



Clam Films presents

# Relentless



a film by

Andy Amadi Okoroafor

starring

Nneka Egbuna,  
Gideon Okeke &  
Jimmy Jean-Louis

Sélection London Film Festival  
World Cinema

Screenings :

Wed 20 18:15 NFT2 / Thu 21 16:00 NFT2

BFI Southbank  
Belvedere Road, Southbank, London, SE1 8XT



## Synopsis

A haunting story about loneliness, love and self-discovery set in Africa's throbbing megacity Lagos, Nigeria that delicately explores the effects of war and loss.

Obi is a peace-keeping soldier in worn torn Sierra Leone, where he meets Blessing a Sierra Leonean woman. His life is devastated when he finds Blessing mutilated by rebels. His only option is to end her misery. On his return to Lagos, Obi is a man battling with the scars of war. By day he runs a small security company with Ola, his best friend and fellow war veteran, at night he walks the lonely streets of Lagos. It's election time in Nigeria and a powerful politician hands Obi's firm a lucrative contract to provide security for his candidate. Honey, a street hooker, abruptly enters Obi's life, as she is seeking for her lost girlfriend, last seen with powerful politicians, and feared to be involved in a ritual sacrifice.

The film explores the vast canvas that is Lagos today – powerful, dangerous, alive and uncompromising; fraught with deceptions and corruption yet thriving with hope, strength and resilience. This film celebrates Lagos as an African city bustling with energy, music, vibrant, full of culture and humanity.



# Story of a film

There are 3 key things that shaped RELENTLESS :

Firstly : a reflection on Africa: I wanted to create a cinematographic searchlight on what Africa is today ... beyond the demagogues, optimists and pessimists.. to present an honest look at what is Africa and how its history and present affects the simplest of its citizens.. Also I wanted to show the complexity of Africa, being in Africa without explanations. I wanted the film to be like random story you hear on the back of the “motorbike taxi’s” (“okada” in Nigeria).

Secondly : An Exploration of loneliness in big cities, which is universal. Paris, London, Moscow or Joborg are the same ..the incomprehension and alienation from ones own environment..in Africa, it could be ethnic, class, politic, church or whatever.

Thirdly: A thesis on style in African cinema. Relentless is a big exercise in freedom. I wanted to go back to all the films that has been done in Africa, and take a different direction. It is not a dogma spin off, nor is it Nollywood.. Having seen what has been proposed up till now as African cinema, I think it does not match the modernity that is everywhere in Africa. Relentless is my stylistic line in the sand that says art films can be made in Africa without apologies.

The music is worth being mentioned, from Tony Allen, late Fela Kuti’s drummer to Nneka, the latest Nigerian sensation (winner of the Moba Awards as the lead actress), to Keziah Jones who is a heartthrob in France.. Relentless is a bold step to present African talent in its own terms through Art house cinema.



# The director

## Andy Amadi Okorafor

Andy Amadi Okorafor is a classicist but loves experimentation and style.

Born in Nigeria a year before the Biafran war, Andy moved to France after his secondary education where he studied cinema.

After a documentary on young fashion in the early 90's, he started working for fashion houses and the French prêt à porter, art directing shows, catalogues and campaigns.

Head hunted by Virgin France to change their image he spent 5 years art directing music videos, record covers and billboards for major French musicians, from Benjamin Biolay to Manu Chao.

In between all these Andy started Clam magazine, one of the most influential creative magazines that is found in museums and selected stores in most parts of the world.

Relentless is his first long feature.





## The actors



### Nneka Egbuna

Nneka Egbuna, is the daughter of a Nigerian father and a German mother. She was born and grew up, in the Delta region of Nigeria.. She now divides her time between Nigeria and Hamburg.

After releasing her debut EP 'The Uncomfortable Truth, she performed on her first tour with Patrice Bart-Williams in 2005.

Her first album entitled 'Victim of Truth' was released not only in Germany but also in England, France, Netherlands, Nigeria and Japan. Garnering rave reviews from the media, the UK's Sunday Times later declared it "the year's most criminally overlooked album", comparing it favourably to 'The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill ».

In 2008, her second album, 'No Longer at Ease' combines the political and the personal in "a winning mix of soul, hip-hop an reggae". The lead single from it, 'Heartbeat', became her first song to break into the German Top 50. In September 2009, the song entered the UK Singles Chart at number twenty.

Nneka has been nominated in three categories for the 2009 Channel O Music Video Awards, and won an award for Best African Act at the 2009 MOBO Awards.

In November of 2009, Nneka staged a concert tour of the United States and appeared in Late Show with David Letterman in New York before getting her US tour underway.

In June of 2010, she won the reggae category of the Museke Online Africa Music Award 2010 with her hit song, Africans.

She won the award for best indigeneous artist in Nigeria at the Nigerian Entertainment Awards 2010 which was held in New York, U.S.A.

« Relentless » is her first feature.



## **Gideon Okeke**

Born July 23rd,'83, Gideon Eche Okeke, is a breakout talent who launched an on-screen career only four years back after a stint on the Nigerian version of the hit reality series BIG BROTHER (NIGERIA). He soon pursued a career in modeling which would turn out to be a nursery of sorts to a presently promising acting career. Gideon currently plays a leading man's role on MNET Africa's daily drama series TINSEL, as Philip Ade-Williams, made broadcast to viewers in 48 countries of Africa via cable subscription ([www.mnet africa.co.za/tinsel](http://www.mnet africa.co.za/tinsel)). Having garnered a wide reach of audience on pay TV, Gideon also finds time off to engage himself in other challenging frontiers as stage productions. The 2010 showing of FRACTURES, (an adaptation of Arthur Miller's "A view from a bridge") proves this young actor ready to take on the challenge of a global audience. With two nominations to his name, "Best Actor in a TV series", NEA Awards, NY and also "Actor of the year" at the FUTURE Awards 2010, the word is official that this is a young talent to be taken seriously. An Applied Biochemistry graduate from the NAU Awka, Nigeria, with special skills in music and screen acting, Gideon is best described as a body of work in progress... His latest feature appearance (the third under his belt), RELENTLESS, gives further buttressing pointers to this actors intensity, commitment and capacity to learn and adapt even in the most debilitating conditions.



## **Jimmy Jean-Louis**

Jimmy Jean Louis was born in Petionville, near Port-au-Prince, Haiti. He lived there until the age of twelve, when he moved to Paris with his family to pursue a modeling career. He was very successful in London, working for such notables as Gianfranco Ferré and Valentino. In 1995, Jimmy moved to Los Angeles where he began acting full-time in underground and independent films. This eventually led to him landing a role in Jean Claude Van Damme's movie Derailed. He went on to have secondary roles in Tears of the Sun, Hollywood Homicide, Monster-in-Law and The Game of Their Lives. He was cast as the romantic lead in the 2006 film Phat Girlz starring opposite Monique Imes Jackson as her love interest. He achieved his most widespread fame, however, when cast in the recurring role of The Haitian on the NBC television series Heroes,

# Soundtrack

Music by Tony Allen, Keziah Jones, Dj Farhot feat. Nneka, Bantu, Kuku, General Pype, Chuma Obumsele, Oraminyam.

Original score by Philippe Mallier & Pascal Morel



## Technical datas

**Script and Direction** Andy Amadi Okorafor

**Image** Javier Arrontes  
**Editing** Octavio Rodriguez  
**Art direction** Bola Belo  
**Production design** Clam Studio  
**Line producer** Ukachi Arinzeh  
**Executive producer** Nkem Okoroafor

**Production :** Clam Films  
**in coproduction with** Charivari Films  
Isolde Pringiers  
Aaron Allred, Franziska Wagner  
Suite 156 Entertainment GmbH

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**Format and running time :** 35 mm/ 92 minutes

2010 Nigeria, France, Spain, Germany

