

LES FILMS DU 3 MARS PRESENTS

WITH JOMANNE HARBELLE LOINCE HARBELLE MARC HARBELLE HIMANI HARBELL BLAIN CADOUX PAULINE BERNATCHEZ PIERRE JUTRAS JACQUES DE MONTJOYE CLAUDE JUTRA  
AND THE SPECIAL PARTICIPATION OF EDGAR MORIN ALANIS OBOMSAVIN FRANZIS VOLTAIRE NARRATION AND OBSERVATION NADINE JEAN SCHELBY JEAN BAPTISTE GABRIANNA JEAN LOUIS  
CAST ABLA OSMAN ISOLY KATSHINGU DANIELLE GUMET RESEARCH AND SCRIPT NADINE VALCIN DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY PHILIPPE LOULETTE  
EDITOR KATHARINE ASALS COMPOSER JACQUES KUBA SECURIN SOUND DESIGNER OLIVIER LEDER SOUND DESIGNER LUC RAYMOND SOUND MIXER CHRIS LEON EXECUTIVE TONY MANDLIKAKIS  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS YVES BISSILLON NADINE VALCIN PRODUCERS ANJA JAMILA JOSIANE BLANC DIRECTOR NADINE VALCIN

*Simply*

# JOHANNNE

A FILM BY NADINE VALCIN



IN THEATRES OCTOBER 25

WITH THE FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION OF



TELEFILM CANADA FONDS TALENTS



Canada

IN COLLABORATION WITH







A contemporary tribute to trailblazer Johanne Harrelle: artist, actress and one of North America's first Black models.

## SHORT SYNOPSIS

A talented artist, actress, and one of North America's first Black models, Johanne Harrelle lived a life as bold and complex as she was. *Simply Johanne* is a contemporary tribute to a woman who relentlessly defied the expectations of her time.

## LONG SYNOPSIS

Abandoned on the doorstep of a Montreal orphanage, Johanne Harrelle eventually rose to prominence as a gifted artist, actress, and one of North America's first Black models. *Simply Johanne* deftly explores her complex and audacious life through archival footage, interviews with loved ones and performances of her writings by three contemporary actresses. The film chronicles the journey of a charismatic and passionate woman who defied the expectations of her time.

## TRAILER







# TEAM

**Directed by**

Nadine Valcin

**Screenplay**

Nadine Valcin

**Production**

Ania Jamila, Josiane Blanc

**Executive Production**

Yves Bisaillon

**Cinematography**

Philippe Lavalette

**Production Design**

Alex Guèvremont

**Editing**

Katharine Asals

**Music**

Jacques Kuba Séguin

**Sound Recording**

Olivier Léger

**Sound Mix**

Chris Leon

**Sound Design**

Luc Raymond

**Colour Grading**

Tony Manolikakis

**Narration and discussion**

Nadine Jean, Schelby Jean-Baptiste,  
Garihanna Jean-Louis

**Cast**

Abla Osman, Isoloy Katshingu, Danielle  
Ouimet

**Featuring**

Johanne Harrelle, Louise Harrelle, Marc  
Harrelle, Hamani Harrell, Alain  
Cadieux, Pauline Bernatchez, Pierre  
Jutras, Jacques de Montjoye, Claude  
Jutra

**With the special participation of**

Edgar Morin, Alanis Obomsawin, Frantz  
Voltaire

**Distribution**

Les Films du 3 Mars



# DIRECTOR'S NOTES

My first encounter with the feature film *Take It All* (original title: *À tout prendre*) was many years ago, but as a woman of Haitian descent who grew up in Montreal, it left an indelible mark on me. Until then, I had never seen a woman of African descent in a lead role in Quebec cinema. Johanne Harrelle's presence in the film is both rare and remarkable.

I had the chance to revisit the film as part of an artist residency where I explored representations of Black populations in Canada's national audiovisual archives. This research led me to delve deeper into Johanne Harrelle's life and career. What I found was a story both spectacular and tragic, yet largely unknown to mainstream audiences.

Despite the accusations levelled against director Claude Jutra, *Take It All* remains a groundbreaking work, depicting the filmmaker's love affair with Harrelle during the Quiet Revolution and Quebec's transition to modernity. For the first time in North American cinema, an interracial couple is shown sharing a bed on screen.

Johanne Harrelle's journey was shaped by significant challenges: her mother's abandonment, a childhood in an orphanage, and the barriers brought about by racism. Yet, she forged a path uniquely her own, becoming one of North America's first models of African descent. Her achievements weren't driven by activism, but by a profound desire to live fully and freely, embodying humanistic and feminist values. As her second husband Edgar Morin aptly wrote in his *California Journal*: "Johanne is the comet of love carrying us all on its tail. She is a master communicator, drawn to each person, wanting to get to know them, open them up, and dive into them."

The documentary draws a vital link between past and present, shedding light on this multifaceted trailblazer. It's a true pleasure to witness three Quebec women of Haitian descent - Schelby Jean-Baptiste, Nadine Jean and Garihanna Jean-Louis - lend their voices to Johanne Harrelle's autobiographical writings. They explore her legacy and share their personal experiences. Model Abla Osman brings Johanne to life in poetic re-enactments. Such a gathering of women of African descent unfortunately remains all too rare. They acknowledge Johanne's legacy and its impact in a spirited tribute.

**NADINE VALCIN, DIRECTOR**



# BIOGRAPHY



Nadine Valcin is an award-winning bilingual filmmaker and media artist whose practice spans documentary, experimental and narrative film as well as installation and virtual reality. Her work explores questions of memory, identity and language. She has directed four documentary projects for the National Film Board of Canada, including the critically-acclaimed *Black, Bold and Beautiful* and *A School without Borders*.

Nadine has been awarded numerous grants and prizes including two prestigious Chalmers Arts Fellowships and a Drama Prize from the National Screen Institute for the short film *In Between*. She holds a professional degree in architecture from McGill University and recently completed an MFA in Digital Futures at OCAD University and an artist's residency at Library and Archives Canada through Archive/CounterArchive. She is a professor in the Bachelor of Film and Television program at Sheridan College.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*OUR HOME AND HAUNTED LAND*, Virtual reality, 2021  
*ORIGINES*, 4 min, Video installation, 2021  
*ÉMERGENCE*, 6 min, Video installation, 2017  
*HEARTBREAK*, 1 min, Experimental, 2016  
*WHITEWASH*, 6 min, Experimental, 2016  
*RIPPLES*, 8 min, Fiction, 2016  
*IN BETWEEN*, 8 min, Fiction, 2009

*FIRE AND FURY*, 14 min, Fiction, 2007  
*DERRIÈRE L'IMAGE*, 8 min, Documentary, 2007  
*STILL WAITING FOR JUSTICE*, 17 min, Documentary, 2006  
*A SCHOOL WITHOUT BORDERS*, 50 min, Documentary, 2005  
*SORTIE DE SECOURS*, 5 min, Short film series, 2002  
*BLACK, BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL*, 43 min, Documentary, 1999



# CONTACTS

## Distribution

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