



CINÉDOC FILMS & MUTOTU PRODUCTIONS PRESENT

MAMA COLONEL

A FILM BY DIEUDO HAMADI



CINÉDOC FILMS & MUTOTU PRODUCTIONS PRESENT MAMA COLONEL A FILM BY DIEUDO HAMADI ■ PHOTOGRAPHY : DIEUDO HAMADI ■ SOUND : FRANÇOIS TARIQ SARDI ■ EDITING : ANNE RENARDET ■ SOUND DESIGN : SYLVAIN GIRARDEAU ■ PRODUCER : CHRISTIAN LELONG, KIRIPI KATEMBO SIKU ■ WITH THE SUPPORT OF TÉLÉ PASEE, LYON CAPITALE TV IN ASSOCIATION WITH CNC CENTRE NATIONAL DU CINÉMA, RÉGION RHÔNE-ALPES, ORGANISATION INTERNATIONALE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE, AMBASSADE DE FRANCE DE RDC, PROCIREP / ANGOA, IDFA BERTHA FUND, SUNDANCE INSTITUTE ■ INTERNATIONAL SALES : ANDANA FILMS

MAMA COLONEL

A film by Dieudo Hamadi

Democratic Republic of the Congo / France - 2017 - 72 minutes

Image format 1.85 - Color - Sound 5.1

Produced by Cinédóc Films and Mutotu Productions

Photography Dieudo Hamadi - Sound François Tariq Sardi.

Editing Anne Renardet

International sales Andana Films



**Tagesspiegel Readers Prize
and
Ecumenical Jury Prize**

FORUM JURY PRIZE - BERLINALE

BEST FORUM FILM, TAGESSPIEGEL PRIZE - BERLINALE

GRAND PRIX CINÉMA DU RÉEL PARIS, FRANCE

AWARD FOR BEST DOCUMENTARY - AMAA (AFRICA MOVIE ACADEMY AWARDS)

BEST ACTRESS FESTIVAL DE CINE AFRICANO FCAT, SPAIN

ZIFF AWARD FOR BEST DOCUMENTARY - ZANZIBAR INT'L FILM FESTIVAL

ÉCRAN DU MEILLEUR DOCUMENTAIRE - FESTIVAL ECRANS NOIRS DE YAOUNDÉ, CAMEROUN

THE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD - DURBAN INT'L FILM FESTIVAL - SOUTH AFRICA

BERLINALE - FORUM

CINÉMA DU RÉEL, Paris France

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AGAINST GRAVITY, Warsaw Poland

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I-REPRESENT Documentary Film Forum - Nigeria

Seoul Int'l Women's Film Fest SIWFF, Korea

ZIFF - Zanzibar, Tasmania

CONGO International Film Festival

ECRANS NOIRS - Burkina Faso

ÉTONNANTS VOYAGEURS - France

VIENNALE - Austria

FIFF Namur - Belgium

DURBAN International Film Festival, South Africa

ZURICH FILM FESTIVAL, Switzerland

DOKUFEST, Prizren, Kosovo

RENCONTRES CINÉMATOGRAPHIQUES Bejaia, Algeria

GUTH GAFA, Ireland

NUREMBERG HUMAN RIGHTS Film Festival, Germany

DUHOK Film Festival, Iraqi Kurdistan

DOC-CÉVENNES, France

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SYNOPSIS

Colonel Honorine, more commonly known as « Mama Colonel », works for the Congolese police force and heads the unit for the protection of minors and the fight against sexual violence. Having worked for 15 years in Bukavu, in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, she learns she is transferred to Kisangani. There, she finds herself faced with new challenges.

Through the portrait of this extraordinarily brave and tenacious woman, who fights for justice to be done, this film addresses the issue of violence towards women and children in the DRC and the difficulty of overcoming the past war.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The context

In 2000, the Congo is rife with war. The country is split in three. The east is controlled by rebels backed by the Rwandan army. The north is controlled by other rebels backed by the Ugandan army. These two heavily armed groups and their backers converge on the west of the country – controlled by loyalist troops – in order to overthrow the Congolese government.

In May 2000, the two rebel armies which, until now, were gradually advancing to the west, met in Kisangani – the obligatory passage to the capital Kinshasa. Who would control the «strategic» city? They were unable to reach an agreement. A violent clash broke out between the Ugandan and Rwandan armies which would last six days (hence the name «6-Day War»), causing thousands of deaths and considerable infrastructural damage.

I witnessed this terrible event, as a native of Kisangani. I was still young back then, but the memories of this atrocious war have never left me. I still can't understand why there have never been, until this day, trials, reparations or a simple outcome to this «affair» which cost the lives of thousands of human beings.

By choosing to follow Colonel Honorine on her long journey between Bukavu and Kisangani, I had no idea I would have the opportunity to tell the story of this terrible war. I was even more emotionally moved to see, 15 years later, that there were women who had never restarted their life after such a long time, having lost husbands, children and all they owned. I thus seized this rare chance to highlight,

in the time of a documentary, the story of an unjust war that the majority of Congolese have chosen to forget.

The Film

This isn't a documentary about the 6-Day War. It's not a question of making an exhaustive, historical, educational film about what happened between Rwandans and Ugandans on the streets of Kisangani in 2000. It's a film about a courageous woman – Mama Colonel – who, by discovering the extreme suffering of a group of women, raped and broken by this war, decides to try to help these women to rebuild themselves and their lives. The 6-Day War is therefore treated exclusively from the point of view of Mama Colonel. Viewers discover this reality with her; they seek to understand what happened along with her; and through her eyes, they will be surprised at the gravity of the situation and of the indifference of people regarding the victims. All of this with neither narration nor interviews. The sequences are put together according to the chronology of the real, and their succession constitute the narrative of the film. Mama Colonel is always dressed in her blue police uniform when at work, but in civilian clothes when at home with her family. The shoot set-up is simple: one hand-held camera for three-quarters of the film. That way viewers will have the impression of walking the chaotic streets of Kisangani, following in the footsteps of Mama Colonel as she puts all her energy into helping the women victims of the 6-Day War and coming to the aid of children accused of witchcraft.

Dieudo Hamadi



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) and nearly 60 festivals worldwide. In 2015, *Mama Colonel* his latest film in production, received assistance in post-production from the Sundance Institute and IDFA - BerthaFund.

FILMOGRAPHY

AWARDS & FESTIVALS

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 Taiwan

International Documentary Festival, Taipei

- Selection TIFF Toronto, Canada
- Selection BFI London Film Festival, UK

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 you get the idea for the film? In which circumstances did you meet the main character?

My friend and co-producer of the film, the late Kiripi Katembo Siku, was at the start of the film. He came to see me one day and suggested imagining a film about Congolese women. I immediately thought of Colonel Honorine whom I had already met a few years earlier in Bukavu.

How did the Colonel's transfer from Bukavu to Kisangani go?

The transfert took too long. All the more so as the trip was to take place in stages (by truck, boat and then plane) which considerably lengthened the shooting.

To be able to travel, a police officer needs an official pass furnished by his or her superiors. With it he or she can travel for free in a plane or a boat. The problem is transport companies and airlines in particular are rarely in a hurry to find a place for a passenger with a pass. And when one is transferred, travelling with family and luggage, it's even more difficult.

How did the subject of the Six-Day War come into the new project?

One day, while in Maman Colonel's office, I saw a group of women, victims of that war, come to complain to her. Their stories were heart-rending. So I decided it was important to include it in the film.

Can you explain briefly the matter of witchcraft and what that has to do with the children?

Children have become witches since the State has stopped paying salaries and parents are unable to make ends meet ; since families are wondering what the cause of their poverty is and the « revivalist Churches » received the revelation of the cause of this poverty.

Unfortunately it's a widespread phenomenon throughout the Congo and it is unlikely to disappear soon.

Where is the Colonel today?

She just got transferred again, to another region of the country.

What were your filming conditions? Were people reticent to show certain in flattering images of the country?

It's always difficult to film a country with such a troubled history, whose image is as damaged as that of the Congo. But when I have a subject that really matters to me I don't ask too many questions. I follow my instinct and forge ahead.

How do you see the relationship between this film and your two previous films (Atalaku and National Diploma) that makes an assessment of your country?

Quite frankly, I don't know. I don't have enough distance yet to speak objectively of my work. What interests me and motivates me is the desire to tell stories. And the stories we tell best are those we know.

Did you shoot over a long period of time? How do you let «events» lead you?

At the beginning of every project, I choose my subject, what I want to tell and show. But there comes a time during the shooting when the subject itself chooses to lead me in one direction. Sometimes it's difficult to let go and to change direction, to go where you don't necessarily want to go. So you debate, resist, seek and in the end the film commands. Always.

I like to take my time filming. For me it's a way of experiencing the story I'm telling. But filming for a long time doesn't necessarily mean shooting all the time. Often people are surprised at how few hours of rushes I bring back considering how long I was out filming.



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 Zaire

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

2000, June 5-10

The 6-Day War

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

Beginning of a transition period that should lead to the organization of the presidential election in December 2017

6-DAY WAR

During the Second Congo War, from June 5 to 10, 2000, a confrontation between the Ugandan and Rwandan troops took place, holding the population of Kisangani under the fire of these ravages: massacres, looting, rapes. Considered to be the city of martyrdom, then renamed City of Hope, Kisangani still bears in her the abuse of the Six Day War. Although the United Nations has recognized the Kisangani massacre as a war crime, the Governments of Uganda, Rwanda and even the Congo remain silent in the face of this situation. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has found Uganda guilty of violations committed in the territory, and despite claims for compensation, no compensation has been paid for human and material losses. Instead of appealing, Kisangani preferred to shut up and renounce his rights in order to privilege his relations with Kampala, the Ugandan capital.

This war sank into a forgetfulness leaving the victims to their fate. No national commemoration takes place on June 5, only an association has been created, the Association of victims of the Six-Day War.





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