



BORDERLINES FILM FESTIVAL

ÀMA GLORIA (15)

Director: Marie Amachoukeli

Starring: Louise Mauroy-Panzani, Ilça Moreno Zego, Abnara Gomes Varela
France, 2023, 1 hour 24 minutes, French/Cape Verdean Créole + English subtitles

This is Amachoukeli's solo directing debut, having previously co-directed the Camera d'Or-winning *Party Girl* alongside Claire Burger and Samuel Theis. But aside from the detail of brief animated interludes done in a pleasant paintbrush style, that seem initially superfluous but come good in one dramatic late cut, Amachoukeli has a mature confidence in narrative and presentational simplicity, the better to linger on the seamless subtleties of Mauroy-Panzani's exceptional performance. DP Inès Tabarin's warm close-up camerawork leaves the girl nowhere to hide, and yet from the broadest gesture to the minutest flicker of apprehension in her magnified eyes, everything we get from her is true and honest. – **Variety**

Ama Gloria is quite the heartbreaker as writer/director Marie Amachoukeli confidently traces the intense bond between a six-year-old girl and her beloved nanny. Acutely sensitive to the churning emotions of childhood, this autobiographical tale has a clear affinity with Celine Sciamma's *Petite Maman* (2021) and was made by Sciamma's production company Lilies Films. It is a small film, but one whose subtle touch and generous spirit proves captivating... Amachoukeli creates a sympathetic story in which everyone has their reasons for what they have done. The Cape Verde scenes allow us into Gloria's world of a community reliant on fishing and tourism, where religion holds sway for her family and she has her hopes set on building a small hotel. Everything deepens our understanding of the ties that bind Gloria to her home. – **ScreenDaily**

With tiny, delicate brushstrokes, Marie Amachoukeli paints an incredibly accurate and poignant picture (without any heavy-handedness) which is inspired in the simple way it singles out subtle yet incredibly crucial moments: a movement, a look, an ordinary situation which resonates inside of us. Shot in very close proximity to the characters, this highly sensitive exposé of the various states of mind experienced by a little girl who's discovering the world (without grasping all the issues involved) and slowly realising that it doesn't revolve around her, exudes a charm which is both firmly controlled and crystal clear. – **Cineuropa**

Preview courtesy of BFI Distribution

Notes compiled by Holly Dennison

If you liked **ÀMA GLORIA**, you may also enjoy:

RED ISLAND (12A) - A wonderfully inventive childhood film, set in 1970s Madagascar, a decade or so after the former French colony gained its independence.

THE NEW BOY (15) - Newcomer Aswan Reid, Cate Blanchett as an unorthodox nun and a haunting score from Nick Cave and Warren Ellis make for an intriguing follow-up to Warwick Thornton's *Sweet Country* (2017).