

A FILM BY  
HACHIMIYA  
AHAMADA

WITH  
SOEUF  
ELBADAWI

  
OFFICIAL  
SELECTION  
INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL  
ROTTERDAM  
2024



# زَنَاتَانِي

When Soulless Shrouds Whisper

# ZANATANY

With Hatia Ali, Moindjoumoi Ahmed Assoumani, T. Syldio Christophe Mana, Habib Cesar Larson

DOP : Charlotte Michel — Editing : Thibaut Verly — Sound : Rafaël Bekouche — Sound design : Liza Thiennot — Mix : Sébastien Van Dhelsen — Color grading : Audrick Mercier — Music : Nawal Mianao  
Produced by The Blue Raincoat - Jérémy van der Haegen, Manon Coubia, Nicolas Rincon Gilie. Coproduced by Aurora Films - Charlotte Vincent. Executive producer (Madagascar) Films&Comics - Franco Clerc.  
With the support of Wallonia-Brussels Cinema and audiovisual Center. Coproduced with RTBF and Shelter Prod.

With the support of Taxshelter.be and ING, Tax Shelter from the Belgian federal government, Doha Film Institute and OIF. The production particularly thanks the Royal Army Museum.

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blue  
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FILMS

FEDERATION  
WALLONIE-BRUXELLES

Wallonia - Bruxelles  
International Co

rtbf

shelter prod

taxshelter.be

ING

Doha Film Institute

la francophonie

**World Premiere Rotterdam International Film Festival IFFR, 2024.**  
Official Selection.

*With the close collaboration of non-professional Comorian and Malagasy actors from Majunga, Hachimiya Ahamada invites us to bear witness to an untold and disquieting conflict that left an indelible mark on the inhabitants of Majunga.*

Lyse Ishimwe Nsengiyumva

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| ORIGINAL TITLE        | Zanatany, L'empreinte des linceuls esseulés |
| COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION | Belgique, France                            |
| YEAR                  | 2023  |
| INTERNATIONAL TITLE   | Zanatany, When Soulless Shrouds Whisper     |
| LENGTH                | 27 min                                      |
| SPOKEN LANGUAGES      | Comorien, malgache, français                |
| SUBTITLES             | Français, anglais                           |

## SYNOPSIS

Madagascar. December 1976. A wind of revolt sweeps through the city. Ali, a second-in-command in a bookbinding workshop, is raising his two daughters alone. One morning, before going to work, he witnesses what seems to be a simple neighborhood quarrel...

## CREW

|               |                       |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| DOP           | Charlotte MICHEL      |
| EDITING       | Thibaut VERLY         |
| SOUND         | Rafaël BEKOUICHE      |
| SOUND DESING  | Liza THIENNOT         |
| MIX           | Sébastien VAN DHELTEN |
| COLOR GRADING | Audrick MERCIER       |
| MUSIC         | Nawal Mlanao          |

## CAST

Soeuf ELBADAWI  
Hatia ALI  
Moindjoumoi AHMED ASSOUMANI  
T. Syldio CRISTOPHE  
Habib Cesar MARSON

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## DISTRIBUTION AND FESTIVAL STRATEGY

### The Blue Raincoat SRL

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## **RESUME**

Madagascar. December 1976. A wind of revolt blows over the town of Majunga. Ali, a Comorian widower with two young daughters, works in a bookbinding workshop. One morning, he witnesses a neighborly dispute that quickly turns into a racial conflict and escalates abruptly when a strike breaks out. For three days, families of Comorian origin have been killed in cold blood by a section of the Malagasy population: their own neighbors. Faced with rising tensions between communities, Ali must protect his daughters.

## **WORD OF THE DIRECTOR**

Through my family, I remain attached to the Comoros Archipelago. Our relationship with exile is complex: our parents' departures remain open parentheses forever. With my films, as if trying to close these parentheses, I wonder about the reasons for the eternal wandering of our diaspora – sometimes leading to violent clashes (Tanzania 1964/Majunga in 1976/Mayotte at present).

"Zanatany, When Soulless Shrouds Whisper" is based on real events and lifts the veil on the events in Majunga in 1976. The film recounts the gradual build-up of a tension spreading through the town until a spark exploded the fraternal harmony between Comorians and Madagascans. Over the course of three days, several Comorian families were decimated. With the collaboration of non-professional Comorian and Malagasy actors from Majunga, we have reconstructed this shared history in images. Through the eyes of Ali, played by Soeuf Elbadawi, the only professional actor, we witness the slow fall of his world.

Zanatany is a Malagasy word meaning 'child of the homeland or child of the land'. It was given to all children born in Madagascar whose parents were foreigners. My mother's family had to leave the island in a hurry at the time of the events. I wanted to understand the reason for this history, which had been swept under the carpet.

From the very first moments of writing, I saw this story told in the form of fiction, because I felt it had more visual force and would be able to retain in memory the images, sensations and emotions experienced by the inhabitants of Majunga in 1976-1977. Time has erased the traces of this tragedy. There are no graves or memorial sites. Zanatany, in addition to bearing witness and reconstructing the past, will leave a filmic imprint of this little-known tragedy: the aim is to bring this missing image to the surface. To reveal it and fix it so that it is no longer forgotten.



### **HACHIMIYA AHAMADA'S BIOGRAPHY**

Hachimiya Ahamada studied directing at INSAS, Belgium. *Zanatany* is her second fiction film. With this project, she continues her work on the trajectories of the Comorian diaspora to which she belong. Between fiction and observation of reality, she builds a universe whose narrative deepens her relationship to her roots. *Ylang Ylang Residence*, her first short film, has been selected many times in international festivals. From the International Critics' Week at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival, to the Arab Film Festival in Oran, including the Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage Festival in Tunis.



### **FILMOGRAPHY**

2023 - *Zanatany, when soulless shrouds whisper*- shortcut fiction -25 min

**World Premiere Rotterdam International Film Festival IFFR, 2024.**

2011- *Ashes of Dreams* – documentary – 88 min

2008- *Ylang Ylang Residence* – shortcut fiction -20 min

**World Premiere Cannes International Critic's Week, 2008.**