

A film by Catherine Therrien

Directed by  
Catherine Therrien and Othmane Jmad

A part of us

جزء منا

Une part de nous



When love  
transcends boundaries

# TECHNICAL SHEET

جزء منا

A PART OF US

2023

## TECHNICAL DATA

Length : 63 minutes

Colors : Colors

Format: 4:2:2 10-bit C4K

Original languages of the movie: French, Moroccan dialect, Portuguese, English, Amazigh language.

Subtitled versions: French or English.

Movie type: Feature length documentary.

Production country: Morocco

Filming countries: Morocco, France

## CREDITS

Director: Catherine Therrien

Co-director: Othmane Jmad

Director of photography: Othmane Jmad

Sound design: Othmane Jmad

Subtitled: Nada Hamdi

Supervision of subtitles (translation and adaptation): Catherine Therrien

Editing: Othmane Jmad

## PRODUCTION

Producer: Catherine Therrien



Centre National pour la Recherche  
Scientifique et Technique

## FINANCING

CNRST (National Center for  
Scientific and Technical Research)

ITHACA

Interconnecting Histories and Archives for Migrant Agency

Research Project ITHACA

<https://ithacahorizon.eu/>



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# SYNOPSIS

## جزء منا

### A PART OF US

#### **SYNOPSIS (short version) :**

Based on an in-depth ethnographic study conducted among mixed families in Morocco, جزء منا ("A Part of Us") is an honest, visceral and empathetic story that takes us to the heart of the unique experience of mixed families from different backgrounds. We follow them in their daily life, but also in their reflections and questions. This multilingual film dusts off preconceived ideas and addresses the crucial question of living together by showing that love has the ability to transcend boundaries (geographical, ethnic, racial, cultural and religious).

#### **SYNOPSIS (long version) :**

Based on an in-depth ethnographic study of mixed families in Morocco that was funded by the National Center for Scientific and Technical Research (CNRST), جزء منا ("A part of us") takes us to the heart of the daily lives of four Moroccan-foreign families whose children grew up mainly in Morocco.

The documentary opens with the story of a Moroccan-British-French family whose transnational mobility takes us on a journey between Meknès (in Morocco) and Périgueux (in France). The complexity of belonging to different cultures, the way in which life's contexts influence thoughts and positions on religion as well as the feeling of home are some of the themes addressed by this family. Music, which is a real connecting element for this couple and their family, structures the entire plot of the documentary. The food is the second common element which weaves a link between the different families who took part in this documentary.

We then transport ourselves to another context where a completely different story unfolds: that of a Moroccan-Cameroonian family. This takes us on a journey between the cities of Kenitra, Zagora and Tamegroute, in the South of Morocco. Julio and Nora, as well as the latter's extended family, invite us into their daily lives (Christmas celebrations, meals during Ramadan, cooking, caring for children, making pottery, etc.) while taking a little leap into the past to tell us, with lively humor, how they met, the announcement of their marriage, as well as the reactions of the Moroccan family. This family demonstrates a capacity for love and welcome that transcends cultural differences. We will see how Jamal (Muslim name of Julio) integrated into this family.

Moving away from family stories, the rest of the documentary presents an anonymous narrator: a third generation Moroccan-French-Kenyan. In a voice-over lured by magnificent landscapes of Agadir, this child of a mixed couple shares his experience as a “dark skinned” Moroccan within Moroccan society. This story, which offers an intimate glimpse of the racial categorizations woven by the context and internalized within this mixed household, evokes both the history of slavery and colonization that the country has experienced. The narrator tells us the complex story of his sense of belonging to the country and its evolution over the years.

We are finally transported to the capital of Morocco, Rabat, in a Moroccan-Brazilian family where the father is Muslim, the mother Christian and both of them are practicing. Tatiana and Yasser take us back to their first encounters in Brazil and the deliciously awkward and visceral nature of young romantic love at a time when we still had to write letters. Their children reflect with them on the particularities of their socialization in a mixed multilingual and multireligious household and how this diversity influenced their relationship to religion as well as languages. Their story is a hymn to the acceptance of difference.

## **INTENTION :**

The director, Catherine Therrien, who is above all an anthropologist, takes us on this immersive journey to discover real life experiences. Her attention to ethnographic detail is shared by her co-director, Othmane Jmad, who shot, with the discretion necessary for the fly-on-the-wall documentary, intimate and breathtaking images of Morocco. This multilingual film (with versions subtitled in French or English) is above all a reflection on the question of living together and openness to others which aims to stimulate a debate with an audience of all backgrounds and all ages.

How do Moroccan families react to the announcement of their child's marital choice? Is the foreign person accepted into the family or not? How does the transmission of identity (cultural, religious, linguistic) take place within these mixed families? How do children react to parental choices? Do they identify more with a group, do they define themselves as mixed, do they create new identifications? Do they feel at home in Morocco? Abroad? In both parents' countries of origin ? Or nowhere ? Have they had experiences of racism or discrimination? What is the impact of context, gender and transnational links on the reflections and choices of these families? Here are some of the questions this documentary attempts to answer.

# BIOGRAPHY:

**Catherine Therrien // Producer and director**

A Canadian anthropologist based in Morocco since 2001, Catherine Therrien is a professor at Al Akhawayn University of Ifrane (AUI) since 2014. Her research work mainly relates to identity, mixedness, family, migration and transnationalism.

She obtained her PhD in anthropology at the University of Montreal in 2010. Her thesis, which focused on mixed couples in the Moroccan context, also inspired her work “En voyage chez soi. Trajectoires de couples mixtes au Maroc” published by PUL in 2014 (<https://www.pulaval.com/produit/en-voyage-chez-soi-trajectoires-de-couples-mixtes-au-maroc>).

She recently co-edited a collective work entitled Mixed Families in a Transnational World (<https://www.routledge.com/Mixed-Families-in-a-Transnational-World/LeGall-Therrien-Geoffrion/p/book/9780367648619>) with Josiane Le Gall and Karine Geoffrion.

The funding obtained from the Ibn Khaldoun Program to support scientific research in the field of Human and Social Sciences (2019-2024) gave her the opportunity to continue a longitudinal study focusing on the descendants of mixed couples and to produce and direct this documentary.

In recent years, thanks to funds obtained from the MIM-Amern program (2014-2015/2016-2017), she carried out studies on North-South mobility and in particular on migration of French and Spanish people to Morocco (<http://lacroiseedeschemins.ma/produit/la-migration-des-francais-au-marocentre-proximite-et-ambivalence>).

Recently, she has also become interested in South-South mobility, and in particular that of sub-Saharan migrants. Her latest book, “Celui qui échoue devant sorcier. Parcours d’un migrant camerounais parti d’Afrique et arrive...” was published in PUL in 2019 (<https://www.pulaval.com/produit/celui-qui-echoue-devant-sorcier-parcours-d-un-migrant-camerounais-parti-d-afrique-et-arrive-en-afrique>).

With a research team from Al Akhawayn University of which she is the main investigator, she recently received funding from the H-2020 program of the European Union (2021- 2025) (<https://ithacahorizon.eu/>) which allows them to explore this question of migrant narratives in more depth through a multidisciplinary approach (anthropology, history, communication studies). Thanks to this funding, she and her colleagues were able to collect stories of sub-Saharan migrants. Their work also makes it possible to compare the social perception of mixed families in contemporary Morocco as well as during the colonial and postcolonial periods.

Some of her work has been published in international scientific journals such as *L'Année du Maghreb*, *Social Compass*, *Hespéris-Tamuda*, *The Journal of North African studies*, *Recherches familiales*, *Revista de sociologia*, *Anthropologie et Société*, *Diversité urbaine*, *Familles, Enfances, Générations*.

جزء منا (“A Part of Us”) is her first feature-length documentary.