



**AFRICAN ODYSSEYS**

# Raça

+ Q&A co-hosted by Victor Fraga, DMovies

This documentary focuses on Brazil's struggle for civil rights through the life and campaigns of men and woman from different walks of life: Paulo Paim, the only Black senator of the republic, attempts to enshrine race equality in the law; Brazilian pop singer Netinho de Paula tries to redress racial imbalance in the broadcast media; and Tiny dos Santos, activist and granddaughter of slaves, campaigns for land rights. Closely following their individual but interconnected activities, the filmmakers create a vivid and complex picture of race politics in contemporary Brazil.

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*Raça* is a feature-documentary about race in Brazil, a topic igniting passionate debate across the country. Brazil imported ten times more slaves than the U.S. and was the last nation to abolish slavery. Yet, while race has been overtly divisive in most countries with a legacy of slavery, Brazil has long boasted of its intermixing and racial harmony. Today, however, Brazilians are awakening to the reality that opportunity increases directly with the whiteness of one's skin. Half of all Brazilians are of African descent – the world's second largest black population – yet they are nearly absent in the halls of power and history books. As their country's economy booms, millions of black Brazilians are no longer willing for the disparities between light and dark skin to be explained away by class.

*Raça* follows three people on the frontlines of this hauntingly familiar, yet quintessentially Brazilian, battle for equality. In the modernist capital of Brasilia, the country's only black senator fights for landmark civil rights legislation. In the fast-paced metropolis of São Paulo, a famous black pop-star launches a TV station with a cast that looks like Brazil rather than Scandinavia. And deep in the rural countryside, a granddaughter of slaves mobilises her neighbours to defend ancestral land rights. Together, they form a vibrant portrait of a people struggling to redefine themselves and their nation.

## **The Filmmakers**

**Megan Mylan** is a New York-based documentary filmmaker whose work has been recognised with an Academy Award®, Emmy-nomination, Independent Spirit Award and a Guggenheim Fellowship. She directed and produced the Oscar®-winning film *Smile Pinki* broadcast on HBO and released theatrically in India. Her film, *Lost Boys of Sudan*, had a 70-city U.S. theatrical release and broad international television broadcast including PBS-POV in the U.S. Through an extensive social action campaign, *Lost Boys* raised more than a million dollars for refugee education funds and recruited thousands of volunteer refugee mentors. Megan has worked on a wide variety of documentaries including the Oscar-nominated, *Long Night's Journey into Day* and Sundance award-winning *Sing Faster*. Before beginning in film, she worked in the U.S. and Brazil with Ashoka, an international network of social entrepreneurs. She has a Bachelor's from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and Masters' degrees in Journalism and Latin American

Studies from the University of California at Berkeley where she was recently guest director of the Graduate Documentary Program.

**Joel Zito Araújo** is an award-winning Brazilian filmmaker. For over two decades, he has produced documentaries and narrative shorts dealing with social issues in Brazil, particularly the nation's Afro-Brazilian population. His feature-documentary *Cinderellas, Lobos e um Príncipe Encantado* about sexual tourism in Brazil enjoyed a strong theatrical and community release. His documentary *Negação do Brasil* about the participation of black actors in Brazilian telenovelas won Best Documentary at the E Tudo Verdade film Festival. His feature-length narrative, *Filhas do Vento* brought together the largest black cast in the history of Brazilian cinema. The Gramado Festival award-winning film generated intense media attention and screened widely in Brazil and internationally including New York's Film Forum and MoMA. Joel is the recipient of a MacArthur Foundation fellowship and has a PhD in Communications from the University of São Paulo and was a visiting scholar at the University of Texas, Austin.

**Production notes, racafilme.com**

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#### RAÇA

*Directed and Produced by:* Joel Zito Araújo, Megan Mylan  
*Presented by:* Príncipe Productions, Casa De Criação  
*Field Producers:* Mario Furloni, Patrícia Freitas, Valentina Homem  
*Post-production Producer:* Marcelo Lessa  
*Assistant Director:* Luis Carlos De Alencar  
*Camera:* Alberto Bellezia  
*Editors:* Jordana Berg, Megan Mylan  
*Additional Editing:* Purcell Carson  
*Music:* Seu Antonio, Lucio Rebello  
*Sound:* Megan Mylan

#### With

Netinho De Paula  
Miúda Dos Santos  
Paulo Paim

Brazil-USA 2013  
104 mins

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#### REGULAR PROGRAMME

**African Odysseys: Raça + Q&A** co-hosted by Victor Fraga, DMovies  
Sat 7 May 14:00

**Woman with a Movie Camera: To Die For + intro** by Hannah Strong  
Sat 14 May 14:50

**Woman with a Movie Camera: The Bling Ring + intro** by Hannah Strong  
Sat 14 May 18:00

**Silent Cinema: Modern Times + intro**  
Sun 15 May 15:30

**Seniors' Free Matinee: Gregory's Girl + discussion**  
Mon 16 May 14:00

**Experimenta: Lensing the Landscape: River Yar + discussion with artists William Raban and Chris Welsby**  
Wed 18 May 18:15

**Terror Vision: Ms .45 (AKA Angel of Vengeance)**

Fri 27 May 18:30

**Relaxed Screening: Frequencies (AKA OXV: The Manual) + intro and discussion**

Mon 30 May 18:10

**Projecting the Archive: Idol of Paris + intro** by Josephine Botting, BFI Curator

Tue 31 May 18:15

See also:

**UK Premiere: The Coup d'État Factory**

**+ discussion with chair, Baroness Christine Blower and special guests**

A fascinating documentary about media manipulation of democracy in Brazil and beyond.

Sunday 29 May 14:00

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Programme notes and credits compiled by the BFI Documentation Unit

Notes may be edited or abridged. Questions/comments? Email [prognotes@bfi.org.uk](mailto:prognotes@bfi.org.uk)

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