



Vertical Production présente



# KUMVA

CE QUI VIENT DU SILENCE

UN FILM DE SARAH MALLÉGOL



un film de SARAH MALLÉGOL - produit par LOUISE HENTGEN - montage MARIE BEAUNE - image ARNAUD ALAIN  
son EUGENE SAFALI, PIERRE GEORGE, JOCELYN ROBERT - étalonnage JULIA MINGO  
Avec le soutien du CENTRE NATIONAL DU CINEMA ET DE L'IMAGE ANIMÉE  
Avec la participation de la Région Nouvelle-Aquitaine, en partenariat avec le CNC et Brouillon d'un rêve - SCAM





## Synopsis

I return to Rwanda, the land of my childhood. Kumva wanders through the memories of men and women who experienced the 1994 Tutsi genocide as young children. Their failing memory of a childhood lost collides with that of their parents, who have kept their silence for too long. Kumva explores the theme of memory building, giving form to the dead and building a bridge between the past and the present.

**Trailer :** <https://vimeo.com/862341742>

# Technical Informations

**Type of film :** Feature Documentary

**Language:** Kinyarwanda, French

**Format :** DCP / HD Files (Prores or H264)

**Duration :** 108 minutes

**Crew :**

Director : Sarah Mallégol - sarahmallegolll@gmail.com - 06 08 72 72 11

Producer : Louise Hentgen - l.hentgen@verticalproduction.fr - 06 67 68 97 05

Editing : Marie Beaune

Image : Arnaud Alain

Composer : Beatha Mukamulisa

Sound : Eugène Safali, Jocelyn Robert, Pierre George

Color grading : Julia Mingo

**Production country :** France

**Shooting country :** Rwanda

**Festivals and Award :**

New York African Film Festival (May 2024)

Ethnocineca - International Documentary Film Festival Vienna (May 2024)

Beldocs IDFF (Belgrade, May 2024)

Festival des Identités Culturelles (FestIC) (Ouagadougou, May 2024)

Social Justice Film Festival 2024, Chennai (India, Avril 2024)

Festival CitéCiné (Carcassonne), 2024

Festival La Première fois, (Marseille) 2024

Doc Coimbra, Portugal, 2024

Boden International Film Festival (Sweden) 2023- Best Feature Documentary

Anti-War International Independent Film Festival 2023 (Estonia)

Les Escales documentaires 2023 (La Rochelle)

Dok Leipzig 2023 Compétition officielle / Interreligious Award

zur notwendigen Aufarbeitung – begleitet von Gesängen und Landschaftsaufnahmen, die zusätzlich zu Erinnerungen der Überlebenden eine andere Form von Zeugnis ablegen.

— Quietly and discreetly, the French director Sarah Mallégol follows a group of thirty-something protagonists who survived the 1994 Rwanda genocide as children. They have no memory of the events – neither those whose fathers were murdered nor those whose parents were responsible. A confrontation begins: focused conversations between generations which, captured by a gentle camera, are meant to cautiously break the long silence – in order to be able to understand, process and mourn.

Sarah Mallégol herself grew up in Rwanda, before the genocide. She has no memories of her childhood either. But there are home movies shot on Super 8 that show carefree days in a still peaceful countryside – and her nanny from back then, Christine. She died in 1994, which is all the director knows. Her motivation for this filmic search is thus personal. But after the short introduction, she gives all the space to those who live in Rwanda today with the trauma that has spread over the country like a shroud. Grief is at the forefront and the film work contributes to a much-needed coming to terms – accompanied by chants and landscape shots added to the memories of the survivors that bear a different form of witness. **Borjana Gaković**

<https://www.signis.net/news/culture/02-11-2023/interreligious-jury-awards-kumva-which-comes-from-silence-france-at-dok-leipzig-festival-2023>

#### RADIO :

<https://dok-spotters.de/en/2023/10/17/i-thought-we-would-never-be-able-to-speak-again/>

« Quietly and discreetly, the French director Sarah Mallégol follows a group of thirty-something protagonists who survived the 1994 Rwanda genocide as children. They have no memory of the events – neither those whose fathers were murdered nor those whose parents were responsible. A confrontation begins: focused conversations between generations which, captured by a gentle camera, are meant to cautiously break the long silence – in order to be able to understand, process and mourn.

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Borjana Gaković, comité de sélection de Dok Leipzig

## Director's Biography

Following her film studies, Sarah Mallégol worked for several years as a programmer with festivals and art venues also supporting artists and filmmakers on their projects, both in the field of image and production. In 2016, she joined the documentary Master's program at the Fémis. She co-directed "Sakina" in 2020, a medium-length documentary (Festival Côté Court 2020). "Kumva, which comes from silence", her first long feature documentary, has been selected in many International festivals

### Filmography

**2022** : *Kumva - Which Comes from Silence*, 108, feature documentary, Vertical production

**2020** : *Sakina*, 38', co-directed with Clément Postec, produced by En avant jeunesse  
(Festival Côté Court 2020)

**2018** : *Les Nemesis*, 12', documentary short film, produced by Amart Films

## Director's note

I return to Rwanda thirty years after leaving it with this question: how to build in the present when the worst happened?

This universal question became for me a question of cinema.

Is it possible to heal traumatism by reviving the memory ? In psychiatry and cognitive sciences it is called «autobiographical memory». It is a necessary process to face the horror.

This memory is presented in Kumva through an intimate narrative with several voices.

Kumva is not a film just about genocide but about a sensitive universe, strength of memory, reconstruction that goes through the remembrance and appeasement of memories. I film families in which the silence has lasted too long and where we finally try to talk.

Rwema, Grace, Mizero, Noël, were children at the time of the genocide in 1994. Their childhood was marked by death. Their first memories are the images of the disaster : oceans of corpses, violence, cries and tears. Too small to remember the time before, they built their memories upon the silence of their parents – survivors or genocidaires – without any means of holding onto happy memories.

In the solitude of a house under construction or in the Rwandan night, with family, sometimes for the first time, in Kumva, they try to reconstitute the erased images of their memory : we watch the transmission from one generation to another, the words of a parent to his child whose eyes should never have seen what they saw.

Kumva tells how memories, even casual ones, that nothing or anyone could take away from us, allow us to continue living.