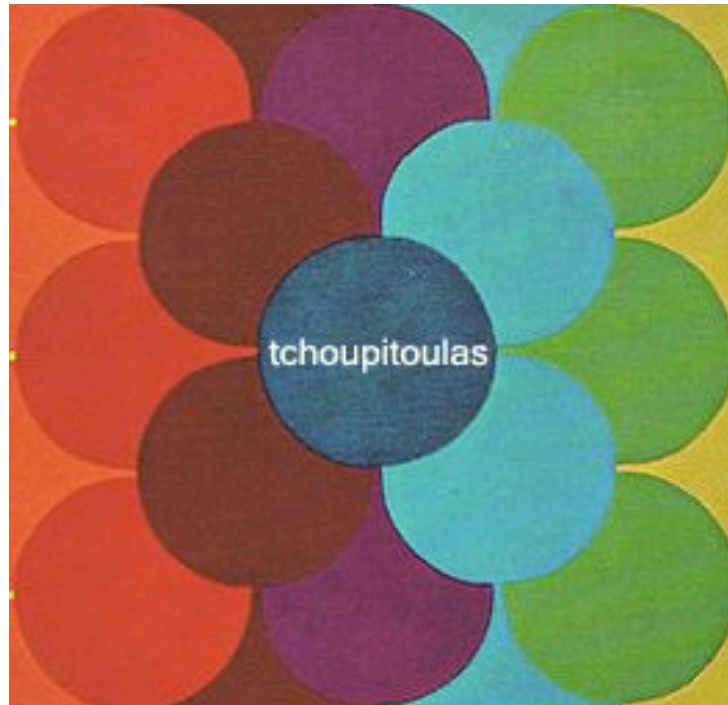




Presents

# TCHOUPITOULAS

Directed by Bill and Turner Ross



**\*\*Official Selection – SXSW 2012\*\***

**\*\*Official Selection – 2012 Dallas International Film Festival\*\***

**\*\*Winner – Documentary Feature Competition Grand Jury Prize\*\***

**\*\*Official Selection – 2012 Ashland International Film Festival\*\***

**\*\*Winner – Best Feature Length Documentary\*\***

**\*\*Official Selection – AFI Silverdocs 2012\*\***

Running Time: 80 minutes  
Opening December 7, 2012

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## SYNOPSIS

In sync with innovative instincts they demonstrated in their first feature *45365*, Bill and Turner Ross' *Tchoupitoulas* takes the term documentary to mean, primarily, the documenting of an experience—a distinct time and a place and the people that inhabit it. No interviews, no voiceover; just the evocation of an existence and the feelings it conjures.

Three young brothers take a secret sunset journey across a river to a pleasure island that's always been forbidden to them. As such, the narrative conceit of *Tchoupitoulas* is as timeless as a fairy tale. But through the eyes of our juvenile protagonists, we experience an impressionistic immersion into this beguiling kaleidoscope of dancers, musicians, hustlers, drag queens, and revelers that parade through the lamp-lit streets between Rampart and the river. While the kids can only glance at the glittery surface, the camera follows the melodies that emanate from these corridors to admit us to the cabarets, into the dark alleyways, next to the barflies, behind the curtains, and on the bandstand with the people who make this place their audience, their stage, their home.

The Rosses capture the fleeting moments of an enduring experience in one of the world's most unique cities.



## DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

The impulse to go about making what became *Tchoupitoulas* was born out of memories from our childhood: wandering the carnival streets of New Orleans, dazzled by the vibrancy of the night, of the mystery emanating from the open doors spilling life out onto the streets. It was a far cry from our other home in the cornfields of Ohio. We wanted to find that again.

Most current descriptions of the place, most documents, rely heavily on the caricatures of New Orleans - the easy identifiers - and the fall back issues of hurricanes and oil spills. But for us, three young brothers became our surrogates, our guides, and our way in to the reality of the city. Through them we found the perspective we needed; just a big step back and it all came in to focus. It felt like being a kid again. We found what we were looking for.

Most of all, *Tchoupitoulas* is an artifact of an adventure. As with our other films, the number one reason we made it was for the experience. We like things in motion - running constantly with camera in hand, chasing what's sparkling. The camera allows us entry into these worlds and keeps our mom thinking we're actually being productive.

This was a fun one. An entire year without sunlight. We found lots of trouble and met lots of new friends.

- Bill and Turner Ross



## **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

The idea was always to make a documentary filmed entirely at night, that took place over the course of one evening. We chose our second home, New Orleans—a place with its share of night life. When it came to shooting, this one was similar to how we usually go about things: exist in an area for a long stretch and shoot what's interesting. The involvement of the kids, who stitched the whole thing together, was a lucky accident.

We shot from sundown to sun-up for nine months. It was us and our lifelong co-conspirator Kyle Rouse, who as always acted as our Muscle. We shot on two broke ass cameras with two empty wallets and ended up covered in an unreasonable amount of transvestite stripper glitter. We drank too much, slept too little, and broke the law. It got weird. We disrobed at a gay karaoke bar to Duran Duran so that we could get permission to film there. We shot under the pier with a homeless man and the next day while watching dailies listened on the lavalier mic as he plotted with his buddy to kill us. Turner filmed on stage with Dr. John but didn't use the footage in the end because it didn't fit. Bill arbitrated an aggressive argument between the members of a rap group in the back of an Escalade. We wish we could show and tell everything that we got into, but in the end, this slice'll work.

## **ABOUT BOND STRATEGY AND INFLUENCE**

With a vast knowledge and experience in marketing, pr, and digital strategy, BOND Strategy and Influence act as a trusted partner and advisor to filmmakers, studios, and financiers to help navigate and maximize opportunities presented by new digital platforms. BOND recognizes that in today's "connected" world, the true promise of digital technologies is to amplify word-of-mouth, reduce marketing costs, and help filmmakers spend less to achieve financial profitability.

Recent projects include Academy Award nominee Exit Through The Gift Shop, SENNA, The Imposter, Killer Joe, The Island President, The Invisible War, Rampart and many more.



## FILMMAKER BIOS

Bill and Turner Ross' first feature length film, *45365*, was the winner of the 2009 SXSW Grand Jury Award for Best Documentary Feature and the Independent Spirit Truer Than Fiction Award in 2010. They went on to receive numerous accolades, including nominations for Editing, Cinematography, and Debut Feature at the Cinema Eye Honors; the film was also broadcast as part of PBS' Independent Lens Series.

Bill and Turner Ross were born and raised in Sidney, Ohio, and both graduated from the Savannah College of Art and Design. Bill Ross' documentary, fiction, and multi-media short films have been featured at festivals that include Cannes and the Seattle Film Festival. He has taught filmmaking to students at the elementary and secondary level, and conducted a summer film program for children in the Los Angeles area. Turner Ross has worked in the art departments of studio features such as *Déjà Vu*, *Skeleton Key*, *My Own Love Song*, and *Idiocracy*, as well as a handful of independent features.

*As brothers, we have worked together on everything for the past twenty-eight years. We have lived and created together for all of our lives. As adults, we moved to Los Angeles and began work in the film industry, honing our skills and crafting our roles as a unit. Five years ago we started off on an adventure to make our own films, free of the constrictions of commercial work. We are now producing our third independent documentary feature together. We conceive, scout, produce, shoot and edit all of our own work.*



## **CREDITS**

Featuring:  
William Zanders  
Bryan Zanders  
Kentrell Zanders

Produced by, cinematography by, picture/sound editing by:  
Bill Ross IV  
Turner Ross

Executive Producers:  
Michael Gottwald  
Dan Janvey  
Josh Penn

The Muscle:  
Kyle Rouse

Sound Editing:  
Lawrence Everson

Picture Finishing:  
Bossi Baker  
Josiah Howison  
Markus Rutledge

Additional Photography:  
Chris Keohane  
Kyle Rouse

Music Supervisor:  
Joe Rudge