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OFFICIAL SELECTION

# THE STATE AGAINST MANDELA & THE OTHERS

a film by

**NICOLAS CHAMPEAUX** and **GILLES PORTE**

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FRANCE – 2018 – DCP – SCOPE – COLOR – 5.1 – ENGLISH (FRENCH SUB-TITLES) – LENGTH : 1H46

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SYNOPSIS

2018 marks the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela.

He seized centre stage during a historic trial in 1963 and 1964.

But there were eight others who, like him, faced the death sentence. They too were subjected to pitiless cross-examinations. To a man they stood firm and turned the tables on the state : South Africa's Apartheid regime was in the dock.

Recently recovered sound archives of those hearings transport us back into the thick of the courtroom battles.



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INTERVIEW WITH  
THE DIRECTORS

**NICOLAS CHAMPEAUX**

AND

**GILLES PORTE**

***The State Against Nelson Mandela And The Others* is based on the sound archives from the trial of Nelson Mandela and nine other men between 1963 and 1964. These sound archives are a treasure trove but why were they hidden away for such a long time ?**

**NICOLAS CHAMPEAUX :** The trial was recorded on an analogue audio recording system called dictabelts. This was a very supple vinyl that was rolled around a cylinder and was read with a stylus rather like a record player. The British Library tried to digitalise them in 2000. The library selected the speech of Mandela but the result wasn't very satisfying.

**GILLES PORTE :** So after that the recordings went back to gathering dust in South Africa until some French people came along with a recent invention called the Archéophone. This is a machine which allows dictabelts to be digitalised without ruining them.

**N.C.** And that's essentially how an agreement developed between France and South Africa.

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**But even before the South African government decided to digitalise the recordings in July 2016, you'd already listened to them, hadn't you Nicolas ?**

**N.C.** That's right. Henri Chamoux, the inventor of the "Archéophone" had listened to the entire 256 hours of the trial into order to digitalise them. Just to give you an idea, that's a bit like reading all of Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*. Chamoux was immediately struck by the courage of some of Mandela's co-accused especially Ahmed Kathrada. I'd interviewed Kathrada several times while I was working as the permanent special correspondent for Radio France Internationale in Johannesburg. Chamoux came across my interviews with Kathrada on the internet and got in touch with me.

I didn't exactly need a second invitation. I listened to two 30 minute extracts and straight away I knew that this was a gold mine. I was stunned by what I was hearing. It wasn't only the sound quality but the sheer emotion that was coming through. One of the accused, with the death sentence hanging over him, was going toe to toe with the prosecutor. He wasn't looking for any sort of clemency or a more lenient sentence. Nothing of the sort. He wanted to put apartheid on trial even if that made things worse for himself. I wanted these voices to be heard so that everyone could listen to their stories. I thought who takes this kind of risk nowadays in the name of a cause ? I instantly decided to make a film about it.



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Drawings Hilda BERNSTEIN (1963) - Wife of accused number six



### **But you'd never directed a film, had you ?**

**N.C.** And that's why I contacted a friend of mine, William Jéhannin, who eventually became our producer. He had just finished distributing Jean-Gabriel Périot's film *Une jeunesse allemande* which was based on archive material. Once William took an interest in the project, he introduced me to Gilles Porte because I wanted to team up with an experienced director.

**G.P.** In fact Raphaëlle Delauche is the person who brought us together. She currently works with William at UFO Production. But 14 years ago when she was working at Paulo Branco's production company, she worked on the distribution of my first film *Quand la mer monte*.

### **So, Gilles, what drew you to the project ?**

**G.P.** To be frank, when I met Nicolas in November 2016, I didn't know anything about the Rivonia trial and that others had been sentenced to life in prison along with Nelson Mandela. The first question I asked Nicolas was : 'Are there any survivors?' 'Three,' he replied and promptly called each one of them up. I'd forgotten that there wasn't a time difference between South Africa and France ! When he'd finished talking to the last of them, he told me that two defence lawyers were still alive including Nelson Mandela's lawyer. All these men were between 87 and 93. I said to Nicolas: 'We don't have a choice. We've got to get them now.'



**But did you have any financial backers at that point ?**

**G.P.** No. We had nothing. I'd already done some documentaries on the hoof - so to speak - so I wasn't freaked out. And besides it was a chance to get to know Nicolas better. It's crucial in this type of project to know the other person a bit... We might not have been able to get along.

**N.C.** William Jéhannin and his company backed us. They put up the money for the first trip to South Africa.

**G.P.** For the interviews, I put up the same backdrop that I'd used when I was filming children who didn't know how to read or write for the short films in *Portraits/Autoportraits*. This grey cloth allowed the children's gestures to be highlighted. The cloth was going to help us gather up the words and expressions of some very extraordinary old men.

**N.C.** As they sit in front of this cloth, wearing headphones, the survivors hear their confrontations with the prosecutor from 57 years ago for the first time in their life.

**G.P.** Thanks to this technique, the men are taken right back. That helped them to speak more freely and more intimately. They often said some stunning things. You've got to remember these aren't men who usually speak about themselves. They had made



the choice to fade into the background and they were always asked about Nelson Mandela. Basically, for the first time, they were being given the chance to tell their own personal stories. And it was easier for them because Nicolas knew their stories.

### **How did the first trip go ?**

**N.C.** For most people who travel there South Africa is a tricky issue. I realised quite quickly that Gilles was one of those people who is sensitive to the history of the country.

**G.P.** I've liked my trips to South Africa and going there with Nicolas as a colleague was brilliant. I'd do it all again tomorrow if I could. Our two trips there to film went really well even though there seemed to be loads of problems before we left.

### **Did you both instantly know what kind of film you wanted ?**

**G.P.** There's no film footage of this trial but when I met Nicolas, he showed me sketches that the wife of one of the accused had done during the hearings. The idea of 2D animation came quickly. The trial couldn't be filmed but it could be an animation! I introduced Nicolas to Oerd, a graphic designer with whom I've collaborated and whose work I admire.

**N.C.** Oerd's work has always had sound as an important element and we needed someone who could handle that side of



things. The commission was quite complex. Oerd had to design something extraordinary on the screen without it eclipsing the sound. Oerd's work has humour and some amusing artistic ideas. It was important to make the most of the lighter moments in the film. It needed some breathing space. In short, Oerd ticked all the boxes and added his idiosyncrasies. South African politics - which separated people on the basis of their skin colour - lends itself to the design. Black, white and a line between them. There wasn't a doubt that Oerd would come up with something wonderful.

**G.P.** Oerd's animations had to make sure they didn't detract from listening to what was going on. He got that straight away. Oerd got the balance exactly right.

**N.C.** I knew that Oerd was going to get on well with the composer Aurélien Chouzenoux. Aurélien's a friend from childhood who works in the performing arts. It seemed to me to be a better fit for our project than an out and out film music composer. Oerd and Aurélien were with us from the very beginning. We did a trailer of the film with them and our editor, Alexandra Strauss, who had worked on Raoul Peck's excellent feature *I am not your negro*. Each stage of the film was, artistically speaking, like a five way ping pong match. I loved it.

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**G.P.** Nicolas and I wanted to operate in a small-scale way. Working with Oerd, Aurélien and Alexandra allowed us to do that.

**N.C.** The production company Rouge International which joined the project later was on board with this way of doing things. The producer, Julie Gayet, was, I think, drawn to the project from an emotional point of view. When we met her for the first time, she told us about her visit to the prison on Robben Island in South Africa.

**G.P.** And as all the accused in the film had passed through the ranks of the Communist party, it was apt that one of the co-production companies involved was called Rouge International! But on a serious level, you just have to look at the list of films that Julie Gayet and Nadia Turincev have been behind to acknowledge that we were lucky that they opened the door of their production company to us.

**They faced serious charges, didn't they ?**

**N.C.** Absolutely. They could well have been hanged.

**But not all the accused were black, were they? There was an Indian and some whites.**

**N.C.** That's right and in fact the apartheid government shot itself in the foot. One of the main planks of apartheid had been



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South Africa – 1960s (picture : Ambrose PETERS)



to divide in order to rule. Whites enjoyed all the power and the blacks had the least. The coloureds and Indians suffered but they were given certain privileges. For example in prison, Indians and coloureds got bigger rations than black inmates and were allowed to wear trousers. Black prisoners wore Bermuda shorts. That was intentionally done to degrade them because Bermudas were children's clothes. By putting, blacks, whites and an Indian on the same bench, the government was effectively showcasing the multiracial character of the anti apartheid movement.

**The line the defendants were going to take became obvious very quickly didn't it ? They wanted to turn the hearing into a political trial by pleading not guilty and accusing the government of being responsible for the situation in the country.**

**N.C.** Even though the death sentence hung over them, they chose to regain control of their plight by making it a trial against apartheid. Before the trial they were forced to live in hiding. Political meetings were banned and suddenly, here in the dock, they finally had their public. Reporters and diplomats could transmit their message.

**G.P.** They chose this strategy despite the legal advice. They told their lawyers: 'We are the clients. You do what we tell you to do.'

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**Listening to the statements of the accused during the trial and then speaking to them 57 years later, do you feel the role of Nelson Mandela is less decisive than what we've been led to believe ?**

**G.P.** Even if our film has never been a question of debunking the Mandela myth, it seemed absolutely crucial to us pay tribute to the collective spirit of the men starting with accused number two, Walter Sisulu.

**N.C.** As the lawyer George Bizos said, Sisulu was the ANC's éminence grise. He knew the history of the movement inside out and was very close to the people who lived in the Soweto township. The collective pushed Mandela forward because, of course, he was brilliant but also because he was from a royal family. He was also a marvellous orator. He was one of the few black men to have become a lawyer. As for Sisulu, he only had a certificate for a basic education.

**G.P.** The ANC really was a collective movement and it was in the name of the collective that they chose Mandela so that one man could embody their struggle to the entire world. Each of the accused knew every word of the speech Mandela made during the trial.



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**Andrew MLANGENI in the streets of SOWETO – december 2017 (picture : Gilles PORTE)**

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**Ahmed Kathrada also had a lot of influence, didn't he ?**

**G.P.** For sure. His influence gives us an insight into Mandela's politics. Ahmed Kathrada was a disciple of Gandhi. Mandela's politics of resilience didn't come from out of the blue.

**It's heart wrenching when Kathrada talks about his trip to Europe and his first cafe on a terrace.**

**G.P.** It reminds me of the migrants who I come across all the time at Porte de la Chapelle in Paris. I am struck by the resonance because of what is happening today in Europe.

**N.C.** There seems to be an overriding cruelty which stops people from coming together. It's an ill that we thought was well behind us but it rises up far too often.

**How do you explain this almost undying international infatuation for Mandela ?**

**N.C.** I'll say it again. It was apartheid which cemented his role as leader. The trial was officially recorded as 'the State against Nelson Mandela and the others'. The South African government explicitly used his name and did not mention the others. Ultimately you risked a fine or a prison sentence if you had a photograph of Mandela. Apartheid helped shape the icon.

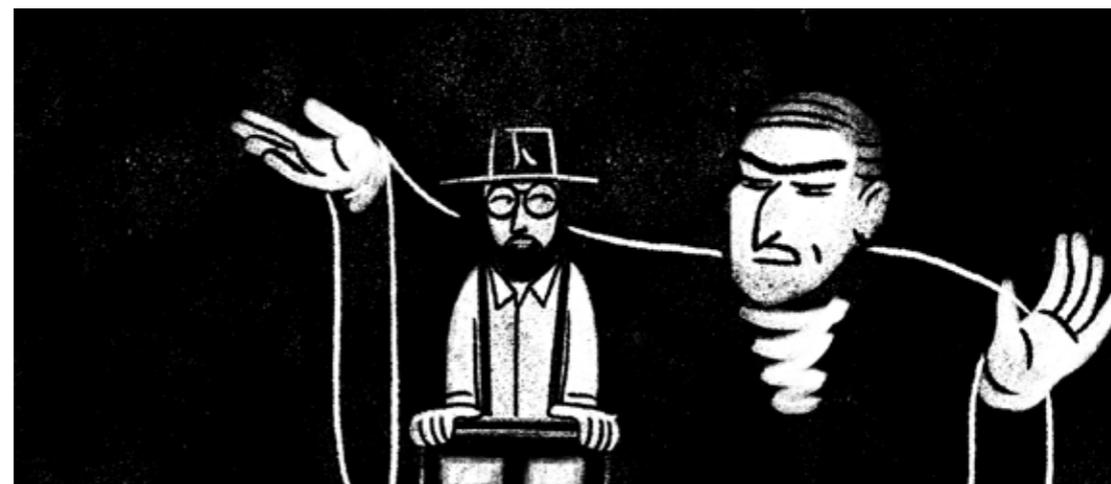


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**G.P.** Why this infatuation for Mandela ? This question transcends South Africa. Like Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Elie Wiesel, Stéphane Hessel, Nelson Mandela guides generations in a world where it will never be good to accept the intolerable. Let's be honest, Nelson Mandela and the others were on a path where their personal lives were secondary to the cause that they were defending. What would we have done in their place ? How many resistance fighters like Jean Moulin were there in France in 1940 ? *The State Against Mandela And The Others* stirs up notions of engagement, resistance, resilience and indignation. These are ideas that make sense in a society that becomes a little more individualistic every day.

**During the trial, the co-accused spoke about opting for violence. But they used sabotage instead of terrorism, guerrilla strikes or armed revolution.**

**N.C.** Resorting to sabotage was a huge step for the ANC. Historically it was a movement of non-violence. But due to the harshness of the regime, its rank and file members no longer accepted this stance. But they didn't want to spoil their future. Planting bombs at 2am did not risk setting all white people against the organisation. And in this way the ANC didn't give up its hope for a multiracial South Africa in which everyone could live together. The ANC showed immense patience on this issue.



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**Although it's a documentary, *The State Against Mandela And The Others* contains all the elements of a fictional drama, doesn't it?**

**N.C.** It's like a Hollywood movie. There are all the characters. Percy Yutar, the relentlessly aggressive racist prosecutor. He's obviously the bad man. Quartus de Wet, the judge. He's a bit jaded and you can't really guess what he's thinking. He adds to the suspense along with the turncoats, the super heroic antics of the accused and the lawyers.

**G.P.** There are also the women who were involved. They were activists who played a central role in this struggle. Before I made the film, I was unaware of just how essential a part women played in the battle against apartheid. In our film - just like in any Hollywood film, there are incredible love stories. My eternal thanks to some of those women for sharing their memories as part of our story about their men.

**N.C.** It was important to have the wives and the children of the accused. When you take risks and give yourself to a cause, it's the families that suffer the most. These women told us so. The accused are very humble men and they tend to play down the suffering and the noble nature of their choices. They were totally



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devoted. For them it all seemed rather obvious. They had a goal and the rest was simply collateral damage. Well, that's what they try to make us believe.

**The film is quite simple in format, isn't it ?**

**N.C.** When you've got such subject matter, why go looking for complications ? We assumed that calm, sober surroundings would befit the extraordinary dignity of our main characters.

**G.P.** To paraphrase the film director Michel Audiard, I'd say: 'When men serve 26 year prison sentences solely so that blacks, coloured and Indians can have the same rights as whites, people who have been reared in democracies should listen.'



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Toni STRASBURG, daughter of Rusty BERNSTEIN, accused n°6 — 2017 (picture : Gilles PORTE)

Max SISULU, son of Walter SISULU, accused n°2 — 2017 (picture : Gilles PORTE)



Winnie MANDELA – 1964 (picture : Alf KUMALO)



Winnie MANDELA – December 2017 (picture : Gilles PORTE)

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INTERVIEW WITH  
THE GRAPHIC DESIGNER

**O E R D**



Drawing : OERD

**What was your reaction when Gilles Porte contacted you about the film ?**

I was extremely enthusiastic about the idea of collaborating with him again. We worked together in 2009 on the series of films *Portraits/Autoportraits*, and also in 2011 on *Dessine-toi*, which was a documentary about children. Gilles was considering several animators. We got on very well and I was flattered when he offered me the work.

**Did you know anything about the Rivonia trial ?  
Was it a subject you cared about ?**

How can you be insensitive to a problem like apartheid ? You have to be concerned about it. And marked. There were lots of things that I didn't know. I was very surprised to discover that the archives only had recordings on dictabelts and thanks to Gilles and Nicolas Champeaux, I've learned so many more things about the trial.

***Jazzimation, Abstract Day, Youpla, Saïgon* are the short films which helped to raise your profile. They've always had sounds**

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**in them ... but with *The State Against Nelson Mandela and The Others* you had to work around what was being said in the courtroom. Was that another thing to worry about ?**

It was something to consider and also a responsibility. That's why I liked the project. It was a question of working on the sound and it had to be a sound which had a lot of texture and sharpness. There was a true story at play. I think that's why Gilles and Nicolas Champeaux brought me in because they felt that I'd know how to adapt the graphics to the sound content of the trial.

**How did you work with them ?**

In December 2016 they gave me sound sequences from the trial to listen to. Then they got me to read the screenplay. Then I began to draw some sketches and sent them back to them. There was some to and fro between us. It was like a constantly evolving storyboard. Gilles and Nicolas reacted to my designs, I took them back and so on. It was really good artistic exchange of ideas. Then we went to the animated storyboard which allowed us to see if the graphics worked with the sound, the archive images and the interviews with the people from the trial. The actual animation only came later when the first sequences from the animated story board had been properly edited.

**How long did you take to develop this storyboard ?**

It was about a year. There were obviously a lot of designs left by



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the wayside. Gilles, Nicolas and I dreamed up how things should look and without a doubt it's what makes the marriage between the animation, the sound archives and interviews work so well. If we proceeded using the animated storyboard - if I'd come in only at the editing stage - the film would not have had this fluidity. Alexandra Strauss, the editor and the composer Aurélien Chouzenoux both worked really hard on it as well. It was a collective effort. That allowed us to construct a film in exactly the way we wanted it.

**Your creations in 2D are usually quite abstract. In the film there's figurative and abstract. That's something new for you isn't it ?**

From the very first sequences in the courtroom, it became obvious that figurative was needed. It was necessary to create concrete images from the accusations of the prosecutor just as it was important to draw the accused. But then again I would say that certain passages - especially the description of the police raid on the farm at Rivonia - combine both styles: bright light takes the sketch towards the abstract.

**Why did you give the prosecutor Percy Yutar such a threatening stature ?**

Well, when you listen to him you naturally want to do this. This is where animation becomes exciting. It allows you to play with these excesses. That's why I love it so much.



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**The animation sequences veer towards the abstract. Is that what Gilles Porte and Nicolas Champeaux wanted ?**

At the outset, neither they, nor I, had exact ideas on the percentage of figurative or abstract images that would be used in the sequences. Everything happened as we were writing. Six months after we started, we wanted to do a trailer just to reassure ourselves that the animation worked and also to see how far we could go with the abstract side of things.

**With squares, circles and lines, some sequences come across as pictures. Could you take us through that ?**

The sequence that you're talking about is the courtroom scene between the defendant Walter Sisulu and the prosecutor Percy Yutar. Sisulu is shown as a black circle and Yutar as a white square. Forms and colours clearly express the differences between the two men. Black and white symbolise the conflict that sets them apart: separation and segregation.

**Where does this taste for the abstract come from ?**

Artists such as Norman McLaren have influenced me a great deal. For me, the abstract is sometimes stronger than the figurative.

**Is apartheid a good subject for a graphic designer ?**

Of course. Even though my instant choice for the film wasn't black and white. For my first sketches, I was keen on monochrome -



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a sepia colour with a texture of film on it which gave off a slight patina. Black and white came later when I started to think about the abstract parts. It then seemed obvious.

**There are 40 minutes of animation in the film.**

**That's quite a lot isn't it ?**

It's the first time I've done anything like it. But then again there are a lot of firsts in this film. It is the first time that I've done so much figurative animation. The first time - except for my short films - that I've had such artistic freedom and the first time that I've been in charge of such a big team.

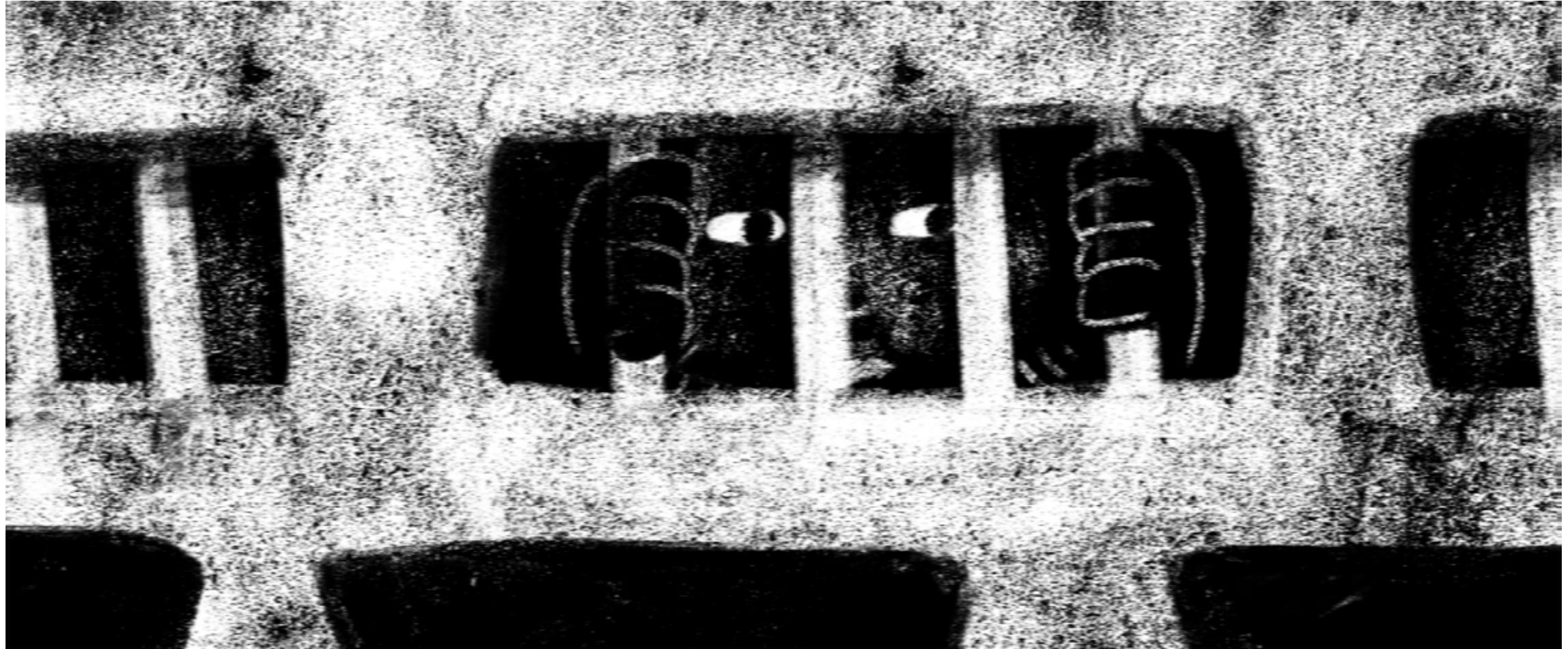
***The State Against Nelson Mandela And The Others* is all about action. One gets the sense that you too wanted to get stuck in artistically to join in the fight of the anti- apartheid militants.**

The commitment of these people is beyond belief. Don't forget they refused to appeal their sentence so that their action could resonate. We really wanted to do our very best in order to pay tribute to such men and to make a powerful film.

**What do you hope the film will achieve ?**

That it makes people think. These men fought for our future. We mustn't forget it. Forget history and we run the risk of falling into the same traps and making the same mistakes.

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Drawing : OERD

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## SOUTH AFRICA

### IN BRIEF



South Africa – 1960s (Picture : Jürgen SCHADEBERG)

**1948** Victory of the nationalist Afrikaners in the general election. Implementation of apartheid policies: restricted movement for non-Europeans and expulsion of blacks from urban centres and relocation to housing zones outside city centres. Inter racial marriages are banned.

**1952** Anti-apartheid movement organises a campaign of civil disobedience. Authorities imprison 8,000 people.

**1960** Sharpeville Massacre. Dozens of protesters are shot dead by police. The government declares state of emergency. The ANC is banned.

**1962** Arrest of Nelson Mandela.

**11 juillet 1963** Police raid leads to arrest of several leading members of the anti-apartheid movement including Govan Mbeki, Walter Sisulu, Denis Goldberg and Ahmed Kathrada.

**1963-1964** Trial : State against Nelson Mandela and the Others

**Juin 1964** Mandela, Sisulu, Goldberg, Mbeki, Mhlaba, Motsoaledi, Mlangeni and Kathrada sentenced to life in prison.

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## SOUTH AFRICA

### IN BRIEF

- 1964** UN backs the start of the diplomatic boycott of South Africa; suspension of cultural and sporting exchanges; embargo on the sales of arms.
- 1976** Police fire live rounds to put down high school student protests in Soweto.
- February 1990** Release of Nelson Mandela.
- 1994** ANC wins the first multiracial elections in South Africa. Mandela becomes president.
- December 2013** Death of Nelson Mandela.



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South Africa – 1960s (picture : rights reserved)

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BIOGRAPHY

**NICOLAS CHAMPEAUX**



Drawing : OERD

Champeaux was born into a Franco-American household in 1975.

In his career as a journalist, he was Radio France Internationale's special correspondent based in Johannesburg between 2007 and 2010. He was then appointed reporter-at-large for the radio station's Africa service. He left RFI in October 2017 to pursue a freelance career.

Champeaux has written and produced several radio documentaries including *Mandela et son image* (2013), *Mandela : l'histoire secrète d'une libération* (2010) et *Nelson Mandela 1990-1994 : les années de transition* (2013). He was also behind several radio programmes on Robert Mugabe such as *Zimbabwe exclusif* and *Robert Mugabe : le pouvoir à tout prix* (2016).

He also produced the web documentary *Sur les traces de Boko Haram* which was shortlisted in the multimedia category for the 2015 Prix Bayeux des correspondants de guerre. This accolade came two years after his documentary *Tombouctou : 10 mois sous Aqmi* was shortlisted in the radio category for the Prix Bayeux.

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BIOGRAPHY

**GILLES PORTE**



Drawing : OERD

Gilles Porte is a director of photography and a film director.

He has worked as a director of photography on around 30 films directed by Jacques Audiard, Raoul Ruiz, Xavier Durringer, Safy Nebbou, Frédéric Beigbeder, Xavier Gens and Marc Dugain.

In 2004, with Yolande Moreau, he co-directed *Quand la mer monte* which won the César for best first film and the Prix Louis Delluc.

In 2010, he directed the documentary *Dessine toi* and around 100 short films entitled *Portraits/Autoportraits* which mixed live action images and animation. Children from around the world were asked to do their self-portraits on a glass following the same techniques employed by Henri-Georges Clouzot in his film *Le Mystère Picasso*.

In 2015, Porte directed *Tantale*, an interactive film with Jean-Luc Bideau and François Marthouret.

He is also the author of two books on photography *Rendons à César* and *Portraits/Autoportraits*.

He has been president of the Association française des directeurs de la photographie since April 2018.

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## BIOGRAPHY

### OERD



Born in 1973, Oerd van Cuijlenborg is an animator and director of animated films.

He has operated from Paris since 2006. A semi-abstract universe pervades his work highlighting the influence of Norman McLaren and in particular McLaren's *Begone Full Care*.

His studies took in the Beaux-Arts in Utrecht in the Netherlands and the Institut Néerlandais des Films d'animation where he directed two films *Jazzimation* et *Scratch*. He directed his third short film *Zodiac*, at the Studio Folimage in Valence.

Oerd van Cuijlenborg has directed more than a dozen short films and worked on numerous commissions including two projects of Gilles Porte - *Portraits/Autoportraits* et *Dessine-toi*.

His films *Jazzimation*, *An Abstract Day*, *Saïgon* and *Youpla* have received prizes at international festivals.

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STARRING

THE FORMER ACCUSED

**DENIS GOLDBERG**

**AHMED KATHRADA**

**ANDREW MLANGENI**

THE LAWYERS

**GEORGE BIZOS**

**JOEL JOFFE**

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM

**WINNIE MANDELA**

**SYLVIA NEAME**

**MAX SISULU**

**TONI STRASBURG**

**DAVID YUTAR**

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C R E D I T S

SCREENPLAY : Nicolas Champeaux, Gilles Porte

DIRECTORS : Nicolas Champeaux, Gilles Porte

DRAWINGS AND ANIMATION : Oerd

ANIMATION : Mathieu Ratier, David Devaux,  
Vincent Escrive, Matthieu Gueritte, Antoine Presles,  
Loïc Espiche, Soukaïna Najjarane, Théo Gremillet,  
Vivianne Karpp



ORIGINAL MUSIC : Aurélien Chouzenoux

VIOLIN : Georges Van Dam

PERCUSSION : Francesco Miccolis

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY : Gilles Porte

2<sup>ND</sup> CAMERAMAN : Samuel Lahu

SOUND MIXER : Gautier Isern

EDITOR : Alexandra Strauss

ASSISTANT EDITOR : Marie Pascaud

SCRIPT CONSULTANT : Olivier Lorelle

RESEARCHER : Nolwenn Gouault

SOUND EDITOR : Élisabeth Paquotte

MIXING : Christophe Vingtrinier

POSTPRODUCTION :

Moïra Chappedelaine-Vautier, Maxime Beugin

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FICHE TECHNIQUE



PRODUCERS :

William Jéhannin  
Julie Gayet  
Nadia Turincev  
Antoun Sehnaoui  
Raphaëlle Delauche

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS :

Omar Sy

LINE PRODUCERS :

UFO production  
Rouge International

CO-PRODUCTION :

Korokoro Films  
Ina  
Arte France

With the participation of Canal +  
With the support of Gervanne et Matthias Leridon

## DICTABELTS

**The Rivonia trial sound archives, which are at the heart of the film *The State Against Mandela And The Others*, have been saved thanks to a historic partnership between the Institut national de l'audiovisuel (Ina) and the government of South Africa.**

The collaboration between the Ina and the South African government which helped to save 256 hours of archives of the trial of the leaders of the ANC, came as part of an agreement signed on 20 December 2013. In the accord, South Africa's national archives gave Ina 591 dictabelts. These vinyl cylinders are rare and fragile. They were used to record the Rivonia trial which took place at the supreme court in Pretoria between October 1963 and June 1964.

In a partnership with the École normale supérieure in Lyon and in particular Henri Chamoux, the inventor of the Archéophone - the only modern machine capable of reading dictabelts - the Ina carried out the operation which led to the digitalisation, restoration and indexing of these pieces which have been logged in the Memory of the world register since 2007.

Between 2014 and 2016, Ina gradually gave back all of the digitalised dictabelts to South Africa. A first consignment of 267 dictabelts was handed over in October 2014. Then the original trial dictabelts were given back to the court in Pretoria and their digitalised version were given to South Africa's culture minister Nathi Mthethwa on 17 March 2016 by Laurent Vallet, the head of Ina during a ceremony attended by the French ambassador and three of the surviving men from the Rivonia trial. President François Hollande of France handed the final tranche of dictabelts to his South African counterpart, Jacob Zuma, at the Elysée Palace on 11 July 2016.

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A B O U T

## U F O P R O D U C T I O N

**When UFO Distribution was set up in 2008, we wanted to promote original films that we could unveil at festivals. In our heart of hearts we probably knew these features might not reach a wider cinema audience in France. Our approach was one of cinephiles happy to be working in a milieu that we loved and equally delighted to share our 'finds'.**

But as time passed we became more and more involved in the production of films, while maintaining our role as a distributor. Eventually we entered into a co-production with the company Envie de Tempête on Sébastien Betbeder's film *Le voyage au Groenland*. It was an experience that included a transmedia project during the shooting of the film.

It seemed natural to establish a production branch that was not only in tune with our wish to help innovative projects but also in line with our editorial and artistic outlooks.

It was at about that time that Nicolas Champeaux was speaking to us about his film about Nelson Mandela and the other accused at the Rivonia trial. Julien Faraut was also in contact with us about his film *L'empire de la perfection*.

Faraut's film furnished us with our first prize - at the 2018 Berlin film festival. Champeaux's *The State Against Mandela and The Others* is in the official selection at the 2018 Cannes film festival. There will be more productions during the year such as Kanu Behl's, *Agra*, and Faraut's latest film documentary.

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