



Production Notes

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FORMOSA
MG PRODUCTIONS
SUKA!

PRESENT

VIVA RIVA!

Written, directed and produced by Djo Tunda Wa Munga

Patsha Bay Mukuna
Manie Malone
Hoji Fortuna
Alex Herbo
Marlene Longange
Diplome Amekindra
Angelique Mbumba
Nzita Tumba
Jordan N'Tunga

Directed By
DJO TUNDA WA MUNGA

Screenplay
DJO TUNDA WA MUNGA

Producers
BORIS VAN GILS
MICHAEL GOLDBERG
DJO TUNDA WA MUNGA

Co-producer
STEVEN MARKOVITZ

Cinematography
ANTOINE ROCH afc

Sound
MARIANNE ROUSSY

Production Designer
PHILIPPE VAN HERWIJNEN

Music
LOUIS VYNCKE
& CONGOPUNQ

Editor
YVES LANGLOIS

SYNOPSIS

Congolese director Djo Tunda Wa Munga's feature film *Viva Riva!* was shot on location in Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in both French and Lingala. The film is a visceral thriller about a charming small-time thug, Riva, who returns to his energy-starved hometown of Kinshasa after stealing a truckload of fuel from an Angolan crime lord named Cesar. His bounty is worth a fortune in the city which has run out of petrol. Not only is the sharply dressed Cesar hot on his trail, but Riva also runs into trouble with the tough mob boss Azor (think Marsellus Wallace in "Pulp Fiction"), husband of the beautiful Nora, a woman he meets in a nightclub.

Explosively violent, gritty and realistic, the film delves into the world of young smugglers working the Angola-Kinshasa trade – young men who care little about what happens tomorrow. It's a tale of rival gangsters and corrupt officials, recounted against the sprawling background of Kinshasa.

Congo-born R&B singer Patsha Bay Mukuna stars as Riva. Making her screen debut as the beautiful night club denizen Nora, is the gorgeous Paris-based actress Manie Malone. Cesar is played by Hoji Fortuna, an Angolan born African Academy Award winning actor who lives in New York. Diplome Amekindra takes on the role of Azor.

Wa Munga's Kinshasa is a seductively vibrant, lawless, fuel-starved sprawl of shantytowns, gated villas, bordellos and nightclubs and Riva is its perfect embodiment. In typical gangster film fashion, Wa Munga's world is populated by underworld figures and ruthless hoodlums who operate outside the law, stealing and violently murdering their way through life. He glorifies Riva's rise and fall against the backdrop of a crowded city and provides a no holds barred view of the secret world of the criminal: dark nightclubs, streets with lurid neon signs, fast cars, piles of cash, sleazy bars, contraband, and seedy living quarters.

Like most film gangsters Riva is materialistic, street-smart, immoral, megalomaniacal, and self-destructive. His poor background makes him fall prey to crime in the pursuit of wealth, status, clothes, cars and girls because all other avenues are unavailable.

The film's runaway success is a coup for Wa Munga who spent his childhood in Kinshasa and completed his schooling in Belgium, where he later studied film. He has directed several short

films and documentaries. He also wrote *Viva Riva!*, his first feature film, and secured finance for the film from France's Canal Plus. It's the first film shot in the Congo in 25 years after the industry was shut down by former president Mobutu Sese Seko.

Viva Riva! opened in the US on Friday, 10 June 2011 to rave reviews. *The Hollywood Reporter* calls it "A bold crime action film that's vicious, sexy and throbbingly realistic." Writing in *Worldfilm*, Andrew Grant says it's "gripping entertainment from start to finish, and the type of gangster film that Hollywood no longer knows how to make." *AV Club*'s Allison Willmore describes it as "frenetic, sleazy, and entertaining as all hell...a stylish and multiplex-worthy crime drama."

AWARDS

*****Winner*** Africa Movie Academy Awards 2011**

Best Film

Best Director – Djo Tunda Wa Munga

Best Supporting Actress – Marlene Longange

Best Supporting Actor – Hoji Fortuna

Best Production Design

Best Cinematography

*****Winner*** PAN African Film Festival 2011**

Best Feature Film

*****Winner*** MTV Movie Award 2011**

Best African film

2010 Toronto International Film Festival (Official Selection)

2011 Berlin Film Festival (Official Selection)

2011 South By Southwest Film Festival (Official Selection)

CINEMA IN THE DRC

Historical overview

In 1997, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC, formerly Zaire) was hit by civil war, sparked by a massive inflow in 1994 of refugees from Rwanda and Burundi. The government of former president Mobutu Sese Seko was toppled by a rebellion led by Laurent Kabila in May 1997. His regime was subsequently challenged by a Rwanda- and Uganda-backed rebellion in August 1998. Troops from Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, Chad and Sudan intervened to support the Kinshasa regime. A cease-fire was signed on 10 July 1999 by the DRC, Zimbabwe, Angola, Uganda, Namibia, Rwanda and Congolese armed rebel groups RCD-G and MLC, but sporadic fighting continued. Laurent Kabila was assassinated on 16 January 2001 and his son Joseph Kabila was named president in January 2001. He gained a mandate through the ballot box to rule the vast country as its elected leader in an election in 2006. The eastern areas of the country still remain beset by violence.

History of cinema from 1896-2000

The Democratic Republic of Congo was formerly known as Zaire, and previously as Belgian Congo. Colonialism had a major impact on the development of cinema in the country. Patrice Lumumba, the first national leader of an independent Congo from 1960 to 1965, referred in his independence speech to the impact of colonialism by stating that the locals were not allowed to view foreign films during the period of Belgian rule. The official reason was that the locals could not distinguish between fact and fiction and therefore film could lead to mental problems. The government was afraid that watching Western films would lead to subversive behavior.

Ironically, it was the colonial government that introduced filmmaking in Congo by establishing a priest-led film school. In the 1940s, the colonial government's Film and Photo Bureau made educational and propaganda films specifically for the African population. In order to reduce costs the bureau employed African workers who were taught the basics of film production. In addition, Africans could acquire cinematic skills at the Congolese Center for Catholic Action Cinema (CCCAC) in Léopoldville (present-day Kinshasa) or Africa Films in Kivu, both of which were run by Catholic priests.

The two companies' films, such as the CCCAC's series *Les Palabres de Mboloko*, starring an animated antelope, aimed to teach African audiences religious virtues. Both companies offered Africans an opportunity to learn cinematic techniques, but the content and format of the films produced by these groups were severely restricted by the colonial administration. In 1950,

George Fannoy established Belgavox, a production company residing in Brussels who made documentaries and news items in Congo.

However, the ensuing civil war led to the demise of the film industry in Congo. Some directors have been able to produce and direct films with foreign support. Most noteworthy was *La Vie est Belle* (1987), by Mwenze Ngangura which was shot in the Congo, but was a Belgian production in the French language. To this day, however, there are no movie theaters in Kinshasa.

Viva Riva! is the first Congolese feature film in the Lingala language and the first Congolese feature distributed in the U.S.

** Information from FilmBirth.com*

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In making *Viva Riva!* I wanted to find a new way to talk about life in Kinshasa today – to describe how my hometown works and how it doesn't work. I also felt the time was right to depict aspects of life in the capital that everyone knows exist but no one has ever talked about publicly.

Riva returns home after a ten-year absence with pockets full of cash to do what every young Kinshasan man dreams of. He is king for one rollicking good night – and keeps that night going on and on, scoffing at the plain truth that in the light of day he is nobody. Where is he headed? The devil may care.

Over the past twenty years, Kinshasans have lived in bedlam, through every kind of spirit-crushing experience imaginable – war, crime, corruption, food and energy shortages, poverty and the breakup of the family structure – yet life goes on.

As word got out that a film was being made, people all around us in the community began to reach out and help us in ways large and small – any way they could. Shooting the film as we did, we were constantly on our toes, ready to shift the scene, take off or improvise solutions at a moment's notice. We sometimes let people know we were making the film and wanted to use their home, place of business or car. And almost all the time, the answer was "yes, please do." In how many other cities, I wonder, would we have found such cooperation?

There are no acting schools in the Congo, so we made a first round of casting in the very small circuit of local theatre companies, then a second round by casting a very wide net over the streets of the capital. We wanted to find Kinshasan actors who could bring something personal to the film – add some vital and sprightly energy to a film that was otherwise anchored in documentary realism.

Twenty candidates were selected to participate in a workshop that stressed screen acting skills, and also included tai-chi, dance and other exercises to put the players in touch with the way their bodies moved. The work we accomplished led us to sharpen our casting of certain roles and invite some participants into a second workshop where. There, over two months, we went further into defining characters, without working on specific dialogue, lines for which came later. Dialogue in the final film was entirely scripted – none of it was improvised.

All things were lining up so well on the production that we realised we had been offered a golden opportunity. It was time for us to envision a new world and to take a big step forward as storytellers. The actors, especially, took on the self-assured confidence of pioneers. One of the most challenging aspects of the production was the depiction of frank sexuality in a culture where

nude scenes remain taboo and are never even implied. Our first thought was to bring in European or American actors; but then my second assistant, a young Congolese documentarian, pressed me to ask a number of local women to consider playing the part.

I explained to them that I wanted to properly portray the city and its club life, where we all know what is going on behind the walls. I wanted the film to be real. However, once we all resolved that, first and foremost, we wanted to portray the city and its club life in a very real way, as it is today, nothing could stop us. The cast and crew gave it their all every step of the way and took the project to a new height. For that, I am more than grateful.

Our work on *Viva Riva!* was resolutely modern. The film dives into its depiction of tough situations so forthrightly that we hope it will help sweep away some of the old school perceptions of Africa and African art. Our aim was simply to work without fear or shame of who we are and the issues we face today.

I hope, especially for young people, that this film will be a convincing argument that we can make it as a society – and that cinema can be part of our lives. Under the dictatorship, we were not allowed to even think about making films and several decades of Congolese filmmakers went into self-imposed exile.

A young artist I met eight years ago dismissed me as mad when I told him I wanted to make films in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Then he visited the shoot of *Viva Riva!* to experience the energy of the cast and crew hard at work. He is now a believer. Our future can be different if we really want it to be.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Kinshasa is a musical city. The original *Viva Riva!* soundtrack expresses the spirit of a young city trying to leave a difficult past.

Director Djo Munga chose composer Cyril "CongopunQ" Atef for his musical acumen and for his natural sense of rhythm. Atef was born in Berlin in May 1968 to a French mother and Iranian father. The family moved to Los Angeles in 1978. He has played drums for 32 years. He is also a singer, and began composing music in the late 80s. After studying music in Los Angeles and Boston he left for Europe in 1990 to tour with the Boston-based percussion band Ozain. He toured that summer on the streets of various European capitals and decided to settle in Paris in 1990.

Since then Atef has been working with different bands including French reggae artist Princess Erika, British reggae band Aswad, the afro-funk combo Hopen Collective, Cameroonian bikutsi star Mama Ohandja, Arab singers Cheb Mami, Cheb Saraoui and Chaba Fadela, L'orchestre national de barbes (ONB), French pop-rock superstar -M-, singer-songwriters Alain Bashung and Brigitte Fontaine, the experimental hybrid sextet Olympic Gramofon, improv band Bumcello with cellist Vincent Segal, Los Angeles-based Geggy Tah (with Tommy Jordan) and New York City based Chocolate Genius, among others.

As a percussionist, Atef has an emotional energy close to all music in Kinshasa. As leader of CongopunQ, Atef marries "tradi-modern" sounds, uniting Congolese ancestral rhythms and urban reality with a punk energy from his youth.

For his arrangements, Atef chose one of the most popular guitarists in Kinshasa, Flamme Kapaya and one of the city's most amazing voices, Papy Mbavu, well-known for his African dance hit "Kotazo".

Memories of Kinshasa in the 70s are present on the soundtrack with three classic Congolese tracks: "Regina Regina" and "Mario" by François Luambo Makiadi, aka Franco, and "Le Bûcheron" by Franklin Boukaka. Known for his mastery of rumba, Franco was nicknamed the "Sorcerer of the Guitar" for his seemingly effortlessly fluid playing. As a founder of the seminal group Ok Jazz, he is counted as one of the originators of the modern Congolese sound. The singer Franklin Boukaka released "Le Bucheron," his first album in 1970 which was produced and arranged in Paris by Manu Dibango. Boukaka was shot and killed in Brazzaville by military police on February 23, 1972 for protesting against Marien Ngouabi, then the military President of the Republic of the Congo.

Four afro-dance tracks illustrate the long sequence in *Viva Riva!*'s Club Saisai: "Viva Kinshasa" and "Danse du Charlot scié" by CongopunQ/Papy Mbavu, "Techno Malewa" by Werrason and "Secousse All Stars" by Radioclit. Werrason is one of the most popular ndombolo-style Congolese singers in Africa. He was part of the innovative musical band Wenge Musica 4X4 Tout Terrain Bon Chic Bon Genre at the beginning of the 80s. In 2000 he performed in Paris-Bercy in front of 17 000 fans. In 2001 he won two Kora Awards in South Africa including Best African performer. The United Nations has awarded him with the title of Universal Ambassador of Peace. In 2001, Werrason was received in audience by Pope John-Paul II. Since then, he has dedicated part of his time to all UNESCO campaigns fighting AIDS along with campaigning for Human Rights organisations.

Radioclit is the international British DJ/production duo based in London who refer to their style as ghetto pop, a mélange of Dirty South rap, Baltimore club, British grime, funk carioca, and straight dance-pop along with various African dance-pop styles.

BIOGRAPHIES: CAST

PATSHA BAY MUKUNA (RIVA)

An accomplished musician and singer, Patsha Bay Mukuna makes his acting debut in the starring role as Riva.

MANIE MALONE (NORA)

Manie Malone began her career as an actress in several French television series including *Femmes de Loi*, *Seconde Chance*, and *La Vie est à Nous*. She was born in Africa and now lives in Paris, France. *Viva Riva!* is Malone's feature film debut.

MARLENE LONGANGE (COMMANDANTE)

Marlene Longange makes her acting debut as Commandante in *Viva Riva!*. Longange won the 2011 Africa Movie Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress.

HOJI FORTUNA (CESAR)

Hoji Fortuna was born and raised in Angola and moved to Portugal where he started his career as a comedy actor. He then moved to New York to further his acting career. He has acted in theatre and film, appearing in several television series, shorts and films, including Hal Hartley's upcoming film *Meanwhile*. Fortuna won the 2011 Africa Movie Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor.

DIPLOME AMEKINDRA (AZOR)

Diplome Amekindra makes his acting debut as Azor in *Viva Riva!*.

BIOGRAPHIES: CREW

DJO TUNDA WA MUNGA (Director, Screenwriter, Producer)

Djo Tunda Wa Munga was born and raised in Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) where he spent his childhood. At the age of 10, he left for Belgium. Wa Munga's first language was Swahili, after which he learned French, Lingala and English.

He went on to study art, and later filmmaking at Institut National Supérieur des Arts du spectacle et des techniques de diffusion (INSAS) in Brussels.

During his studies he directed his first short films. He worked for a few years in the film industry in Europe, and then went back to the DRC to work on documentary projects for the BBC, ARTE and Danish TV, among others. He also directed a number of documentaries for the local market. He went on to create the first film production company in the DRC, *Suka Productions!* and is currently focusing his energies on building up the film business in the DRC which, up to now, has been virtually non-existent, and where everything has yet to be invented.

Munga served as producer on *Congo in Four Acts*, a quartet of short films that exposed the distressing reality of everyday life in the Congo.

Viva Riva! is Wa Munga's first feature film and signals the beginning of the New Wave of Congolese Cinema.

He was named the 2010 African Trailblazer by MIPTV. In 2011 he won the Africa Movie Academy Award (AMAA) for Best Director. *Viva Riva!* won the award for Best Film.

STEVEN MARKOVITZ (Co-Producer)

Steven Markovitz is the co-owner of Suka! Productions in South Africa. He is also a director of Encounters Training and Development Institute, and the co-founder of Encounters SA International Documentary Film festival. From 1994 to 2009, he was the co-owner of Big World Cinema, a film and documentary production company.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION COMPANIES

MG PRODUCTIONS

The partnership of Boris Van Gils of Formosa and Michael Goldberg of MG Productions is anchored in their mutual passion for film that mixes genres. Based in Paris and Brussels, respectively, the terrain of their work ranges over Europe and Africa.

SUKA!

Suka! Productions was founded by Djo Tunda Wa Munga in Kinshasa and is co-owned by Steven Markovitz in South Africa. The company focuses on bringing cinema to the DRC, one of the biggest countries in Africa. The first productions include the critically acclaimed television feature *Papy*, and the documentaries *Congo in Four Acts* and *State of Mind*. In partnerships with South Africa the company is developing a pan African production of six feature films set in various African countries.

End Credits

CAST

Riva	PATSHA BAY MUKUNA
Nora	MANIE MALONE
Cesar	HOJI FORTUNA
JM	ALEX HERBO
Commandante	MARLENE LONGANGE
Azor	DIPLOME AMEKINDRA
Malou	ANGELIQUE MBUMBA
Mere Edo	NZITA TUMBA
Anto	JORDAN N'TUNGA

CREW

Director	DJO TUNDA WA MUNGA
Producers	BORIS VAN GILS MICHAEL GOLDBERG DJO TUNDA WA MUNGA
Co-producer	STEVEN MARKOVITZ
Screenplay	DJO TUNDA WA MUNGA
Cinematography	ANTOINE ROCH afc
Sound	MARIANNE ROUSSY
Production Designer	PHILIPPE VAN HERWIJNEN
Music	LOUIS VYNCKE CONGOPUNQ
Editor	YVES LANGLOIS

MUSIC CREDITS

CongopunQ - Cyril Atef
Louis Vyncke assisted by Peter Meyvaert

In order of appearance:

« *Bombe Anatomique* »
Performed by Jean Goubald Kalala
(Jean Goubald Kalala)
(p) Igloo Mondo

« *Porte Bleue* »
Performed by Mabele Elisi & le groupe Super 8/8
(Mabele Elisi)
(p) 2010 Formosa Productions

« *Mario* »
Performed by Luambo Lokanga Lwa Djo, known as Franco
& l'Orchestre TPOK Jazz
(Luambo Lokanga Lwa Djo)
(p) © Frochot Music / Editions Populaires

« *Cesar é do Patrão* »
(CongopunQ)
(p) 2010 Formosa Productions

« *Kobéta Paul* »
Performed by Cyril Atef & Flamme Kapaya (CongopunQ)
(p) 2010 Formosa Productions

« *Techno Malewa* »
Performed by Ngiamakanda, as known as Werrason
(Ngiamakanda)
(p) Diego Music SARL Lumi
with the courtesy of Ngiamakanda Werrason

« *Danse du Charlot Scié* »
Performed by Papy Mbavu, Cyril Atef & Flamme Kapaya
(Papy Mbavu / CongopunQ)
(p) 2010 Formosa Productions

« *Secousse All Stars* »
(Radioclit)
(p) 2010 Mental Groove

« *Viva Kinshasa* »
Performed by par Papy Mbavu, Cyril Atef & Flamme Kapaya
(Papy Mbavu / CongopunQ)
(p) 2010 Formosa Productions

« *Rêve* »
Performed by Mabele Elisi & le groupe Super 8/8
(Mabele Elisi)
(p) 2010 Formosa Productions

« *Regina Regina* »
Performed by Luambo Lokanga Lwa Djo, known as Franco
& l'Orchestre TPOK Jazz
(Simon Lutumba Ndomanueno, known as Simaro)
(p) © Frochot Music / Editions Populaires

« *Danse du Charlot Coupé* »
Performed by Cyril Atef & Flamme Kapaya
(CongopunQ)
(p) 2010 Formosa Productions

« *Baise moi Mama* »
(CongopunQ)
(p) 2010 Formosa Productions

« *Le Bûcheron* »
Performed by Franklin Boukaka & Manu Dibango
(Franklin Boukaka)
(p) Syllart Productions
© Franklin Boukaka (DR)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Official film website: www.vivarivamovie.com

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