

Barefoot to Timbuktu

ERNST AEBI – COME HELL OR HIGH WATER

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www.Barefoot2Timbuktu.com





Barefoot to Timbuktu

a Film about Tolerance, Conflict and Friendship between Cultures

Araouane, a settlement in the middle of the Sahara, seven days by camel from Timbuktu ...

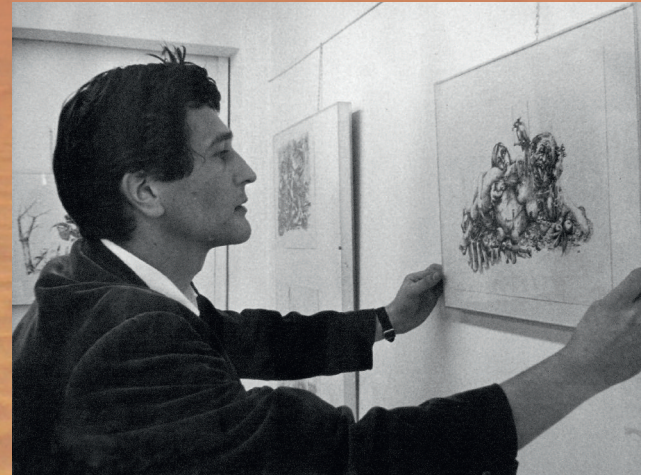
In 1989, the once prosperous oasis was disappearing under encroaching dunes when the noted Swiss/American artist Ernst Aebi passed through on a caravan. The population's destitution leaves a deep impression on him. Trying to help them becomes an obsession for Aebi. Attempting the impossible satisfies his quest for adventure.

Aebi, one of the pioneers in the transformation of New York's SoHo factory spaces to lofts, stays for three years in the desert and becomes so engrossed in the project that he is willing to bury his capital there. Under his guidance, the village awakens to a new life; a productive vegetable

garden, a school, and even a small hotel rise from the barren sands.

A civil war in Mali forces Aebi in the early nineties to escape "his" village. He leaves behind a blooming oasis and a family of friends who await his return.

Except for a few earlier unsuccessful attempts, almost twenty years pass until Aebi is finally able to get back. A journey between hope and doubt.



Aebi in a New York Gallery (1970)



Challenging Terrain for Truck Driving in the Sahara (1990)

BAREFOOT TO TIMBUKTU cleverly weaves archival and new material into a fascinating portrait of an out-of-the-ordinary Swiss/American swashbuckler.



Crazy Project: a Garden in the Sand (1990)



Aebi in Timbuktu with his friends from Araouane (2008)

