

LIMITED WORLD PREMIERE EDITION

*Sometimes, Darkness Illuminates.*

# POWER cut



plantation pictures presents

claudette allens • lynn lowe • robyn sawyer

powercut

screenplay by nicollette bethel and many knowles

adapted from the play by nicollette bethel

directed by philip a. burrows • produced by many knowles

SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE BOOKLET

# plantation pictures

17th October, 2001

*Welcome!*

*We have quite a story to tell you. Actually, we have two stories. One is the story of three women in a bathroom during a powercut; the other is about the making of a movie. The first tale is best told on the screen; the second is told in the pages to follow.*

*For as long as I can remember, I have been interested in movies. For that, I thank my mother, Hilda M. Knowles, who exposed me to movies and the performing arts throughout my childhood. I must also thank my father, Joel R. Knowles, for ensuring that I always had a camera and some film. I know that he always believed in me and that he looked forward to an occasion such as this. Alas, he did not live to see this day. I wish he could be here.*

*I am grateful to all of you for attending this occasion and for the support you offer us today. Philip and I have spent countless hours making this film. We made it for you and we hope you enjoy it.*

*Our film version of "Powercut" is based on the 1990 play by Nicolette Bethel. It is a point of interest that we return to The Dundas Centre for the Performing Arts for the World Premiere of the movie eleven years after the play was first presented here. Adapting the work for the screen was truly a joy. Years ago, I think we would have readily agreed that Nico's writing demonstrated a mastery of story, character, context, pacing and dialogue. It also owes much of its ability to withstand the test of time to Nico's sense of culture and history.*

*Philip Burrows directed the original stage presentation, but this should not imply that our movie is merely a redux. Philip has re-envisioned the themes and re-presents them to you with a deeper sense of darkness. He was the first person with whom I discussed my plans to make Bahamian films and I am grateful and privileged that he supported me from then until now. It has been an interesting journey so far, and we have only begun!*

*Claudette Allens, Lynn Lowe and Robyn Sawyer will forever have a special place in my heart. All three actresses work during the day. They would come to us in the evenings and work from around 7pm until well past midnight. It took guts, commitment, stamina and (oh, yes!) talent to do this. They did it well, and they did it with a smile. They can be proud of their efforts. I know that we are certainly proud of them.*

*Thank you for supporting Bahamian filmmaking. Enjoy the evening!*

*Manny.*

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www.plantationpictures.com**

# An Interview with The Men Behind “Powercut”

**Manny Knowles (screenwriter, producer, cinematographer and editor) and Philip A. Burrows (director) discuss the process of bringing “Powercut” to the screen.**

**Q: Manny, this is your first complete feature-length film. What made you choose “Powercut” for a project?**

**MK:** “Powercut” was actually not going to be my first movie. It was originally intended to be second or third in line. There were some compelling reasons to move “Powercut” to the number one slot. First, all of the action takes place indoors and in a single location. This means that we would be shooting in a controlled environment, which makes for a faster production schedule. Second, there are only three characters in the play and it’s easier (and cheaper) to cast three people than it is to cast seventeen people. Overall, “Powercut” is a textbook example of what a first film should be. I have a suspicion that all of our movies from here on out will be more complicated productions in terms of cast size, number of locations and size of budget.

**Q: When you began working on the project, what things did you have to consider in making the transition from stage to film?**

**MK:** There were quite a number of small changes to the dialogue. Characters in plays tend to speak perfect En-

glish, perfect sentences. This was certainly the case with the Darlene character in “Powercut.” It works on stage somehow, but not on film. It’s weird. With plays you have real people in front of you but their speech patterns are often unrealistic. With movies, it’s the other way around. The actors aren’t really there, but their dialogue is usually criticized if it doesn’t sound real. Philip and I moved a small bit of the action from the

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***“I have a suspicion that all of our movies from here on out will be more complicated productions...”***

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middle of the play to the very beginning of the movie and this impacted the overall tone of the play. Also, in writing a screenplay one has to consider the individual shots that will make up a scene. The closeup, the wide shot, the details in the room. A candle, a knife or what have you. None of this is in the play of course because plays are continuous segments of action whereas movies tend to be made up of small bits of action that are edited to give the illusion of continuity.

**Q:** You and Philip seem to have developed this as a team. Were you both involved from the inception? Can you give us some idea of the working relationship that you have developed?

**MK:** We started discussing the notion of making movies back in the late 1980s. Actually, we were talking about making one movie in particular and that would have been based on Winston Saunders’ play, “You Can Lead A Horse To Water.” But when I came back from Los Angeles, I started looking at making “Powercut” as a movie. I asked Philip if he would direct. He was trying to take a year off after teaching in Canada for three years. Anyway, he turned me down and I was forced to take on the task of directing for a while.

As for the working relationship, the most interesting thing is that Philip and I hail from two different backgrounds, so we have very different thought processes. Philip’s training is in theatre and he studied in New York, which is pretty

**- Continues on page 11.**



*Manny installs storm shutters on the backyard patio that became a movie studio. Photo from plantationpictures.com*



*Makeup artist D'Angelo Bethel performs a final check on Robyn Sawyer before filming. Photo: Plantation Pictures.*

**The Nassau Amateur Operatic Society**

*Congratulates*

**Plantation Pictures**

*on the World Premiere of*

**POWER  
cut**

*Best Wishes for a Successful Theatrical Release!*



*Claudette Allens as "Glory"*

Most people know Claudette by her nickname, "Cookie." She has been acting for over thirty years, appearing in such plays as *You Can Lead A Horse To Water*, *The Amen Corner*, *I, Nehemiah*, *Remember When...* (Parts I through IV) and *Agnes Of God*, to name just a few. Cookie originated the role of "Glory" in the 1990 Production of *Powercut* at the Dundas.



*Lynn Lowe as "Darlene"*

Lynn made her acting debut as "Darlene" in *Powercut* eleven years ago. Her stage work since then includes *No Seeds In Babylon*, *You Can Lead A Horse To Water* and *The Death Of Silence*. On August 4th of this year, Lynn participated in a 200 mile bicycle marathon in the United States to raise money for cancer research. Lynn is a qualified massage therapist by profession.



*Robyn Sawyer as "Tanya"*

Robyn is a member of The Nassau Amateur Operatic Society. Most recently, she appeared with Manny Knowles (Producer) in this year's hit *Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. She also appeared in *Grease*. Robyn was invited to audition for this production of *Powercut* and was cast as a last-minute replacement two weeks before shooting began.



***Manny Knowles, Producer.***

Manny has long dreamed of creating a film industry in The Bahamas. From the age of eight, he began making short films with friends. He attended the School of Cinema-Television at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. His education took him behind the scenes of many films including the popular ***Jason's Lyric***. Locally, Manny has produced several commercials and he appeared on-stage at the Dundas in ***Norman, Is That You?*** and ***Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat***.



***Nicolette Bethel, Playwright.***

Nicolette is a lecturer in English and Anthropology at the College of The Bahamas. Her playwriting credits include the script for the original ***Dis We Tings***, and, with her husband, Philip, the docu-musical ***Music of The Bahamas***, based on the late E.Clement Bethel's M.A. thesis. In addition to writing plays, Nico has also written poems and short stories. Among her publications is ***Junkanoo: Festival of The Bahamas***, also adapted from her father's thesis. She played "Tanya" in the original Dundas stage production of ***Powercut***.



***Philip A. Burrows, Director.***

Philip was the Artistic and Resident Director of the Dundas Repertory Season from 1981 until 1997. He is a 1980 graduate of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and attended the National Theatre Institute at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. Although he is trained as an actor, Philip is best known as a director. His work in theatre has been enjoyed by audiences in The Bahamas as well as in Barbados, The United States, Europe and Canada. This is Philip's first outing as a film director.

# *Complete Production Credits*

## *Cast of Characters*

Darlene Lynn Lowe  
Glory Claudette Allens  
Tanya Robyn Sawyer

Director Philip A. Burrows

Producer Manny Knowles

Screenplay by Manny Knowles &  
Nicolette Bethel

*Adapted from the play by Nicolette Bethel*

Photographed & Edited by Manny Knowles

Set Design & Construction by Jürgen Spengler

Wardrobe by The Designer Barn

Makeup by D'Angelo Bethel

Production Assistant Becky Collins

Fashion Consultants Debra White  
Jérôme Miller

Seamstress Hope Demars

Electrician Alfred Bain

Music Performed by The Swing Solicitors  
Vocalist: Ronnie Butler, Jr.

“New York Rain”

Written by Jean-Yves Poupin, Mark Filipiuk & Ronnie Butler, Jr.

“No Moon At All”

Written by David Mann & Redd Evans

*From the CD “Straight Flight”*

## The Producers Wish To Thank:

Keva Bethel  
David Jonathan Burrows  
Derek Burrows  
Brigette Dean  
Stewart Harnell  
Larry Higgs  
Christian Knowles  
Hilda Knowles  
Lorraine Lightbourn  
Steven Lowe  
Lowell Mortimer  
E. Terry North  
Winston V. Saunders  
Vann Thompson  
Debra White  
Angel Wong

The College of The Bahamas:  
The School of Communications  
and Creative Arts  
The School of English Studies  
The National Endowment for the Arts

Cinema Concepts  
Creative Edge  
Sign & Image



*Manny goes over last minute script notes with production assistant Becky Collins prior to the night's shooting. Photo from plantationpictures.com*

# *The World Premiere Gala*



*The Gala Committee (From Left): David Jonathan Burrows, Keva Bethel, Lorraine Lightbourn and Lowell Mortimer.*

## *Acknowledgement and Special Thanks:*

The Dundas Centre for the Performing Arts  
Sean Hanna  
Betty Knowles

Bristol Cellars  
The Caribbean Bottling Company  
College of The Bahamas: School of Hospitality and Tourism Studies  
Creative Edge  
Floral Arts  
Mortimer's Candy Kitchen  
Peisi-Cola  
Sign & Image

Video Projector provided by RND Cinemas  
Amplifiers & Loudspeakers provided by ACE Productions  
Gala Banners Manufactured by Sign & Image  
Tent provided by Celebrations

Lobby Display by Plantation Pictures  
featuring Elements of the Movie Set by Jürgen Spengler  
and Photographs from 1990 Dundas Repertory Production by Peter Ramsay







*Lynn Lowe as "Darlene" in the 1990 Dundas Repertory production of "Powercut." Photo by Peter Ramsay.*



*From the 1990 Dundas Repertory production of "Powercut." Tanya introduces herself to Darlene. Photo by Peter Ramsay.*

Continued from page 3

much the total opposite of my background, which is in Hollywood filmmaking. Also, Philip's life experience is bound to be different, considering that he grew up in the sixties and seventies, while I grew up in the seventies and eighties. So we have markedly different perspectives. But we actually work quite peacefully with one another.

**Q:** *Philip, you are best known in the Bahamas as a theatre director. Is this your first film project?*

**PB:** It's my first feature length film project, yes. I've been an extra in films, and I've done some work in television, including writing, creating and being executive producer to the television game show "Brainstorm", but this is my first feature film.

**"Philip and I hail from two different backgrounds. We have very different thought processes. But we actually work quite peacefully with one another."**

**Q:** *Have you found the process of working in film very different from working in theatre? What kinds of differences are there? Challenges? Rewards?*

**PB:** Yes. The differences mainly relate to pace and structure. In theatre you work toward one continuous performance. In film, in the end it plays like one continuous performance, but it's put together in bits and pieces. There were many challenges. Not having a studio in which to work, the time factor dealing with people who have full-time jobs. The major reward is being able to have something that will forever be documented, something that you can't do with a stage play in the same way. The process of learning as you go. Artists are never complete. We learn something with each new project. When you stop learning you repeat yourself and become stagnant.

**Q:** *Which do you prefer – stage or film? Do you think you will make other films? Do you plan to do any more theatre directing in the near future?*

**PB:** Having only done one film, and it having taken a great physical toll, at this point it would be comparing apples and oranges. They are very different media. There are similarities, specifically dealing with acting work, but there is a totally different



From the movie: *Glory* (Claudette Allens, right) tries to persuade Tanya (Robyn Sawyer) to buy one of her dresses.

kind of engagement. I can see why film has been called the director's medium, because you can basically control what the actors do at the end of the day. What you have to realize is that

**"Artists are never complete. We learn something with each new project. When you stop learning you repeat yourself and become stagnant."**

there are very few scenes in this movie where the actresses were even in the studio at the same time. On many a night, Manny and I, with several takes in hand, put together the scenes. In some cases, we even put together the performances. As I said one night to one of the actresses, "Just do it. We'll get it outta you one way or another." As for your other questions, yes, and yes.

**Q:** *Both of you, what have you learned from the project? What things will you do differently in the future?*

**PB:** From this project, we have set out a blueprint as to how to and how not to do things for future projects. This relates to scheduling, working with sound specifi-

- Continues on page 13



*From the 1990 Production: Glory (Claudete Allens) suggests a new look for Tanya (Nicolette Bethel). Photo by Peter Ramsay.*



*From the 1990 Production: Glory (Claudete Allens) offers to find Darlene (Lynn Lowe) a man. Photo by Peter Ramsay.*

***“Film has been called the director’s medium because you can control what the actors do at the end of the day. There are very few scenes in this movie where the actresses were in the studio at the same time.”***

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cally, and pre-production planning.

MK: I think what I’ve learned, really, is that this project has proven that we can do this, that we have what it takes to make a movie. You could say I learned that. And that gives us confidence to make another one. In the future, I’d like to be able to delegate some of the duties. I’d like to have people other than myself writing and doing camera work, editing, sound recording and publicity.

**Q: *What do you envision as the future of film in The Bahamas in general?***

PB: We know that other films have been produced, but we see this film as the beginning of what we think will be the Bahamian film industry. The way we shot this film, on digital video, makes the process of filmmaking much more accessible, and this is the first Bahamian feature film made with that technology.

MK: I envision us being self-sufficient. If “Powercut” succeeds, it means that we can immediately embark upon our next film project without having to go through the begging process again. At the moment, much of the excitement surrounding “Powercut” is that it’s a Bahamian film, and at this point that’s very much a novelty. I envision that as we continue to develop and complete future projects we will begin to take it for granted that Bahamians can make movies, that they will be enjoyable, and that they will be good. I envision that very soon we will be funding all of our movies with our own money. We are not only Bahamian filmmakers; we want to be primarily funded with Bahamian dollars, which will come from attracting larger and larger

local audiences. This will mean that not only will our voices be heard, but the probability of our voices being heard the way we want them to be heard will be all the greater.

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Answers to crossword on p.9

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