

gebrueder beetz filmproduktion presents

# HOTEL SAHARA

a film by Bettina Haasen

CPH:DOX COPENHAGEN  
DOK LEIPZIG  
IDFF JIHlava  
PLANETE DOC REVIEW WARSAW  
VISIONS DU REEL NYON

DOC  
ALLIANCE

German  
Competition  
Documentary Film

DOX  
LEIPZIG



WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY **BETTINA HAASEN** DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY **JACKO VAN'T HOF** SOUND **PASCAL CAPITOLIN** EDITING **KRISTINE LANGNER**  
MUSIC **KARSTEN HÖFER** AND **THE DURGAS** PRODUCER **EVA RINK, MARIA WISCHNEWSKI** PRODUCTION ASSISTANT **SUSANNE RADELHOF**  
PRODUCTION ACCOUNTANT **DANIELA SCHÖNE** PRODUCTION MANAGER **REINHARDT BEETZ** TECHNICAL SUPERVISOR **PHILIPP WEIGOLD**  
LINE PRODUCER MAURITANIA **ABOURAHMANE ABOU SALEM** „La maison des cinéastes“ SOUND MIX **JÖRG HÖHNE** COLOR CORRECTION **THOMAS HARBERS**  
COORDINATION POST PRODUCTION **HANNES STROMBERG** TITLE WORKS **NICOLE WINTERBAUER** PRODUCED BY **CHRISTIAN BEETZ**  
COMMISSIONING EDITOR ZDF/ARTE **MARTIN PIEPER** WORLD SALES **DECKERT DISTRIBUTION**  
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gebrueder beetz  
FILMPRODUKTION



arte

MEDIA



DEUTSCHER  
FILMFÖRDERFONDS



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Berlin-Brandenburg GmbH

Scam\*

ARRI®



[www.hotelsahara.tv](http://www.hotelsahara.tv)



# Hotel Sahara

A documentary by **Bettina Haasen**  
52 & 85 min

A dead-straight, endless road leading to nowhere. And at the end of the road: Nouadhibou, a town in the West African country Mauritania, bordered by the ocean on one side and the Sahara Desert on the other. A bleak and inhospitable departure point for the tens of thousands of people that pour in from neighboring countries, all with only one dream in mind: Europe.

Hotel Sahara is a film journey to the last invisible border separating the West-African coast and Europe. The bleak city on the Atlantic Coast is a metaphor, a point of arrival and of departure, a gathering place of broken dreams – a place of waiting for that better life on the far side of the Atlantic. It is above all a no-man's land, a place of endless waiting and endless hoping.

The film reveals how difficult it is to differentiate between „true“ and „false“ refugees. Is one „real“ only when threatened life and limb? What if one simply desires to escape a deadening lack of perspective? With an observant and cautious eye, Hotel Sahara documents how closely the dream of a better life is linked to sudden stagnancy, and how much patience is required to wait for years to finally, perhaps, arrive somewhere.

Author and Director **Bettina Haasen**  
Camera **Jacko van 't Hof**  
Editor **Kristine Langner**  
Music **Karsten Höfer**  
Sound **Pascal Capitolin**

Line Producer **Maria Wischnewski**

Executive Producer **Christian Beetz**  
on behalf of **ZDF/arte, YLE**

developed with the support of **UNESCO & MEDIA Development**  
funded by **FFA – Filmförderanstalt, DFFF, Medienboard Berlin-**

**Brandenburg** and **MEDIA Programme**

World Sales **Deckert Distribution**

Distribution **GM films**

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# HOTEL SAHARA

## TECHNICAL DATA

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Documentary, Germany 2008, 85 Min, OmU (in English, French, German)

## FESTIVALS

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DOK Leipzig	Documentary Film Festival Leipzig, Germany // German competition 2008
Vision du Réel	Festival International de Cinéma Nyon, Switzerland // International competition „Regards Neufs“ 2009
Planete Doc Review	Festival Warsaw, Poland 2009
FESPACO	Festival Panafricain du Cinéma et de la Télévision, Festival of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso 2009
achtung berlin	new berlin film award, Germany 2009 // competition
IFFF	International Women's Film Festival Dortmund // Cologne, Germany 2009
Ecrans Noirs	Film Festival Yaoundé, Cameroon 2009
Huesca	International Film Festival Huesca, Spain 2009 // European Documentary Contest
IDFF	Jihlava International Documentary Film Festival // Jihlava, Czech Republic 2009
CPH_DOX	International Documentary Film Festival // Copenhagen, Denmark 2009

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Persönlich haftende Gesellschafterin: Gebrüder Beetz Media GmbH

Sitz der Gesellschaft: Berlin · Amtsgericht Charlottenburg · HRB 112420 B

Geschäftsführer: Reinhardt Beetz · Christian Beetz

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

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The freedom and latitude with which we manoeuvre has long since ceased to be a given for everyone. For a number of years now I have concerned myself with the microcosm of those in perpetual waiting, of those continually living "ready to go" but trapped in inadvertent immobility.

Nouadhibou, in Mauritania - the last stop before crossing the Atlantic. It is a vacuum, this enormous departure area harbouring an innumerable mass of people from Ghana, Cameroon, Togo, Nigeria and diverse other African countries. Only a small fraction of the African refugees that depart from here ever manage to reach the other side, manage to survive the ocean distance of roughly 1,000 kilometres. Their irresistible urge to "get away" and their unquestioned assumption that everything is better in Europe is what initially moved me, but soon that alone was not enough.

I sought an answer behind the obvious explanation. My goal was to go beyond the statistics, to look beyond the anonymous faces and stereotypical images of stranded boats and to gain a better understanding of what it means to live stranded and waiting, far removed from both security and family ties. Already departed, but not yet arrived. A life on standby

My aspiration was to make this continual condition of "inbetweenness" tangible through the documentation of image and sound; to make the very atmosphere of the condition perceptible and, in turn, achieve a greater proximity to the diverse facets of being in perpetual transit.

Each and all of us are familiar with the desire to reinvent oneself, to move forward in life, to remain in motion, to realize ones dreams. During my many years of research at differing thoroughfares and crossing points, I have witnessed numerous biographies and fates that have confronted me with my own taken-for-granted freedom. The people that I have met have a special "invulnerability": they have nothing left to lose.

Hotel Sahara, for me, is a location between the desert and Atlantic Ocean that houses provisional lives; dissipated existences that now possess only one thing: their dreams.

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## BETTINA HAASEN

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Bettina Haasen (\*1969) studied African Languages and Political Sciences in Hamburg and in Paris. In 1997, during her work as a producer for the documentary production company EGOLI Films in Berlin, she started working on her own film projects. In 2001 she decided to live and work in Niger, Africa. In 2004 she returned to Germany and realized her film "A love apart" - the perspective of a thirteen year old Tuareg girl in her cultural context while she is getting married. Other documentaries are: "Shadows of the Desert" (43' and 52'); "Irene Dische - My Life" (43'). HOTEL SAHARA is her first feature-length documentary film. She currently lives as a freelance author and director in Berlin and works on her first feature film screenplay.

1999/2000 „Between 2 Worlds“ (FIPRESCI Award for best debutant film at IDFA 1999)  
2004/2005 „A love apart“(IDFA, Lussas, Thessaloniki, Berlin)  
2006 „Shadows of the desert“  
2007 „Irene Dische – Mein Leben“  
2008 direction and co-direction within the film project „Berlin 24h“ (Volker Heise)  
2008 „Hotel Sahara“

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# GEBRÜEDER BEETZ FILMPRODUKTION

## CREDITS

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written and directed by .....	BETTINA HAASEN
director of photography.....	JACKO VAN'T HOF
editing .....	KRISTINE LANGNER
sound .....	PASCAL CAPITOLIN
music .....	KARSTEN HOEFER & THE DURGAS
producer .....	EVA RINK & MARIA WISCHNEWSKI
sound mix .....	JOERG HOEHNE
colour correction .....	THOMAS HARBERS
coordination post production .....	HANNES STROMBERG
title works .....	NICOLE WINTERBAUER
subtitling .....	BABELFISH
credit song performed by .....	THE DURGAS
produced by .....	CHRISTIAN BEETZ
production assistants .....	DANIELA SCHOENE, SUSANNE RADELHOF
production manager .....	REINHARDT BEETZ
technical supervisor .....	PHILIPP WEIGOLD
commissioning editor .....	MARTIN PIEPER, ZDF/arte
world sales .....	DECKERT DISTRIBUTION
editing consultant.....	CHRISTIAN BEETZ
sound design .....	PASCAL CAPITOLIN, KARSTEN HOEFER
production assistant Mauritania .....	BAERBEL MAUCH
line producer Mauritania .....	ABDOURAHMAN SALEM ABOU („La maison des cinéastes“)

### **funded by:**

MEDIA PROGRAMME  
FFA – FILMFOERDERUNGSANSTALT  
DFFF – GERMAN FEDERAL FILMFUND  
MEDIENBOARD BERLIN-BRANDENBURG

### **with the support of:**

MEDIA DEVELOPMENT  
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# G E B R U E D E R   B E E T Z   F I L M P R O D U K T I O N

## CINEMA RELEASE

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August 3rd: Berlin, Central  
August 4th: Dresden, Kino im Dach  
August 5th: Münster, Cinema  
August 6th: Munich, Monopol  
August 7th: Frankfurt, Mal Sehn Kino  
August 8th: Hannover, Kino im Künstlerhaus  
August 8th: Hamburg, 3001 Kino

### **Further dates from August, 6th:**

Berlin, Moviemento  
Berlin, Central  
Berlin, Lichtblick  
Frankfurt, Mal Sehn Kino  
Hamburg, 3001 Kino  
Dresden, Kino im Dach  
Münster, Cinema  
Hannover, Kino im Künstlerhaus  
Munich, Monopol  
Freiburg, Friedrichsbau  
Cologne, Filmpalette

## Homepage

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