



The Netherlands Institute for Academic Studies in Damascus (NIASD)
proudly presents the feature film “Wan Pipel” - the 27th and 28th of
September, 2006



* East Mezzeh, Farabi Street 85 (near Greek Embassy), Damascus

* Evening starts at 19:45 hours

* Dutch, Sranan Tongo and Sarnami Hindustani, with Arabic subtitles!

Wan Pipel (“One people”). Since several years Surinamese student Roy Ferrol has been studying economy in Amsterdam, where he also has a Dutch girlfriend, Karina. Suddenly a telegram arrives, begging Roy to return to Suriname immediately because his mother is dying. After the burial, Roy takes some time to visit relatives, and for the first time really discovers the beauty of his home country Surinam. Roy slowly gets himself immersed in the Surinamese society and culture. He also falls in love with Rubia, a hindustani woman with modern views and a strong will of her own, who studied in Holland before but now works in a hospital in Surinam. The two quickly discover that a relation between a black, creole man and a hindustani girl is not easily accepted in Surinamese society in which, as a result of Dutch colonialism, many different races (creoles, javanese, hindustani, chinese and bush negroes) live together, but not without some segregation. Whereas Roy’s father and brother-in-law pressure Roy to return to Holland (“your future is there”) and to finish his studies in Amsterdam, Roy is in serious doubt and contemplates a life together with Rubia in Surinam, to help build up his home country that recently gained independence. To complicate matters even further, Karina, who really loves Roy, suddenly shows up in Surinam and tries to convince Roy to come back to Holland with her. Roy needs to make difficult choices: between Rubia and Karina, between Surinam and Holland...



Film director: Pim de la Parra. Pim de la Parra was born in Paramaribo, Surinam, in 1940. At the age of twenty he went to Holland and studied political science for 2 years, after which he switched to the Film Academy in Amsterdam. In the seventies he made several successful



feature films with film director Wim Verstappen, including “Blue Movie” (1971). They both worked together as well on “Wan Pipel” (1976), a film which Pim de la Parra decidedly wanted to make with Emanuel van Gonter in the role of Roy’s father. The film production was halted until that actor became available. The actor finally came and acted marvelously in this role, but the risen film production costs lead to the bankruptcy of De la Parra. Later, the film director established a name in Holland with ‘miminal’, low budget movies, such as “Paul Chrevolet and the Ultimate Hallucination” (1985), “Lost in

Amsterdam” (1989), “Let the Music Dance” (1990) and “Dream of a Shadow” (1995). In 1996 the film director returned to Surinam to care for his old father. At present, Pim de la Parra is leading the first Surinam Film Academy, which was established in 2005.

Surinam, Wan Pipel and Holland. In 1975 Surinam became an independent republic, after 300 years of Dutch colonial rule. After the abolition of slavery, in 1863, immigrants from India, Indonesia and China came to Surinam. As a result of this history, many languages are spoken, including Dutch (official language), Sranang Tongo (a mixture of English, Dutch, French, Spanish and Portugese), Sarnami Hindustani (a Surinamese dialect of Hindi) and Javanese. Wan Pipel was the first feature film produced in independent Surinam. Since many issues in the film still seem relevant to us today, the film continues to be analysed, reviewed and appreciated. The documentary ‘Wan Pipel, 20 years later’ (Ger van Westing, 1995) shows that the divisions between the different racial groups in Surinam still exist, and that the actress who played Rubia even had to leave Surinam due to the criticism of the hindustani community on her role. In ‘Pictures of Suriname & Holland: Wan Pipel, Bakra’s and Boeroes’ (De Balie, Amsterdam, 2003) professor Mrs. Patricia Pisters of the University



of Amsterdam notes that ‘Wan Pipel’ indirectly gives Dutch people good reasons to question their role in history as well as their identity in relation to that of other groups of people, many of whom are now living in The Netherlands.

Free Entrance. Entrance at NIASD is free. We kindly ask you however to call or email our assistant before and tell us on which day and with how many persons you come: 61249790, assistant@niasd.org.

