68 Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin
Generation

SUPA MODO

HEROES LIVE FOREVER

ONE FINE DAY FILMS IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH GINGER INK FILMS AFRICA IN ASSOCIATION WITH DW AKADEMIE PRESENTS STYCIE WAWERU MARRIANNE NUNGO NYAWARA NDAMBIA IN SUPA MODO CINEMATOGRAPHER ENOS OLIK SUPERVISING CINEMATOGRAPHER VOLKER TITTEL PRODUCTION DESIGNER NEHA MANOJ SHAH SUPERVISING PRODUCTION DESIGNER ULI HANISCH LAURIKA VENTER EDITOR CHARITY KURIA SUPERVISING EDITOR CHRISTIAN KRÄMER ORIGINAL MUSIC SEAN PEEVERS SUPERVISING SCREENPLAY NATJA BRUNCKHORST IAN MASTERS SUPERVISING DIRECTOR CLAUDIA PRIETZEL PRODUCED BY SARIKA HEMI LAKHANI SIOBHAIN "GINGER" WILSON TOM TYKWER MARIE STEINMANN-TYKWER GUY WILSON WRITTEN BY MUGAMBI NTHIGA SILAS MIAMI WANJERI GAKURU KAMAU WANDUNG'U

DIRECTED BY LIKARION WAINAINA

FILM WORK SHOP · ONE FINE DAY FILMS · GINGER INK FILMS AFRICA · DW Akademie · BMZ Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development · ARRI FILM & TV · RUSHLAKE MEDIA* GmbH · thefestival agency · GÖHDE FOUNDATION

Artwork by Ng'endo Mukii

SUPA MODO

Kenya / Germany – 2018 – 74 minutes – Cinemascope - 24fps – DCP

Swahili, English & Kikuyu with English and German subtitles

Festivals and Bookings

THE FESTIVAL AGENCY, Paris

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International Sales

RUSHLAKE MEDIA, Cologne

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

Jo, a witty 9-year old terminally ill girl is taken back to her rural village to live out the rest of her short life. Her only comfort during these dull times are her dreams of being a Superhero, which prove to be something her rebellious teenage sister Mwix, overprotective mother Kathryn and the entire village of Maweni think they can fulfill.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Jo, a witty 9-year old girl who is terminally ill with cancer, loves films and superheroes. She is utterly taken in by the films that Mike, a local VJ, screens at the children's hospital to entertain the kids. One day, her mother Kathryn takes her home from hospital, to live out her last days. Her sister Mwix protests this decision but their mother is adamant. Jo is stuck at home with nothing to do but play by herself since her age friends are all in school.

Mwix, sensing her sister's loneliness, gives her hope by pretending that Jo has superpowers. Jo, at first, does not believe her but Mwix is very convincing. As they play, Mwix makes sure that Jo understands that Kathryn can never know anything about these games.

What starts off with Jo and Mwix as a simple game with "moving" table salt ,progresses to "freezing" her friends at a football game. Mwix thinks that it's working great and starts to involve more people in the scheme she believes is giving her sister a chance to enjoy her last days.

Mike warns Mwix that their little game will turn sour if she doesn't stop it. Mwix tells him that "there is no harm in a little pretending", but Mike tells on Mwix and takes Kathryn to the scene of the latest stunt. However, the stunt goes a little too far when Jo, in an attempt to stop a speeding vehicle, narrowly survives being run over. Kathryn is furious.

Jo runs from the scene to the cliff where her dead father used to take her. Kathryn and Mwix find her there and Jo reveals to them that she always knew that she didn't really have powers, but went along because it seemed to make everyone happy. Asking Jo what her wish is, she tells Kathryn and Mxix that he biggest dream is to make a superhero movie. Determined to make this dream come true and to give Jo hope again, Kathryn enlists the help of the entire village for a major plot…

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

People always asked me "Why do you want to make this film?", "What is your intention?" And I always answered "I just want to tell an honest story… to make a film with no pretenses… no manipulations… a film that, in its purest form, bears its soul to you." That was always the mechanical response I gave; it sounded good on paper. Besides it was a very personal story I was making. So when I embarked to develop this story, I drew heavily from my childhood. I drew from that time when I was 9 years old and I had my first cinema experience in an old shack at the edge of Kibera Slums in Kenya.

I saw Jackie Chan star in "Legend of the drunken Master" and right there and then I knew I wanted to make films. From that moment onwards, Films became my solace. Every Saturday I would go back to that shack and for 3 shillings per movie, I would let my mind be transported to other worlds. Worlds that gave me hope, excitement and fear.

I also drew from my relationship with my mother; a single Mum raising 4 kids. In our eyes she was the strongest person we knew but one day I walked past her room and I heard her cry. She was broken and hurt but she had to play strong for her kids. That led me to draw heavily from when I was a teenager and I would argue with my mother, and how I

would yell that I can't wait to leave her as soon as I turned 18. Not knowing that it would have killed her.

Yes Likarion, channel that last part into the small child in your film and the cancer would be symbolic of you leaving your mother when you turn 18.

Yes Likarion, turn that time your family was homeless and you were too afraid to turn to the community for help.

Yes, turn all that into a story.

As I wove this story, poured it all in a treatment and got the writers in to take it to the next level, I never truly answered why I really wanted to make this film. That was the case until a month to filming.

I had the pleasure of visiting Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi. Ward 1E, the special unit where children with terminal illnesses reside. I went expecting the worst but I was greeted by the most heartwarming, kindest children you will ever meet. There was so much life in that small ward. We chatted, laughed, cheered and shared precious moments with them.

Before we left, we played a game with the children. We were to each write what we want on a piece of paper and they would all be anonymously read out loud the following week. The children were excited and wrote everything from fast cars to meeting the President. Almost all of them wished to get better and go home except for this young child who sat next to me.

He was shy and a bit withdrawn. He didn't want me to see what he wrote on his paper but after a little charm and persuasion, he slowly allowed me to have a peek. A part of me wishes I didn't see. All this young child wanted was a helicopter, more *Chapatis* and for his mum to be happy. You see this brave young soul already knew he won't live long. He just wanted his mother to be happy… Her Sadness was the only thing he couldn't live with.

That emotional blow hit me and I staggered to my house, that night I cried… I stared at the script and I cried some more because I was so caught up with Directing, getting the story structure right with the writers, thinking about how to make the cinematography amazing, that I forgot that this character that I had created for this film, that I thought

embodies who I was growing up was actually a real person at ward 1E and I was too selfish to realize that. I had dishonored those children. I had dishonered that young soul who sat beside me. I lay in bed that evening, ashamed. Thinking of how I shall relay to the producers that I don't want to make this film anymore.

But when I woke up the next morning,I realized that I finally had an intention for making this film. So why do I want to make this film? I just want to tell an honest story. To make a film with no pretenses; no manipulations. A film that in its purest form bears its soul, because someone somewhere has lost someone. Death has snatched that someone from you but you know that they would want you to be happy. You can be happy. Do not fear death, fear not enjoying life. The Heroes at ward 1E are enjoying theirs. So everything since that day, from the shaping of the characters, to the cinematography, to my directing, to the post production; everything I have done for this film is in honor of those little amazing angels at Ward 1E. They are the Heroes who will live forever… They are SUPA MODO.

BIOGRAPHIES

LIKARION WAINAINA (DIRECTOR)

Likarion Wainaina is a Kenyan Filmmaker born in Moscow, Russia, who lives and works in Nairobi, Kenya. He is marking his seventh year working as a professional Film/TV Director and Cinematographer. In this time he has gathered a wealth of experience and showcased his talents in various productions. As a cinematographer he has also worked on a number of documentaries and commercials and has directed TV shows - both Drama and Sitcoms - that are currently gracing local TV stations in Kenya and Television commercials as well. He has done a number of short films. His film BETWEEN THE LINES, being one of his first short films, later became the first Kenyan Film to be projected on an IMAX screen in Kenya and got him a nomination at the AMCVA awards 2015 for "Best New Online Media". His most recent Short Film endeavour was taking part at the 48Hour Film Festival 2015 where he and his team worked on the film BAIT, which was selected as one of the top short films screened at the Cannes Film Festival (2016).

STYCIE WAWERU (JO)

Acting has always been Stycie's passion. Before being discovered by Likarion Wainaina to act as Jo in SUPA MODO, she had already featured in several school plays as well as she is a regular participant at the Kenya Music Festival, an annual event where she competes in reciting poems and traditional dance.

MARRIANNE NUNGO (KATHERYN)

Marrianne Nungo has committed to building a strong reputation as one of the top actresses in the Kenyan Entertainment and Film Industry. Known for her finely horned acting skills, versatility, beautiful hoarse voice and a big infectious laughter she has gained recognition and respect and won numerous awards. Thriving both on screen and stage performances, Nungo has been blessed to grace theatre stages all over Africa. She was the Kenyan representative in the COP-17 Climate Change Performance in Durban South Africa in 2011, Ubumuntu Arts Festival in Kigali, Rwanda in 2016 and Visa2Dance Festival in Tanzania. At home in Nairobi she continues to charm the audiences with her gifts in some of our very own productions; Purposely emptying herself time and time again.

NYAWARA NDAMBIA (MWIX)

Nyawara Ndambia started out acting for the fun and excitement of recounting tales and events and portraying other characters. She started acting while in high school where she did her first play and feature film. Her elder sister introduced her to The Phoenix Players in Kenya where she started her professional acting career. Her first play '*Roots of shame, seeds of pain*' was her biggest stage debut where she got to work with the likes of Millicent Ogutu and Marrianne Nungo and immediately got the opportunity to work with Likarion Wainaina, Brian Munene and Bruce Makau of Kibanda Pictures doing her first short film BEFORE AND AFTER. Since then she has been in various feature films like the MNET series movies LOST INNOCENCE and STELLA , TV ads, local TV series, film festival projects and web series working with production houses such as Insignia and The Nest Collective. Other than acting, she enjoys various outdoor activities and live performances.

MUGAMBI NTHIGA (HEAD WRITER)

Mugambi is a Kenyan-based writer, actor and director. He landed his first acting gig at age 5, but the adventure really began when he found himself jobless in America during the 2008 recession.

He joined Philadelphia's acting scene, appearing in independent stage plays and short films, and telling stories about American history to tourists in the summer. On returning to Nairobi he landed principal roles in M-Net's pan-African TV drama CHANGES, and the celebrated Kenyan films NAIROBI HALF LIFE and STORIES OF OUR LIVES. After co-writing a series of musical plays, he went on to create, co-write and co-direct GROOVE THEORY, a musical drama TV series that ran for two seasons on regional cable TV.

In 2014, he curated and directed '*Stories From The Mall*', a stage tribute to the 2013 Westgate terrorist attack, and in 2015 he co-wrote KATI KATI by Mbithi Masya. KATI *KATI* premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival 2016 where it won the FIPRESCI Prize.

He's most recently been seen on 'Because You Said So', a comedy improv group which hosts sold-out shows every other month, on OH-BAMA a satirical web series produced in Nairobi and Los Angeles, and NEW BEGINNINGS, a drama series airing across Africa. He is currently pursuing a certificate course in film studies at the FilmAkademie Baden-Württemberg in Ludwigsburg while creating more stories, and incessantly looking for acting work.

ENOS OLIK (CINEMATOGRAPHER)

Enos Olik is a Kenyan Music Video Director, Filmmaker, Editor, Visual Effect Artist and Lover of Art. He started out as a musician, then turning to photography until he discovered his heart lay in music video production. In 2017 he was nominated for the Africa Music Awards as Best Video Director Africa. Having produced and directed music videos for most major artists in Africa, he ventured into filmmaking, directing various TV productions in Kenya. That's where his love and passion for film started. He worked with upcoming directors and indie film makers in Kenya as a cinematographer and editor. Meanwhile he obtained a degree in Commerce from The University of Nairobi and also holds a certificate in 3D animation. Enos now is working on individual film and indie projects which are slated to be released next year.

THE PROJECT

Following the success of feature film SOUL BOY, ONE FINE DAY FILMS and Kenyan-based production company GINGER INK partnered with DW AKADEMIE to design a two-module training initiative: ONE FINE DAY FILM Workshops.

The first module, a classroom-like "mini film school", deepens and expands the skill set and cinematic language of already practicing African filmmakers. It widens cinematic perspectives, exposure and vocabulary.

Treasuring African Stories and wanting to enable talented filmmakers from the continent to reach a larger amount of viewers is what ONE FINE DAY FILMS are working for.

In 2012, the second feature film to come out of the ONE FINE DAY FILM Workshops, NAIROBI HALF LIFE by Tosh Gitonga, was the first ever Kenyan entry to the Oscars. In 2018 KATI KATI has also been selected to compete within the Oscars Best Foreign Language Film Award category.

The story idea for SUPA MODO was first introduced to the Producers of ONE FINE DAY FILMS and GINGER INK by Likarion Wainaina in January 2017 during a script development workshop. Four writers, namely Mugambi Nthiga, Silas Miami, Wanjeri Gakuru and Kamau Wandung'u, successfully took on the challenge to come up with a script that was to be shot just five month later in July 2017.

Twelve international film professionals travelled to Kenya to mentor almost 100 pan-africans filmmakers while shooting SUPA MODO in the outskirts of Nairobi.

In cooperation with the GOEHDE FOUNDATION the Kenyan film music composer Sean Peevers was invited to Germany in January 2018 to rehearse and record the film music together with the JUNGE ORCHESTER NRW.

THE PARTNERS

SUPA MODO is the result of a joint training initiative of ONE FINE DAY FILMS, DW AKADEMIE and GINGER INK FILMS AFRICA.

The production of SUPA MODO has kindly been supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation (BMZ), the Goehde Foundation and ARRI Media.

CAST

Jo	STYCIE WAWERU
Kathryn	MARRIANNE NUNGO
Mwix	NYAWARA NDAMBIA
Mike	JOHNSON FISH CHEGE
Pato	HUMPHREY MAINA

CREW

Directed by	LIKARION WAINAINA
Original Screenplay by	MUGAMBI NTHIGA
	SILAS MIAMI
	WANJERI GAKURU
	KAMAU WANDUNG'U
Based on a Story by	LIKARION WAINAINA
Produced by	SARIKA HEMI LAKHANI
	SIOBHAIN "GINGER" WILSON
	TOM TYKWER
	MARIE STEINMANN-TYKWER
	GUY WILSON
Cinematography by	ENOS OLIK
Production Design by	NEHA MANOJ SHAH

Edited by CHARITY KURIA

Costume by SCOLASTICA NAMWAI

Make-up by VICTOR MURIGI

Original Music by SEAN PEEVERS

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Format	ALEXA
Ratio	Cinemascope
Sound	5.1 Surround
Running Time	74 minutes
Country of origin	Kenya, Germany
Date of Production	2018

CONTACTS

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