

VEVE*

* ['ve've] Flowering plant, contains a monoamine alkaloid called cathinone, an amphetamine-like stimulant, which is said to cause excitement, loss of appetite and euphoria. Also known as Miraa, Chat or Khat.

WHEN TRUTHS REVEAL THEMSELVES TOO LATE



 ONE FINE DAY FILMS    giz  thefestival 

ONE FINE DAY FILMS in co-production with GINGER INK FILMS in association with DW AKADEMIE presents LOWRY ODHIAMBO EMO RUGENE LIZZ NJAGAH CONRAD MAKENI in VEVE
Cinematographer MAYYE ZAYAN SHIV MANDAVIA Supervising Cinematographer BELLA HALBEN Production Designer AYAKO BERTOLLI Supervising Production Designer NAJA BARRENECHEA CLAUS MAYR
Editor ROSELIDAH TAABU OBALA Supervising Editor SABINE SMIT SEBASTIAN BONDE Original Music MATTHIAS PETSCHKE Supervising Screenplay PHIL PARKER Supervising Director SVEN TADDICKEN
Line Producer KATJA LEBEDJEWA Co-Producers MARIE STEINMANN-TYKWER GUY WILSON Produced by SARIKA HEMI LAKHANI TOM TYKWER SIOBHAIN 'GINGER' WILSON
Screenplay by NATASHA IKIMANI Directed by SIMON MIKALI

VEVE

when truths reveal themselves too late

Kenya / Germany– 2014 – 94 minutes – Cinemascope 1:2,35 – DCP
Swahili, English, Igembe and Somali with English subtitles
Kenya / Germany 2014

Festivals and Bookings

THE FESTIVAL AGENCY, Paris
info@thefestivalagency.com

Distribution

RUSHLAKE MEDIA, Cologne
philipp@rushlake-media.com



SHORT SYNOPSIS

*[*Set in the town of Maua (Kenya), VEVE is a slang word for what is internationally known as khat or miraa.]*

VEVE follows the lives of multiple characters trying to find themselves in a world of political intrigue, revenge, love and longings for success complemented by the background of the thriving yet unregulated veve business.

Amos, an ambitious politician, is running for another term as Maua MP whilst facing his opponent **Wadu** in the extension of his veve empire. His wife **Esther** discovers the true nature of his affairs and seeks solace in **Kenzo**, a conflicted young man out to seek vengeance for his father's death. **Sammy**, Amos' right hand man, has to choose between being loyal to his work and being a caring father to his 12-year-old son **Kago**. **Maua's Veve Farmers** want to farm a union to force Amos to pay decent prices for their veve. **Clint**, a hedonistic wannabe documentary filmmaker meddles to far, blind of the dangers he is putting himself and others into.

All are in search of purpose not knowing, that their destinies are entwined in more ways than they imagine.



LONG SYNOPSIS

At the base of the green hills overlooking Maua town in Northern Kenya lie farms where veve – also known as khat or miraa – is grown in a business that generates millions of Kenyan shillings each day.

Amos, an unscrupulous local Member of Parliament, wants to become Maua's Governor in the upcoming elections whilst expanding his business interests. He is a key supplier to the exporter of veve, **Wadu**, a shrewd businessman, who commands a sizeable share of the business.

Following a conversation with his backdoor accountant, Amos sees an opportunity to upgrade his working relationship with Wadu and acquire a bigger stake in the business. He shares his plan with his right hand man **Sammy**, who has been instrumental in building Amos' influence, doing the dirty work for him. But Sammy's penchant for such assignments is waning. Still mourning his wife's death despite the passage of a few years, Sammy is struggling to connect as a father with his rebellious, glue-sniffing son **Kago**.

Amos' bold plan hits a snag when Wadu brushes off his proposal, driving Amos into taking things by force. He puts in motion a chain of events to drive Wadu out of business. Meanwhile, veve farmers in Maua who get peanuts for their crop want to better their lot by forming a union, led by the elderman **Mzee**.

Amos' ambition has gradually led to a flagging marriage with his wife **Esther**, though he does not seem to notice this. Esther enjoys the comfort of the wealth he has, but misses out on the affections of a loving man. When she discovers he is sleeping with other women, she does not take it lightly anymore.

Kenzo, an ex-convict, is a bitter man seeking revenge by hunting down the man who killed his father: Amos. He attempts to assassinate Amos at a campaign rally and fails. Undeterred, he seeks the help of fellow ex-convict Julius, and they hatch a multi-pronged plan to attack the business interests of both Wadu and Amos simultaneously, triggering a fatal clash between the two and ultimately destroying Amos.

In a twist of events, Esther's and Kenzo's paths cross and she ends up finding solace in his arms, totally oblivious that she is falling for her husband's grim reaper. Elsewhere, Wadu suspects that his troubles have something to do with a competitor.

Sammy burns down Mzee's farm as a lesson to the unionists. As Mzee's grandson Morris wonders what to do next, his impulsive friend and wannabe documentary filmmaker **Clint** tries to confront Amos, which only makes matters worse.

Inevitably, things boil over. Kenzo and Julius raid both Amos' and Wadu's business interests, and Julius pays with his life. Amos hunts down Kenzo as Sammy is torn between obeying his orders and finding his son who has run away from home. Esther struggles between being faithful to the man she married and saving the man she just met. Wadu's patience runs out after he finds out the source of his troubles, and he hires an assassin to finish off Amos. Ultimately, new beginnings are made and vengeance is served.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

VEVE follows the lives of multiple characters trying to find themselves in a world of political intrigue, revenge, love, and longings for success complemented by the background of the thriving yet unregulated miraa business. The gradual convergence of the plot and sub plots precipitates a chain of fast paced events. The film's hand-held, documentary style seeks to bring you closer to the humanity of the characters.

The story unravels against the backdrop of the controversial yet popular trade of veve. Grown in Central Kenya, it is transported to all over Kenya and exported to neighbouring Somalia and other nations where the crop is still legal. It has to be consumed within 48 hours after harvesting then it loses its effect. It earns estimated 30 million Kenya shillings a day, however unregulated and untaxed.

The film is a kaleidoscope of rural versus urban life, the conflict between the poor versus the rich. It also caricatures the political class, voices the thoughts of the rural farmer, reflects the corruption and social imbalance as you embark on a fast paced veve truck ride from the farms of Maua to the streets of Eastleigh, Nairobi, where the real money is made.

Characters are confronted by realities of what they actually need, shifting the paradigm of how they have been doing things. What appears to be an end is actually the beginning of something new.

BIOGRAPHIES

Simon Mukali (Director)



Simon Se'ydou Mukali is a writer and director born 1983 in Nairobi, Kenya. He studied Architecture before deciding to bite the bullet and switch careers, getting into the world of film. He has worked on several television productions on various freelance assignments.

Simon always wanted to tell visual stories. He has done numerous short documentaries for the magazine TV series TAZAMA, as well as other productions such as THE SPACE. In 2010, Simon got to make his first fictional short film NAILA'S CLIFF, shot in in Kampala, Uganda, a rousing

experience of shooting an African story.

In 2012 he was a Content Director on the Kenyan reality series UONGOZI. During this time he directed the feature documentary LET ME BE A CHILD, a social commentary on the state of street children in Nairobi.

Simon is currently developing a feature film about a young woman seeking to reconnect with her long lost family 20 years after the genocide in Rwanda.

Natasha Likimani (Writer)



Natasha Likimani is a screenwriter by profession, working on renowned and award winning television shows in Kenya. Her journey started 7 years ago when she got her first script writing assignment for the Mediae Company. She was chosen as one of the participants for the ONE FINE DAY workshop in 2010, after which her story and screenplay VEVE was chosen as the next One Fine Day Film Workshop production.

About her experience Natasha says: "Writing VEVE was the most fulfilling goal so far in my career. The professionalism and exceptional film making standards have motivated me to continue developing my talent."

Lowry Odhiambo (Amos)



Lowry Odhiambo, born 1973 and raised in Nairobi, studied Business Management in India from 1996 to 2000. During these years he worked on several Bollywood productions as an extra earning his studies.

Back in his hometown Nairobi, Lowry ran a tour operating business and a cyber café before the post election violence in 2007 affected his businesses and finally made him switch careers, following his passion for film. Today Lowry splits his time between acting, casting and being an agent. He is the founder of Lowrys Online, a casting and

modeling agency representing models, actors and children, pioneering in the emerging agents business in Kenya.

“Playing Amos in the movie marks the pinnacle of my acting career thus far and I have no doubt in my mind that this is the beginning of great things.”

Emo Rugene (Kenzo)



Emo Rugene studied International Relations at United States International University (USIU), Nairobi and was headed into a career of professional football, which did not materialise because of injury. He became a model, was booked on numerous fashion shows in Kenya and East Africa and dreamt of an even bigger career in the United States. Short of money for the flight, Emo began designing shoes to earn this passage and quickly discovered that he is an entrepreneur more than anything else. Being the owner and sole designer of his shoe label Afroshoes, he

sells to the whole East African region and is gradually expanding his business to the international level. Simultaneously he completed a master program in Peace, Development, Security and International Conflict Transformation in Innsbruck, Austria, and is currently writing his master thesis.

“VEVE was the first acting job that I ever landed and can conclusively say it is one of the highlights of my life so far. I consider this a gateway to a lot of things to come.”

LIZZ NJAGAH (ESTHER)



Lizz Njagah is a prolific international stage, TV and film actress. Born and bred in Nairobi, she started out as an actress at the Kenya National Theatre in 2002 and received the prestigious KWAL scholarship, an intensive two-year internship program with the only East African Repertory Theatre Company, Phoenix Players. Lizz further ventured into TV and film, playing in the TV series MAKUTANU JUNCTION, Nigeria's soap opera TINSEL and Greece-Kenyan production RETURN OF LAZARUS. Through her film outfit Historia Films, Lizz has produced

and starred in six films including popular HOUSE OF LUNGULA. She recently completed work on PEARLS OF AFRICA, a feature film, set for release in 2015.

"Being a part of VEVE was one word - awesome! It's my hope that people will enjoy watching it as much as we enjoyed making it."



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.

From June 18th to June 29th 2012, the third ONE FINE DAY FILM Workshops were held in Nairobi, Kenya. 56 participants from eleven African countries were invited to enhance their skills in the fields of directing, production, scriptwriting, editing, sound, production design and cinematography under the mentorship of experienced film professionals. Out of those participants a creative team from all departments was formed to shoot VEVE nine months later: Simon Mukali from Kenya was selected to direct the movie, Egyptian participant Mayye Zayed and Kenya's Shiv Mandavia as the cinematographers and many more in various departments – VEVE was born.

Written by Kenyan Scriptwriter Natasha Likimani (OFDF workshop alumni 2011), it is a high-octane multi character story that gives a glimpse of the contemporary realities within the Khat trade in Kenya.

Treasuring African Stories and wanting to enable talented filmmakers from the continent to reach a larger amount of viewers, that is what we 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.

THE PARTNERS

VEVE is the result of a joint training initiative of ONE FINE DAY FILMS, DW AKADEMIE and Ginger INK.

It is supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Film- and Medienstiftung NRW, the Goethe-Institute Nairobi and ARRI Film & TV Services.



CAST

Kenzo	EMO RUGENE
Esther	LIZZ NJAGAH
Sammy	CONRAD MAKENI
Amos	LOWRY ODHIAMBO
Clint	ADAM PEEVERS
Morris	VICTOR MUNYUA
Kago	DAVID WAMBUGU
Wadu	ABUBAKAR MIRE
Mzee	JOSEPH PETER MWAMBIA
Julius	DELVIN MUDIGI
Steve	GERALD LANGIRI
Corrupt Policeman	ALBERT NYAKUNDI
Bernard	PHILIP MWANGI
Betty	FIDELIS NYAMBURA
Mzee's Wife	MARY GACHERI
Wadu Junior	SALIM PAUL



FILMMAKERS/CREW

Director SIMON MUKALI

Script NATASHA LIKIMANI

Producers SARIKA HEMI LAKHANI
SIOBHAIN "GINGER" WILSON
TOM TYKWER

Co-Producers MARIE STEINMANN-TYKWER
GUY WILSON

Line Producer KATJA LEBEDJEWA

Directors of Photography MAYYE ZAYED
SHIV MANDAVIA

Production Designer AYAKO BERTOLLI

Editor ROSELIDAH TAABU YOGO

Costume Designer SARAH WANJIRU KINYI

Make-up Artist JOHN SUKI

Music MATTHIAS PETSCHÉ

End Credit Song SAVE ME SAUTI SOL feat. BLINKY BILL

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Format	ALEXA
Ratio	1: 2.35
Sound	5.1 Surround
Running time	94 minutes
Country of origin	Kenya, Germany
Date of Production	2014

CONTACTS

Festivals and bookings

THE FESTIVAL AGENCY
Leslie Vuchot
44 rue de Clery
75002 Paris, France

lv@thefestivalagency.com
www.thefestivalagency.com

Distribution

RUSHLAKE MEDIA
Philipp Hoffmann
Karolingerring 31
50678 Cologne, Germany

philipp@rushlake-media.com
Office: +49 221 588 321-80

Production Company Germany

One Fine Day Films
Marie Steinmann & Tykwer GbR
Kastanienallee 79
10435 Berlin, Germany

mail@onefinedayfilms.org
www.onefinedayfilms.com

Production Company Kenya

GINGER INK Films
P.O. Box 39165
Parklands 00623
Nairobi, Kenya

info@gingerink.tv
www.gingerink.tv

