

THE BALLAD OF SUZANNE CÉSAIRE

LOOKBOOK




ABOUT THE FILM

Founded by a group of students, Négritude would give Black people throughout the world the courage to resist and mount independence movements in their home countries.


Aimé and Suzanne Césaire were at the center of this movement, redefining how Black people around the world regarded themselves.



Aimé would become the most prominent Black man in French politics while Suzanne would become an important surrealist thinker, influencing the likes of writer André Breton.



For 50 years Suzanne's contributions to some of the most influential works of art and political movements in the world would be overshadowed by Aimé. Most of her life has remained shrouded in mystery until now.

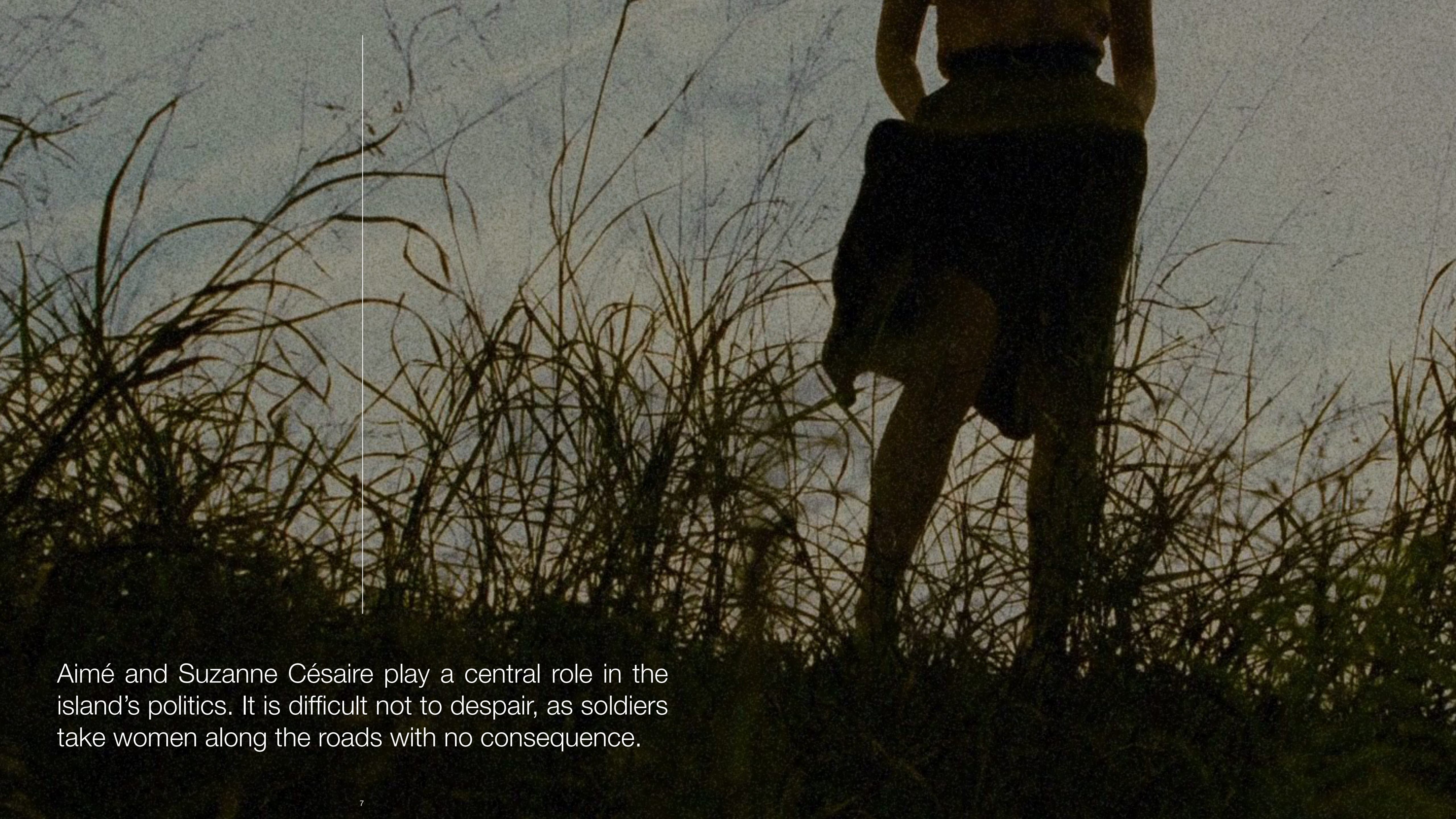
A photograph of a group of women, likely from a Caribbean festival, wearing teal dresses and large, wide-brimmed hats. The women are smiling and looking towards the camera. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Drawing inspiration from Caribbean aesthetics and surrealist artworks, “The Ballad of Suzanne Césaire” will bring the magic of cinema to an intersection of culture never seen before on the silver screen.

SYNOPSIS

A large, billowing fire and smoke plume rises from a burning building at night. The fire is intense, with bright orange and yellow flames. The smoke is thick and dark, rising high into the dark blue night sky. The building is a simple structure with a gabled roof, and its interior lights are visible through the flames. The scene is set in a dark, open area, possibly a field or a beach, with some distant hills visible in the background. A thin white vertical line runs down the right side of the image, separating the title from the synopsis text.

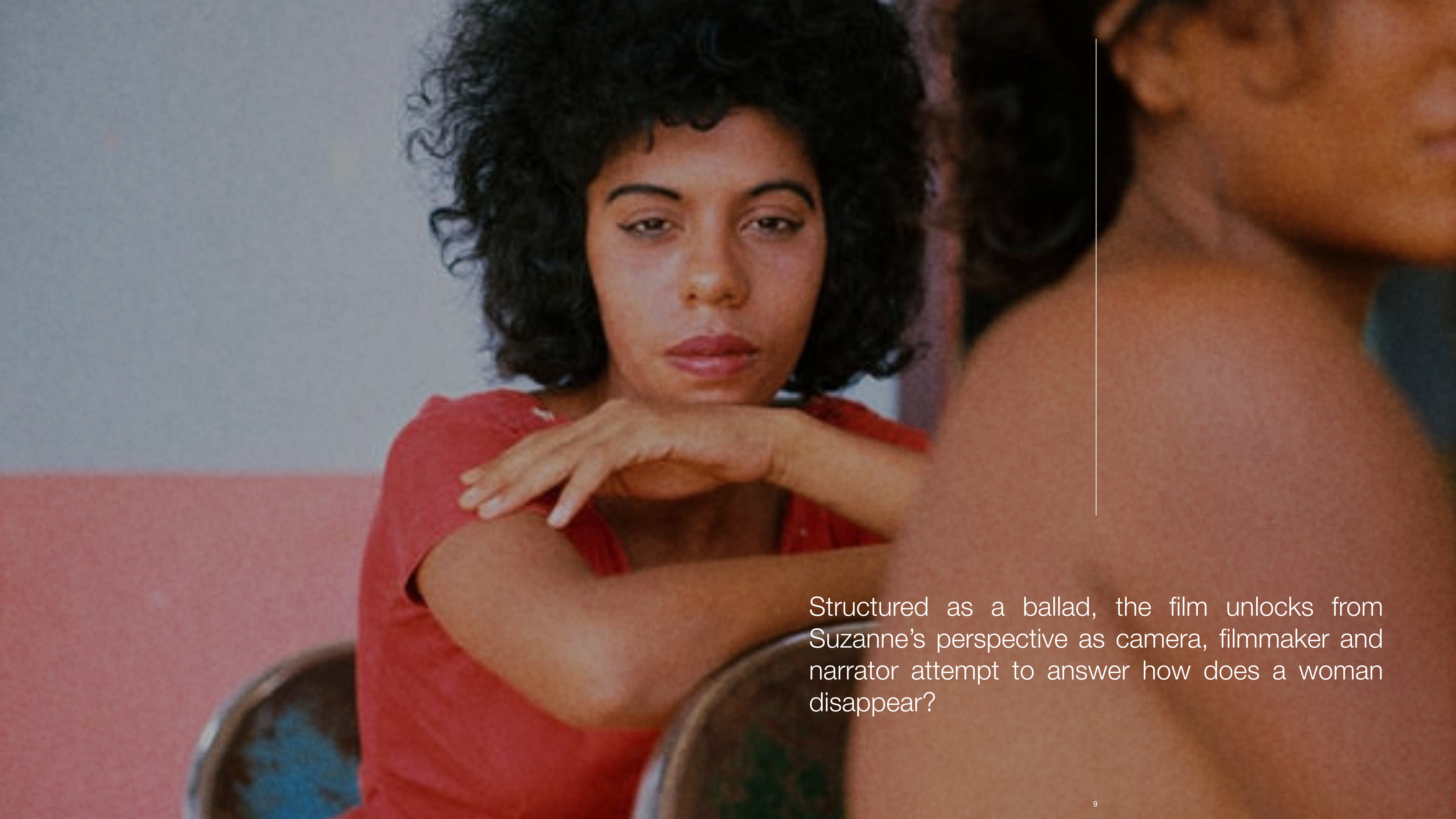
The island of Martinique as a French territory is occupied by a racist, Nazi-aligned Vichy military.



Aimé and Suzanne Césaire play a central role in the island's politics. It is difficult not to despair, as soldiers take women along the roads with no consequence.



When André Breton and the surrealists arrive as refugees to the island and seek out the Césaires, Breton, Aimé and Suzanne begin a mutual and triangular infatuation that blazes through them all, jolting Aimé and Suzanne from their depression.



Structured as a ballad, the film unlocks from Suzanne's perspective as camera, filmmaker and narrator attempt to answer how does a woman disappear?



BIOS

ZITA HANROT
AS SUZANNE CÉSAIRE

Zita Hanrot is a French and Jamaican actress. She won the César Award for Most Promising Actress in 2016 for her role in the film Fatima. She is a graduate of the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique in Paris.



BIOS

MOTELL GYN FOSTER AS AIMÉ CÉSAIRE

Motell Gyn Foster is known for his work in Marriage Story, Random Acts of Flyness, and The God Committee. He performed as Othello in The Public Theater's Shakespeare in the Park production.





BIOS

MADELEINE HUNT-EHRLICH

DIRECTOR

Madeleine Hunt-Ehrlich's work has screened all over the world, including: the Venice Biennale, the Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New Orleans Film Festival, Doclisboa, True/False Film Festival and BlackStar Film Festival. She was named on Filmmaker Magazine's 2020 list of "25 New Faces of Independent Cinema." She is the recipient of a 2020 Jerome Hill Artist Fellow-ship and a 2019 Rema Hort Mann Award, a 2019 UNDO/Ford Foundation fellowship, a 2015 TFI Future Filmmaker Award and a 2014 Princess Grace Award in film. Her first feature film "The Ballad of Suzanne Cesaire" has received support from San Francisco Film Society's Rainin Grant for the screenwriting phase, and was a 2020 finalist at Biennale College Cinema, the Venice Film Festival's prestigious film lab.

BIOS

SOPHIE LUO PRODUCER

Sophie Luo is a New York-based producer and filmmaker. Her work includes several short films and the award-winning documentary 95 AND 6 TO GO (dir. Kimi Takesue), which screened at over twenty-five international festivals including CPH:DOX, Dok Leipzig, DOC NYC, and Doclisboa. She has also produced several commercial campaigns, including recent work for TED, Nike, Facebook, and more. In 2020, she was selected as part of the inaugural roster for Women In Film's Emerging Producers Program.





BIOS

MIKE S. RYAN

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

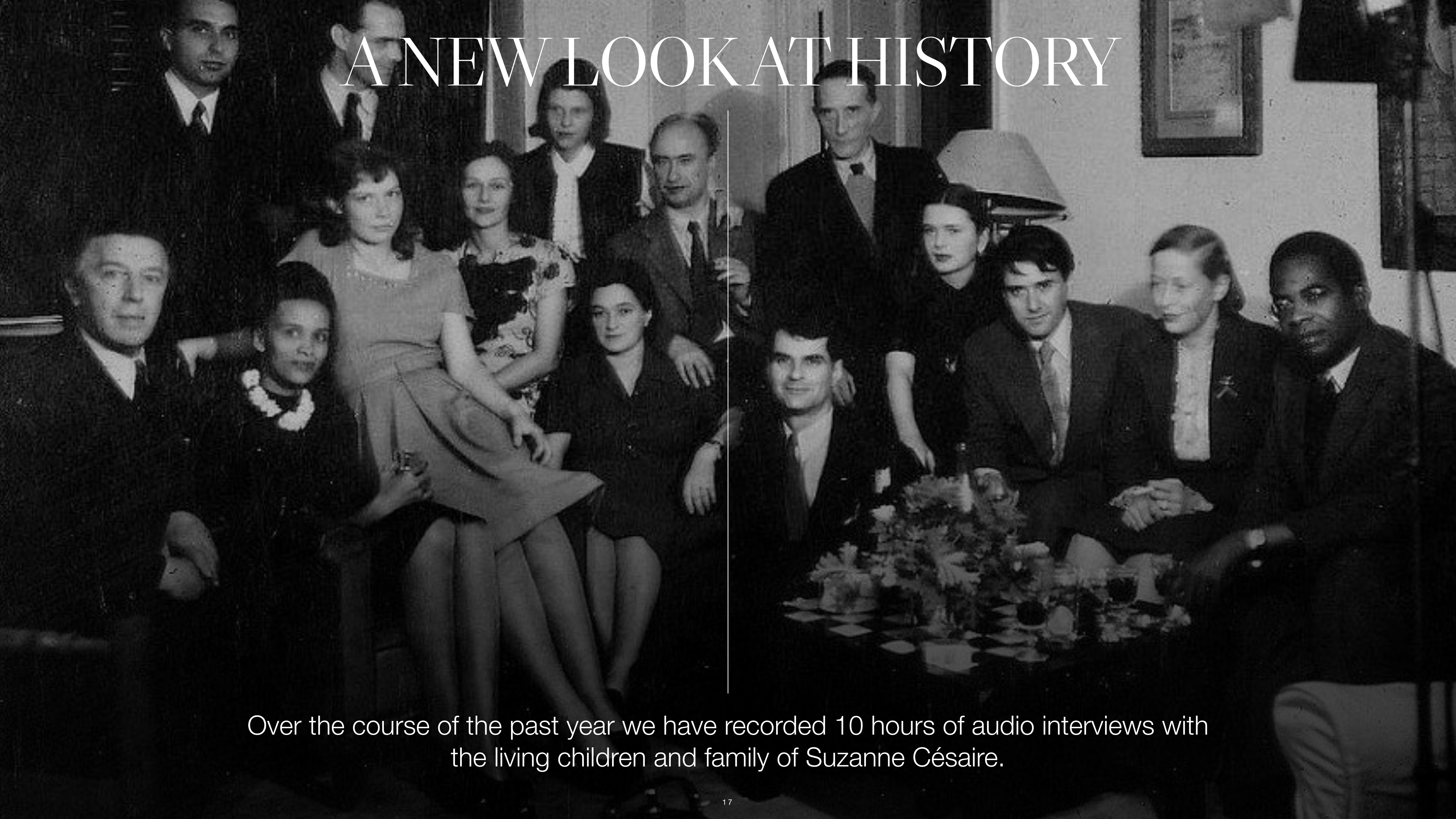
Mike S. Ryan is an Independent Spirit Awards “Producer of the Year” nominee and one of Variety’s 2007 “10 Producers to Watch.” He has line produced, executive produced, and produced many films that have garnered accolades from the Academy Awards, Gotham Awards and many more including Todd Solondz’s *Palindromes* and *Life During Wartime*, Bela Tarr’s *Turin Horse*, Phil Morrison’s *Junebug*, Kelly Reichardt’s *Old Joy* and *Meek’s Cutoff*. “Junebug,” starring Amy Adams, made its international premiere at Sundance in 2005 and went on to be one of the lowest-budgeted feature films ever nominated for an Oscar (Best Supporting Actress, 2005). Mike is a New York City native and a graduate of New York University’s Tisch Graduate School of Film and Television.

LOCATION

Our film will be shot on the Colonel Robert H. Montgomery Estate in Coconut Grove, Miami, now the privately kept Montgomery Botanical Center. At Montgomery on 120 gated acres of rolling fields, 100s of species of palm trees are grown and studied. The estate also features the original house and guest houses of the Montgomery family built in the 1920s.



A NEW LOOK AT HISTORY



Over the course of the past year we have recorded 10 hours of audio interviews with the living children and family of Suzanne Césaire.

A NEW LOOK AT HISTORY

Bringing to light the under told story of the woman credited by the Metropolitan Museum of Art as being the most important under-sung voice of Surrealism.

NOTABLE PROJECT SUPPORT

—
PRESS

FILMMAKER MAGAZINE
25 New Faces of Independent
Film 2020

ART IN AMERICA MAGAZINE

ACCOMPLISHMENTS
SF FILM RAININ GRANT
VENICE BIENNALE CINEMA COLLEGE
JEROME HILL GRANT
NYSCA
2022 CREATIVE CAPITAL AWARD





COPYRIGHT MADAME NÉGRITUDE, LLC

MADELEINE HUNT-EHRLICH
E: MADELEINE.HUNT.EHRLICH@GMAIL.COM

SOPHIE LUO
E: SOPH016@GMAIL.COM