

experienced by the small Liberian community of Taylor Town in late 2014. The film examines the larger ramifications of Ebola on Liberia's labor and healthcare sectors as well as the social psyche. It succinctly surveys the economic, sociological, and psychological scars that Liberia will continue to confront outside of the Western media's gaze, which has now largely turned its attention elsewhere (to Syria, Brexit, the U.S. election, and so on). And it reveals, for example, how other medical crises like malaria, tuberculosis, or at-risk pregnancies became "death sentences" because many hospitals and clinics were closed—shown shuttered in the film—to protect healthcare workers during the Ebola outbreak.

Central to Gierstorfer's film is the socio-psychological stigmatization that many Ebola survivors, such as Stanley Juah, faced in the wake of the disease. Stanley, we learn through on-camera and subtitled interviews, became a pariah in his home village of Taylor Town for having defied a quarantine order by bringing his son, suspected of having Ebola, into the village where twenty-six people eventually fell ill and fourteen died. The legacy of those deaths haunts Stanley and the villagers alike. Furthermore, the film depicts how Taylor Town struggled with economic hardship. Angry villagers are shown in the film confronting Stanley at a Town Hall-style meeting, where he is held responsible for the town's economic woes after the season's crop harvest withered while many of Taylor Town's farm laborers either died or languished with the disease.

Absent from this film, however—and also from many other attempts to examine West Africa's 2014 Ebola outbreak—is the larger contextual background of the region's political and economic instability, as well as Liberia's and Sierra Leone's civil wars of the 1990s and early 2000s. Those wars left both countries traumatized with deep psychological scars, to say nothing of their devastated economies and dramatically scaled-back healthcare systems. The war damage to both countries, along with a dearth of healthcare workers—many of whom fled during the wars—put Sierra Leone and Liberia at a significant disadvantage in their efforts to contain and combat the Ebola outbreak of 2014. But in fairness to Gierstorfer, those topics are vast and documentary-worthy in their own right.

We Want You to Live: Liberia's Fight Against Ebola/In Ebola's Wake is a welcome contribution toward a deeper understanding from an African perspective of the Ebola outbreak and its larger social impact.

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Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi, director. *Yousou N'Dour: I Bring What I Love*. 2008. Arabic, English, French, and Wolof with English subtitles. 102 minutes, plus six special features. United States. Groovy Griot Film, in association with 57th & Irving Productions. \$12.99.

On Saturday, August 13, 1994, Youssou N'Dour and Le Super Etoile de Dakar performed at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Woodstock Festival in Saugerties, New York. Largely unknown in the U.S., Youssou N'Dour presented a set that included "Nelson Mandela," a jam tribute that was the title track of the album of the same name released eight years earlier, when Mandela was still in prison. Few in the audience could have realized then that this extraordinary African talent would bring such hope to the world with his music and positive message about Islam. Over his phenomenal career, Youssou N'Dour has released some twenty-five studio albums and appeared in a convincing role as Olaudah Equiano in the abolitionist film *Amazing Grace* (directed by Michael Apted, 2007). *Youssou N'Dour: I Bring What I Love*, Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi's biopic, stunningly conveys N'Dour's life as a musician, griot, and Muslim. The film opens with his performance of the powerful pan-African anthem "New Africa," and from the start his beautiful tenor voice—along with his pleas, inspired by Kwame Nkrumah, for African unity, creativity, and self-reliance and for all to remember the difficult days of colonialism—are captivating.

The documentary is divided into nineteen segments. The first third of the film introduces viewers to the people and culture of Senegal, Sufi Islam, images of Amadou Bamba, and N'Dour's family. The rest of the film focuses on the creation and impact of his album *Egypt*, which fortuitously won a Grammy award during the filming of the biopic. In the first parts of the film we learn that when N'Dour was young, his father opposed his embrace of his mother's griot heritage. In youthful haste, he and his band fled Dakar for a nightclub in The Gambia, where they lived and played music. He later reconciled with his parents, promising to remain and develop his musical career in Dakar. In the late 1970s N'Dour helped create Senegal's national dance music, Mbalax. In 1982 he and his band released their first album, and by the mid-1980s they were appearing in concert and crusading for human rights with musicians such as Peter Gabriel and Bono.

Yet N'Dour remained unfulfilled, and he began to consider using his musical gifts to honor his Muslim faith. In the late 1990s he initiated the *Egypt* project in which he sought to express Senegalese Sufi Islam through the musical traditions of Arabic music. Kabou Guèye, N'Dour's friend, agreed to write songs for *Egypt*, and by 1999 N'Dour had begun his collaboration with the Egyptian musician Fathy Salama, who helped produce and arrange the album. Just after they met to rehearse songs with Salama's Cairo Orchestra, 9/11 and the invasion of Iraq occurred, forcing N'Dour to put the album on hold. But the growing negative imagery of Islam moved N'Dour to return to the project, and at the Fez Festival of World Sacred Music in the summer of 2004 he and Salama presented the world premiere of *Egypt* in the stunning moonlit setting of the Royal Palace. Vasarhelyi then followed him on his seven-nation European tour, the subject of this documentary.

Whereas the album release and the tour were extremely well-received in Europe, the album caused an uproar in Senegal. The majority of Senegalese Muslims mistakenly believed that N'Dour had set his Sufi-inspired lyrics

to pop tunes instead of creating his own sacred music. Sales flopped and local radio stations withdrew support. N'Dour brought the controversy to the Grand Marabout of Touba, head of the al-Murīdiyyah Sufi order and descendant of founder Amadou Bamba. But although he gained official approval, misconceptions about the album continued. Late in the film we learn the origins of its title in a statement that N'Dour made to his critics: "J'apporter ce que j'aime" (I bring what I love).

The last sections of the film follow N'Dour's family and friends in Dakar, at Muslim festivals, and at the Grammy ceremony in which he won the award for the best World Music Album of the Year in 2005. Ironically, this foreign recognition proved to be the catalyst for his eventual acceptance by the Senegalese. The film concludes with the creation of a new song in collaboration with Moustapha Mbaye, a Senegalese artist famous as an Islamic praise singer, in which N'Dour recalls the life of Mohammad and his companion, Bilal. As N'Dour's concert at Carnegie Hall begins, Vasarhelyi's brilliant film ends.

Youssou N'Dour: I Bring What I Love succeeds in conveying to the world Senegalese Sufi Islam, West African culture, and the tension between spiritual and secular worlds. N'Dour's music and the original music written for the film meld well. Outstanding work on the part of the engineers and editors is evident in the creative juxtaposition of scenes, such as the footage of N'Dour's performance of "Touba" that is interspersed with images of Muslims carrying out their national pilgrimage and rituals at Touba's Grand Mosque. English-speaking viewers will be particularly grateful for the closed captions facilitated by the work of thirteen translators. The extensive closing credits identify all twenty-two songs that are heard in the film.

Youssou N'Dour: I Bring What I Love has achieved international recognition, receiving eight awards at film festivals. In the classroom, this documentary could be presented as an important counterpoint to the negative images of Islam generated by Boko Haram and their ilk. In *Youssou N'Dour: I Bring What I Love*, Vasarhelyi and her cinematic team have created a hopeful fabric rich in African content, color, and movement for audiences worldwide.

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