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Review: 'Moi et Mon Blanc'

David Rooney

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Drawing inspiration from his own experiences, Paris-trained, Burkina Faso-born writer-director S. Pierre Yameogo explores the complexities of cultural differences with an appealingly light touch. This comedy about an odd interracial friendship offers many pleasures that should connect with audiences in African film forums and on multicultural TV.

Clearly drawing inspiration from his own experiences, Paris-trained, Burkina Faso-born writer-director S. Pierre Yameogo explores the complexities of cultural differences with an appealingly light touch in "Moi et mon blanc." While it doesn't dig deep into any issue, this warm comedy about an odd interracial friendship offers many quiet pleasures that should connect with audiences in African film forums and on multicultural TV.

A foreign exchange student in Paris, Mamadi (Serge Bayala) takes a night job as a parking attendant. He meets carefree fellow attendant Franck (Pierre-Loup Rajot), the first white Frenchman to see Mamadi as anything other than a lazy black intruder. Mamadi witnesses an abortive drug deal and is left holding a stash of cocaine and cash, which Franck insists they keep. Tailed by ruthless dealers, the pair flees to Mamadi's hometown in Burkina Faso. Although a little simplistic, Yameogo's good-natured script maintains a droll tone and a deft balance as it gently if schematically exposes the corruption and prejudices of the two cultures. A modest production enhanced by a caperish score, pic's played with an unforced rapport by engaging leads Bayala and Rajot.

Moi et Mon Blanc

Burkina Faso - France

Production

A Dunia Prods., Les Films de l'Espoir, Thelma Film production in association with TV5, TVOR, SBS Australia. (International sales: Dunia Prods., Paris.) Produced, directed, written by S. Pierre Yameogo.

Crew

Camera (color), Jurg Hassler; editor, Manuel Pinto; music, Ansi Ray Lema; production designer, Chef Joseph Kpobly; costume designer, Francois Yameogo; sound (Dolby), Issa Traore, Claude Hivernon; associate producer, Pierre-Alain Meier. Reviewed at Toronto Film Festival (Planet Africa), Sept. 11, 2003. Running time: 99 MIN.

With

Serge Bayala, Pierre-Loup Rajot, Anne Roussel, Bruno Predebon, Samuel Poirier.

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