

# WAR CHILD



**WAR CHILD**, an award-winning feature documentary film directed by C. Karim Chrobog, chronicles the tumultuous, shocking, inspiring, and ultimately hopeful odyssey of Emmanuel Jal, a former child soldier of Sudan's brutal civil war and now an emerging international hip-hop star with a message of peace for his war-torn land and his beloved Africa and a mission and a plan to make that possible. Jal's life story, in many ways, mirrors his homeland: tragedy and terror mingling with hope and restoration.

In the early 1980s, at the age of seven, Jal was swept into Sudan's civil war, becoming one of 10,000 child soldiers conscripted on both sides of the two decades' long conflict. After being forced to do many horrible things that now seem unimaginable to overcome, he escaped the soldier's camp and trekked for four months through Africa. He was eventually found and adopted by the now legendary British aid worker Emma McCune; McCune had married Sudanese guerrilla commander Riek Machar whom she convinced to not employ child soldiers. Shortly after she adopted Jal, McCune died in a suspicious car crash, leaving Emmanuel "orphaned" once again. Jal rises from ruthless child soldier to refugee to rap star. He finds his own redemption and life mission through a message of peace that represents one of the 21st centuries' most inspiring and hopeful journeys, and a metaphor for the broader African predicament.

Emmanuel's journey is, in many ways, just beginning. His dream of *Gua*, peace, in Sudan, and prosperity in Africa, is threatened by corrupt leaders, genocidal warlords, and Western indifference. Hopefully, Emmanuel's peace – his quest to make the world a better place through his music, activism and youth education – will prove to be far more significant than Emmanuel's former war.

WAR CHILD tells the story of Emmanuel Jal's life through his own words, and music and remarkable film footage dating back as far as his early childhood. Even at the age of seven, Emmanuel's charisma and charm were so evident that National Geographic focused their own 1980's reportage on him as spokesperson for the children. Today, Emmanuel travels through Europe and the US, even into the halls of the US State Department, he takes us through his homeland's tormented history of civil war, assesses the prospects for peace after the country's January 2005 ceasefire agreement, highlights the growing problem of war children, and shines a light on the growing African hip-hop scene that is tackling some of the continent's most serious ills through s music.

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**Jal's life and music, Sudan's modern history, and the African predicament intertwine in this gripping story that will both haunt and inspire viewers who scarcely understand the conflicts and tragedies roiling Africa today.**

## **Charitable Outreach of the War Child Project**

WAR CHILD ends with Jal in Leer (Sudan), his home standing on 20 acres of land that he has acquired to build Leer Academy – fulfilling his dream to improve the lives of as many African children as possible through education. 25% of the distribution fees earned by Reel U Films for the North American distribution of War Child will be donated to Gua Africa USA, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping educate children in Sudan and Kenya through various development strategies, including working with Gua Africa UK to build Emmanuel's Leer Academy.

[www.gua-africa.org](http://www.gua-africa.org)

An 18th Street Films Production

In Association with:

- Interface Media Group
- The Global Fund for Children

With the Support of:

- The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
- The World Security Institute
- The Conflict Zone Film Fund – A Lee & Gund Foundation Project

[www.makefilmsnotwar.org](http://www.makefilmsnotwar.org)

Shooting Locations:

- South Sudan: Bentiu, Juba, Leer, Rumbek
- Kenya: Kakuma Refugee Camp, Lokkichoggio, Nairobi
- USA: Washington, DC, New Orleans, New York

Film Screening Format: DigiBeta or HDCam only

Confirmed New York Promotional Partners: Tribeca Film Festival & Afropop

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## **EMMANUEL JAL**

Emmanuel Jal (born ca. 1980), a former child soldier in Sudan, has won worldwide acclaim for his unique style of rap music with its message of peace and reconciliation. Emmanuel was taken from his family home in 1987, at the age of seven, and sent to fight with the SPLA rebel army in Sudan's bloody civil war. For nearly five years, Emmanuel carried an AK-47 taller than himself. He was sent to war in Ethiopia and Southern Sudan, one among thousands of children uprooted from their villages to fight.

Emmanuel has been featured in Time magazine, USA Today, The Times, The Guardian, the Washington Post, CNN, Fox, VOA, BBC, MTV, and Sky amongst many other news outlets. As a spokesman for Amnesty International and Oxfam, Emmanuel has held two press briefings at the United Nations in New York becoming the first hip hop artist to do so. He also addressed congressional staffers on Capitol Hill about the plight of the people of Darfur and the pressing need for an international response to stop the genocide. Emmanuel has won an American Gospel Award as well as a community service award in Kenya for his work promoting peace among youth. He has also recently been nominated for the MTVu Good Woodie Award.

Emmanuel recently performed at The V Festival in the UK, Greenbelt Festival, and the first Black Ball in the UK for Keep a Child Alive (Alicia Keys foundation). Emmanuel also recently met with Nelson Mandela and performed at the tribute concert for his 90th birthday at Hyde Park in London. Emmanuel is currently touring the East Coast of North America speaking and performing at Colleges and Universities throughout the region.

His music has been featured in three *ER* episodes, the documentary *God Grew Tired of Us*, and most recently in the feature film *Blood Diamond* starring Leonardo DiCaprio. Emmanuel recently performed at the tribute concert for Mandela's 90th birthday at Hyde Park in London.

Emmanuel is featured and performs in the musically focused film, *Call and Response*, which highlights the problem of modern slavery around the globe. This film also features Ashley Judd, Julia Ormond, Daryl Hannah, Natasha Bedingfield and Moby. *Call and Response* is due for release on Oct 10th. [www.callandresponse.com](http://www.callandresponse.com)

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His autobiography, “War Child: A Child Soldier’s Story”, will be released by St. Martin’s Press in February 2009. His new album “Warchild” was released on 12th May 2008 on the Sonic360 label (distribution by ADA Global) with additional production and mix by Neal Pogue, (Outkast, Talib Kweli, Pharoahe Monch).

## **C. KARIM CHROBOG – DIRECTOR & PRODUCER**

WAR CHILD is Producer-Director Karim Chrobog’s first feature film. Karim started his career in the media industry at Time Warner’s international public policy office, where he worked closely with the company’s Warner Bros., HBO, Fortune and Turner divisions. In 2005, Karim launched *Tangier Pictures*, an independent feature film company. *Tangier Pictures* is currently producing a feature film on Ibn Battutah, a colorful, but forgotten 14th century Moroccan adventurer. He is also working on the documentary “Kidnapped”, which is based on real-life events and tells the story of his family’s kidnapping during a vacation gone awry in the South of Yemen three years ago.

Karim holds a degree in International Politics and a Certificate in International Business Diplomacy from the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. He speaks German, Arabic, and English. Karim resides in Washington, DC.

## **AFSHIN MOLAVI – PRODUCER**

A critically acclaimed author and journalist, Afshin Molavi has written widely on globalization, development, and Middle East affairs. Afshin’s articles and essays have been published in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Foreign Affairs*, *The Financial Times*, the *International Herald Tribune*, *National Geographic*, and others. A graduate of the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, he is a fellow at the New America Foundation, a think tank devoted to pragmatic policy solutions to global problems, and was also selected by the World Economic Forum in Davos as a Young Global Leader. Afshin is currently conducting a study on hip-hop and globalization and co-founded the Banu Foundation, a not-for-profit organization that supports grass roots initiatives to empower women in the developing world.

## **DAL LAMAGNA – EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

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Dal LaMagna, founder and former CEO of Tweezerman Corporation, sold the company in 2004 and turned toward working as a Citizen Diplomat dealing with Iraq and investing his resources in social change through film. Dal has been the Executive Producer of four movies dealing with the Iraq War: “War Tapes”, “Iraq for Sale”, “The Ground Truth”, and “Meeting Resistance”. He is a Principal of EZTakes.com and iArthouse.com, websites that distribute movies online. Dal is the founder of Reel U Films, the North American distributor of *War Child*. He is currently the Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Bainbridge Graduate Institute, a school that offers an M.B.A. in sustainable business. Dal ran for the U.S. Congress in 1996 and 2000 and for President of the U.S.A. in 2008. He has an M.B.A. 1970 and M.P.A. 2002 from Harvard University.

## **JEFF WEINGARTEN – EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

President of Interface Media Group, (IMG), Jeff Weingarten, is a nationally recognized, multi-award winning leader known for his innovating design concepts and captivating visual effects in television, film, exhibits, and commercials since 1984. Jeff started at IMG in 1989, during this time he helped advance IMG to the forefront of an industry that involves constant change, adaptation, and a vital implementation of new technologies. Instrumental in the design of IMG’s first 601 component digital edit suites and the company’s smoke\*/flame\* suite, Jeff spearheaded yet another industry change of course. In 1999, he completed the design and installation of IMG’s first HDTV suite with a fire\*/inferno\* room. In 2004, IMG, guided by Jeff, collaborated with the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian to produce seven video presentations for exhibition. As Creative Director, Jeff directed both professional and nonprofessional talent, in addition to compositing the short subject videos. In 2005, Jeff led IMG’s partnership with thinkfilm, inc. to create eight one-hour documentaries for the Science Channel titled “The 100 Greatest Scientific Discoveries”. In 2006 he led IMG’s partnership with Alexandria Productions to create the two-hour documentary for PBS “The Boomer Century 1946-2046”. Jeff’s work has earned him a number of prestigious ITS International Monitor awards. As principal editor he has been honored by: the ITVA Silver Reel, the CINE Golden Eagle, the Silver Quasar, the Golden Triangle Award of Merit, and a Washington Film & Video Council Peer Awards.

## **ROSHANAK AMELI-TEHRANI – EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

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Roshanak Ameli-Tehrani is Founder and President of Avand Institute, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting civil society innovation, dialogue and fellowship globally. Roshanak has worked in Nepal, India, Iran, the United States, and Latin America on a wide range of development initiatives including micro-nutrition, women-run cooperatives, and is heading a multi-organizational initiative focused on renewable technologies for meeting the water and energy needs of the urban poor. She is also finishing her first novel, set in Iran, to be published in the winter of 2008.

**RICHARD BODEN – EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

Richard Boden is a seasoned executive with over twenty-five years of financial, operational and consulting experience. Richard has set up Gua Africa USA, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to educating children in Sudan, Kenya, and throughout Africa. He has worked as an advisor and consultant to emerging businesses and established organizations, both private and public. Most recently Richard has served as the interim CFO and strategic advisor for a number of high-tech, services and retail, manufacturing, government and biotech companies, such as MyBizHomePage, Inc., a startup web based services company that provides a financial dashboard and community space to the small business markets globally; Coverstories, LLC, a company that owns the exclusive licensing arrangement with Wenner Media to print and market Rolling Stone Magazine covers as posters and art prints; and Zachary Oxman Studios, an internationally recognized art studio and gallery. He sits on the Advisory Board for the Harry F. Byrd School of Entrepreneurship at Shenandoah University, VITAL, a task force for the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Friends Steering Committee of the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC.

**ULF GARTZKE – ASSOCIATE PRODUCER**

Ulf Gartzke has been the Director of the Hanns-Seidel-Foundation's Washington Office since July 2004. Before joining the Hanns-Seidel-Foundation, Ulf worked at the World Economic Forum in Geneva, where he was in charge of the Forum's engagement with the global automotive industry. He has previously worked for DaimlerChrysler's Washington Affairs Office, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the World Bank in Paris, and the Christian Social Union (CSU) party headquarters in Munich. Ulf studied political science and international relations at the University of Augsburg in Germany and holds advanced degrees from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and



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the Institute of Political Studies in Paris. He is currently completing his PhD in international relations at the London School of Economics. Ulf is a Visiting Scholar at the BMW Center for German and European Studies at Georgetown University and a Contributor to The Weekly Standard Blog.

## **S. J. STANISKI – DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

Stanley Staniski is a well-traveled producer/director/cinematographer with over thirty-five years experience in film and television. Stanley has worked on productions in fifty-two countries mostly in Asia and Africa. Over the last ten years, he has worked on projects for the World Bank in China, Peru, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, and Mauritius. In 1997 he traveled to Mozambique for a film on landmines and in 2001 to Thailand for a film on trafficking in women. Both programs aired on PBS. Also for PBS and Turner Broadcasting, Stanley worked on the series “Avoiding Armageddon”, traveling to Sri Lanka to examine how that country has dealt with suicide bombers. For three years, he worked as cinematographer and field producer for the Learning Channel’s “Archeology” series filming in Jordan, Egypt, Israel, and Ghana.

## **NELS BANGERTER – EDITOR**

Nels Bangerter is a documentary film editor with an eye for his subjects’ revealing moments. A 2005 graduate of USC’s MFA film production program, he is currently in the cutting room on a second feature-length doc - his first was Judy Irola’s award-winning Cine Manifest, for which he also did animation and graphics work. Nels has worked as an editor with Whoopi Goldberg and Penelope Spheeris on a series of short documentaries for “Mississippi Rising” in Biloxi after Hurricane Katrina; with director Charlene Wang on All the Splendour of the Years, a Taiwanese language short fiction film; with Dave O’Brien on the vibrant gay and lesbian rap documentary Hip Hop Homos; and with Charles Haine on Oblivion, Nebraska, an experimental fiction film based on a Pushcart Award-winning short story. He holds bachelor’s degrees in Electrical Engineering and English from Rice University.

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## **FILM FESTIVALS & AWARDS**

Berlin International Film Festival: 2008 Official Selection

Tribeca International Film Festival:  
**2008 Cadillac Audience Award Winner**

Seattle International Film Festival: 2008 Official Selection

Jacksonhole International Film Festival: 2008 Official Selection

Edinburgh International Film Festival: 2008 Official Selection

AFI/ Discovery Silverdocs Film Festival: 2008 Official Selection

Maui International Film Festival:  
**2008 World Cinema Best Documentary Award**

Silverdocs: 2008 Official Selection

Heartland Truly Moving Pictures: **Crystal Heart Award**

**International Documentary Association 2008 Docuweek:  
Los Angeles and New York Showcase**

Montreal Festival des Films du Monde / World Film Festival: 2008 Official Selection

**Capri International Arts Festival, Italy: (Opening film)**

Deauville Festival du Cinema Americain, France: 2008 Official Selection

Festival by the Sea, The Netherlands: 2008 Official Selection

Athens International Film Festival, Greece: 2008 Official Selection

Helsinki Intl Festival - Love & Anarchy: 2008 Official Selection

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www.warchildmovie.com

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Amnesty International Film Festival, Jersey, Channel Islands: 2008 Official Selection

Middle Eastern International Film Festival, Abu Dhabi: 2008 Official Selection

Bergen International Film Festival, Norway: 2008 Official Selection

Dominican Republic International Film Festival: 2008 Official Selection

Bahamas International Film Festival: 2008 Official Selection

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