

KINSHASA MAKAMBO

A FILM BY DIEUDO HAMADI

PHOTOGRAPHY DIEUDO HAMADI SOUND CHRISTIAN L.L., DIEUDO HAMADI EDITING HÉLÈNE BALLIS SOUND EDITING AND MIX PHILIPPE CIOMPI COLORGRADING AND MASTERING CHRISTER LARSEN
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KINSHASA MAKAMBO

A film by Dieudo Hamadi

Democratic Republic of the Congo - France - Switzerland - Germany -
Norway - 2018 - 75 minutes

Image format 1.85 - Color - Sound 5.1

Produced by Kiripifilms, Les Films de l'œil sauvage, Alva Film, Bärbel
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Producers : Quentin Laurent, Frédéric Féraud, Dieudo Hamadi

Written and Directed by Dieudo Hamadi

Photography: Dieudo Hamadi

Sound: Christian L.L., Dieudo Hamadi

Editing: Hélène Ballis

International sales Andana Films



BERLINALE - Berlin Germany

TRUE / FALSE - Columbia USA

CINEMA DU REEL - Paris France

HOT DOCS - Toronto Canada

FCAT - Tarifa Spain

AFI DOCS - Washington USA

ÉTONNANTS VOYAGEURS - St Malo France

DOCAVIV - Tel Aviv Israel

SHEFFIELD DOC FEST: 'TIM HETHERINGTON' AWARD - Sheffield UK

DOC CEVENNES - Lassalle France

BELDOCS - Belgrade Serbia





LOGLINE

« Kinshasa Makambo » tells of three young activists' fighting for political change of power and free elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

SYNOPSIS

Christian, Ben and Jean-Marie are fighting for political change of power and free elections in their country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. But the incumbent President refuses to relinquish power. How can the course of events be changed? Must they join forces with the historical opposition leader and his powerful party? Is dialogue still possible or must they resign themselves to a popular uprising and the risk of a blood bath? « Kinshasa Makambo » immerses us in the combat these three activists are engaged in, a combat that neither bullets, nor prison, nor exile seem able to stop.



* THE PEOPLE ALWAYS WIN!

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When you have abilities that others don't have, skills, tools, to witness a drama, a tragedy, you can't stay silent. The repression against young Congolese people fighting for the establishment of democracy in our country, has reached worrying proportions. Any action, any word «hostile to the regime», either in public space or on social networks, the slightest protest movement, is violently repressed. The government seems determined to silence these Congolese who are striving for change by all means.

It all started in 2011, when President Kabila, in power since 2001, was elected for a second term at the head of the country after a vote marred by massive fraud. The street was torn by violence immediately after the publication of the results. But the extremely violent repression that followed struck down the protests. The demonstrators, mostly young people, were quelled but didn't give up. Patiently, helped by the Congolese diaspora, galvanized by the Tunisians, Senegalese, Burkinabe «springs», they created information and training networks for political activism. They set up exchange platforms. Their network grew across the country... in complete secrecy.

In January 2015, a little more than a year before the next presidential election, the authorities made official the wish of president Kabila to stay in power, despite the constitution's interdiction. The streets burned. The repression, as strong as ever, this time failed to stop the protest. For the first time, the Congolese authorities are aware of the existence and magnitude of youth movements. They realize with dismay the threat that these groups mean for the power.

As soon as the tension in the streets calms down, the government fights back. Youth structures are declared illegal. The leaders especially are described as terrorists on national television. They are systematically hunted down, kidnapped and put to jail. Those who manage to escape the manhunt, have no choice but to flee the country, or hide in the remotest villages.

Such is the fate of the young Congolese who aspire to democracy in the Congo today.

Honouring the fight...

The DR Congo looks like an open-air jail where the threat of a sudden disappearance, hangs like a sword of Damocles over all Congolese that aspire to make a change. Despite the pressure on the leaders, the «anti 3rd term» movement is not weakening.

To many observers of the political scene of the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2016 is a year full of dangers.

Cameras from all around the world will come to our country to try and catch the announced chaos. I want to take my camera at the same time to film the men and women who will face it, those young people without future who decided to fight in order to have one. I want to show their courage, pay tribute to them, and tell their stories.

In this country, there have always been men and women who stood up against injustice. Whether during the slavery era, the colonization, or the dictatorship, there were people who fought at the cost of their lives. But almost all of them have been forgotten.

As a filmmaker, I would like to use the cinema to immortalize their fight for dignity, and freedom, their sacrifices for a « New Congo ». Thus, this film aims at being a work of memory. I want the next generations to remember those who are willing to do anything to regain mastery of their own destinies. I want to tell the story of those “ordinary heroes”.

Lumumba said: « One day, the history of the Congo won't be written in the United Nations, in Washington, Paris or Brussels but in the streets of Mbandaka, Kinshasa, Kisangani... It will be a story of glory and dignity (...) »

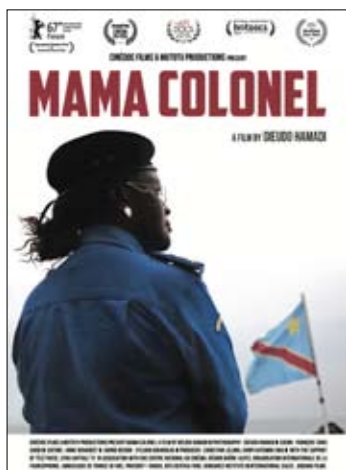


DIEUDO HAMADI

Dieudo Hamadi was born in Kisangani (Democratic Republic of the Congo) in 1984 and studied Medicine in 2005-2008. He then attended several documentary workshops. He is author of two short documentaries *Ladies In Waiting* and *Zero Tolerance* that caught the attention of several festivals in Europe (Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam) and Canada (Toronto). *Ladies In Waiting* received the “Pierre and Yolande Perrault” scholarship at Cinema du Réel (Paris) in 2009. In 2013, with *Atalaku*, his first feature documentary about the 2011 election campaign in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, he won the Joris Ivens award for best first film, presented by Marceline Loridan (Cinema du Réel), Best Foreign Film at the San Diego Black Film Festival (USA), the Jury Prize at FIDADOC (Agadir, Morocco) and 3 other awards. In 2014, *National Diploma* receives both the International Prize of the SCAM and the Potemkin award at Cinéma du Réel (France), is selected at TIFF (Toronto). In 2017, *Mama Colonel* was selected at the Berlinale Forum where it won two awards, then nearly 80 festivals worldwide, 15 awards including the Grand Prize of the Cinéma du Réel 2017.

FILMOGRAPHY

AWARDS & FESTIVALS



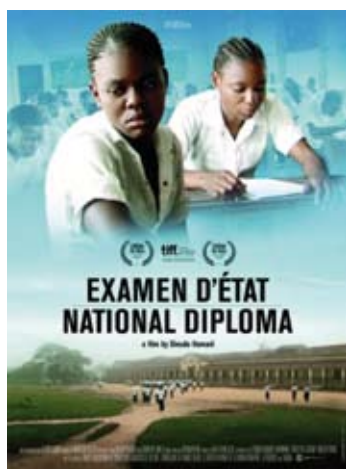
2017. Mama Colonel, 72'

- Forum Jury Prize, 2017 - Berlinale Film Festival
- Best Forum Film, Tagesspiegel Prize, 2017 Berlinale Film Festival
- Grand Prix Cinéma du Réel Paris, France
- ZIFF Award for Best Documentary - Zanzibar Int'l Film Festival
- Écran du meilleur documentaire d'Afrique centrale - Festival Ecrans Noirs de Yaoundé, Cameroun
- The Amnesty International Durban Human Rights Award - Durban International Film Festival - South Africa

- Award for Best Documentary - AMAA (Africa Movie Academy Awards) 2017

- Prix Spécial du Jury - FIFF Namur, Belgium

- Prix «Gian Paolo Paoli» pour le meilleur film Ethno-anthropologique - Festival dei Popoli 2017



2014. National Diploma, 90'

- SCAM International Prize and Potemkine Award, Cinéma of the Réel, Paris
- Grand Prix at Fidadoc Festival in Agadir, Morocco
- Grand Prix of the Documentary Film Festival of Saint-Louis, Senegal
- Grand Prix of the Cinema Festival of Alger
- Special Jury Prize, Festival International du film francophone de Namur, Belgium
- Jury Prize at Carthage Film Festival
- Special Mention, Grand Prize for Best International Feature & Women Inmates Award at the RIDM of Montreal, Canada
- Special Jury Mention at Tai'wan

International Documentary Festival, Taipei



2013. Atalaku, 62'

- Joris Ivens Award, Cinéma du Réel - Best First Film Award
- Jury Prize at Fidadoc in Agadir, Morocco
- Audience Award at the Black Movie, Geneva
- Best Foreign Film Award at San Diego Black Film Fest, USA
- Best Feature Film Award at Vues d'Afrique, Montreal, Canada
- Special Jury Mention at the FCAPA, Apt, France



2009. Ladies In Waiting «Congo in 4 Acts», 24'

- Berlinale Forum
- Pierre et Yolande Perrault Grant awarded to a young filmmaker, Cinéma du Réel, Paris
- Selection IDFA, Amsterdam

2009. Zero Tolerance, 16'

- Selection Toronto International Film Festival
- Selection IDFA, Amsterdam



INTERVIEW WITH DIEUDO HAMADI

How did this project originate ?

This project is the result of my desire to relate the story of an historical event that could have and should have taken place in 2016 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo : the peaceful transfer of power between two Congolese presidents (one leaving, one entering office). This ceremony, un-remarkable in other countries, had never happened in the Congo. It seemed quite likely, finally, to take place for the presidential election of September 2016 : President Kabila was at the end of his second and last term and had only to allow the constitution to be applied this permitting the Congo to join the march of time. Unfortunately, by choosing to hang onto power regardless of the cost, he precipitated the entire country into chaos with the outcome uncertain. The promise of a new era about to emerge was brutally replaced by a new cycle of violence, social unrest, indifferent and systematic police response to the congolese youth's hunger for democracy and the emergence of a new dictatorship.

Under which circumstances did you meet the three protagonists : Ben, Jean-Marie and Christian ?

I first met Ben, in 2013 at a « youth awareness » meeting I was invited to. He was the speaker that day and I was so impressed by his forceful speech on « self-determination and self-empowerment » that I decided to follow him for the film I was already preparing on the presidential election in the Congo.

In 2015 he took part in a protest march against changes to the constitution and as one of the leaders of the movement calling for the march he was forced into exile to escape the security services that were pursuing him.

His exile prompted me to look for other protagonists for the film,

production having just begun. That is how I met Jean-Marie and Christian, two young activists who were in fact Ben's close associates.

How long did the shooting take ?

It was long : we began late 2015 and finished early 2017. For a long time I was undecided as to the film's structure. At the start it was clear : Ben was the central character. I intended to tell his story, his fight with the situation of the country as background. Then, with him in exile I had to reorient the film around his two comrades in the struggle. Then Ben came back from exile and I decided when editing the film to keep all three of them.

The political situation is quite unpredictable. How did this uncertainty influence your approach ? Didn't that require great adaptability ?

It was indeed a real challenge and that explains why shooting was so long. At first I simply wanted to film the first peaceful transfer of power in the Congo's history as seen through the eyes of young Congolese activists. I quickly realized there would be no election and that the subject of the film needed to be modified.

That's when I centered the shooting around a different issue, a change in the constitution, which was the focus of tensions at the time. Finally, there was neither a change in the constitution nor elections, but instead, a « dialogue » (to be understood as negotiation between politicians in power and the opposition). This dialogue was facilitated by Catholic priests and, although lengthy, finally led to shared power and an extension to President Kabila's term at the head of the country. Those were a lot of unexpected developments for what was intended to be a simple easily grasped presentation.

You seem closer to your characters in this film than in your previous films. One feels a certain familiarity and mutual confidence. What were your relations during the shooting ?

We were all « fighters » demanding that the presidential election be held and that the rule of law be respected in our country. Only our means of expression differed : they had the speeches, the slogans and sometime the projectiles to attack the forces of law and order authorized

to fire real bullets, whereas I had a camera. I believe they understood my role alongside them and accepted it ; seeing me taking the same risks as them during the demonstrations certainly strengthened our relationships.

Some of them are marginal and in hiding. Wasn't it very risky for them to be the main characters in your film ?

I said something simple to them : « Your combat is difficult but necessary. I want future generations of Congolese to remember you. » They, no doubt, liked the idea.

The cancellation of the constitutionally mandatory presidential election in September 2016 produced such instability that nobody feels safe anywhere in the Congo.

Where are they today ?

Ben is back in exile. Jean Marie was just released from prison for the third time in one year and Christian has recently been imprisoned.

How do you see the political future of the DRC ?

In the film, during a meeting, you can see a man with the sign saying «The people always win». That's the perfect translation of the current mentality of many Congolese. With such a mentality I do believe that hope is possible.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

1960, June 30

Proclamation of the Independence of the Republic of the Congo. Kasa-Vubu is appointed President and Lumumba Prime Minister

1961, January 17

Assassination of Lumumba

1964, August 1

Adoption of a new flag and currency for the Democratic Republic of the Congo

1965, November 24

After a coup, Mobutu officially takes power

1971 – 1997

Decolonization Process. The territory takes the name of the Republic of Zaïre

1993

Multi-ethnic clashes, particularly between Hutu and Tutsi, in the east of the country

1996, May 17

Laurent-Désiré Kabila overthrew the Government. Zaire becomes the Democratic Republic of Congo

2001, January 16

Laurent-Désiré Kabila is assassinated, his son Joseph takes power

2003, June 30

End of the Second Congo War, which began in 1998

2006

J. Kabila wins the first democratic elections organized in the country

2011

Second elections, unfortunately tarnished by numerous frauds and irregularities

2016

The failure to hold the presidential election in September 2016, as stipulated by the constitution, provokes lethal tensions throughout the country

2017

The beginning of a transitional period that was to pave the way for the presidential election in December 2017

December 2017

Kabila refuses to leave office. Demonstrators take to the streets. Again the election is postponed until 2018

THE CONTEXT

In 2011 President Kabila of the DRC, in power since 2001, is re-elected for a second term after an election marked by massive fraud. The population immediately takes to the street in protest, but is successfully repressed by violent police and army action.

Yet the demonstrators, most of whom were young, do not admit defeat and, inspired by the spring revolts in Tunisia, Senegal and Burkina Faso, patiently build a clandestine information and training network for political activism.

Their common objective is to encourage political change of power and prevent Joseph Kabila from holding a third term of office in December 2016, which is, moreover, against the Constitution.

In the summer of 2016, Kabila's historical opponent, Etienne Tshisekedi, known as the Sphinx, returns from exile in Belgium thus precipitating the rivalries and disagreements among the grassroots movements such as Filimbi or the Fourth Way. For some, they should remain independent of all political parties, whereas for others, they need to be pragmatic and ally themselves with the opposition candidate that has the decisive human and material resources.

In September and December of 2016, dozens of demonstrators are killed as they demand that the Constitution be respected and that Kabila leave office.

On the 8th of December, under the auspices of the Congolese episcopacy, the government and the political opposition meet to try to find a compromise and an end to the political crisis. An agreement for national unity is found on January 2, 2017: the elections will be postponed till the end of the year at the latest. Kabila agrees not to run again, but will remain the head of state for the interim.

On February 1, 2017 Etienne Tshisekedi dies in Brussels at the age of 84. Félix Tshisekedi takes over the reins of the UDPS, the opposition party founded by his father.

On New Year's Eve 2017, Catholics from a "lay coordinating committee" organize marches that are once again repressed with much bloodshed even within the sacred space of churches. The organizers demand that President Kabila declare publicly that he will not be candidate to replace himself and that a "consensual electoral calendar" be finally proposed.

The elections are again postponed until December 23, 2018. To be continued..



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