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SFFilmFest 1969

Sunday, November 2

7:00 P.M.

THE MONEY ORDER

(Mandabi)

Senegal

Source: Grove Press, Inc. **Production:** Jean Maumy, Domireve (Dakar). **Direction, Script:** Ousmane Sembene. **Photography:** Paul Soulignac. **Sound:** Henri Moline. **Leading Players:** Mamadou Guye, Ynousse R'Diaye, Issa Niang, Serigne N'Diayes, Sorigno Sow, Moustapha Toure.



Ousmane Sembene's first film to be widely-seen (in Europe) was a featurette entitled **La Noire de . . .**, the story of a black servant-girl who is suddenly brought to Paris from Johannesburg by her white French employers. When this work was shown at the Critic's Week in Cannes in 1966, Sembene was hailed as Africa's most promising new film talent, and, since that time several other young Africans (all from former French territories) have made distinguished films. **Mandabi** is the first African feature film to be shown at this Festival, and, as expected, it opens up an entirely new, exciting experience for American filmgoers. Sembene is deeply aware of the problems in his country and is always in touch with the feelings of his people, their unique cultural manifestations, and, above all, their wit. **Mandabi** is a folk-comedy with satirical overtones, and with all of the rich visions for the spectator to behold (from the swirling, colorful garments of the women, to the look of the streets and houses), there are deep observations of character involved, and one is totally interested in everything. The story concerns Dieng, a middle-aged Moslem, his two wives and their seven children. One day he receives a money order from his nephew who is working in Paris. The sum to be given over to him is twenty-five thousand francs, with specific instructions about its division. However, news of the money order soon spreads throughout the entire neighborhood and finally, Dieng is swamped (no, engulfed) by parasites, scroungers, relations, and worst of all, the bureaucracy of the postoffice. There is great humour, of course, but also a fine narrative feeling and a plea for human compassion. The very unpretentiousness of **Mandabi** fills one with great optimism about the future of African cinema: like Sembene, these artists have assimilated their lessons, perfected the craft of filmmaking, and are now ready to explain and dramatize the ways of their worlds.

Short: **HEY MAMA.** Los Angeles. Vaughn Obern.

18 min