

RUBIS FILMS

VISIONS DU RÉEL 2018
COMPETITION BURNING LIGHTS

INTERMEZZO FILMS

A BRIGHT LIGHT

KAREN AND THE PROCESS

A FILM BY EMMANUELLE ANTILLE



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94 min. - DCP - 16/9 - COLOR - 5.1. - SWITZERLAND - 2018

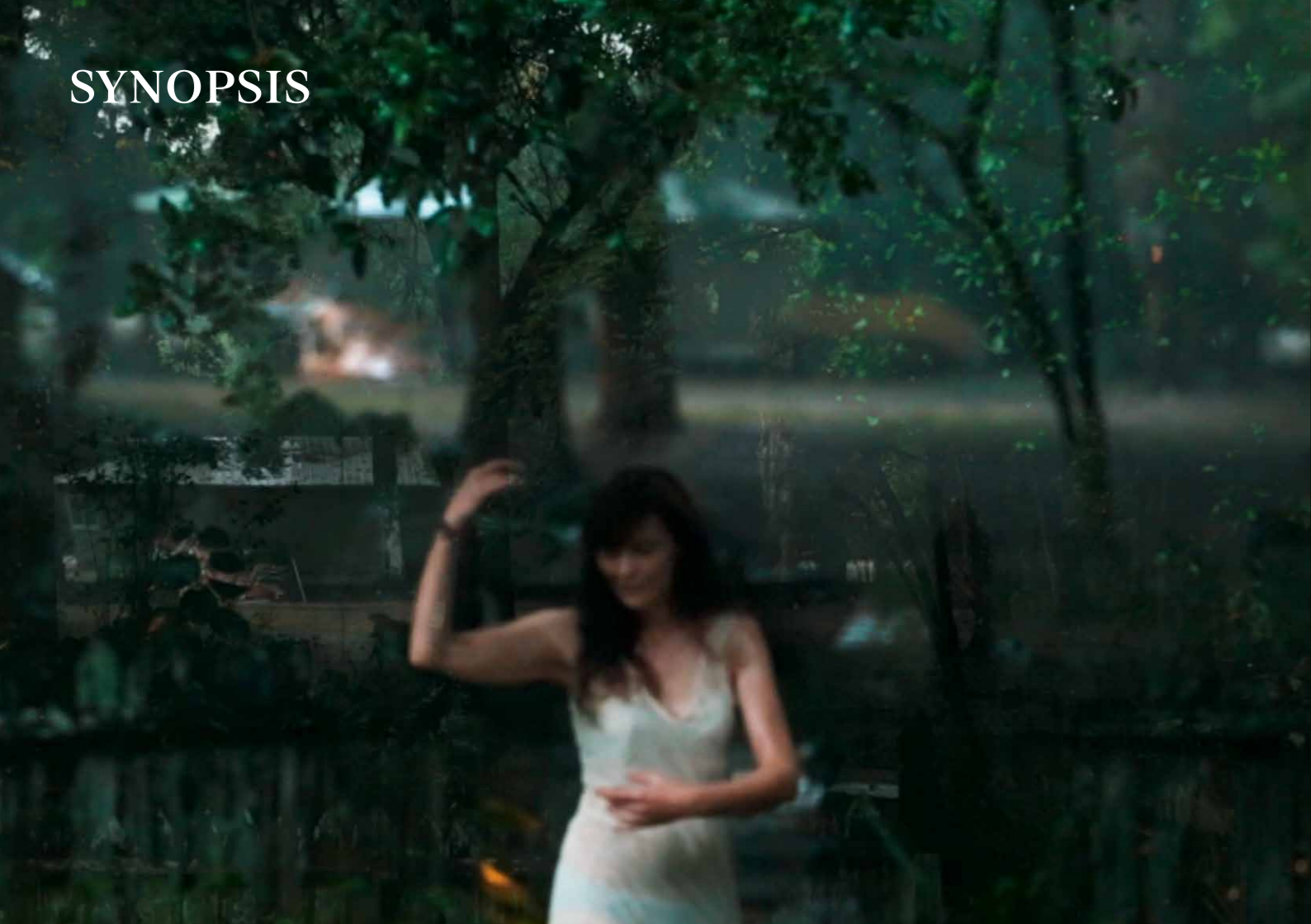
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SYNOPSIS



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF CULT SINGER KAREN DALTON, *A BRIGHT LIGHT - KAREN AND THE PROCESS* TAKES US ON A FRANTIC AND MESMERIZING ROAD TRIP ACROSS THE UNITED STATES.

In search of one of the sixties' most astonishing voices, adulated by her peers, but unknown from the general public, *A Bright Light* is a documentary made of music and art that questions the creative process.

On a wild and enchanted journey from Colorado to Woodstock, three women search for this once upon a time muse. Along the way, they encounter those who knew her as well as those whom she still haunts and influences today.

The film draws the portrait of this exceptional artist, furiously free, who refused the system and its compromises. Through this iconic figure, we follow the quest of a certain freedom of life and expression and an independence for better or worse.

INTERVIEW

« THE IDEA OF THIS PROJECT IS HOW FAR DO YOU DEVOTE YOUR LIFE TO CREATION? ... IS IT WORTH IT? »

« IT HAS TO DO WITH TAKING RISKS AND CHANCES, GOING INTO THE UNKNOWN... »

EMMANUELLE ANTILLE, YOU ARE A FILM DIRECTOR, BUT ALSO A VIDEO ARTIST. *A BRIGHT LIGHT* IS YOUR FIRST DOCUMENTARY FILM. WHAT WAS THE STARTING POINT FOR THIS PROJECT?

Originally, I wanted to talk about creation, its process and our relationship to the world through the figure of an artist. The central question was: How does the creative gesture unfold? How far can the desire to question the world and create lead us? What are we willing to sacrifice to achieve our deepest aspirations?

These are questions that have always accompanied me and that intensify with time. But beyond artistic practice, it is the fundamental question of the meaning of our lives and what is left behind that is asked here.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE SINGER KAREN DALTON TO QUESTION THIS CREATIVE PROCESS?

When I happened to hear one of her songs, *Sweet Substitute*, I was immediately struck by her exceptional voice. It carried a story, a mystery capable of overturning us beyond time. I investigated and found out that she was completely unknown to the general public, but praised by Nick Cave and Bob Dylan among others. She had been the muse of Greenwich Village in New York in the 1960s and had lived in abandoned gold mines. It was very exciting. Digging deeper, I quickly realized that there was little information about her; no interviews, only 10 minutes of film and still the same 5-6 photographs. I then decided to conduct the investigation to gather as much

material as possible about her life, her friends... and also to find out why such an extraordinary talent had remained unknown. This reconstitution lasted two years.

With all the information gathered and convinced that her work resonated perfectly with my initial questioning, I contacted her friends and decided to meet them. I put together a small team; Carmen Jaquier for the camera and Malika Pellicoli for the sound, and we left for thirty-three days of shooting across the United States.

THREE WOMEN AND THIRTY-THREE DAYS OF SHOOTING. TELL US ABOUT THIS TRIP.

It's been a great adventure! It was just the three of us with our cameras, microphones, 150 kilos of luggage and a big car. We drove eight thousand kilometers and met incredible people. We had prepared the trip well in advance. Everyone we interviewed was waiting for us across the country, the course had been marked out and our suitcases were packed with all the needed equipment and accessories. There were fabrics, masks, a DIY kit... and even Bengal fires! Everything had been carefully prepared to be ready for the unexpected, the surprises, of which there were many. All participants shared with us much more than we had originally hoped. We had an incredible adventure and it stands out in the film.

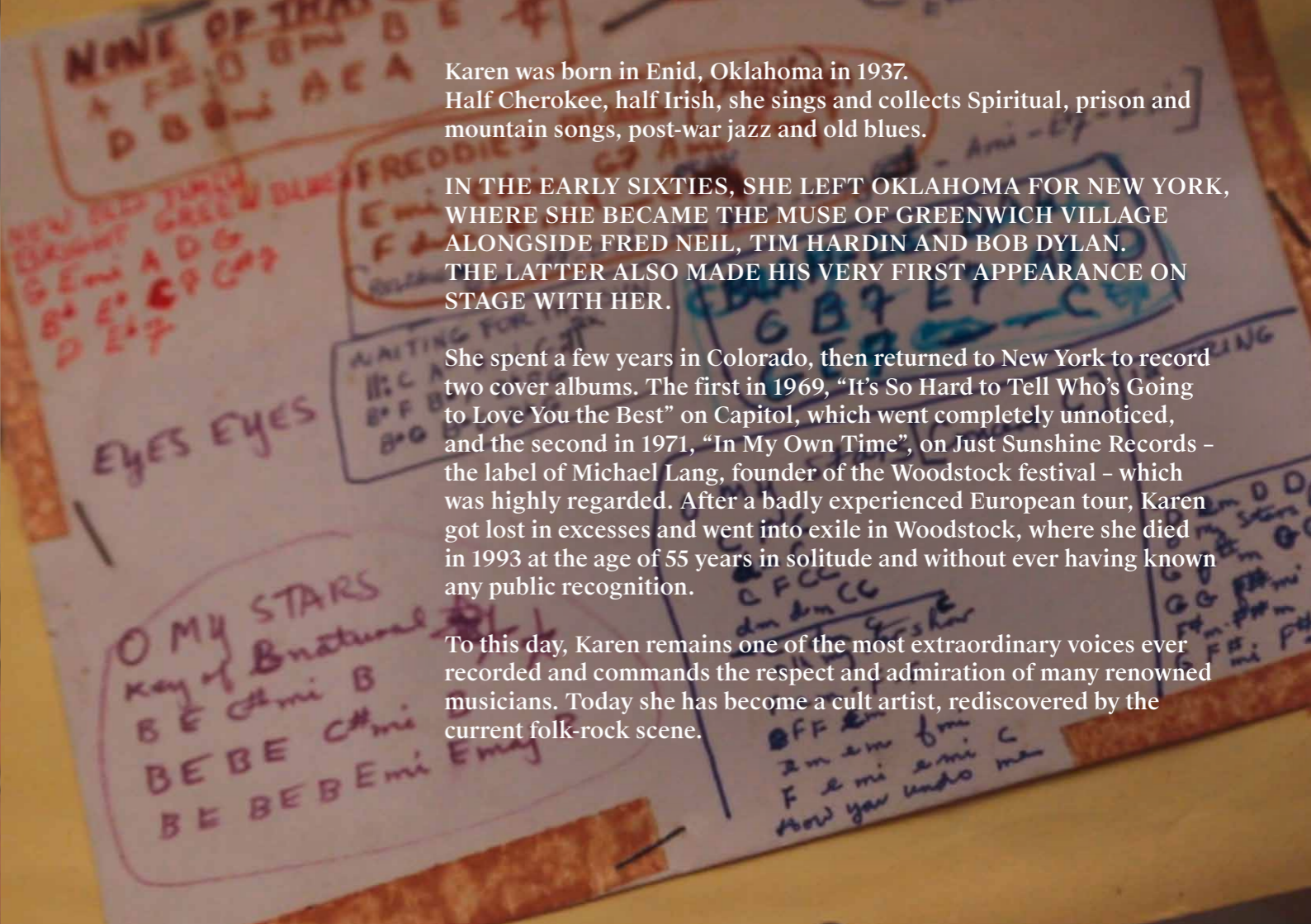
YOU USED SEVERAL IMAGE SOURCES TO EDIT THE FILM. WHY THIS CHOICE?

I wanted to create a film like a kind of fireworks, a kaleidoscope with style breaks, to give an impression of permanent research. We filmed with an HD camera, a Super 8, a mini DV and a mobile phone. Each camera had its precise function: HD for interviews, Super 8 and mini DV for more dreamlike shots and mobile phone for the logbook. These different qualities of images echo the different ways of approaching reality, travel and transposing Karen's story. They weave together throughout the film.

AFTER TWENTY YEARS OF WORK AS AN ARTIST, SEVERAL FICTION FILMS, WHAT HAS THIS PROJECT BROUGHT YOU?

A huge joy and total freedom! This is my first documentary and it won't be the last. I loved doing this project, the investigation aspect, the exchange with the musicians, a whole country that is turning into a vast playground. The fact that there was almost nothing about Karen forced us to be very creative to make her alive, to invent material to find another way to tell her story. Like a fiction, but more intense, thanks to the fabulous encounters and all that the participants gave us.

KAREN DALTON



Karen was born in Enid, Oklahoma in 1937. Half Cherokee, half Irish, she sings and collects Spiritual, prison and mountain songs, post-war jazz and old blues.

IN THE EARLY SIXTIES, SHE LEFT OKLAHOMA FOR NEW YORK, WHERE SHE BECAME THE MUSE OF GREENWICH VILLAGE ALONGSIDE FRED NEIL, TIM HARDIN AND BOB DYLAN. THE LATTER ALSO MADE HIS VERY FIRST APPEARANCE ON STAGE WITH HER.

She spent a few years in Colorado, then returned to New York to record two cover albums. The first in 1969, "It's So Hard to Tell Who's Going to Love You the Best" on Capitol, which went completely unnoticed, and the second in 1971, "In My Own Time", on Just Sunshine Records - the label of Michael Lang, founder of the Woodstock festival - which was highly regarded. After a badly experienced European tour, Karen got lost in excesses and went into exile in Woodstock, where she died in 1993 at the age of 55 years in solitude and without ever having known any public recognition.

To this day, Karen remains one of the most extraordinary voices ever recorded and commands the respect and admiration of many renowned musicians. Today she has become a cult artist, rediscovered by the current folk-rock scene.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1972 in Lausanne, Emmanuelle Antille studied at the ESAV in Geneva and at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam. Since 1995, she has developed her artistic practice as a video artist and film director.

Emmanuelle Antille has received numerous awards and recognitions: three Swiss Art Awards, the Kiefer-Hablitzel Prize, the Review film contest Migros Culture, Residencies in Berlin and in Paris, the Prix Découverte at the Festival de Namur, among others.

Her work has been presented at the Kunstverein in Frankfurt, the Renaissance Society in Chicago, the National Gallery in Reykjavik, the CCA in Glasgow, the Toyko Wonder Site in Tokyo, the De Appel in Amsterdam, the Migros Museum in Zurich, Art Unlimited in Basel, the Jeu de Paume and the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. Her films have been selected in numerous festivals.

In 2003 Emmanuelle Antille represented Switzerland at the 50th Venice Biennale in the national pavilion. In 2012, she directed her second feature film, entitled AVANTI with Hanna Schygulla and Miou-Miou.

A Bright Light - Karen and the Process is her first feature-length documentary.



CREW

DIRECTOR
EMMANUELLE ANTILLE

IMAGE
CARMEN JAQUIER

SOUND & ASSISTANT
DIRECTOR
MALIKA PELLICOLI

EDITING
LAURENCE VAES
EMMANUELLE ANTILLE
EMILIE MORIER

SOUND EDITING
CORINNE DUBIEN

SOUND MIXING
FRANCO PISCOPO

COLOR GRADING
ROBIN ERARD

PRODUCTION
RUBIS FILMS
EMMANUELLE ANTILLE

INTERMEZZO FILMS
LUC PETER

EXECUTIVE
PRODUCER
MICHAEL LANG

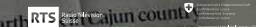
MUSIC

KAREN DALTON &
BILLY MITCHEL · HARRY TUFT · DICK WEISSMAN · JEAN-MARC BUTTY · BEN SCHENCK
COLIN GAGON · DIANE CLUCK · LOWER DENS · CHEYENNE · PHILIPPE HENCHOZ
ROBOT KIMBAP · DJELY MAMOU KOUYATÉ · DELIA MESHLIR · JIMMY « DUCK » HOLMES
LARKIN GRIMM · CHRISTIAN PAHUD · RICHARD TUCKER



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OFFICE FÉDÉRAL DE LA CULTURE (OFC) – HEADSTRONG MUSIC



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