

Ngwenya, o crocodilo (Ngwenya, the crocodile)

Isabel Noronha. 2007. Documentary. Mozambique. 90 min. Portuguese.



© Isabel Noronha

Debate with **Camilo de Sousa**, filmmaker, photojournalist and film producer, **Ana Mafalda Leite**, researcher at CEsa/CSG/ISEG/ULisboa and **João Pina-Cabral**, anthropologist and researcher at ICS/ULisboa.

Synopsis

One day, Xiluwa - Isabel - met Cecília, Malangatana Valente's daughter, at school. Going to her friend's house, she saw the painter's drawings and paintings and thought he could translate into words the sensorial universe to which she knew she belonged but could not name. She then kept the promise that Malangatana would one day take her to that magical place. Thirty years later, she went on, together with him, in search of the keys to understanding Mozambican traditions, in particular the mythical ronga universe, of which Malangatana and his ancestors were part. Accompanying him, he travelled between sensitive memories and ancient recollections, night fears and mysterious stories, erotic memories and the heat of the campfire. At each stage of the journey, she captured the dreamlike contours and infinite colours of Malangatana's sacred world.



Prizes

Milan Film Festival, 2009: "Window to the World" Prize - Best Documentary from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

“*In Isabel Noronha's documentary, not only camera and object are in orchestration. Camera and subject(s) also harmonize and express emotions that reach the viewers (...). The cinematographic gaze traces the affective paths of individual and collective memory of the painter and of Isabel. It enters the mythical and sacred past of the Master, also a poet and healer. It brings alive, from the filmmaker's early childhood, both the memory of the black nanny who lovingly cradled her to the sound of traditional songs, and the fascination and fear experienced, as a child, before the monsters drawn by the painter.*”

Carmen Tindó Secco

Technical Credits

Cast: André Ngwenya

Jaime Tina

Inês Lobo

Palmira Magule

Obelino Mabjaia

Belmiro Magule

Joaneta Ngwenya

Percina Ngwenya

Champelino Ngwenya

Mia Couto

António Forjaz

Louka Guedes

Producer: Camilo de Sousa

Photography and Camera: Karl Sousa

João Costa

Sound: Gabriel Mondlane

Valente Dimande

Micas Cumba

Editing: José Nascimento

Assistant Director: Alcía Ferreira

Field Production: Momade Mussá

Music: Chico antónio Amável

Suggestions for reading/watching about the original idea:

Carmen T. Secco, (2016) Uma viagem pela vida e obra de Malangatana Valente: cinema, pintura, literatura. Revista Cerrados, n. 41, 288-295, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/231182175.pdf>

Gabriel Dottling Dias (2021) Mergulhar no sonho: notas sobre Ngwenya, o crocodilo, de Isabel Noronha, e O beijo da palavrinha, de Mia Couto, Revista AbeÁfrica, v. 5, n.5, <https://revistas.ufrj.br/index.php/abeafrica/article/view/45102>

Carmen T. Secco; Ana Mafalda Leite; Luís Carlos Patraquim (2019) Cinegrafias moçambicanas. São Paulo: Kapulana.