

A silhouette of a soldier in a trench coat and helmet, holding a rifle, standing on a rocky outcrop. The background is a dark, moody landscape with a teal-to-purple gradient.

MUDJER DI INDEPENDENSIA

written and directed by
francisca da silveira



mudjer di independensia

When American-raised Lidia returns to her native Cape Verde to settle her estranged late mother's affairs, she discovers hidden belongings that make her question just who her mother was and what role she may have played during the country's independence movement decades earlier.



CONTEXT

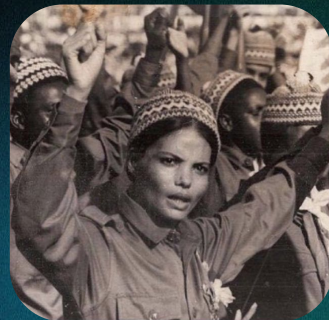


AMÍLCAR CABRAL is the **father** of Cape Verdean independence. His iconic pensive face and sùmbia, a traditional skullcap, are recognized all over the world, as well as his leadership of socialist and nationalist movements in Africa. But...

...THIS IS NOT HIS STORY.

This is a story honoring the **women** who fought alongside Amílcar Cabral, women who put their lives on the line both on the battlefield and behind the scenes, treating the wounded, covertly orchestrating secret meetings and passing information across borders.

This is also a story about a daughter's **homecoming**, the **complexity of grieving**, and **forgiveness**, even when it feels too late.



PRODUCTION PLAN

PRE PRODUCTION



November -
February 2026

PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY



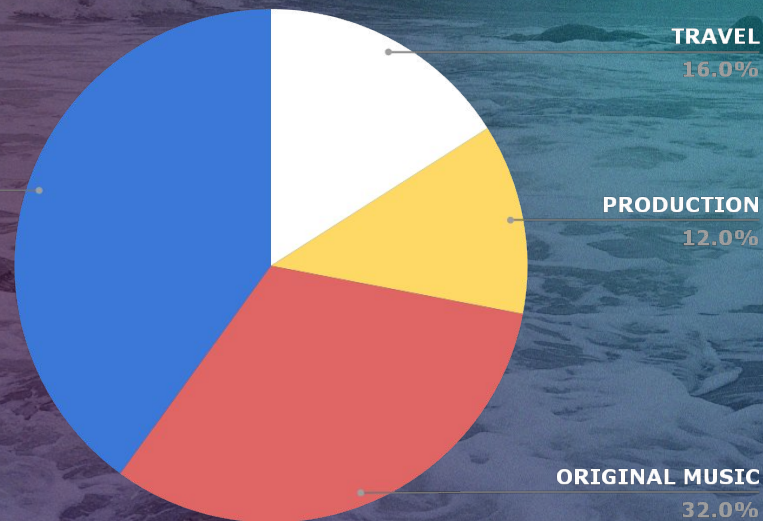
February 2026

POST PRODUCTION



March - April
2026

BUDGET BREAKDOWN



Total Budget - \$90,950

Stretch Goals - raising another \$15k will allow us to shoot a high quality music video in Cabo Verde for the original song

Visuals

LOCATION



Salinas Beach,
where Lidia's dream
takes place, a real place
near the cemetery her
mother is buried in



Marsala Cemetery,
where Dona Lena is buried



City of Sao Filipe,
capital city of the island, where
Lidia and Paula search for Dona
Lena's longtime friend, Terezinha

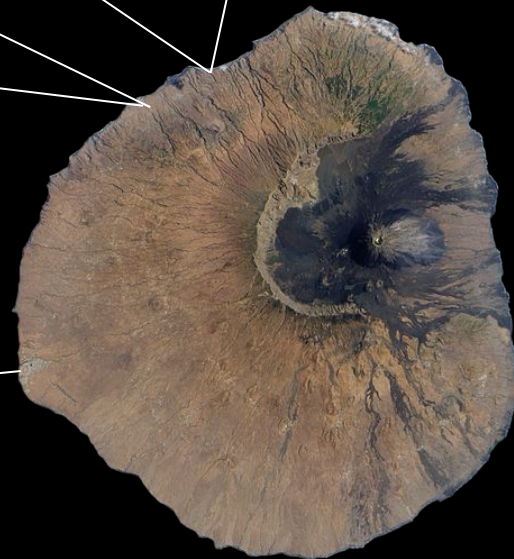


Village of Campanas Baixo,
where Paula still lives



Dona Lena's House, which
Lidia has inherited

FOGO ISLAND, CABO VERDE



CHARACTERS



LIDIA

AGE: 40s

American raised, Cape Verdean born, fighting feelings of abandonment and displacement

Focused, ready to get a job done

Hard but hates being perceived as hard. Yearning for answers.



PAULA

AGE: Early 20s

Dona Lena's longtime housekeeper

Playful, a feeler, helpful

More intuitive than you'd think



TEREZINHA

AGE: 70s

Dona Lena's longtime friend and confidant

Former freedom fighter

A keeper of secrets, and a teller of truths

CHARACTERS

MILITIA WOMAN



A spirit, a memory, a figment
of Lidia's imagination

AESTHETICS & SOUND

BATUKU

Layering in the rhythmic pounding beat of batuku, traditional forbidden dance of Cape Verde

Merging the sound of drumming with the disarming of a rifle

Emphasis on natural sounds - animals, cars, street people

Vacuum of an empty home

Silence of death

Awkwardness of a newfound relationship



COLOR PALETTE

383830

Black olive

CCD1D7

French gray

3D67A7

True blue

94A7A2

Ash gray

ORIGINAL MUSIC



In partnership with Anika Noni Rose, we will collaborate with a popular Cabo Verdean female music artist to create an original song to underscore the short film

The track will be a combination of English & Kriolu, about the themes that Mudjer di Independensia highlights - womanhood, telling untold stories, embracing the significance of women's role in history

Not only will the song pull from the Batuku tradition, it will actively include batukadeira's in the writing and creative process, emphasizing a respect for authenticity

While in Cabo Verde, if our stretch goals are met, we will shoot a music video that will be released in tandem with the short film - opportunities to distribute across music platforms

A GLOBAL FOCUS

Target premiere festivals around the world:

Americas - Sundance, New York City Tribeca, SXSW, Palm Springs International

Eurasia - Cannes, Venice, Berlin, Edinburgh, Tropfest, Sarajevo

CENTERING DIASPORA

Emphasis on the often overlooked African continent film festival market. Many festivals have requirements that we are uniquely qualified for as a group of African Diaspora filmmakers telling an African story, shot entirely on African soil. Through these submissions, we will join and help grow a network of filmmakers across Africa to share resources and foster future collaboration.

Cabo Verde - Cabo Verde International, Djarfogo

Egypt - Cairo International

Ghana - Black Star International

Nigeria - Africa International, Eko International

Senegal - Festival Films Femmes Afrique

South Africa - Durban International, Joburg

Tanzania - Zanzibar International

Cultural and Educational Awareness

Beyond showing the film around the world, intentional focus on partnering with local arts organizations on all 10 Cabo Verdean Islands for free screenings and talkbacks

Develop a relationship with the Cabo Verde Ministry of Culture & Creative Industries for assistance in promoting and distributing the film

Partner with educational institutions and organizations that celebrate and promote Cabo Verdean history and culture like Bridgewater State University Pedro Pires institute of Cape Verdean Studies, The Cape Verdean Association of Boston, the Cape Verdean Museum, Boston University, etc.

Mentorship and Professional Development

Inspire filmmakers and continue the growing effort to bring legitimate filmmaking to Cabo Verde and Fogo. We will be one of the few projects who intend to use majority local crew and cast.

Host workshops in Cabo Verde exploring the technical side of filmmaking (grips, electrical) in order to help build a knowledgeable crew base at the ground level so Cabo Verde can continue to grow into destination for filmmakers

Music and Business Distribution

Potential for showing film on airlines, specifically those traveling to Cabo Verde (SATA International, TAP Air Portugal)

Release of original song across music platforms (Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube) and music video promotion across social media platforms (TikTok, Instagram)



CREATIVE TEAM



FRANCISCA DA SILVEIRA, Writer & Director

francisca da silveira is a Cape Verde born, Boston raised playwright and tv writer. She was recently named a 2025 Women to Watch by the Broadway Women's Fund. Her produced plays include: CAN I TOUCH IT?, Rolling World Premiere at Company One Theatre (Boston), Rogue Machine Theatre (Los Angeles), and Cleveland Public Theatre (Cleveland); PAY NO WORSHIP, a 2023 Finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and World Premiere at InterAct Theatre Company (Philadelphia) in April 2023; NOT- FOR-PROFIT (OR THE EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PLAY), World Premiere at Cleveland Public Theatre in October 2024; and MINOR :ITY, World Premiere at WP Theatre, co- produced by Colt Coeur (NYC) in April 2025.

da silveira was a 2020-2021 Playwrights Realm Writing Fellow, a member of The Public Theater's 2020-2023 Emerging Writers Group, a 2022-2023 Jerome Fellow with the Playwrights' Center, a member of The Apollo Theater's 2023 New Works Initiative Cohort, and a 2023 NYSCA commission recipient with The New Group (NYC). She has developed work through La Jolla Playhouse, the Banff Centre, MacDowell, the Venturous Theater Fund, and the National New Play Network. She is currently the 2024-2025 Tow Playwright-in-Residence with WP Theatre (NYC). In TV land, da silveira was in the writers' room for HBO's Season 3 of INDUSTRY and in development with HBO. She holds a BFA in Dramatic Writing from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and an MSc in Playwriting from the University of Edinburgh.
IG: franciscads922



ANIKA NONI ROSE, Lead Actress & Executive Producer

Tony Award winner Anika Noni Rose is known around the world for having voiced 'Princess Tiana' in Disney's *The Princess and The Frog*, featuring the first African American Disney 'Princess.' The film received three Oscar nominations and Anika became the youngest inductee to ever be honored as a Disney Legend. She is the author of the children's book "Princess Tiana's Perfect Plan," and is currently voicing the animated series that will premiere on Disney+ in 2025. Anika also stars as Afia in the Disney movie, *Mufasa: The Lion King*.

She was last seen on the small screen in *Let The Right One In* based on the internationally best selling novel of the same name. She drew notice for her acclaimed performance as Regina in Netflix's most-watched limited series to date, *Maid*, opposite Margaret Qualley and Nick Robinson, for which she was nominated for "Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Television Movie, Limited-Series or Dramatic Special" at the 2022 NAACP Image Awards.

Rose appeared in *Jingle Jangle: A Christmas Journey* (Netflix), Lena Waithe's horror anthology *Them* (Amazon) and *Little Fires Everywhere* (Hulu) with Reese Witherspoon and Kerry Washington. Additionally, Anika led the cast of BET's series *The Quad* as Eva Fletcher for two seasons and in 2017, she starred in the film *Everything, Everything* based off the popular young adult novel of the same name by Nicola Yoon.

Continuing to take on iconic characters, Anika starred in the History Channel's adaption of *Roots* as Kizzy (NAACP Image Award nomination). On the big screen, Anika starred as 'Lorell Robinson' in *Dreamgirls* (AFI Ensemble Award, SAG Award nomination, Grammy Award nomination).

Additional television and film credits include: *Power*, *The Good Wife*, *The Simpsons*, and *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency*, *For Colored Girls*; *Half of A Yellow Sun* and *Assassination Nation*.

Anika most recently starred in the critically acclaimed revival of *Uncle Vanya*, on Broadway alongside Steve Carell. She won the Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in a Musical for her role in *Caroline, or Change* (Lucille Lortel Award, Theatre World Award, Obie Award, Clarence Derwent Award, Drama Desk nomination). Additional Broadway credits: *A Raisin in the Sun* (Tony Award nomination and Outer Critics Circle nomination), *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*, *Footloose*. Additional stage credits include *Carmen Jones* for which she won a Lucille Lortel Award, an AUDELCO award and received Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle nominations; the New York Philharmonic's production of *Company* and Broadway's *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* directed by Debbie Allen.

A nine-time NAACP Image Award nominee, Rose has voiced many audiobooks, and has performed sold out concerts all over the world, including singing at Carnegie Hall and the Vatican.

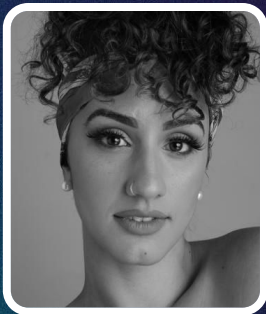
CREATIVE TEAM



EMANUEL FIDALGO, Executive Producer

Ema's mom and dad met in Boston after emigrating to the US from Angola and Cabo Verde, respectively. He graduated from the University of Miami in 2009 with a degree in advertising but an itch for film. A year later he was awarded \$15k from the Boston based *Words Matter Now* competition to produce his short film. Ok so maybe there's something here, he thought, and moved to LA where he spent the last decade post producing scripted TV shows, including Emmy Award winning *Curb Your Enthusiasm* and *DMZ* for HBO along with *American Born Chinese*, *Pose*, *The 100*, *The New Edition Story* and others.

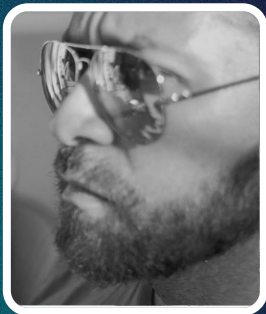
IG: Efidalgo12



JOHANNA FACADA, PRODUCER/1ST AD

Johanna is a Cape Verdean Dorchester native who is working as an AD in both New York City and Los Angeles. She has worked on commercials for major brands such as Mac Cosmetics, Logitech, Pepsi, Nike, and Tommie Hilfigher to name a few. With a background in dance and movement direction, she also has extensive experience in the music video space both in front and behind camera. She has worked with artists such as Rita Ora, Jennifer Lopez, J Rey, Jacob Collier, Ken-Y, J Cole and more.

IG: johannafacada



PETER DA SILVA, Director of Photography

Peter Da Silva is a Cinematographer based in Los Angeles. He has worked over twenty years in the Film & Television Industry. Over the years he has acquired a unique skill set which allows him to give vital insight and expertise to help with the filmmaking process. Several productions have been nominated for Grammy's, MTV VMA's, Billboard Top 5 Music Videos, Trojan Film Festival. With an ever evolving film industry, a new generation of creative storytelling is coming from the Cabo Verde Diaspora, Peter hopes to bring his industry know how, to help usher in all the voices emerging from this creative community.

IG: peterdasilva_dp

OBRIGADO
THANK YOU

