

Mon Jan 31 | 8:30 PM

Jack H. Skirball Series

In-theater and virtual screening

Theater tickets \$12/9 members; virtual: \$10/8 member

To get tickets, visit: [Petna Ndaliko Katondolo](#)

Films by Petna Ndaliko Katondolo

Petna Ndaliko Katondolo, born in Goma, DR Congo, is a filmmaker, educator, and ecological activist. His multi-genre artistic works are acclaimed for their decolonial Africanfuturistic style, which engages historical content to address contemporary sociopolitical and cultural issues. The evening comprises the first two parts of his Triptych in progress, a project of recoding aesthetics – a representational practice rooted in Ndaliko Katondolo's indigenous understanding of time and space. *Matata* (2019) draws up an inventory of Africa and the legacy of its representations; *Kapita* (2021) is inspired by the official job title given to Congolese charged with enforcing their white master's bidding over their fellow Congolese. These two films are followed by Ndaliko Katondolo's latest completed piece, *Kumbuka*, which premiered at the Rotterdam International Film Festival.

"*Matata* first and foremost shares questions about how a decomposed colonial gaze could constitute itself. It resists a purely critical approach, understanding that critique cannot but center its own object. Instead, the artist proposes a communal and reparative approach by imagining an elsewhere beyond entanglements with the colonial gaze.... A genderless angel dances elegantly within a white-walled museum filled with posters arranged along a colonialist timeline and finally turns toward the wooden structure of a windowless window frame." – True Africa

"Instead of reproducing aesthetics of (ostensible) transparency, *Kapita* makes the window itself visible, as a reality of a representation that lies about colonization as a philanthropic and civilizing project, and the reality of an extractivism that reduces humans to function and form and ultimately annihilates them. Human functions and forms are melted and molded like copper is melt and molded." – Matthias De Groof

"*Kapita* seizes the very images that have stereotyped and de-humanized the Congolese, and resets them to chart a new path forward."
– *Artmatters.info*

Special thanks to Rebecca Baron and David Dinnell.

Special thanks to the Rotterdam International Film Festival.

Program

First two parts of the Triptych:

Matata (2019), *Kapita* (2020) and *Yira* (est. 2022) comprise a triptych predicated on the visionary Alkebulan filmmaker Petna Ndaliko Katondolo's project of recoding aesthetics. "Recoding aesthetics is a representational practice rooted in my own indigenous understanding of time and space, in which the yesterday of tomorrow is linked to the tomorrow's yesterday; it is equally rooted in a relationship to the natural world that is predicated on reciprocity rather than extraction. The point of this aesthetic practice is to interrupt the narrative of modernity not only by seeking, mourning, and commemorating the invisible, but proposing modes of storytelling that emancipate indigenous memory, imagination, and future possibility."

Matata, 34 min (2019), DCP/ProRes

Matata draws up an inventory of Africa and the legacy of its representations: A photoshoot takes an unexpected turn, spiraling into a series of dance-inspired dreamscapes, historical fragments, and the external, awakening world. From the outset, photography, and with it, cinema, are as much a predatory technique as an instrument of beauty: ethnographic documents filmed by the colonizer, or historical images of those who played a part in decolonization, now dead and neutralized in museums... Faced with this history of exploitation, bodies resist. Rhythm, color and movements, being more than just the film's subjects, lead *Matata* away from prescribed representations of Africa into a new future.

Kapita, 22 min (2020), DCP/ProRes

"Ka-pi-ta" is the official job title given to Congolese charged with enforcing their white master's bidding—through domination—over their fellow Congolese on plantations, in factories, in commerce, and other sites of capitalist extraction and production.

From one perspective, this history of exploitation in Congo is well documented from the colonial era to the present. There are a wealth of images of the copper and cobalt mines that fueled the industrial revolution, of the coltan and niobium mines that fuel the electronic revolution. But even in their efforts to reveal violence, such images often render the engines of exploitation invisible. By recoding archival footage and intertwining it with contemporary images, *Kapita* exposes patterns of extraction and burial to decode colonial representations—and exploitation—of central African land and people and mines the archival films for what they make invisible: the

black-skinned workers evaporated by cameras calibrated to white, the collateral death and destruction interred in infrastructure.

REDCAT spectators have had the opportunity of first discovering *Kapita* last fall in the program "Mur Murs" curated by Rebecca Baron and David Dinnell... and the film deserves a second viewing!

Kumbuka, 60 min (2022), DCP/ProRes

Kumbuka is a multi-dimensional film that confronts the history and legacy of colonial views of Africa. It tells the story of two emerging African filmmakers as they struggle to re-edit the acclaimed yet controversial film shot by Joris Ivens in Congo. Interspersed with their story are two contradictory collections of archival footage, which provide a meta-critique both of the colonial project and of the Africanfuturistic movement that is growing in Congo in the wake of the ongoing project of Recoding Aesthetics.

Artist's Biography

Petna Ndaliko Katondolo, born in Goma, DR Congo, is a filmmaker, educator, and ecological activist who lives between his hometown and Chapel Hill, USA. His multi-genre artistic works are known for their decolonial Africanfuturistic artistic style, which engages historical content to address contemporary sociopolitical and cultural issues. In 2000, he founded Yole!Africa, a non-profit organization that serves as a hub for education and social innovation for artists, civil society leaders, and journalists in the east of Congo. In 2005 he founded the ISHANGO an ecological and storytelling festival (formerly known as the Salaam Kivu International Film Festival). In addition to serving as Artistic Director of both Yole!Africa and the ISHANGO Festival, Ndaliko Katondolo also teaches and consults regularly for international organizations, addressing contemporary social and political inequity among marginalized groups through culture and education.

The Jack H. Skirball Series is organized by Bérénice Reynaud and Eduardo Thomas and funded in part by the Ostrovsky Family Fund.