

**an International Film Circuit release
of a Liro Films Production**



A film by Lisa and Rob Fruchtman

National Publicity Contact:

Adam Segal

adam@the2050group.com

(202) 422-4673

Distribution Contact:

Wendy Lidell

wlidell@infoc.us

212-777-5690

San Francisco Publicity Contact:

Karen Larsen

larsenassc@aol.com

(415) 957-1205

US • 2012 • 84 mins • 16:9 • 5.1 Stereo • NR
In English and Kinyarwanda w/eng st • All Digital Formats

<http://www.sweetdreamsrwanda.com/>
downloadable images: <http://sweetdreamsrwanda.com/info/press/>

SWEET DREAMS

LOG LINE:

A remarkable group of Rwandan women defies the devastation of the genocide to form the country's first all-female drumming troupe and open the country's first ice cream shop.

SHORT SYNOPSIS:

Ingoma Nshya is Rwanda's first and only all women's drumming troupe. Made up of women from both sides of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, the troupe offers a place of support, healing and reconciliation. When the group decides to partner with two young American entrepreneurs, Jennie Dundas and Alexis Miesen of Brooklyn's Blue Marble Ice Cream, and open Rwanda's first ever ice cream shop, these remarkable Rwandan women embark on a journey of independence, peace and possibility. SWEET DREAMS interweaves intimate, heart-wrenching stories with joyous and powerful music to present a moving portrait of a country in transition.

LONG SYNOPSIS:

Powerful sounds pierce the silence of the Rwandan countryside. Curious children gawk outside the gate. This is something new in Rwanda—a group of women, 60 strong, pounding out rhythms of power and joy.

In 1994 Rwanda suffered a devastating genocide. Close to a million minority Tutsis were killed by neighbors, friends, even family. Horror swept the land. And when it was over, those who remained were broken, dead inside. The country has made great strides in economic recovery, but "people are not like roads and buildings" says Kiki Katese, pioneering Rwandan theater director. "How do we rebuild a human being?" Kiki decided to start *Ingoma Nshya*, Rwanda's first and only women's drumming troupe, open to women from both sides of the conflict. There was only one requirement: to leave the categories of the past at the gate.

For Marta, a Hutu whose Tutsi husband was killed; Seraphine, who was eight when she lost her whole family; Regine, whose parents are killers, in prison as perpetrators - the troupe has been a place to begin to live again, to build new relationships, to heal the wounds of the past. Yet the struggle to survive and provide for their families still persists.

So when Kiki came up with the idea to open Rwanda's first and only ice cream shop, the women were intrigued. What was ice cream exactly and how would they do it? Kiki invited Jennie Dundas and Alexis Miesen of Brooklyn's Blue Marble Ice Cream to come to Rwanda to help the drummers open their shop, which they aptly named *Inzozu Nziza* (Sweet Dreams).

SWEET DREAMS follows this remarkable group of Rwandan women as they emerge from the devastation of the genocide to create a future of hope and possibility for themselves. For Kiki, "Reconciliation is not just about two peoples. People have to reconcile with themselves, with happiness, with life."

SWEET DREAMS

DIRECTORS' STATEMENT:

"Ice Cream, Coffee, Dreams"

That's what it says on the sign of the shop called Inzozu Nziza (Sweet Dreams) in the small town of Butare, Rwanda. Rewind to 2010, when we first heard about Kiki, the drummers and the unusual project unfolding half a world away.

What we knew of Rwanda was the devastation of 1994 Genocide – 800,000 minority Tutsis killed in one hundred days, many by those they knew, neighbors and friends. How, we asked ourselves, was it possible for Rwandans to move forward from that? And how did drumming and ice cream fit in? We got on a plane to Rwanda to find out.

When we landed in Rwanda, we saw a country of contrasts - a beautiful land that is also an impoverished one: a country where the exciting strides of economic development are coupled with trauma and tremendous sadness. The mandate of the government is for Hutus and Tutsis to rebuild the country together, yet can this really be done without somehow rebuilding the spirits which were shattered? Both the drumming and ice cream projects embody the idea that Rwandans need not only the means to survive, but also the means to live...ways to reconnect with joy, hope and previously unimagined possibilities.

Over the course of a year and a half we returned to Rwanda four times - each time filming another facet of the story.

Following the women together in rehearsal and performance, we experienced the beauty and transformative power of their drumming. In intimate interviews we entered their lives and came to understand their painful histories.

We filmed the emergence of the women as budding entrepreneurs, their struggles to build their cooperative, their delight as they learn to make and taste ice cream for the first time. And when the cohesion of the group is threatened by the difficulties inherent in starting a business, we saw the tensions lurking within the society and the group begin to emerge. During April, the national month of mourning, the country is plunged into a dark time as the trauma of the past fills the present.

While other films have documented the atrocity of the Rwandan genocide, "Sweet Dreams" is telling a new kind of story... the story of a remarkable group of women who dare to dream of new possibilities for themselves and their country.

SWEET DREAMS

A CREATIVE COLLABORATION:

It all began with Rwandan playwright Odile “Kiki” Katese, who in 2005 founded the first women's drum troupe in Rwanda - breaking the taboo against women drumming and bringing together women from both sides of the genocide.

Invited to workshop one of her plays at the Sundance Institute Theatre Lab in 2009, Kiki met Jennie Dundas, an actor and co-founder (with Alexis Miesen) of Brooklyn's Blue Marble Ice Cream. When Kiki asked them to come to Rwanda to help the drummers open the country's first local ice cream shop, they thought of all the reasons they should say no. But instead, they said yes.

SWEET DREAMS co-director Lisa Fruchtman was an advisor at the Sundance Lab when she first heard this extraordinary story and was determined to find out more.

Within six months she and her brother, co-director Rob Fruchtman, were on a plane to Rwanda for their first shoot.

By making SWEET DREAMS, we wanted to cast a light on a visionary grass roots initiative, Both the drumming and ice cream projects are about ways to reconnect with joy, hope and previously unimagined possibilities. Both demonstrate the power of thinking outside the box and of the power of seemingly small projects to generate big change.

So SWEET DREAMS is really about having the courage to dream, to imagine a radically new future.

We are gratified that SWEET DREAMS is reaching mainstream audiences and also that the film is garnering world wide attention. The film had its debut at the United Nations in April 2012 as part of the 17th commemoration of the Rwanda genocide, and has since screened at numerous film festivals around the world. In the process, SWEET DREAMS has drawn world-wide attention to Kiki Katese and the drummers.

In November 2012 following the film's US premiere at the Silverdocs Film Festival, Katese and Ingoma Nshya received the prestigious Common Ground Award in Washington DC for their achievements in peace and reconciliation. Past recipients of this award include *Jimmy Carter, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, and Bishop Desmond Tutu.*

April 2013 brought an invitation to the Skoll World Forum on Social Entrepreneurship in Oxford, England, where Ingoma Nshya drummers performed and clips from the film opened the Forum. An interview with co-director Lisa Fruchtman was prominently featured on The Skoll Forum online site. <http://skollworldforum.org/contributor/lisa-fruchtman/>

In turn, participation in the Skoll Forum attracted the attention of Pat Mitchell, President & CEO of the Paley Center for Media, who invited Katese and 4 drummers to participate in the upcoming TEDWomen 2013 Conference to be held in San Francisco Dec 4-6, 2013. The film will open in Bay Area movie theaters to coincide, and so the collaboration continues...

SWEET DREAMS

MEET KIKI - Founder of INGOMA NSHYA:



KIKI KATESE is a theater director, actor and playwright. She is the founder of Ingoma Nshya, Rwanda's first and only womens' drum troupe, and the visionary behind the Inzizi Nzizi ice cream project. Her newest project is "The Book of Life" - letters from the living to the dead.

The extraordinary women of Ingoma Nshya, both Hutu and Tutsi women ranging in age from 16 – 60, have been drumming together since 2005.



FOUNDERS OF BLUE MARBLE ICE CREAM: Jennie Dundas and Alexis Miesen

In 2007, from their home borough of Brooklyn, NY, Dundas and Miesen embarked on a simple mission: to offer a product that made tastebuds happy and hearts feel good. They began with premium, certified organic dairy to create delicious ice cream. Next, they built a company that cared for the world around it through its sourcing, business

practices and community involvements. Finally, through Blue Marble Dreams, their non-profit initiative, they helped open Rwanda's first local ice cream shop.
<http://bluemarbledreams.org/>

SWEET DREAMS

MEET THE FILMMAKERS:

Brother and sister Lisa and Rob Fruchtman bring extensive feature film and documentary experience to the project.



PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Lisa Fruchtman is an Academy Award winning editor who has worked in both feature film and television. Among her many film projects are *Apocalypse Now*, *The Right Stuff*, *Children of a Lesser God*, *The Godfather Part III*, *The Doctor*, *My Best Friend's Wedding*, *Dance with Me* and *The Woodsman*. For television, she has edited such HBO films as *Truman*, *Witness Protection*, *Point of Origin* and *Normal*. Her awards and honors include an Oscar for *The Right Stuff*, Academy Award and BAFTA Nominations for Best Editing for both *Godfather Part III* and *Apocalypse Now*, an Emmy Nomination and a Cable ACE Award for *Truman*.



PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Rob Fruchtman is an award-winning director, producer and editor of documentaries and television programs. He won the Documentary Director award at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival for his feature film, *Sister Helen*, which aired on HBO. He has won three Emmys for his work with PBS. His film, *Trust Me*, a documentary produced for SHOWTIME, follows Christian, Jewish and Islamic boys at an interfaith camp in North Carolina. Fruchtman directed and produced *Seeing Proof* in 2007, a film about Cambodia's brutal Khmer Rouge regime and its lingering effect on Cambodia's society, for George Soros' Open Society Institute. His documentaries have explored the arts, history, world cultures and social justice issues and have aired in festivals and on television around the world.

SWEET DREAMS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS:

RUSSELL LONG is an environmental activist. He founded Bluewater Network in 1996 and was responsible for numerous state and federal laws including the United States' first law to reduce greenhouse gases. He currently serves on the Board of Friends of the Earth. Turning his attention to film, Russell was executive producer on the award winning *Someplace with a Mountain* (PBS 2011) and *A Sheltered Sea* (PBS 2009), and was co-executive producer of *The Island President* (Sundance 2012), about former Maldives President Nasheed's efforts to stop global warming.

TIFFANY SCHAUER is the executive director of Our Children's Earth (OCE), a San Francisco based non-profit, which she founded in 1998. The maverick public charity is recognized for its effectiveness in human justice campaigns and litigation. She served as executive producer on Mai Iskander's *Words of Witness*, as well as Mai's previous film *Garbage Dreams* and was co-executive producer on *The Island President*.

CO - EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS:

DEBORAH SANTANA is an author, philanthropist, activist for peace and social justice, and founder of Do A Little, a non-profit that serves women and girls in the areas of health, education and happiness. Her memoir, *"Space Between The Stars: My Journey to an Open Heart"*, was published in 2005.

GRACE HIGHTOWER DE NIRO is an American philanthropist, actress, singer and entrepreneur. She launched Grace Hightower & Coffees of Rwanda in 2013 with the mission of improving lives of Rwandans through direct sourcing, fair trade and environmental stewardship. She is a board member of the New York Women's Foundation, the New York Fund for Public Schools and the International Women's Coffee Alliance. Hightower has been honored for her work by numerous institutions including the American Cancer Society of New York City.

SWEET DREAMS

PRODUCTION CREDITS:

DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY

Lisa Fruchtman
Rob Fruchtman

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Russell Long
Tiffany Schauer

CO-EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Deborah Santana
Grace Hightower De Niro

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Rob Fruchtman
Lex Fletcher

EDITED BY

Lisa Fruchtman
Rob Fruchtman

ADDITIONAL CAMERA

Jean de Dieu Minani

CAMERA ASSISTANT

Hyppolite Ntigurirwa

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Chelsea Walton

RE-RECORDING MIXERS

Malcolm Fife, Skywalker Sound/San
Francisco
a LucasFilm Ltd. Company
Tom Efinger, Dig It Studios/New York

MUSIC RECORDING CONSULTANT

Marlan Barry

MUSIC RIGHTS COORDINATOR

Sandrine Legrand

INZOZI NZIZA PROJECT MANAGER

Nikki Grey Rutamu

INTERPRETERS (RWANDA)

Hyppolite Ntigurirwa
Ernestine Kamarora
Aime Nshizirungu

TRANSLATORS (RWANDA)

Aime Nshizirungu
Willy Chrysostome Ingabire
Deo Rutamu
Grace Tsuni Uwase
Zayana Uwase
Seraphine Habimana

TRANSLATORS (NEW YORK)

Isabelle Nyombayire Umugwaneza
Simeon Bikolimana
Nadine Ingabire
Felicite Fulani

RWANDAN SUPPORT

Sandra Uwineza
Deo Rutamu
Gloria Magambo
Center for Arts and Drama,
National University of Rwanda
Rwanda Ministry of Sports and Culture
CNLG: National Commission for the Fight
against Genocide
Generation Rwanda

HD POST-PRODUCTION

ZAP Zoetrope Aubry Productions/San
Francisco

ONLINE EDITOR

Ri Crawford

TITLES

Elisa Tanaka

COLOR FINISHING

Gary Coates

POST-PRODUCTION OUTREACH ASSISTANT

Rebecca Saladoff

ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE

ITN News Source
CameraPix