

MACHETERO

a film written + directed by vagabond
• CAST AND CREW BIOGRAPHIES •

vagabond

Writer, Producer, Director and Editor

Brooklyn born to a Puerto Rican mother and Jamaican father and raised in the boroughs of NYC, Vagabond's use of images began with using NYC's Mass Transit Authority as a canvas while attending Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & the Arts. After graduating he went on to attend The School of Visual Arts but dropped out after his first year. He began his career in film early on, working on independent black films such as Spikes Lees "Do The Right Thing", where he quickly learned all aspects of filmmaking and forged his own artistic and ideological aesthetic.

The first film that Vagabond produced was the documentary "RICANSTRUCTING VIEQUES", that told the story of the US military's occupational abuse of Vieques, Puerto Rico as a training site, through the use of interviews and live musical performance footage of Nuyorican punk rock band Ricanstruction. It opened to an emotional sold out screening at the first annual NY International Latino Film Festival and opened the Lost Film Festival 4.0 in Philadelphia. The film has gone on to screen across Europe, Australia, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and throughout the US.

Vagabond continued working with Ricanstruction and help found what would become the Ricanstruction Network, a politically radical artist collective in the vein of the Situationist International. Vagabond would go on to create murals, posters, pamphlets, and videos and organize political marches, rallies, vigils, art shows, screenings and protests with the Ricanstruction Network.

"MACHETERO" is his first feature film. The film stars Isaach de Bankolé (Ghost Dog, Manderlay, The Limits Of Control) who plays a French journalist who comes to New York to interview a Puerto Rican "terrorist" in prison about his decision to use violence as a means to free his people. Screened in neighborhood/barrio community centers and squats while still in mid-production, the controversial film engendered political discussion and debate within (and outside of) the Puerto Rican Diaspora and has been called one of the most important and insightful underground political films ever made. It has since gone on to screen at festivals all over the world and garnered one award in Africa and two awards in the United Kingdom.

Currently, vagabond is in pre-production on two more, sure to be controversial feature films. "AMOR Y RABIA", which concerns three anarcho-punks trying to start a revolution and "FREEDOM ON LAYAWAY" a performance film starring Dylcia Pagan. vagabond is also developing another passion project, "HURT", a modern gothic horror tale of innocence destroyed in the pursuit of a dream, starring Wilson J. Heredia (TONY award winner of RENT).

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Isaach De Bankolé

Actor

Isaach was born in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. His parents came from Benin and his grandparents came from Nigeria. He has appeared in over 30 films, including Jim Jarmusch's *Night on Earth*, *Ghost Dog: The Way Of The Samurai*, and *Coffee and Cigarettes*. He has also appeared in Lars Von Trier's *Manderlay*. He has recently portrayed Steven Obanno, a terrorist, in the 2006 James Bond film *Casino Royale* and also *The Lone Man* in Jim Jarmusch's *The Limit's Of Control*.

Not4Prophet

Writer, Musician, Actor

Born in Ponce, Puerto Rico but raised mostly on the streets of East Harlem, NYC. For his 10th birthday his father gave him a copy of Piri Thomas' *Down These Mean Streets*. The revelation that not only did PR's write, but that PR's from NYC had a distinct voice and vision that was all there own, led him to seek out writings by other PR's from NYC. Not4Prophet went on to steal anything that was ever published by any of the "NuYoricans" and began to, as he says, "study the masters, messiahs, and movimiento". A homeless/squatter by the time he reached his teens. His artistic career began writing his name and (punk) political slogans on private property. In an attempt to find "his own vocabulary", he added pen and paper to an arsenal of spray paint and walls.

Not4Prophet is lyricist and vocalist of the punk/hip-hop/be-bop/salsa/reggae band RIKANSTRUCTION who have taken their rebel music everywhere from around the globe to around the corner. He is the voice and poet of the "spoken noise" group RENEGADES of PUNK. Not4prophet is also one half of the hip-hop project X-VANDALS, spitting rhymes about life, liberty and the pursuit of poverty. He also plays the lead role in the provocative film MACHETERO. It is his first time acting in front of a camera. Not4Prophet also wrote the Anti-manifesto for MACHETERO.

Kelvin Fernandez

Actor, Aspiring Pro Wrestler

Kelvin was born in Queens, New York to Dominican parents. He began acting with the encouragement of vagabond and has worked with TONY award winner, Wilson Jermaine Heredia. Kelvin is studying Brazilian Ju-Jitsu with Renzo Gracie in New York City and is planning on going to Atlanta to study pro-wrestling. It's Kelvin's dream to become a Professional Wrestler.

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Dylcia Pagan

Journalist, Poet, Artist and Actor

Former Puerto Rican Political Prisoner and Prisoner Of War

Dylcia Pagán was born in 1946 at the controversial old Lincoln Hospital, in the Bronx, in New York City. At the age of two she moved to El Barrio - East Harlem. From the time she was five until the age of 12 she performed on "The Children's Hour on NBC TV, every Sunday morning. Having lost her parents at the age of twenty, Ms. Pagan became an independent woman and activist in her community of East Harlem.

Her involvement began in the civil rights movement, participating in voter registration drives and doing community organizational working in the areas of housing, health, youth development and research. In the late 60's Ms. Pagan ran for public office as a candidate for District Leader. She also ran as a delegate to the Democratic Convention on Shirley Chisholm's ticket during her presidential candidacy.

In 1969 she decided to attend Brooklyn College on a full time basis after attending Hunter College at night. As a student at Brooklyn College she was one of the founders of the Puerto Rican Student Union, which resulted in the formulation of a student-controlled Puerto Rican Studies Department, which is still in existence today.

By the early 1970's, she worked with the Puerto Rican Media and Education Council, filing a series of lawsuits against the major television stations which facilitated the local public affairs programming that still exists today. She is the first Puerto Rican Woman TV producer in New York City and has worked as a TV producer, writer, and filmmaker developing investigative documentaries and children's programs at NBC, ABC, CBS, and PBS. She also worked as the English editor for the first bilingual daily, El Tiempo and wrote a daily, popular column, for the same newspaper.

Sometime in 1979 she went underground with her son and was arrested in 1980, charged with Seditious Conspiracy, for fighting for the Independence of Puerto Rico and was sentenced to 63 years of imprisonment in state and federal facilities in the USA. When she was arrested in 1980, her young child, whose safety she feared for, was hidden from the government. In prison she developed educational and cultural programs for the other inmates, has taught aerobics classes, hand formed ceramics and block printing.

During her prison stay she also worked on and was featured in three documentaries. "The Pleasanton Five"- about the five Puerto Rican political prisoners including her, housed in the Federal facility of Pleasanton California at that time. "Woman's Voices" a documentary about several woman who participated in a therapeutic holistic program at the prison. She and her son are featured in this half hour piece. And "The Double Life of Ernesto Gomez Gomez"- the award winning documentary that aired on PBS nationally on July 30, 1999 about the year that she and her son get to know each other after many years of separation. It also contains a historical political overview of Puerto Rico and the reasons Ms. Pagan choose to defend her country.

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On September 10, 1999, Dylcia Pagan was released from prison after serving almost 20 years for fighting for the Independence of her homeland Puerto Rico. Her release came after a long campaign in the US, Puerto Rico and internationally, which pressured President Clinton to give her and nine of her co-defendants, a Presidential Conditional Clemency.

Since 1999 Dylcia has been residing in her native Puerto Rico where she was received by thousands of supporters as a national hero.

Jeff "AK" Akers
Cinematographer

Since receiving his B.A. in Fine Arts from Roanoke College in 1983, Jeff has been pursuing a photography career in New York City. Building on his extensive technical knowledge of lighting and composition, as well as his capacity for team collaboration, Jeff's growing interest in film and it's creative potential eventually led him to shift his professional focus towards cinematography. Having now completed several short films, documentaries, music videos, and trade commercials, Jeff is confident he made the right choice.

RICANSTRUCTION
Songs and Score

RICANSTRUCTION is a New York City based Puerto Rican punk/hip hop/salsa/jazz/reggae fusion musical group and artist collective. The band consists of lead vocalist Not4Prophet (also known as N4P, formerly known as Alano Baez, born in Ponce, Puerto Rico), bassist Arturo "R2O" Rodriguez, drummer Joseph "SickFoot" Rodriguez from Harlem, and guitarist Eddie "Alsiva" Alsina. Other members of Ricanstruction through the years have included vocalist Taina Asili (formerly of the punk band Anti-Product), percussionist Roger Vasquez (who left the band to join Latin Rock band Ill Nino), and guitarists Fidel Paulino and Steven "Albizoo" Maldonado.

Ricanstruction made their mark on the underground hardcore scene in NYC and became a cult band. They began gigging in local NYC clubs in the mid 1990s at places such as CBGB, The Continental, ABC No Rio, Webster Hall, The Knitting Factory, Downtown Beirut and many other venues. They developed a loyal cross-cultural following in New York and were soon signed to CBGB Records by club and label owner Hilly Kristal. They recorded and released "Liberation Day" with CGBG. They began to tour in support of their albums while continuing to gig at local NYC clubs, empty lots, and block parties as they felt it important to reach everyday people. The band then signed to Uprising Records and put out the album "Love + Revolution" which featured Vernon Reid of Living Colour, Dead Prez, Chuck D. of Public Enemy and Chuck Treece of McRad. The band has played shows in Central America, the Caribbean, and across the United States. The band last performed together on September 23rd of 2006 at a United Nations rally, demanding independence for their homeland, Puerto Rico.

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