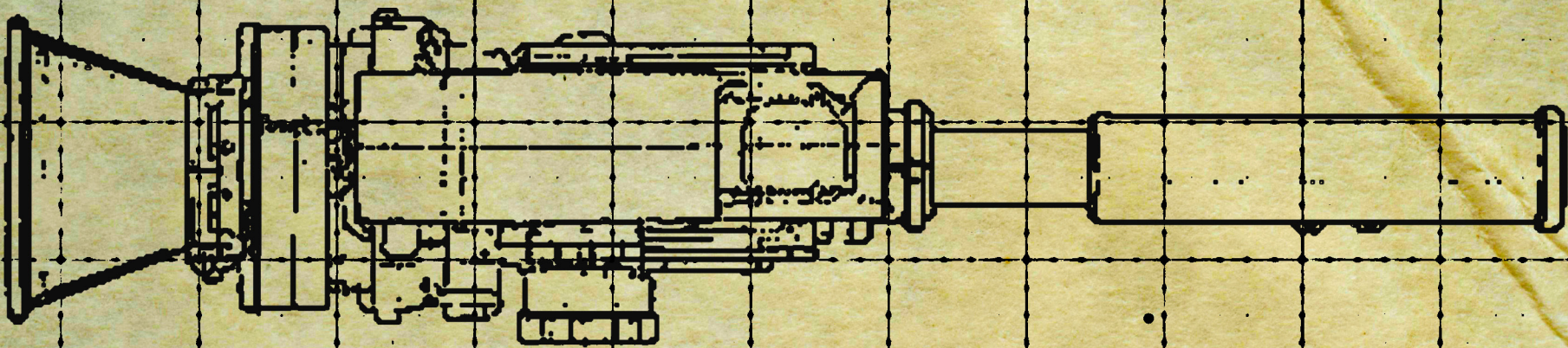


SCHEMATICS
FOR AN
ABSENTIAL
CINEMATIC
FUTURE

AUDIO
VISUAL
TERROR
ORISM

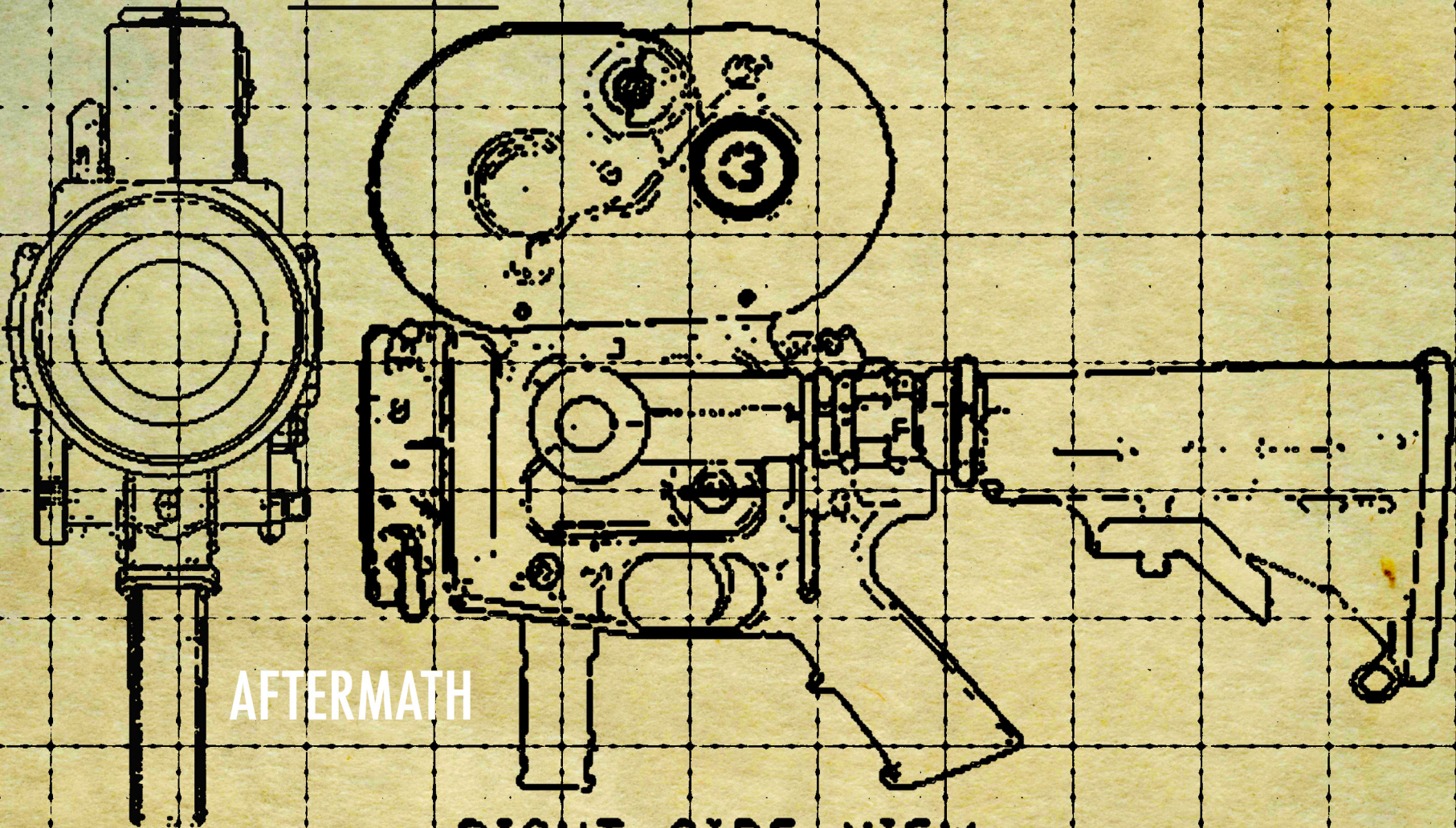
LEGALLY DRUGGED

SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND



TOP VIEW

ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE FIRE ESCAPE



AFTERMATH

RIGHT SIDE VIEW

DETAIL A
FILM MAGAZINE

DETAIL B
LENS MOUNT

HARLEM'S LAST POET



{ this page is essential and intentionally left absent }

ABSENTIAL CINEMA

Before we get into the more philosophical questions that support this pitch, let's be clear about something. We're trying to make money... A lot of it...

Our problem has always been that we care more about making art than we do about making money. But not caring about money is a difficult position to maintain inside a capitalist shit-stem this rapacious, so at some point you either submit to the logic of the market or figure out how to weaponize it.

We prefer the latter...

We live in a time when things are changing faster than most people can even comprehend. Everything is shifting, like standing on the shore while the tide pulls the sand from beneath your feet. The ground is moving while everyone is still arguing about the weather.

There are forces shaping our lives that are difficult to see directly, but whose effects are everywhere. Anthropologist and neuroscientist Terrence Deacon calls this phenomenon "absentialism." In his book **Incomplete Nature: How Mind Emerged from Matter**, Deacon explores what he calls "absentials": phenomena whose existence, meaning and causal power are determined by something physically absent.

Zero is physically nothing, but without zero mathematics collapses into something far less powerful. Deacon opens the first chapter of his book with a passage from the 'Tao Te Ching': "Thirty spokes converge at the wheel's hub, to a hole that allows it to turn." The hole at the center of the wheel is nothing. And that nothing makes the wheel possible. That is the absential.

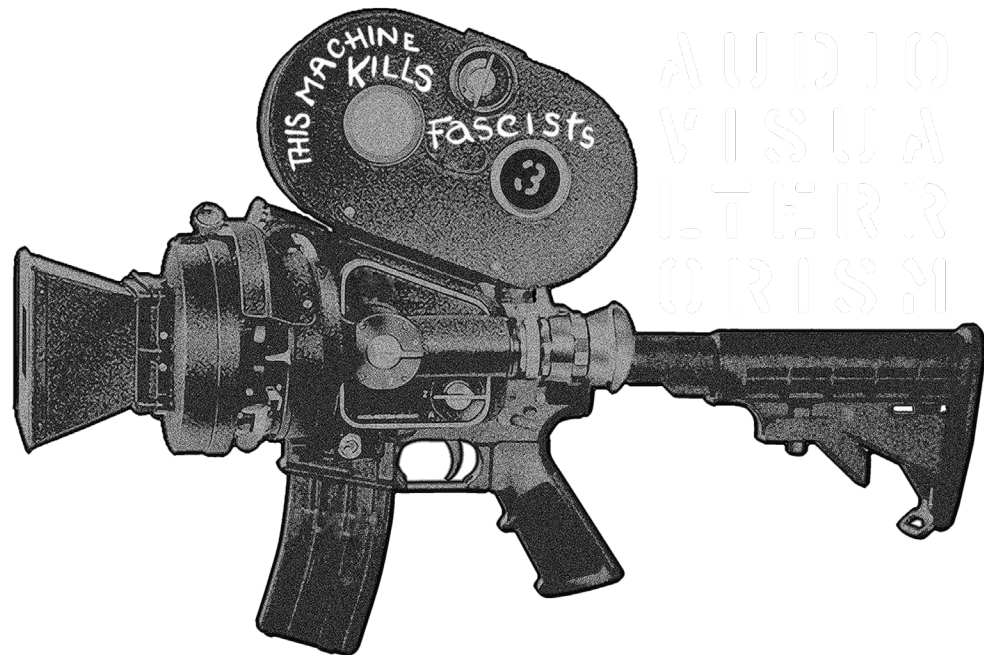
Absentialism gives us a language for understanding how what is missing can exert as much force as what is present. A dead parent can determine the course of a life. A debt that cannot be paid can dictate every decision a person makes. A future that has not yet arrived can control the present. A fear that has never happened can still govern behavior. A freedom someone has never experienced can organize an entire political struggle. What is absent is not necessarily powerless. Sometimes it is the most powerful thing in the room.

***"PEOPLE DON'T COME
TO THE MOVIES TO GET
WHAT THEY WANT, THEY
COME TO THE MOVIES TO
GET WHAT THEY NEED."***

Most cinema tells stories about what is present. Absentialist Cinema tells stories about the invisible absences determining what is present. That distinction matters because we live in a culture obsessed with surfaces. We measure clicks, ratings, box office, impressions, demographics, polling, engagement, market share and attention. We count everything we can see. The problem is that the forces that actually move people are often the things nobody is counting.

What cinema should be doing is revealing them. And there is money to be made doing it. A lot of money. Because films that audiences recognize as relevant to their lives have a greater potential to connect, spread and endure. The most powerful films give shape to something people are already feeling before they have the language to explain what that feeling is.

The film and television industry spends extraordinary amounts of money trying to determine what audiences want. Studios study algorithms, demographics, intellectual property, social media behavior, box office performance and whatever succeeded six months ago. Then they spend hundreds of millions of dollars attempting to reproduce it. That strategy works. Until suddenly it doesn't.



People don't come to movies only to get what they want. They come to get what they need. And those are not the same thing. The entertainment industry is exceptionally good at measuring what audiences watched yesterday and surprisingly bad at identifying what they will need tomorrow. That failure creates an opportunity.

The most valuable cultural opportunities often exist before the market has a name for them. Audiences may have wanted to see a Christopher Nolan film about Robert Oppenheimer. But the enormous cultural resonance of Oppenheimer cannot simply be explained by a hidden mass desire for a three-hour historical biopic about a theoretical physicist. The film arrived at exactly the right psychological moment. The twentieth century asked one of the most terrifying questions humanity has ever confronted: Should we build the atomic bomb simply because we can? The twenty-first century has resurrected the same question through Artificial Intelligence. Should we build it simply because we can? Oppenheimer allowed audiences to revisit an old technological terror at precisely the moment a new technological terror was entering the culture. The film looked backward and audiences felt the future staring back at them. That is the absential.

At Audio Visual Terrorism, we devote our energies to finding those absences before they become obvious. We look at the world and ask questions that are not being asked loudly enough, then place those questions inside films designed to engage audiences emotionally, intellectually and viscerally. We are interested in the films people are still arguing about in the parking lot. The films they discuss over dinner. The films they text someone about at two in the morning. The films that refuse to end when the credits roll.

We know how to make those films. Our slate proves it. We have the talent. We have the creativity. We have the resourcefulness. What we do not have is any interest in pretending the film industry operates as a pure meritocracy. It doesn't.

Everyone knows the cliché: it is not what you know, it is who you know. But even that is only half true. The industry runs on relationships, ideological comfort, institutional familiarity and precedent. Financing structures are built around comparables, proven genres, recognizable intellectual property, established talent and models based upon things that have already worked.

That logic is understandable. It is also inherently conservative. A system designed to mitigate risk through precedent is structurally biased toward the past. And the future has no precedent. That is the contradiction at the heart of the entertainment business. Everyone says they are looking for the next thing but most of the machinery is designed to reproduce the last thing.

The artists who actually change culture have always existed in tension with that machinery. Some learned to navigate it. Some manipulated it. Some found patrons who understood that the dominant ideology of the moment was preventing everybody else from seeing where the world was going. Others died in obscurity and were declared geniuses fifty years too late...

The commercial challenge for an artist has always been the same: How do you reveal something before the culture has fully learned how to recognize it? At Audio Visual Terrorism, we do not align ourselves automatically with the prevailing ideological and political assumptions of our time. Why should we? We can see where many of those assumptions have brought us. We can see where some of them are going. And we are not alone.

Millions of people are watching democratic institutions erode while wealth concentrates upward. They are watching Artificial Intelligence expand faster than the laws governing it. They are watching corporate surveillance become the price of participating in everyday life. They are watching war, displacement, authoritarianism and climate catastrophe become normalized as background noise. They feel the instability even when they cannot name it. They feel that the ground is moving. That feeling is the absential.

None of what is happening should surprise anyone paying attention. The difference is that we have been paying attention with purpose. We have been tracking these forces and turning them into stories. Our films are built around the absences these systems produce.

LEGALLY DRUGGED - The Invisible System
What happens when capitalism, medicine and good intentions become an antagonist without a face? It becomes an invisible network of incentives linking pharmaceuticals, psychiatric institutions, capitalism, wealth, dependency and the fantasy that every human crisis can be chemically managed.

SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND - The Invisible Presence
How do memory, grief, death and history continue acting upon the living through absence? The Afterdeath itself is a realm built around absence, desire and unfinished human connection.

ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE FIRE ESCAPE - The Invisible History
What happens when a living artist becomes the vessel through which an endangered cultural history remains present? The people, places, and movements that shaped Jesús Papoleto Meléndez are disappearing even as they continue to live through his poetry. The film asks what happens when one man becomes the living vessel for a history the city is in danger of forgetting.

AFTERMATH - The Invisible Future
What happens when a future that does not yet exist becomes powerful enough to determine the moral choices of the present? Characters are forced to confront the possibility that the civilization they are trying to save may itself be the catastrophe.

HARLEM’S LAST POET - The Invisible Inheritance
History is shaped as much by who and what has disappeared as by who remains. The film becomes a confrontation with cultural memory, artistic survival and the question of what happens when living history outlives the institutions that once gave it meaning.

These films are radically different in genre, tone and form. But they are



all asking variations of the same question: What invisible forces are determining our lives before we have learned how to see them? Roger Ebert famously called cinema an “empathy machine.” That is true. But empathy requires recognition. Audiences must recognize something of themselves on the screen. Their fears, grief, contradictions, desires, anger, and confusion. Their sense that something is wrong even when they can’t explain what it is. When cinema stops responding to the forces shaping people’s lives, audiences stop recognizing themselves in cinema. And when audiences stop recognizing themselves in cinema, they stop showing up.

That failure is not merely artistic. It is financial. There is an enormous amount of money being left on the table by an industry that increasingly confuses familiarity with relevance. It is the role of the artist to challenge the existing paradigm. Not because rebellion is fashionable. Not because transgression is inherently valuable. But because every paradigm eventually becomes incapable of explaining the world that replaced it. Then somebody has to push against the boundary. Somebody has to identify the contradiction. Somebody has to see the thing that is missing. That is the artist’s job.

But where are those films? Where are the filmmakers willing to make them? They’re here... With us... We believe the next commercially significant cinema will not emerge from endlessly chasing what audiences already consumed. It will come from identifying the fears, desires, contradictions and cultural anxieties audiences have not yet learned how to articulate. Capitalism tells artists that artistic integrity and commercial success are opposing goals. We reject that premise.

The most valuable commercial opportunities frequently happen when someone recognizes a need before the market understands that the need exists. That is not anti-capitalist romanticism. That is market intelligence. The difference is where you’re looking. Everyone else is studying what is already there. We’re studying what’s missing. We’ve identified the phenomena shaping the world around us. We’re responding to them. We believe those responses have enormous artistic potential. And enormous financial potential.

That is what we mean by Absentialist Cinema...

The films that follow are our proof...

**"MOVIES
ARE LIKE A
MACHINE THAT
GENERATES
EMPATHY"
- ROGER
EBERT**

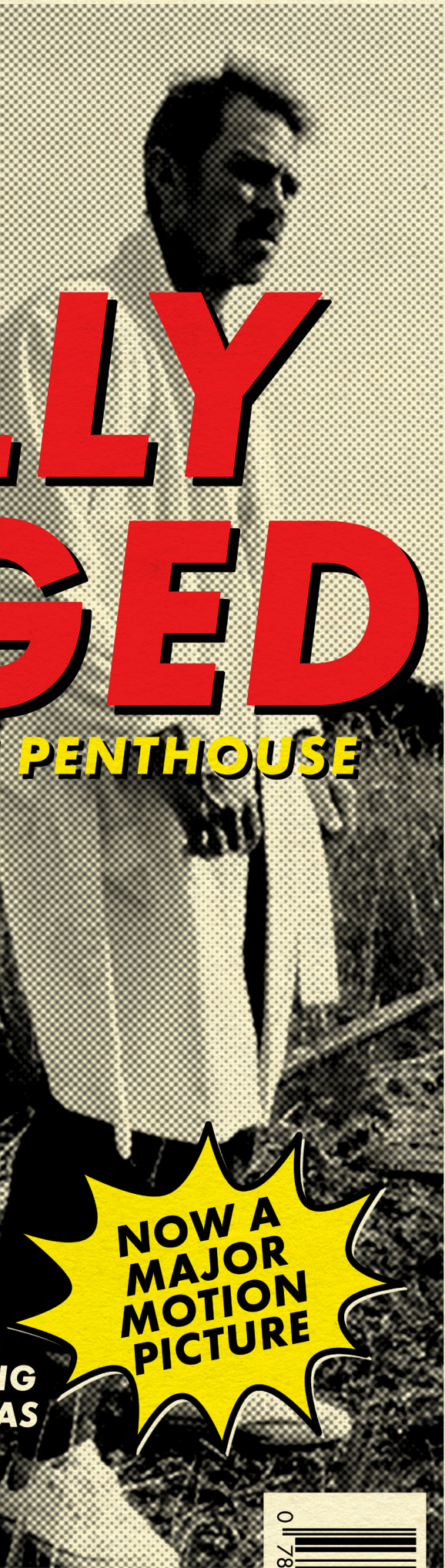


WORLDWEEKLY[®]
MOVIE
TRUE CRIME TABLOID CINEMA



**"HOW I MADE \$10M OVER
3 YEARS WHILE IN AND OUT OF
LUNATIC ASYLUMS FIGHTING
THE GREED OF THE MENTAL
HEALTH INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX"**

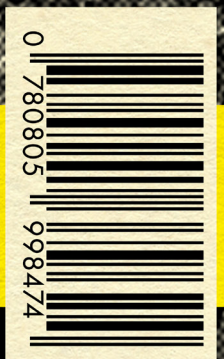
**MILLIONAIRE ARRESTED
ON ABANDON TRAIN TRACK
SAYS IT'S NOT HIS FAULT
SAYS HE WAS...**





**SHOCKING EXCLUSIVE
WITH THE EX-WIFE!!!
"I DIDN'T FEEL SAFE
HE CALLED 911 TO CONFESS TO
KILLING OUR SON AND SETTING
OUR HOUSE ON FIRE BUT IT WAS
ALL AN ANTI-DEPRESSANT
FUELED DELUSION"**

**NOW A
MAJOR
MOTION
PICTURE**



**STILL
JUST
\$1**



BLACKNUSS TV & AUDIO VISUAL TERRORISM
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER BY RICHIE SCHNEEBERG MIKE DELISA FLOYD WEBB
STARRING ZACHARY WILLIAM HUBER COURTNEY SANELLO PAUL FUREY JAKE COONEY LEO GIBBS
ART DIRECTION BY GABRIELLE KING RIOS CINEMATOGRAPHY BY JEFF "AK" AKERS SCORE BY MONDRIANA VILLEGAS
FEATURING SONGS BY FAMOUS LETTER WRITER PRODUCED BY FLOYD WEBB OMAR & VAGABOND
WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY VAGABOND



LEGALLY DRUGGED
Completed and Seeking Distribution

Starring
Zach Huber as Richie Schneeberg
Courtney Sanello as Cindy Schneeberg
Jake Cooney as Little Richie
Paul Furey as Tom "Cat" Garfield
Leo Gibbs as Calvin

Soundtrack by Famous Letter Writer

Written by vagabond and Floyd Webb
Based on the book
LEGALLY DRUGGED
by Richie Schneeberg

LEGALLY DRUGGED
From The Nuthouse To The Penthouse

The Invisible System

The absurd but true story of Richie Schneeberg—and the invisible system that transformed his desire to protect his family into the very thing that destroyed it. What if the antagonist in a film isn't a person? What if it's a system nobody can see? When Richie Schneeberg was fifteen, his father died struggling to provide for his family. His father's absence never left him. It became the invisible force around which Richie built his life.

5

After marrying Cindy, the love of his life, Richie becomes obsessed with accomplishing what his father could not: creating enough financial security to protect his family from the uncertainties that shaped his childhood. A schoolteacher turned real-estate investor, Richie succeeds beyond anything his father could have imagined. He becomes a self-made millionaire, retires, and becomes a stay-at-home father after the birth of his son. He has everything he thought he needed. Then he risks almost all of it.



photo by Leslie Jean Bart

Presented with what appears to be an extraordinary investment opportunity, Richie makes a massive financial bet. The pressure becomes unbearable. He stops sleeping. Cindy, exhausted by his late-night pacing, tells him he needs help. Richie walks into a psychiatric hospital asking for help with insomnia. He walks into a system he does not understand.

Over the next three years, Richie will experience ten psychiatric hospitalizations and be prescribed a succession of antidepressant and antipsychotic medications as his behavior becomes increasingly erratic. And while his life is collapsing, the investment pays off. Richie makes \$10 million.



photo by Leslie Jean Bart

The tragedy of LEGALLY DRUGGED is contained inside that contradiction. Richie spent his entire life trying to accumulate enough money to protect his family because he watched his father die struggling to provide for his. He finally achieves unimaginable financial security. And loses his family in the process. Cindy divorces him. He loses custody of his son. Cindy develops cancer and eventually dies.

And the specter of Richie's father—the man whose absence started everything—continues to cast its shadow over a life that has somehow fulfilled his father's dream and repeated his tragedy at the same time.

THE MONSTER YOU CAN'T SEE

LEGALLY DRUGGED is where Absential Cinema becomes brutally literal. There is no traditional villain in this story. The antagonist is an invisible architecture of incentives.

- Money
- Fear
- Insurance
- Pharmaceuticals
- Psychiatric institutions

The cultural assumption that every human crisis requires an immediate medical solution. And beneath all of it, capitalism's most seductive promise: If you can just accumulate enough money, you can finally become safe. Richie's father is absent, but his death determines Richie's choices decades later. The \$10 million is absent when Richie makes the investment, yet the possibility of obtaining it drives him into insomnia. The financial incentives operating inside American healthcare are largely invisible to the patient, yet they can influence the choices presented. And the family Richie is desperately trying to protect becomes the thing that disappears. What's missing becomes the most powerful presence in the story. This is the absential.

CAPITALISM AS CHARACTER

LEGALLY DRUGGED is not an anti-medicine film. It is not an argument that psychiatric medication does not help people. Richie himself is careful to make that distinction. It is a film about agency. And about what happens when human vulnerability enters systems in which medicine, insurance, pharmaceuticals and profit become entangled. Because LEGALLY DRUGGED asks a more uncomfortable question: What happens when the system charged with healing you can also make money from keeping you inside the system?

Richie's tragedy is propelled almost entirely by people acting with ostensibly good intentions. He wants to provide for his family. His wife wants him to sleep. Doctors want to stabilize him. Hospitals want to treat him. Medication is intended to help him. Investors want to make money. No evil mastermind is required. That is precisely what makes the story frightening. The machine doesn't need a villain. It only needs everyone to perform their assigned function.



A TRAGEDY DISGUISED AS AN ABSURD COMEDY

Despite the tragic nature of the story, LEGALLY DRUGGED is funny. It has to be. Richie's story becomes so extreme that tragedy collapses into absurdity: delusions, psychiatric wards, extravagant purchases, spectacular financial success and catastrophic personal failure coexisting within the same life. The film embraces that contradiction.

Richie narrates his own story and breaks the fourth wall, speaking directly to the audience. We leave slate claps in the film, deliberately exposing the machinery of filmmaking rather than pretending the documentary itself is an objective window onto reality. When Richie enters the psychiatric institution, we don't attempt to realistically recreate a hospital. We put him in a black box. A hospital bed. Nothing else. The emptiness becomes the institution. His isolation becomes the production design.

Surreal music-video sequences erupt through the narrative using songs from indie-pop band Famous Letter Writer, with karaoke-style bouncing-ball lyrics transforming Richie's deteriorating interior state into something simultaneously hilarious, disturbing and heartbreaking.

The emotional realism of John Cassavetes collides with the situational absurdity of John Waters, the paranoid satirical rage of Sidney Lumet's Network, and the surreal comic tragedy of Terry Gilliam's Brazil. This isn't a medical procedural. It's a capitalist tragicomedy.

THE \$10 MILLION QUESTION

Eventually Richie comes to believe that the medication cycle is contributing to what is happening to him. He gets off the medications, stabilizes his life and becomes an outspoken advocate for greater patient agency and caution around the overuse of antidepressants.

He later takes that fight to Washington, testifying during FDA hearings concerning suicide warnings on antidepressants for children. He transforms his experience into a book: LEGALLY DRUGGED: Ten Nuthouse Stays to \$10 Million—My Battle with Psychiatrists and Antidepressants. Now it becomes a film.

But the question at the center of the film is bigger than Richie. What is success worth if the system that makes you wealthy destroys the thing you wanted the wealth to protect? That question extends far beyond psychiatric medicine. We live inside systems that promise security while simultaneously producing anxiety. Systems that promise connection while producing isolation. Systems that promise convenience while producing dependence. Systems that promise wealth while consuming our lives in pursuit of it. Those contradictions increasingly define the experience of living in the twenty-first century. Audiences feel them. Even when they can't name them.

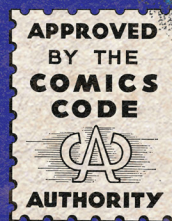
The Absentialist elements of Richie's story are what make LEGALLY DRUGGED relevant to audiences. The monsters aren't hiding under the bed. The monsters are the very systems and institutions that convinced us that they exist for our benefit when the truth is much scarier.



FABLES OF EXISTENTIAL DREAD!!!

10¢
NO.13
JULY

SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND



THERE IS NO AFTERLIFE - ONLY THE AFTERDEATH...

A FILM BY
VAGABOND



FEATURING
OMAR VILLEGAS
ALEXIS "FLEA" FERNANDEZ
PAUL FUREY
TESSA MARTIN
EVELYN ESCOBAR
KYONNE SMITH
DENNIS LEROY KANGALEE
& DICK ZIGUN
WRITTEN BY
YOUSSEF ALAOUI
& VAGABOND
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY
JEFF "AK" AKERS
SCORE BY
ARTURO RODRIGUEZ
& BONFIDE ROJAS

AUDIO VISUAL TERRORISM

STARRING ISAACH DE BANKOLE WILSON J HEREDIA ABIODUN OYEWOLE OMAR VILLEGAS ALEXIS "FLEA" FERNANDEZ TESSA MARTIN PAUL FUREY KELVIN FERNANDEZ
EVELYN ESCOBAR KYONNE SMITH DENNIS LEROY KANGALEE AND DICK ZIGUN SCORE BY ARTURO RODRIGUEZ BONAFIDE ROJAS + THE MONA PASSAGE SOUND BY CHRISTIAN MORAN
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY JEFF "AK" AKERS STILL PHOTOGRAPHY BY EDWIN PAGAN SANDRA WONG GEROUX LESLIE JEAN-BART EDITED BY VAGABOND
PRODUCED BY OMAR VILLEGAS JOE CARRAHA VAGABOND AND TONXTI VAZQUEZ EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY RESISTER ELOINA + TONY BEAUMONT
WRITTEN BY YOUSSEF ALAOUI AND VAGABOND DIRECTED BY VAGABOND

"Your relevance is assured, it anchors
the entropy..." - Dune

SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND

Seeking \$300K in Financing and Distribution

Written by Youssef Alaoui and vagabond

Directed by vagabond

Cinematography by Jeff "AK" Akers

Starring

Isaach De Bankole as Baron Saturday

Wilson Jermaine Hereida as Papa Legba

Tessa Martin as Ayezán

Abiodun Oyewole as Dun

Omar Villegas as Coney Island

Alexis "Flea" Fernandez as Laila

Evelyn Escobar as Anati

Paul Furey as Fred Christ

Leo Gibbs as Calvin

SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND.

There is no afterlife, only the Afterdeath.

The Invisible Presence

Coney Island, a liminal world of memory and desire where the dead remain entangled with the people, places, and histories they can no longer physically touch.

Coney Island—a man named after the place that has defined his entire existence—crosses into this realm carrying the wreckage of his life with him. Around him, Laila and Anati struggle with grief, anger, revenge, and the impossible desire to repair what death has already taken away.

Watching over them are ancient spirits: Baron Saturday, Papa Legba, and Ayezán. But even the spirits are changing. Their authority, memory, and relevance are being challenged by a world increasingly shaped by technology, algorithms, development, spectacle,



and forgetting.
And somewhere between the living and the dead stands Dun, an old sage whose mysterious connection to the spirits suggests that nothing in Coney Island is ever completely separate from anything else.

THE INVISIBLE PRESENCE

SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND is Absential Cinema at its most literal. The film is built around people who are no longer there.
Lovers.
Parents.
Ancestors.
Communities.
Histories

Versions of Coney Island that have already disappeared. But absence does not mean powerlessness. The dead continue dete mining the emotional lives of the living. Memory continues shaping behavior. Grief becomes an active force. History refuses to stay buried. The characters are haunted not simply by ghosts, but by everything they have lost and cannot stop carrying. That is the absential. The thing that is missing becomes the thing organizing everything that remains.

GRIEF AS GRAVITY

Most ghost stories ask whether the dead are still with us. SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND asks a different question: What if the dead never stopped acting upon us in the first place? Grief, memory, and history each have their own gravity. They pull people toward choices, relationships, revenge, forgiveness, and repetition long after the original event has disappeared.

Coney, Laila, and Anati believe they are making decisions in the present. But they are being pulled by absences. The people they lost. The justice they never received. The love they can’t recover. The futures that never happened. The film turns those invisible forces into a physical landscape. The Afterdeath isn’t heaven and it’s not hell. It is the architecture of



unresolved human attachment.

THE SPIRITS ARE HAVING AN EXISTENTIAL CRISIS

The ancient Loa have another problem. What happens to spiritual beings when people stop needing them? For centuries, spirits carried memory, meaning, ritual, fear, and hope across generations. Now algorithms do much of that work. Social media decides what is remembered. Platforms decide what becomes visible. Attention has replaced ritual. Virality has replaced mythology. And the spirits find themselves confronting an uncomfortable possibility: Perhaps humanity has invented new gods and doesn’t realize it.

The struggle in SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND is therefore not simply between life and death. It’s between different systems of meaning. Ancient spirituality, technology, memory, capital, development, the sacred, the algorithm... All of them are competing to determine what people value, what they remember, and what they forget.

CONEY ISLAND AS A GHOST

There may be no place better suited to this story than Coney Island. It is simultaneously real and mythical. A neighborhood. An amusement park. A childhood memory. A graveyard of vanished attractions. A place continuously demolished and rebuilt while somehow remaining instantly recognizable. Coney Island itself is an absential object.

Every version of it contains the ghosts of the versions that came before. The boardwalk remembers. The rides remember. The ocean remembers.

The people remember. Even redevelopment becomes a form of haunting.

Fred Christ, a developer moving through this landscape, represents another kind of spectral force: capital transforming physical space while erasing the histories embedded inside it. Buildings and communities disappear. Memory becomes real estate. And yet what has been erased continues shaping what replaces it.

QUANTUM ENTANGLEMENT AS METAPHYSICS

The film uses quantum entanglement not merely as science-fiction ornament, but as a philosophical proposition. Two things that appear separate may remain connected despite distance. The living and the dead. Parents and children. Victims and perpetrators. History and the present. Humans and spirits. Dun and the Loa. The film asks whether human relationships might operate according to a similar emotional logic. Once two lives become entangled, can they ever become completely separate again? Death may remove the body. But does it remove the relationship? That question sits at the center of SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND.

MYTHIC CAPITALISM

The supernatural world of the film does not exist outside material reality. It collides with it. Developers buy land. People lose homes. Neighborhoods become brands. Sacred histories become entertainment. Algorithms compete with ancestors for attention. Capitalism does what it has always done: it takes things that once possessed meaning and asks what they might be worth instead.

The spirits understand something humans repeatedly forget. Not everything valuable can be measured. Not everything absent is gone. And not everything that has been erased has stopped exerting power.



HORROR WITHOUT A MONSTER

There is no single monster in SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND. The monster is repetition. Grief repeating itself as revenge. History repeating itself as development. Memory repeating itself as trauma. Capital repeating itself as displacement. Human beings repeating patterns they believe they have escaped. The supernatural elements of the film make those patterns visible. The horror is not that ghosts exist. The horror is that we may spend our entire lives being controlled by things that are no longer physically there.

WHAT REFUSES TO DISAPPEAR

SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND moves between supernatural drama, afro-futurism, philosophical science fiction, dark comedy, African spiritual cosmology, and the dream logic of Coney Island itself. But beneath all of it is an extremely human question: How do we let go of something whose absence has become part of who we are? That question belongs to everyone. Everyone loses people, places, versions of themselves. Everyone inherits histories they didn’t create. And everyone eventually discovers that the things that disappear from our lives do not necessarily stop shaping them.

That is why SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND belongs inside Absential Cinema. The dead are absent. The past is absent. The futures we imagined are absent. And yet all of them remain active forces in the present. The film is not really asking whether ghosts exist. It’s asking something more unsettling:

What if absence is the ghost?



"You should have noticed how time moves differently here, in the land without shadows. It swells, forms waves, it jumps from wave to wave, it pours into a glass, it fills the entire sky."
- Ayezan



photo by Omar Villegas

**FROM FEATURE FILM TO
CONEY ISLAND FABLES**

For nine consecutive years, we created films for the Coney Island Film Festival in the tradition of EC Comics and The Twilight Zone—strange, darkly comic stories rooted in the mythology, history, and contradictions of Coney Island. Four of those films eventually evolved into the feature SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND.

Over the course of making those films, we also shot a wealth of material that never made it into the finished feature. Restoring those scenes would push SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND toward a three-hour running time. The material is too rich to disappear, but the theatrical feature is not necessarily the best place for all of it.



photo by Edwin Pagan

Our proposal is a limited theatrical release of SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND, followed by an expanded limited series for streaming or linear television. The feature could be restructured into chapters, incorporating the deleted material and allowing audiences to experience its interconnected stories, characters, and mythology at a more deliberate pace.

But SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND is only part of a larger body of work. Looking back at films such as CONEY ISLAND SIREN, MORPHEUS OF CONEY ISLAND, and SISYPHUS OF CONEY ISLAND, we recognized a common thread running through everything we had created. Writer Youssef Alaoui described them as “21st-century Coney Island fables.”

That phrase revealed the larger possibility. These films share a world, a tone, and a philosophy strong enough to become an anthology series: CONEY ISLAND FABLES—stories where mythology collides with capitalism, memory, grief, desire, absurdity, and the supernatural against the disappearing landscape of Coney Island.

A theatrical release of SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND could therefore function as more than the launch of a single film. It could introduce audiences to the world of CONEY ISLAND FABLES, creating a platform for an ongoing anthology series for streaming or linear television.

We're already developing additional stories that expand this mythology. SPIRITS OF CONEY ISLAND is the feature. CONEY ISLAND FABLES is the world.



"This place doesn't belong to us, we belong to it..."
- Coney Island

PAPA LEGBA

Go and collect your shit... It's the end of an era. You and your kind don't fit in this shiny new world.

CONEY ISLAND

Thats where you're wrong, Pops...

PAPA LEGBA

Yeah how's that...?

CONEY ISLAND

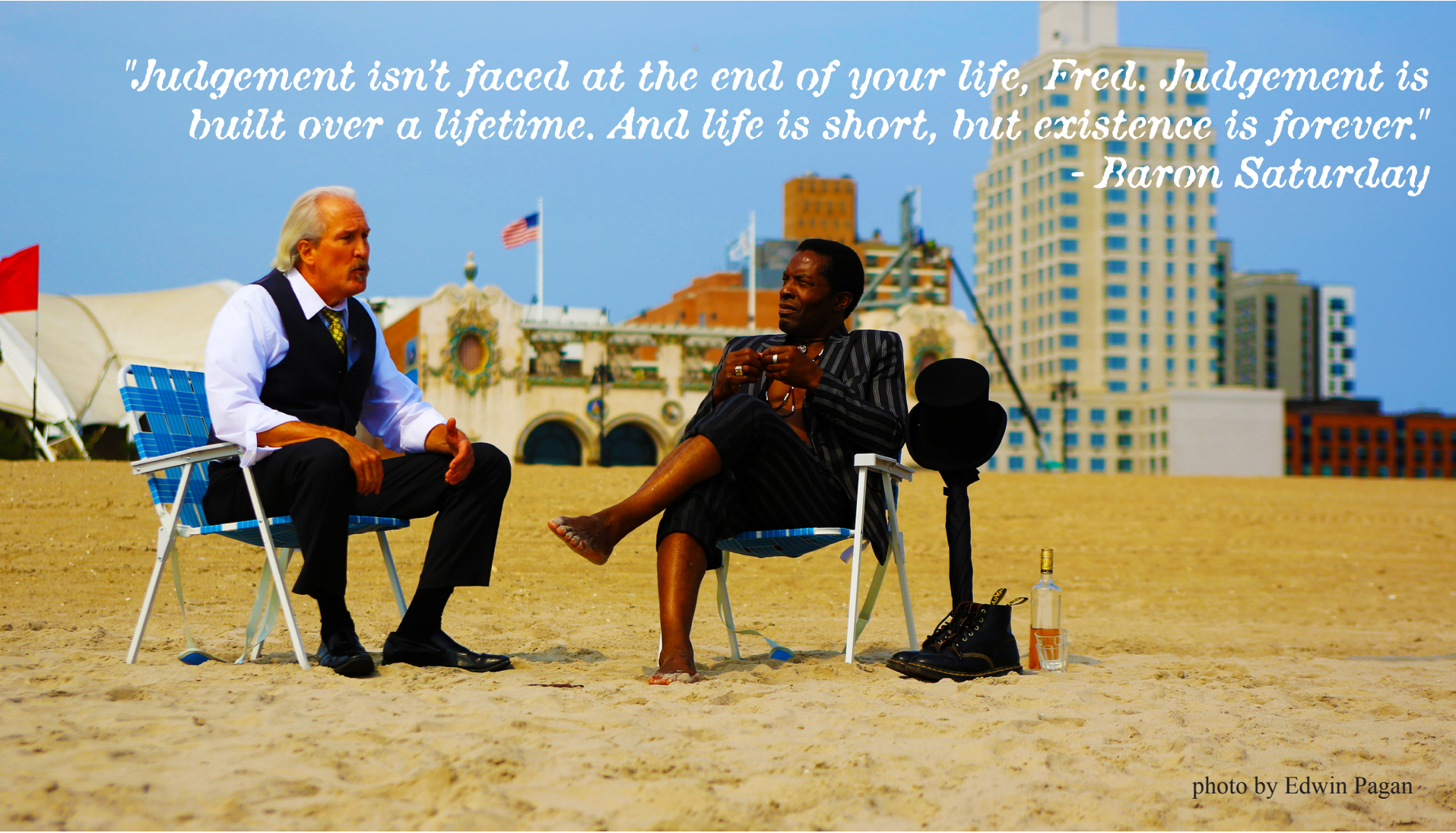
This place doesn't belong to us, we belong to it...

Coney Island walks away.

PAPA LEGBA

Then the capitalists own you and it...

Papa Legba laughs...



"Judgement isn't faced at the end of your life, Fred. Judgement is built over a lifetime. And life is short, but existence is forever."
- Baron Saturday

FRED

Hell, how does failure make progress?

BARON SATURDAY

Because the universe is not about balance. It's ruled by entropy, randomness, chaos. Justice is the seeking of balance in an unbalanced universe, but in a sense justice can't exist. And in another sense we're all entangled at the quantum level and the experience of one particle affects the other.

Physicists call it 'action at a distance' The evil you did in your life left a void. Left a void in your family. Left a void in Coney Island. Left a void in the victims of your business dealings. Victims you didn't even know existed. There's a space between you and them, but your actions affected them directly. Action at a distance.

Your victims take the void that your actions created and place that void on the scales of justice, but it's not enough.

I'm here to tell you that the penance you do for your crimes will always fall short. You place your void on the scales and it's found lacking. You need to know that there's a void that exists within your victims. And you need to know that their void must be matched by the void that your penance leaves you with.

FRED

I don't feel a void.

BARON SATURDAY

You don't recognize the void. There's a difference.

FRED

To hell with this...

BARON SATURDAY
Indeed... But Heaven and hell are not a place outside of you. They exist within you. In your quest to be a self made man, to be a wealthy man you built a heaven on earth for yourself and your evil built a hell within you. Judgement isn't faced at the end of your life, Fred. Judgement is built over a lifetime. And life is short, but existence is forever.

photo by Edwin Pagan

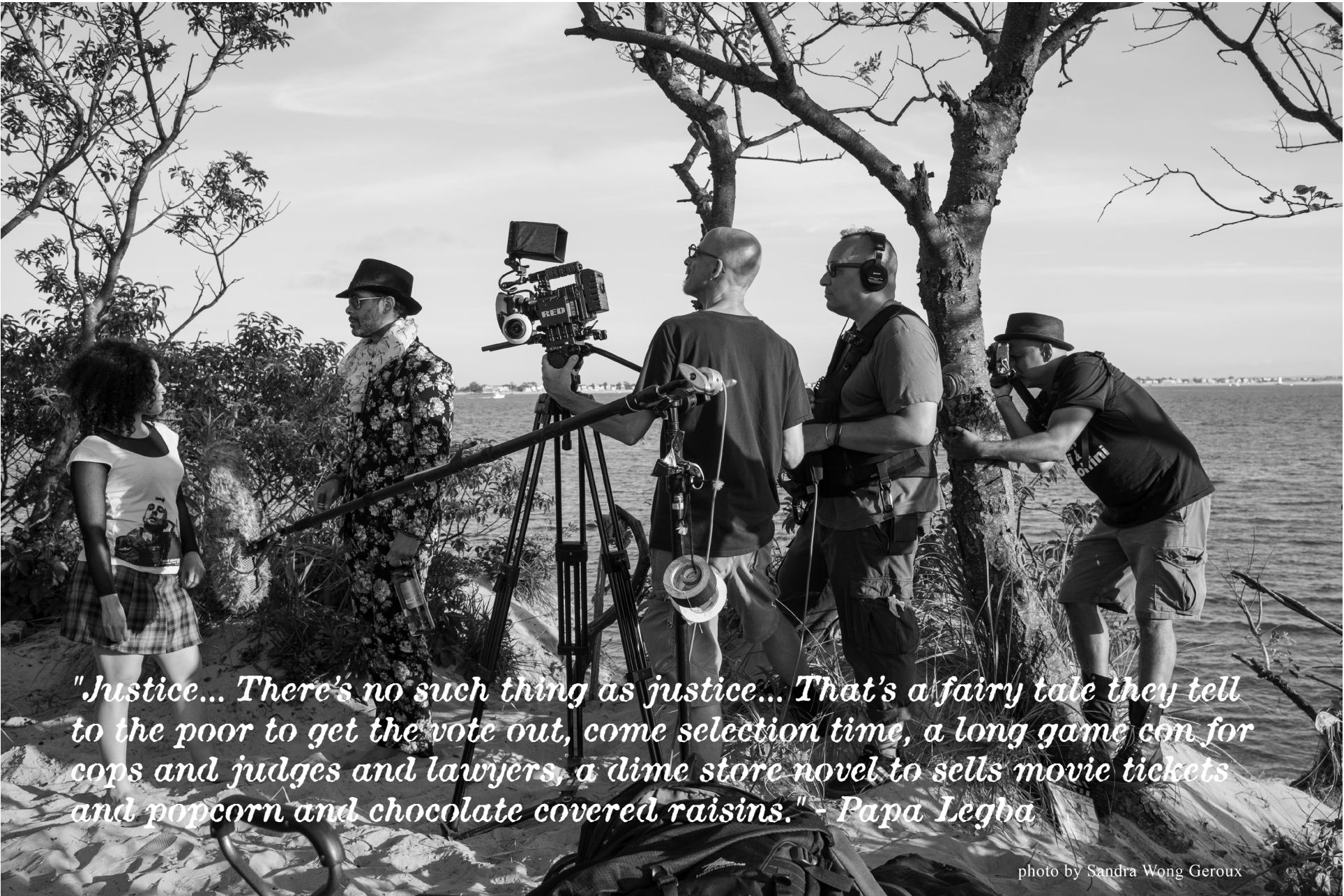


photo by Sandra Wong Geroux

"Justice... There's no such thing as justice... That's a fairy tale they tell to the poor to get the vote out, come selection time, a long game con for cops and judges and lawyers, a dime store novel to sells movie tickets and popcorn and chocolate covered raisins." - Papa Legba

LAILA
Because I tried making peace with it.

PAPA LEGBA
You think justice brings peace?

LAILA
Not having justice isn't bringing us peace. We paid the price and have nothing to show for it. If peace doesn't follow justice then what does? At least we can have justice.

PAPA LEGBA
There it is again.

LAILA
What?

PAPA LEGBA
Justice... There's no such thing as justice... That's a fairy tale they tell to the poor to get the vote out, come selection time, a long game con for cops and judges and lawyers, justice is a dime store novel to sell movie tickets and popcorn and chocolate covered raisins.

LAILA
Then revenge...

PAPA LEGBA
That escalated quickly...

LAILA
Revenge is real, Legba.

PAPA LEGBA
Oh, Revenge is real... but it's gonna cost you, but because you brought me gifts, rum and then some, I'm going to let you in a little secret. Everything has it's price. They say if you want revenge - you should dig two graves.



photo by Omar Villegas

"It's difficult to be a spirit. We've had the luxury of having our spirit be housed in a body. We have the advantage of having had a life." - Dune

DUNE
That you Mayor?

MAYOR
Yeah.

DUNE
How you doin'?

MAYOR
I'm good. Who you talkin' to Dune?

DUNE
The Spirits.

MAYOR
And what do they have to say?

DUNE
They need our help.

MAYOR
Why do the spirits need our help?

DUNE
It's difficult to be a spirit. We've had the luxury of having our spirit be housed in a body. We have the advantage of having had a life.

MAYOR
Huh... never thought of it that way.

DUNE
This body, this soul craft, this vessel, this thing we call living, it gives us a unique perspective they don't have.

ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE FIRE ESCAPE

A FILM ABOUT THE LAST SURVIVING MEMBER OF

THE LATIN INSOMNIACS MOTORCYCLE CLUB WITHOUT MOTORCYCLES

JESUS PAPOLETO MELENDEZ



AN AUDIO VISUAL TERRORISM PRODUCTION A FILM BY VAGABOND STARRING JESUS PAPOLETO MELENDEZ
FEATURING PHOTOGRAPHY BY LESLIE JEAN-BART MUSIC COMPOSED BY THELONIOUS MONK AND PERFORMED BY JERRY GONZALEZ
PRODUCED BY TONXTI VAZQUEZ RESISTER AND VAGABOND DIRECTED BY VAGABOND

ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE FIRE ESCAPE

A film about the last surviving member of The Latin Insomniacs Motorcycle Club Without Motorcycles
Jesús Papoleto Meléndez

Seeking Distribution and Sales

Runtime 86 minutes
Starring Jesús Papoleto Meléndez
Directed by vagabond
Photography by Leslie Jean Bart

ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE FIRE ESCAPE

The Invisible Foundation

The Nuyorican Poetry Movement, alongside the Black Arts Movement, helped create the cultural and rhythmic foundations from which hip-hop would emerge. ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE FIRE ESCAPE is therefore structured not simply as a documentary, but like an album.

The film is composed of short video chapters—each functioning almost like its own song—built around different aspects of Jesús Papoleto Meléndez’s stories, poetry, memories, observations, and philosophy. Between them are interstitials featuring a pull quote from the incoming chapter and an audio sample that either complements, complicates, or deliberately contradicts what follows.

The structure borrows directly from hip-hop’s language of collage—fragments of sound, image, memory, history, and contradiction placed beside one another until they create new meaning. But that same structure has migrated into the twenty-first century. Instagram, TikTok, and other social-media feeds now organize our experience through an endless succession of short, self-contained pieces of image and sound. What feels radically contemporary has roots in a much older cultural practice.

Music critic Nelson George has described the twentieth century as the century of collage. ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE FIRE ESCAPE carries that idea into the twenty-first century—just as Papoleto himself carries the cultural memory of one century into another. The film’s form therefore becomes part of its argument. The collage of hip-hop becomes the architecture of the social-media feed. The Nuyorican poet becomes the ancestor of forms that no longer remember where they came from.

And that is the absence at the center of the film: we live inside cultural forms whose origins have become increasingly invisible. ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE FIRE ESCAPE makes that invisible foundation visible again.



AFTERMATH
Seeking Financing and Distribution

written and directed by vagabond

Attached Talent
Wilson Jermaine Heredia as Moses Baptiste
Tessa Martin as Sarah

Scientific Advisor
Stephon Alexander

Based on the forthcoming the novel
written by vagabond

AFTERMATH
~~the future isn't coming~~

The Invisible Presence
The future in AFTERMATH is not destroyed by one catastrophe. It is hollowed out slowly—by the disappearance of democracy, economic equality, ecological stability, privacy, truth, and eventually the belief that humanity deserves to survive.

In 2067, Moses Baptiste is a dying time-traveling assassin sent back to 2021 with an impossible mission. He must recruit Omar, a grieving father struggling to raise his daughter Alexis after losing his wife during the pandemic. But Moses has not come to save the future. He has come to accelerate humanity’s extinction, convinced that ending mankind may be the final radical act of compassion.

Omar refuses. His responsibility is not to history, revolution, or some abstract future. It is to his daughter.

AFRO-FUTRUIST TIME TRAVEL

That refusal becomes the moral center of the film. Most science-fiction stories about time travel are built around a warning: do not disturb the past, because you might change the future. AFTERMATH rejects that premise.



This is an Afrofuturist time-travel story built around the opposite idea: the past must be disturbed because the future has to change. For people whose histories have been shaped by slavery, colonialism, capitalism, racism, exploitation, and erasure, preserving the existing timeline is hardly an act of heroism. What if history itself is the thing that needs to be disrupted? The question is not how we protect the timeline. The question is whether the timeline deserves to survive.

In the speculative tradition of Octavia Butler, with the stripped-down post-apocalyptic brutality of Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road* and the spiritual journey through a ruined America found in *The Book of Eli*, *AFTERMATH* uses science fiction not to escape the present, but to confront where the present may be taking us.

It is speculative fiction constructed from absences already forming around us: capitalism increasingly untethered from democracy, extreme concentrations of wealth, corporate power replacing public institutions, climate collapse, artificial intelligence, endless war, political authoritarianism, and a digital culture capable of transforming language itself into contagion. The future is not another world.

It is our world after everything we failed to change has reached its logical conclusion.

THE FRANCHISE

AFTERMATH was never conceived as a single film. It is the beginning of a planned series of five interconnected films designed first for theatrical release, each confronting one of the defining crises shaping the twenty-first century while expanding the same Afrofuturist universe.

Rather than building a franchise around superheroes or spectacle, we are building one around ideas—capitalism, authoritarianism, climate collapse, artificial intelligence, war, inequality, historical memory, resistance, and the struggle to imagine a future outside the systems that created the catastrophe.

Each film would stand independently as a theatrical experience while advancing a larger narrative. Once the five-film cycle is complete, the films can be restructured into episodic chapters for streaming or linear television, allowing audiences to experience the story as an extended speculative saga.

The theatrical films build the mythology.

The series reveals the architecture underneath it.



ATTACHMENTS

That world is already beginning to take shape around the film. Tony Award-winning actor Wilson Jermaine Heredia is attached to play Moses Baptiste, the dying revolutionary who carries the future back into the past.

Physicist and cosmologist Dr. Stephon Alexander is attached as our science consultant, helping us ground the film’s ideas about time, quantum physics, cosmology, and the speculative possibilities that connect them. Alexander previously served as a science advisor on Ava DuVernay’s *A Wrinkle in Time*.

Our ambition is for the science of *AFTERMATH* to be treated with the same seriousness Christopher Nolan brought to *Interstellar*: the story may push into extraordinary speculative territory, but its ideas should grow from real physics rather than convenient science-fiction shortcuts.

The more radical the fiction becomes, the more important it is that the scientific foundation feels credible.



Alexander’s involvement allows us to ask larger philosophical questions without abandoning scientific rigor: Is time fixed? Can causality be disrupted? Can the future exert pressure on the past? And if history is a system, what would it actually mean to break it...?

THE NOVEL AS IP

The screenplay for *AFTERMATH* has also been expanded into a novel, allowing the universe to move across cinema, literature, and eventually other forms of storytelling.

At the center of it all is the question that runs throughout *Absential Cinema*: What happens when everything we believed would protect us is gone? Democracy, stability, progress, history and even the future itself....?

And if the future has already been determined by the failures of the past, perhaps the most radical act is not preserving history. Perhaps it’s in changing it...



Abiodun Oyewole is
Harlem's Last Poet
a film by vagbond



AUDIO VISUAL TERRORISM
ABIODUN OYEWOLE UMAR BIN HASSAN BABA DON BABATUNDE FELIPE LUCIANO DJ JOHNNY JUICE ARTURO RODRIGUEZ GABRIELLE DAVID
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY JEFFREY AKERS PRODUCED BY OMAR VILLEGAS JOE CARRAHA TONTXI VAZQUEZ VAGABOND DIRECTED BY VAGABOND

**BRANCHES
OF THE
TREE OF LIFE**

THE COLLECTED POEMS
OF ABIODUN OYEWOLE
1969-2013

INTRODUCTION BY
BETTY J. DOPSON

EDITED BY
GABRIELLE DAVID

HARLEM'S LAST POET
The Invisible Inheritance

In Production and seeking \$250K Financing and Distribution

Life Rights for Abiodun Oyewole are secured.

ATTACHMENTS

DJ Johnny Juice of Public Enemy
Felipe Luicano
Don Baba Babatunde
Umar Bin Hassan
Arturo Rodriguez of RICANSTRUCTION
2 Leaf Press (Publisher for Abiodun Oyewole)

Transmedia Potentital

- Books
- Music
- Concert Fim



"I didn't serve time, I made time serve me..."
- Abiodun Oyewole

HARLEM'S LAST POET
Abiodun Is Harlem's Last Poet

Some men serve time. Abiodun Oyewole made time serve him.

HARLEM'S LAST POET tells the extraordinary story of Abiodun Oyewole—founding member of The Last Poets, revolutionary poet, author, and one of the architects of the rhythmic and political language that would eventually become hip-hop.

After being imprisoned for his involvement in the robbery of a Ku Klux Klan organization, Abiodun transformed incarceration into education, discipline, and artistic purpose. From Harlem and the Black Arts Movement to The Last Poets and decades of poetry, activism, teaching, and cultural resistance, his life charts the journey of a man who refused to allow history—or prison—to define the limits of his imagination.

The absence at the center of HARLEM'S LAST POET is generational. The artists who forged the bridge between Black radical politics, spoken-word poetry, jazz, and hip-hop are disappearing, even as the culture they created has become one of America's most powerful global exports. DJ Johnny Juice of Public Enemy is attached to the project, creating a living connection between The Last Poets and the hip-hop generation that inherited their revolutionary use of rhythm, language, and political confrontation. The documentary will follow Abiodun making a concept album of his life with DJ Johnny Juice and Arturo Rodriguez.

The project also extends beyond the documentary. Abiodun's poetry and autobiography, including BRANCHES OF THE TREE OF LIFE, provide the foundation for a larger transmedia vision encompassing the film, his books, music, and a concept album—with his publisher 2Leaf Press committed to supporting the project wherever possible.

HARLEM'S LAST POET is not simply about preserving Abiodun Oyewole's past. It is about preserving the lineage of rebellion, poetry, and sound that made the future possible before the people who carried that history are gone.



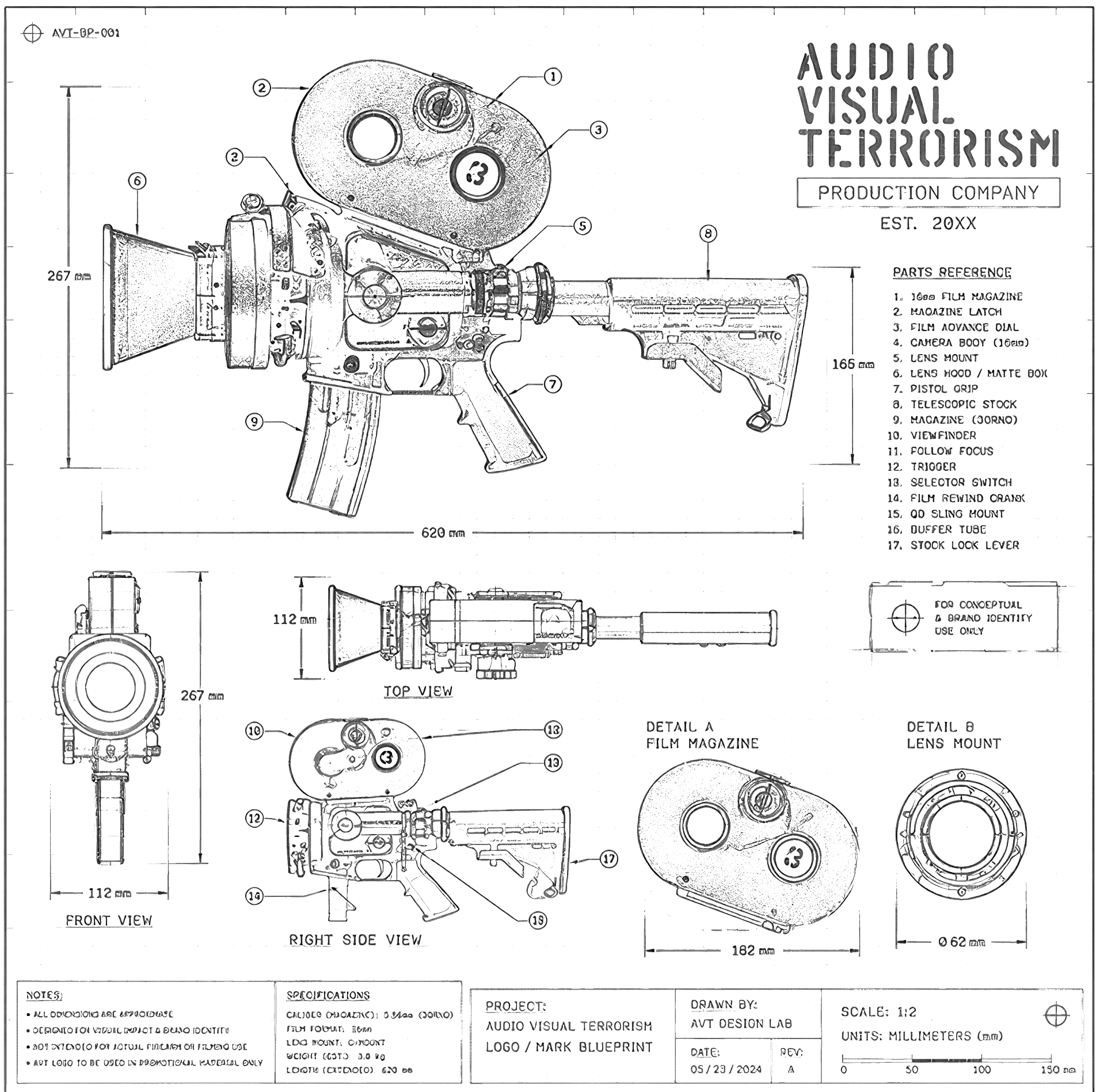
Something Beautiful

I wanted to say something beautiful
How we've turned garbage into gold
How we made a swamp fertile land
How we turned a curse into a blessing
How we made a nigger Black
Wanted to say something
That would make us stand up
And be proud
With the sun shining on our faces
And in our hearts
I wanted to say
But the day wouldn't let me
And the skies were too gray
The air was choking my dreams
And all the smiles
On the faces of my people
Had turned to frowns

Are we so loving
That we love what hates us
That we love what hates us
That we love the pain
That twist our minds into creatures
We can't even recognize
Are we so strong
That we play being weak
I wanted to say something beautiful
That would lift us up
Kick depression to the curb
And walk tall
In the middle of the storm
Bu the storm is raging
And we are tossed about
Like rag dolls
Played with by children of dogs
And we allow this
And dance with this noise
And call it music

Dress up in the debris
Of a shattered world
Where broken bodies and broken
hearts
And blisters from a swollen lie
Infect our world with disease
And yet we are the only cure
For a world gone mad
If we could stop and see and smell
The flowers we planted long ago
Ah, I wanted to say something beau-
tiful
But ugly like a brick in my path
Keeps tripping me up
Causing me to fall on my face
And make me forget
How beautiful we can be.

- Abiodun Oyewole



WE GOT A
SAYING IN
BROOKLYN...

SCARED
MONEY
DON'T
MAKE
NONE!

C

ABSENT

+

ESSENTIAL

+

ABSENTIAL

A