



REDCAT

AMP THE PLAY
NTARE GUMA MBAHO MWINE
A MISSIONARY POSITION

JUNE 28 – 30, 2012 8:30 PM
JULY 1, 2012 7:00 PM

presented by
REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater
California Institute of the Arts

CALARTS

NTARE GUMA MBAHO MWINE

A MISSIONARY POSITION

Written, directed, performed and shot by Ntare Guma Mbaho Mwine

Direction and dramaturgy by Emily Hoffman

Video design by Carole Kim

Light design by Tiffany Williams

ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Audio engineer: Mikhail Davies

Uganda National Anthem sung by Somi

Additional footage shot by Julius Amedume

Hair and makeup: Wamuhu Waweru

Stage Manager: Jennifer Sears

Crew: Kenny Valera

Executive producer: Anonymous

Associate producers: Clarke Peters, Elizabeth Cuthrell and Nyambi Nyambi

All of the news items projected during *A Missionary Position* are real. The rest of the footage was shot by Mwine in Uganda. Almost all of the words of the characters come directly from interviews -- each of the four characters takes a particular individual as its model, but the text is a composite of many interviewees. So often in the press, individuals in dire circumstance are flattened, their voices restricted to a single, plaintive key. *A Missionary Position* is an attempt to hear some of those voices in a fuller register, to let the story emerge from the mouths of the people who are living it.

SPECIAL THANKS

Research for the project was made possible in part to Icebreakers Uganda, Freedom and Roam Uganda, Rainbow Health Uganda, Sexual Minorities Uganda and The Law, Gender & Sexuality Research Project at the Makerere University School of Law.

A Missionary Position was also made possible in part by the CCI ARC grant and from the generous contributions of Nicole Arbusto, Dan Attias, Eric Bowers, Kim Dickens, Danny Dimian, Timothy Erickson, Ken Foster, Danai Gurira, Fred Hamilton, Taslim van Hattum, Gavin Irwin, Mark Jarvis, Nankunda Katangaza, Mari Kornhauser, Seith Mann, Alex Metcalf, Lucia Micarelli, Nancy Shelby, Alison Smerchinski, Michelle Thompson, Wamuhu Waweru, Sonia Williamson-Kelley.

A brief Q & A will follow the performance and conversation will continue in the lounge.

PROGRAM NOTE

In 2005, Ugandan police entered lesbian activist Victor Mukasa's house without a warrant, seized documents, arrested her and her partner, Yvonne Oyoo, whom they strip-searched and fondled, and finally released the couple without filing any charges.

Everyone expected Mukasa and Oyoo to lie low after the attack. Instead, the activists brought a suit against the Attorney General of Uganda. Though it took three years, in 2008 the High Court issued a shocking ruling in favor of the pair: the decision stated that the police had violated the plaintiffs' constitutional rights, rights which extend to all citizens, LGBT or straight, regardless of the legal status of homosexuality in Uganda.

The radical victory did not get much attention from the press, but the cascade of negative reactions, which resulted in the proposal of the notorious Anti-Homosexuality Bill in 2009, did. The Bill, proposed by MP David Bahati, sets the punishment for homosexuality at life imprisonment and assigns the death penalty for "aggravated homosexuality" (which includes repeat offenders and those who are HIV positive). The Bill also criminalizes all association with homosexuality, demanding that all those who know of the existence of a homosexual turn him or her in within 24 hours, or face up to three years in prison.

Western intervention has had mixed effects. For the past decade, anti-gay American Evangelical groups have pushed their agenda in Uganda with workshops, rallies, and aid money (MP David Bahati is the head of the Ugandan chapter of the American Evangelical group The Family); the proposal of the Bill can be understood as a logical end-result of their work, though most of the groups' leaders deny the link and have issued lukewarm condemnations of the legislation. Strong opposition by the U.S. State Department and a number of European countries, coupled with a threat by British Prime Minister Gordon Brown to cut aid money to Uganda, led to the tabling of the Bill in the Ugandan Parliament. However, the Bill has since been reintroduced and, should it come to a vote, will likely pass, according to LGBT activists. Proponents of the Bill now argue that the West has tried to buy immorality from Uganda in a sort of neo-colonial power play, and say they would rather live in poverty than in sin.

Bahati and his supporters have gotten a tremendous amount of airtime, both in Uganda and abroad. What has remained more hidden is the struggle Ugandan LGBT activists are waging against them. Another landmark case came in January 2011, when the courts ruled against *Rolling Stone* newspaper for its public outing campaign-- which named "top homos," printed their photos, and even provided home addresses. The three LGBT activists who brought the case after being named in the press were each awarded approximately U.S. \$600 in damages. One of the activists, David Kato, whose name had appeared under a banner that read "Hang them," was murdered later that month.

The community has continued its struggle undeterred. Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG) is currently suing American Evangelical Pastor Scott Lively in United States Federal Court for inciting violence against LGBT individuals in Uganda. Jacqueline Kasha Nabagesera (who appears in *A Missionary Position*) is suing Simon Lokodo, the Ugandan Ethics Minister, for closing down an LGBT workshop. Nabagesera was listed in Newsweek as one of the 150 Most Fearless Women of 2011 and that year received the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders, the most prestigious human rights award. She was the first gay rights activist to do so.

The court cases are only the most public form of protest. When Ntare Guma Mbaho Mwine travelled to his native Uganda in 2009, he found a thriving community of remarkable individuals who had organized to create offices, a health center, a bar, who were, in short, living their lives. Compiled from interviews made over the course of five months, *A Missionary Position* is a partial document of some of those lives. It is a snapshot of a particular historical moment that is unfolding as we speak, and of some of the people that have found themselves at its epicenter. In a way, it is a case study in a certain kind of bravery, a portrait of resistance in some of its many incarnations.

If you are interested in learning more, you can follow the work of these organizations:

Sexual Minorities Uganda pushes for the protection and human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Ugandans.

Icebreakers Uganda recently opened the first LGBT clinic in Uganda.

Freedom and Roam Uganda launched the Hate No More campaign.

St. Paul's Reconciliation and Equality Center, founded by Bishop Senyonjo, an influential ally of the LGBT community, is the first LGBT/Straight alliance center.

Anonymous Ugandan gay bloggers <http://sebaspace.wordpress.com/> and <http://gayuganda.blogspot.com/>

Join the conversation about *A Missionary Position* on Twitter: @CalartsREDCAT#AMPtheplay

BIOGRAPHIES

Ntare Guma Mbaho Mwine: Theatre credits include leading roles at The Public Theater, The Steppenwolf Theatre, The Kennedy Center, The Lincoln Center and Center Theatre Group; Playwriting credits include *Biro*, which held premieres in Uganda, London, New York, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Seattle, Zimbabwe, Los Angeles and Toronto. TV credits include recurring roles on HBO's series *Treme*, *Heroes*, *The Riches*, *ER* and *CSI*; and the feature films *Blood Diamond* and *40*. Ntare's photographic work has featured in *Vanity Fair* and exhibited at Mojo Gallery Dubai, Blue Sky Gallery, The United Nations, Rush Arts Gallery, the UCLA Fowler Museum, The Latino Art Museum, Museum Africa Johannesburg and has been featured on HBO's *Six Feet Under*. Film directing credits include *Beware of Time*, which won Best Film at Berlin Black International Film Festival. Ntare also contributed footage to the documentary film *Call Me Kuchu*, which won the Best Documentary Film Award at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2012. Ntare received his MFA in Acting from New York University and completed studies at The Moscow Arts Theatre in Russia, The Royal National Theatre in London and The University of Virginia. He is an Adjunct Professor at USC. He has also taught at Yale University and taught theatre and film artists in more than a dozen countries in Africa.

Emily Hoffman is a director, dramaturg, and writer who has worked on staff at American Conservatory Theater and The Public Theater. She graduated from Yale with a BA in English Language and Literature and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. In 2008, she received the Andrew Solomon Research Fellowship in LGBT Studies to conduct a study of contemporary queer performance in London, New York, and San Francisco. Her original works include a performance investigation into the history of gender, sexuality, and the 20th century university, entitled *The Student Body*. Most recently, she served as assistant director for Wajdi Mouawad's *Scorched* at A.C.T.

Carole Kim is an interdisciplinary artist with a focus on live video performance and performance-based video installation. She seeks an integration of media where moving image, sound, live presence and space are on equal planes engaging in a dynamic reciprocating and mutually supportive dialogue. She has exhibited and performed widely in the US and abroad. Her work has been supported by the Irvine Foundation, the NEA, Durfee Foundation, REDCAT, UCIRA, The Getty Center, SASSAS, Newtown, Turbulence.org, California Institute of the Arts, and CEAIT.