



FILM MOVEMENT®

presents

# Traitors

A film by Sean Gullette

*"Fiercely energetic...a break-out performance!"* -The Hollywood Reporter



**Morocco/USA / 2013 / Drama/Thriller /  
Arabic and French / 83 min / 16:9 / Dolby Digital 5.1**

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## **FULL SYNOPSIS**

Malika, leader of *Traitors*, an all-female punk rock band, has a strong vision of the world, her hometown of Tangier, and her place in it. When she needs money to save her family from eviction and to realize her dreams for the band, Malika agrees to a fast cash proposition: a smuggling run over the mountains for a dangerous drug dealer. But her companion on the road is Amal, a burnt-out young drug mule who Malika decides to free from her enslavement to the dangerous drug dealers. The challenge will put Malika's rebel ethos to the test, and to survive she will have to call on all her instincts and nerve.

## **SHORT SYNOPSIS**

To keep her parents from being evicted and fund her Clash-inspired punk band, Malika takes a job smuggling drugs over the mountains. Her partner in the run is a world-weary veteran drug mule, who unexpectedly wins Malika's sympathy.

## **LOGLINE**

To keep her parents from being evicted and fund her Clash-inspired punk band, Malika takes a job smuggling drugs over the mountains.

## **A NOTE FROM DIRECTOR SEAN GULLETTE**

The night we screened the 2010 short film version of *Traitors* for the cast and crew saw the largest political protest in Tangier since 1956. The actors snuck out of their parents' homes, and made their way to the Cinematheque de Tanger through a city where the breaking glass, burning cars, and confrontations with authority in the streets echoed across the region. For better or for worse, young people across the Arab world had woken up from the region's post-colonial hangover, pissed-off.

Tangier is many things — a legendary crossroads of civilizations, “the City of the Dream” which seduced artists for centuries, and a waiting room for clandestine immigration to Europe. The region is also a hub for billions of Euros a year of narcotics: the Rif Mountains are one of the world's main sources of hashish. Far more grave: since the Shengen treaty and 9/11 tightened Europe's borders, hard drugs from abroad have entered the Moroccans' expert smuggling pipelines, with predictable consequences. the character of Amal in *Traitors* is based on a true story.

Malika seems closer to a superhero; but many adolescents are superheroes. Certain young people have the power to change their destiny and their environment. They act strongly, confident that their intentions are pure, and their power can be transcendental, smart and ruthless. It's no coincidence that music, politics, and the edges of crime are central to the experience of youth on fire: all three can expand our powers in miraculous ways. Adults may regard that fire with condescending smiles. But when young people like Malika confront the established logic of the 'adult' world, their actions — sometimes heroic, sometimes tragic — can rewrite many stories, not just their own. - Sean Gulette

## **CREW BIOGRAPHIES**

### **SEAN GULLETTE, Director and Writer**

Sean Gulette is a writer, actor, and filmmaker. After making films with Darren Aronofsky at Harvard, he played the lead role, and shared story credit, in the latter's debut feature *Pi*. Gulette has since acted in two dozen films including *Requiem for a Dream* and Brad Anderson's *Happy Accidents*. Gulette's screenplays for independent and studio productions have included the adaptation of Nobel-prize winning Japanese author Kenzaburo Oe's novel *Nip the Buds, Shoot the Kids*.

In 2010, Gulette's 30-minute film *Traitors* debuted at the New York Film Festival. Sean's next project will be *Tangier*, a thriller with Kristin Scott-Thomas and Jeremy Irons, produced with Aronofsky's Protozoa Pictures. Gulette's 212 Society is a US non-profit which fundraises to support cultural and educational projects in Morocco, including the Cinematheque de Tanger, founded by his wife, the artist Yto Barrada.

## **CAST BIOGRAPHIES**

### **CHAIMAE BEN ACHA (Malika)**

Chaimae Ben Acha's first film role was Sean Gulette's 2010 short *TRAITORS*. Before shooting the 2013 feature *TRAITORS*, Ben Acha played the title role in Abdesslam Kesai's *Malak*, for which she was named best actress at the Tangier National Film festival, and the Festival of African Cinema at Khouribga.

**SOUFIA ISSAMI** (Amal)

Soufia Issami won international attention in the lead role of Leila Kilani’s 2011 fiction film *On the Edge (Sur La Planche)* which premiered in Cannes at that years Director’s Fortnight, and went on to international release, awards including best actress at the Brussels Film Festival and critical praise. Soufia’s performance in *Traitors* built on her life adventures and her five years with the regional theater troupe Chourrok.

**NADIA NIAZI** (Rokia (Malika’s Mother))

Nadia Niazi is well-loved by Moroccan audiences for films including *Satan’s Angels*, *The Lovers of the Rif*, and *The End* and her television roles.

**MOURADE ZEGUENDI** (Samir)

Mourade Zeguendi is a Belgian actor best known for his roles in *Taxi 4*, *The Barons*, *JCVD*, *Go Fast*.

**DRISS ROUKHE** (Haj)

Driss Roukhe has appeared in more than 15 movies, including *Syriana*, *Babel*, *The Green Zone*, *Rendition*, and *Black Gold*. He is also an active presence in contemporary Moroccan theater.

**CREDITS**

**CREW**

<b>Director</b>	Sean Gullette
<b>Screenplay</b>	Sean Gullette
<b>Cinematography</b>	Alexander Sass
<b>Editing</b>	Benoit Peverelli, Niko Tavernise
<b>Producer</b>	Karim Debbagh, Audrey Rosenberg
<b>Composer</b>	Nathan Larson

## **CAST**

<b>Malika</b>	Chaimae ben Acha
<b>Amal</b>	Soufia Issami
<b>Rokia (Malika's Mother)</b>	Nadia Niaza
<b>Samir</b>	Mourade Zeguendi
<b>Haj</b>	Driss Roukhe
<b>Jad</b>	Morjana Alaoui