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R E A S S E M B L A G E

Directed, photographed, edited,
recorded, written, narrated by TRINH T. Minh-ha
Produced by Jean-Paul Bourdier & Trinh T. Minh-ha
40 minutes 16mm color film, 1982 (Senegal - USA)
Distributed by Second Decade Films
P.O. Box 1482
New York, N.Y. 10009, USA
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Synopsis:

The film may be compared to an open text intended to yield a plural cinematic reading. Broadly speaking, it sets into motion fragments of life taken among the diverse peoples of Senegal in West Africa. Through its approach in documentation, it constitutes a reflection on the cinematographic language commonly used in documentary films to portray foreign cultures. This language --technics of framing, angles of view, movement of camera, editing sequences (or absence of editing) and subjection of images to an omniscient commentary or narrative--, which has become the norm for a great number of documentaries, more particularly ethno-documentaries, reflects a problem that lies at the very founding of cultural anthropology: the question of objectivity and authenticity, in other words, the appeal of naive scientism. Attempting to break away from such an approach, whose effect is to deepen the cleavage between subject and object and to contribute to the cultural hegemony of the West at work, Reassemblage situates the position of the filmmaker in her/his filming, a ceaseless position of exchange between the filming person and the person filmed, which entails a complicity of interaction between the film and the spectator.