

THE NINE MUSES

A Film by John Akomfrah

UK, 90 min., 2010.



Release 2011

Structured as an allegorical fable and loosely inspired by existential science fiction, *The Nine Muses* is a stylised, unusual and idiosyncratic retelling of the history of mass migration to post-war Britain through the suggestive lens of Homer's epic poem, *The Odyssey*. Divided into nine overlapping musical chapters and mixing a vast array of archival material, *The Nine Muses* is a modern recasting of Homer's epic as a tone poem about journeys, migration, memory and the power of elegy.

The film deploys the 'voices' of a remarkable range of period and contemporary actors reading classical texts by Nietzsche, Dante, Shakespeare or Beckett, from John Barrymore to Richard Burton, Dermot Crowley, or Teresa Gallagher among others. *The Nine Muses* also offers a dizzying range of musical performances from Paul Robeson, Leontyne Price and India's Gundecha Brothers, with a range of music by Arvo Pärt, Wagner as well as Schubert's stunning *Winterreise*. *The Nine Muses* is a feast for the eyes and the ears, a virtuoso exercise in montage and sound.

'...Meditative, formal beauty. Akomfrah's *The Nine Muses*, in particular, wraps the viewer in literature, music and archive footage, summoning up a mood rather than a story that reflects on the immigrant experience and the violence of displacement with a majestic grace. '

Jason Solomons, *The Observer*

'Beautiful and beguiling...a fascinating film'

Mark Adams, *Screen International*

Director

John Akomfrah

Producers

Lina Gopaul, David Lawson

Photography

Dewald Aukema

Editors

Miikka Leskinen, Ben Hunt

Produced by **Smoking Dogs Films**, London.