garbage, risking being run over by trucks, and the other half sleep in the worst favela in town. Their garbage-clad open-sewer favela makes the other favelas look like the Amalfi coast, with their brightly-coloured two-story buildings with twinkling christmas lights piled up the hillside.



Evenings we return to the south zone. I sulk as I head to a delicious dinner in a bulletproof car, I'd rather be with the *catadores* than these billionaires moaning about the price of contemporary art. How competitive the current art market is, because there is just so much money, you have to interview and practically beg for the chance to buy insanely overpriced art works by totally unestablished artists.



These are the people who are going to buy the art work that Vik is making in the garbage in our charity auction at Phillips. And these are the people whose garbage will be part of the piece. We're going to trace all these comings-and-goings of things.

When we ask the *catadores* what they want to do with the money from the auction, they say they're not sure, their first thought is that they don't really need anything, They have everything they need. Richer people are much quicker to tell you what they need money for. I guess the *catadores* know exactly where most things that people spend money on wind up.

## ARTIST BACKGROUND

Brazilian-born, Brooklyn-based illusionist and innovator **Vik Muniz** lives for the moment when all of our fixed preconceptions fail us and we are forced to enter a dialogue with the world we inhabit. In this moment, we are confronted with the chaos that is otherwise hidden from view. It is precisely through his art work (both in product and process) that Muniz harnesses the generative possibility of chaos. Similar to dumpster diving and freeganism, Vik Muniz's latest project "Pictures of Garbage" is invested in the excavation of garbage. However, a key distinction is that his particular exploration moves beyond questions of utility— he isn't simply interested in finding and salvaging the secret treasures within trash heaps (ipods, sealed fruit bowls, jewelry) but rather in using garbage as an art medium. *"The beautiful thing about garbage is that it's negative; it's something that you don't use anymore; it's what you don't want to see,"* says Muniz. *"So, if you are a visual artist, it becomes a very interesting material to work with because it's the most nonvisual of materials. You are working with something that you usually try to hide."*



First, Muniz traveled to the biggest garbage dump in the world, Jardim Gramacho (north of Rio de Janeiro), where he was met with a community of people who scavenge the recyclable refuse of the city — *catadores* in Portuguese — to make a living. An estimated 3,000-5,000 people live in the dump, 15,000 derive their income from activities related to it, and some that Muniz met in Jardim Gramacho come from families that had been working there for three generations. *Catadores* like the trash heaps they call home, are shunted to the margins of society and made invisible to the average Brazilian. And yet, Muniz is not interested in perpetuating a "Save The Children" politics of pity that positions *catadores* as passive victims. *"These people are at the other end of consumer culture,"* he says. *"I was expecting to see people who were beaten and broken, but they were survivors."* Muniz quickly befriended and collaborated with a number of *catadores* on large-scale portraits of themselves including **Irma**, a cook who sells food in the dump; **Zumbi**, the resident intellectual who has held onto every book he's scavenged; and 18-year-old **Suelem**, who first arrived there when she was 7.

According to Donald Eubank, "Muniz rented 4 tons of junk and a warehouse, and together they arranged the trash on the ground to replicate photographs of themselves that Muniz had taken earlier. Then they would climb up to the ceiling and take photos of the compositions from 22 meters high. The portraits of the people are made out of empty spaces, out of what wasn't garbage." Calling upon his resources as a world famous artist, Muniz raised \$64,097 at the esteemed Phillippe de Pury auction in London by selling one of his garbage portraits. 100% of the profits went to the **Garbage Pickers Association of Jardim Gramacho**.

## BACKGROUND OF JARDIM GRAMACHO

Built on the north edge of Rio de Janeiro's Guanabara Bay directly across from the iconic statue of Christ the Redeemer, whose back is turned to it, arms outstretched away towards the south, the metropolitan landfill of **Jardim Gramacho** ("Gramacho Gardens") receives more trash every day than any landfill in the world. 7,000 tons of garbage arriving daily make up 70% of the trash produced by Rio de Janeiro and surrounding areas.

Established in 1970 as a sanitary waste facility, the landfill became home to an anarchic community of scavengers during the economic crises of the 70's and 80's. These *catadores* lived and worked in the garbage, collecting and selling scrap metal and recyclable materials. They established a squatter community (the *favela* of Jardim Gramacho) surrounding the landfill that is now home to over 20,000 people and entirely dependent on an economy that revolves around the trade of recyclable materials.

In 1995, Rio's sanitation department began to rehabilitate the landfill and formalize the job of the *catador*, granting licenses to *catadores* as well as enforcing basic safety standards, like the prohibition of children from the landfill. They also began a pilot project to create a carbon negative power plant fuelled by urban solid waste. On their side, the *catadores* formed ACAMJG, the Association of Pickers of Jardim Gramacho, whose president, Tião Santos, is featured in WASTE LAND. ACAMJG lead the way in community development. Under Mr. Santos' leadership, ACAMJG has created a decentralized system of recycling collection in neighboring municipalities; the creation of a recycling center, professional recognition of the *catador*, enabling *catadores* to be contracted for their services, the creation of a 24 hour medical clinic, and the construction of a daycare center and skills training center. In addition to their community initiatives, ACAMJG leads a national movement for greater professional recognition for the *catador* and support from the federal government and has teamed up with other movements across South America to hold the first international conference of *catadores* in São Paulo in November 2009.



Today roughly 1,300 *catadores* work in the landfill, removing 200 tons of recyclable materials each day. They have extended the life of the landfill by removing materials that would have otherwise been buried and have contributed to the landfill having one of the highest recycling rates in the world.

The landfill is scheduled to close in 2012 and groups like ACAMJG are fighting to raise support to provide skills training to *catadores*.

Information on how to help and give donations to ACAMJG and the *catadores* can be found on our website.

## SUBJECT BIOGRAPHIES

### VIK MUNIZ

Vik Muniz was born into a working-class family in Sao Paulo, Brazil in 1961. As a young man he was shot in the leg whilst trying to break up a fight. He received compensation for his injuries and used this money to fund a trip to New York City, where he has lived and worked since the late 1980s. He began his career as a sculptor but gradually became more interested in photographic reproductions of his work, eventually turning his attention exclusively to photography. He incorporates a multiplicity of unlikely materials into this photographic process. Often working in series, Vik has used dirt, diamonds, sugar, string, chocolate syrup and garbage to create bold, witty and often deceiving images drawn from the pages of photojournalism and art history. His work has been met with both commercial success and critical acclaim, and has been exhibited worldwide. His solo show at MAM in Rio de Janeiro was second only to Picasso in attendance records; it was here that Vik first exhibited his "Pictures of Garbage Series" in Brazil.

### FABIO GHIVELDER

Vik's collaborator and the director of his studio in Rio de Janeiro was crucial to all aspects of the "Garbage" series of works presented in WASTE LAND. Fabio was responsible for identifying Jardim Gramacho as the site for Vik to make the garbage works. He was in charge of all liaising with the *catadores*, officials at the sanitation department (Comlurb) and at Jardim Gramacho. He was also the practical mastermind behind creating the new studio in Rio, building the infrastructure required to make these monumental works, ensuring that the artistic environment would meet the standards set by Vik, day-to-day management of the project and liaising with the *catadores*, overseeing the photo shoot at Jardim Gramacho, and most importantly collaborating as Vik's sounding board and key advisor on all creative aspects of the project.

Previously, Fabio managed the production of Vik's highly successful "Junk" series that was produced in the Rio studio. Before returning to his native Brazil to create and run Vik's operations, Fabio lived and worked in NYC for many years in various professional capacities in the photographic world. Fabio has a wicked sense of humor, is a great raconteur, huge fan of various television series such as "Seinfeld" and forms an amazing comedic double act with Vik!

## CATADORES

### **TIAÕ (SEBASTIAO CARLOS DOS SANTOS)**

Tiaõ is the young, charismatic President of ACAMJG (the Association for the Pickers of Jardim Gramacho), a co-operative to improve the lives of his fellow *catadores*. Inspired by the political texts he found in the waste, Tiao had to convince his co-workers that organizing could make a difference. Tiaõ has been picking since he was 11 years old.



### **ZUMBI (JOSE CARLOS DA SILVA BALA LOPES)**

Zumbi is the resident intellectual. When he sees a book, he doesn't see just recycling paper. He has kept every book he's ever found on the landfill, and he has started a community lending library in his shack. He is on the Board of the Association of Pickers of Jardim Gramacho, ACAMJG. He has been working at Jardim Gramacho since he was nine years old.



### **SUELEM (SUELEM PEREIRA DIAS)**

Suelem has been working in the garbage since she was seven; she's 18 with two kids and another on the way. She's proud of her work, because she's not a prostitute or involved in the drug traffic, those being her only other career options. Still, she'd love to be taking care of children, or even be able to stay home with her own children.



### **ISIS (ISIS RODRIGUES GARROS)**

Isis loves fashion and hates picking garbage. When she falls apart she reveals the tragedy that brought her to the dump.



### **IRMA (LEIDE LAURENTINA DA SILVA)**

Irma is the resident chef, cooking up a plat du jour from the freshest ingredients she can find at Jardim Gramacho.





**VALTER (VALTER DOS SANTOS)**

Valter is the landfill elder statesmen, recycling guru and resident bard who delights in rhymes and morals.



**MAGNA (MAGNA DE FRANÇA SANTOS)**

Magna fell on hard times when her husband lost his job. Her fellow bus passengers may turn their noses up at her, but she tells them at least she's not turning tricks on Copacabana.



## FILMMAKER BIOGRAPHIES



### **LUCY WALKER (Director)**

Lucy Walker uses dramatic filmmaking techniques to make documentary films, following memorable characters on transformative journeys that grant unique access inside closed worlds. In addition to WASTE LAND, Lucy Walker directed a second feature documentary that premiered at Sundance 2010 and was recently released in theaters: COUNTDOWN TO ZERO, a terrifying exposé of the current threat of nuclear terrorism and proliferation.

Walker's previous film BLINDSIGHT premiered at Toronto and received audience awards at the Berlin (Panorama), Ghent, AFI and Palm Springs film festivals, and nominations for Best Documentary at the 2007 Grierson Awards and British Independent Film Awards. BLINDSIGHT follows the emotional journey of six blind Tibetan teenagers who climb up the north side of Mt. Everest with their hero, blind American mountaineer Erik Weihenmeyer, and their teacher, Sabriye Tenberken, who founded Braille Without Borders, the only school for the blind in Tibet.

Walker's first feature documentary, DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND, examined the struggles of Amish teenagers during their period of experimentation (*rumspringa*). It premiered at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival and went on to win awards at the Karlovy Vary and Sarasota film festivals, three Emmy Award nominations for Best Documentary, Best Directing and Best Editing and an Independent Spirit Award nomination for Best Documentary. Walker's credits also include Nickelodeon's "Blue's Clues," for which she was twice nominated for Emmy Awards for Outstanding Direction in a Children's Series, and several award-winning narrative short films.

Walker grew up in London, England, started directing theater in high school and continued as an undergraduate at Oxford University, where her plays won prestigious Oxford University Dramatic Society awards. After graduating at the top of her class with a BA Hons and MA Oxon in Literature, she won a Fulbright Scholarship to attend New York University's Graduate Film Program, where she earned her MFA. While at NYU, she moonlighted as a musician and DJ, during which time she met Moby, who contributed the music for WASTE LAND.

### **JOÃO JARDIM (Co-Director)**

João Jardim's first feature film, JANELA DA ALMA (2002), surprised everyone for its unusual theme: the sight. The documentary was awarded important prizes and became number 8 at that year's Brazilian box-office, staying for 48 weeks on screens – a record for documentaries. In 2006, his documentary feature PRO DIA NASCER FELIZ, about school and adolescence, received 10 awards, including Best Documentary at the Mostra de São Paulo, and 3 important awards at Gramado Film Festival.

In 2008, João co-directed the documentary WASTE LAND, about the Brazilian artist Vik Muniz, which was a co-production between the United Kingdom and Brazil. On television, João directed several series for Globo TV, including POR TODA A MINHA VIDA, which talked about the musicians/singers Nara Leão, Elis Regina, Raul Seixas and Dolores Duran. The programs about Elis Regina and Nara Leão were nominated for the 2007/2008 International Emmy Awards in the Best Art Program category.



**KAREN HARLEY (Co-Director)**

Karen Harley has directed several short film documentaries on Brazilian artists, including Ernesto Neto in *WE FISHING THE TIME*, Leonilson in *WITH THE WHOLE OCEAN TO SWIM* (Best Film in Rio Festival) and Marcos Chaves in *COMFUNDO*.

As an editor, Karen has worked extensively with a wide range of film directors, including Cacá Legues on *TIETA* and Fábio Barreto on *QUATRILHO*, which received an Oscar nomination for Best Foreign Film in 1995. With Mika Kaurismaki, Karen edited *MORO NO BRASIL* (2002), *HONEY BABY* (2003) and *BRASILEIRINHO* (2005).

In 2001, Karen worked with directors João Jardim and Walter Carvalho on the award-winning *WINDOWS OF THE SOUL*. In 2005, she edited *CINEMA, ASPIRINS AND VULTURES*, by then-unknown director Marcelo Gomes, which premiered in *Un Certain Regard* at the Cannes Film Festival 2005. The film went on to win 30 awards, including Best Editing Award, for Karen, from the Brazilian Film Academy. Claudio Assis's *BOG OF BEAST*, recipient of the Tiger Award at the 2007 Rotterdam Film Festival, was edited that same year. *THE DEAD GIRL'S FEAST*, directed by newcomer Matheus Nachtergaele, was presented at the *Un Certain Regard*, Cannes Film Festival in 2008. More recently, in 2009, she worked with Karim Ainouz and Marcelo Gomes in *I TRAVEL BECAUSE I HAVE TO, I COME BACK BECAUSE I LOVE YOU*, which was released in the Orizzonti, Venice Film Festival and was awarded the Best Film at the Cuba Film Festival and Best Film at the Santa Maria da Feira, Portugal, in the same year.

*WASTE LAND* is Karen Harley's first foray into directing feature-length films.

**PEDRO KOS (Editor)**

Pedro Kos has collaborated frequently on documentaries with Academy Award winner Freida Lee Mock, and Sundance winner Jessica Sanders, both as an editor and as a second unit director. He most recently completed Ms. Mock's new documentary *SING CHINA!*, serving both as the editor and as the second unit director. Previously, he was the second unit director on Ms. Sanders' new film *MARCH OF THE LIVING*.

He began his career as an editor on the making-of documentary to Terrence Malick's *THE NEW WORLD*.

Pedro was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and raised both there and in New York City and Miami, Florida. He received his B.A. in theater directing from Yale University.

**DUDU MIRANDA (Director of Photography)**

Dudu Miranda started his career in film in 1989. His first job was that of a camera assistant to the cinematographer Walter Carvalho on the feature *HOW GREAT TO SEE YOU ALIVE*, by Lucia Murat (*Que Bom Te Ver Viva*). He went on to work as Carvalho's camera assistant on a number of films, as well as for several other cinematographers. Miranda progressed as a cinematographer on the 1990 short film *NUMA BEIRA DE ESTRADA*, by Marcos Gutman. This was followed by several other shorts, documentaries, commercials and music videos.

Miranda's first role as cinematographer on a feature came in 2006 on the documentary *OLHAR ESTRANGEIRO*, by award-winning writer/director Lucia Murat. For his work on the film *O PAI, O'*, Dudu was nominated for an award at the Premio Contigo Cinema, Brazil (2007) for Best Cinematography. He subsequently worked on the award-winning TV series of the same name.

Miranda's most recent role as cinematographer is on the film O BEM AMADO (2010) directed by the Brazilian filmmaker Guel Arraes.

### **MOBY (Music)**

Moby was born in New York City, but grew up in Connecticut, where he started making music when he was 9 years old. He started out playing classical guitar and studied music theory, and then went on to play with seminal Connecticut hardcore punk group 'The Vatican Commandoes' when he was 14. He then played with post-punk band 'AWOL' while studying philosophy at the University of Connecticut and SUNY Purchase. He started dj'ing while attending college, and was a fixture in the late 80's New York house and hip-hop scenes, dj'ing at clubs such as Mars, Red Zone, MK, and the Palladium.

He released his first single, 'Go' in 1991 (listed as one of Rolling Stone's best records of all time), and has been making albums ever since. His own records have sold over 20,000,000 copies worldwide, and he's also produced and remixed scores of other artists, including David Bowie, Metallica, the Beastie Boys, Public Enemy, among others.

Moby has toured extensively, playing well over 3,000 concerts in his career. He has also had his music used in hundreds of different films, including HEAT, ANY GIVEN SUNDAY, TOMORROW NEVER DIES, and THE BEACH, among others.

Currently he's touring in support of his most recent album, 'Wait For Me', as well as working closely with a variety of different charities, including the Humane Society and the Institute for Music and Neurologic Function.

## PRODUCTION COMPANY BIOGRAPHIES

### ALMEGA PROJECTS – COMPANY PROFILE

ALMEGA PROJECTS is a London-based independent production company specialising in the in-house development, production and international co-production of feature films and documentaries. The company was founded in 2006 by British/American managing director and producer Angus Aynsley.

OSCAR® nominated *Waste Land* (dir. Lucy Walker), Almega Projects' inaugural feature documentary, won the Audience Award for World Cinema Documentary at Sundance 2010 as well as winning both the Amnesty International Film Prize and the Panorama Audience Award at Berlinale 2010. The film went on to win over 15 major awards at a host of international film festivals before receiving a nomination for the 2011 Academy Awards® for Best Documentary. *Waste Land* is a UK/Brazilian co-production in partnership with O2 Filmes (*City of God*), Brazil's largest film production company. *Waste Land* received its US theatrical release in October 2010 and will be released in the UK on the 25th February 2011.

Almega Projects are production partners/co-financiers of *A Man's Story*, a feature documentary about British fashion designer Ozwald Boateng, directed by Varon Bonicos. The film, which premiered at the Abu Dhabi Film Festival 2010, is produced by Rachel Robey and Alastair Clark of Wellington Films (London to Brighton, *Better Things*) and co-financed by the UK Film Council New Cinema Fund (*Man on Wire*).

Angus Aynsley is also executive producer on the brilliant and controversial *Four Lions* from production company Warp Films. The Film was officially selected for the World Cinema Dramatic Competition Sundance 2010 and has received nominations for both Outstanding Film Debut and Outstanding British Film at BAFTA 2011. The film opened theatrically in the UK on May 7th 2010 and November 5th in the US.

Almega Project's most recent film, *THE BENGALI DETECTIVE* made the official selection at Sundance 2011 (World Cinema Documentary Competition) and will be receiving its European premiere at *Panorama*, Berlinale, 2011. Future projects from the company include various feature documentaries with strong international themes.

Almega Projects previously produced a number of award winning short films including the drama *Oscar & Isabelle* and documentary *Berrydown Cairn*, which was made in collaboration with the British land artist Andy Goldsworthy.

Before founding Almega Projects, Angus worked in senior management positions within the financial sector, in Paris and London, with both AXA Investment Managers and Robert Fleming & Co. He was educated at L'Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA) and Sciences Po in France and has a BA from Indiana University (USA). Angus is an active collector in the art world, and has acted as a consultant to various creative industries, including fashion, design and film.

### O2 FILMES - COMPANY PROFILE

O2 Filmes produced the feature-length film *CITY OF GOD*, directed by Fernando Meirelles, nominated for four Oscars® in 2004, including the Best Director and Adapted Screenplay categories. The movie was seen by over 3.3 million viewers in Brazil, was released worldwide, and received more than 30 awards, including a BAFTA. Among other O2 productions are *DOMÉSTICAS*, *O FILME* (Maids); *VIVA VOZ* (Speaker Phone); *CONTRA TODOS* (Up Against Them All); and *ANTÔNIA*, the two last being co-produced with *Coração da Selva*. Their documentary about soccer, titled *GINGA: THE SOUL OF BRASILIAN FOOTBALL*, was co-produced alongside Nike and Wieden & Kennedy in 2005.

O2 was the first independent film production company to sign a co-production agreement with TV Globo, which resulted in four seasons of the series CITY OF MEN, a major success with both critics and the public. O2 then went on to produce two successful seasons of the TV series ANTONIA. A series of 6 episodes was also produced for HBO Latin America by O2 in 2006, entitled FILHOS DO CARNAVAL (Sons of Carnival).

In 2007, they released EL BAÑO DEL PAPA (The Pope's Toilet), directed by Enrique Fernandez and César Charlone, a feature-length film co-produced by Uruguay and France, which screened in the official selection of Cannes Film Festival (Un Certain Regard). 2007 also saw the release of the feature film CIDADE DOS HOMENS (City of Men), directed by Paulo Morelli, and NÃO POR ACASO (Not by Chance), directed by Philippe Barcinski.

In 2008, the company released BLINDNESS, by Fernando Meirelles, starring Julianne Moore, Mark Ruffalo, Danny Glover and the Brazilian actress Alice Braga. The movie, co-produced by O2 Filmes, Canadian Rhombus Media and Japanese Beevine Pictures, was selected for the Official Competition at Cannes, and opened the festival.

2009 saw the release of O2 Filmes' feature film ADRIFT, directed by Heitor Dhalia starring French actor Vincent Cassel, American Camila Belle and Brazilian Debora Block. The film participated in the Cannes Film Festival (Un Certain Regard). 2009 also saw the release of the TV series 'SOM E FÚRIA' (a Brazilian version of the Canadian series Sling & Arrows), directed by Fernando Meirelles and co produced with TV Globo. O2 co-produced, alongside HBO Latin America, the second season of 'FILHOS DO CARNAVAL' (Sons of Carnival), which was released in October the same year.

In 2010, O2 will release the feature film VIPs, directed by Toniko Melo, starring the actor Wagner Moura.