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Beyond the beauty of Rwanda

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Gilbert Ndahayo’s documentary film, Rwanda: Beyond the Deadly Pit is an explosive work on what happened in Rwanda. It clearly makes every other film, based on the genocide that happened in Rwanda look like a caricature of some sort, whether fictitious or documentary. The startling thing about the film lies so much in its beginning, where the filmmaker, Gilbert, is seen, in a courtroom listening to the killers of his family. It is this scene that basically defines the depth of the film. It stretches deep into the heart of the story.

If you haven’t heard of the Rwandan genocide and watch this documentary, you will obviously think that Rwandans are cannibals. The images are gory. The nuns washing the bones of dead people don’t help matter. From the moment you see people digging out corpses from old graves, arranging the bones in coffins, you start to shiver. It is a very dark work that finely brings out the best in Mr. Ndahayo, who has shown absolute patience in reenacting what must have happened to those killed in Rwanda; the genocide against the Tutsis. I cried for a while, watching this. There is silence serenading the entire work – where one of the characters says: “These days we sleep with dead bones in our homes.”

What the documentary has been able to achieve is – startlingly beautiful.

It makes one realize that humanity is greater than those things that seek to divide us. It cuts through all the fabrics of our lives to reveal our strengths and weaknesses. Anyone hearing of the genocide for the first time through this film, might find it very difficult to think of visiting Rwanda. It is a bloody work of art and daringly scary at the same time.

Rwanda: Beyond the Deadly Pit by Gilbert Ndahayo has been nominated for the 8th Africa Movie Academy Awards.

TEXT ONYEKA NWELUE

Film

Rwanda



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