

PHOTOJOURNALISM

NEVER AGAIN

Angela Blakely and David Lloyd

In 100 days 830,000 people were murdered
250,000 women and girls were raped
Perpetrators included the army, the police, the militia, the
clergy, the professional class and the commonperson
...and nobody helped.

'In such countries, genocide is not too important'
President Francois Mitterrand quoted in Le Figaro 1994

Genocide and Rwanda: A Brief History

The genocide of the Tutsi in Rwanda and the politicide of moderate Hutu was a political strategy adopted by the elite to hold onto power at all costs. While misrepresented in the North as little more than an horrific tribal conflict, the slaughter of Tutsi and moderate Hutus was, in reality, a meticulously planned and well rehearsed attempt by extremists, within the Habyarimana government, to give life to a racial ideology that, paradoxically, had no foundations within historic Rwanda (African Rights 1995).

Six months after the RPF victory and the end of the slaughter the first soldiers from the United Nations Assistance Mission to Rwanda II arrived in-country. Australia provided the medical contingent to UNAMIR II. Following a long tradition of embedding 'war artists' with troops in conflict areas we were attached to the first rotation of troops to Rwanda. Our brief was to document the impact of Australian Forces in Rwanda. Like so many others, we believed the genocide had ended once the killings had ceased.

In 2006 and 2008 we returned to Rwanda to find the traces of Australia's involvement in the contemporary society. What we discovered was that for many survivors there is no life after the genocide. They have lost, and continue to lose, their health, their dignity, their security and their liberty. In many ways through the omission of the Rwanda government and the international community to enforce notions of justice, the genocide continues.

As we interviewed some of the women it was obvious the genocide had not ended. Like many survivors they see their lives as finished and themselves as the living dead. In telling their stories, they sought to share their scars in the hope others cared and they mattered. We came to understand in sharing their stories they validated their survival.

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FAMILY TREE

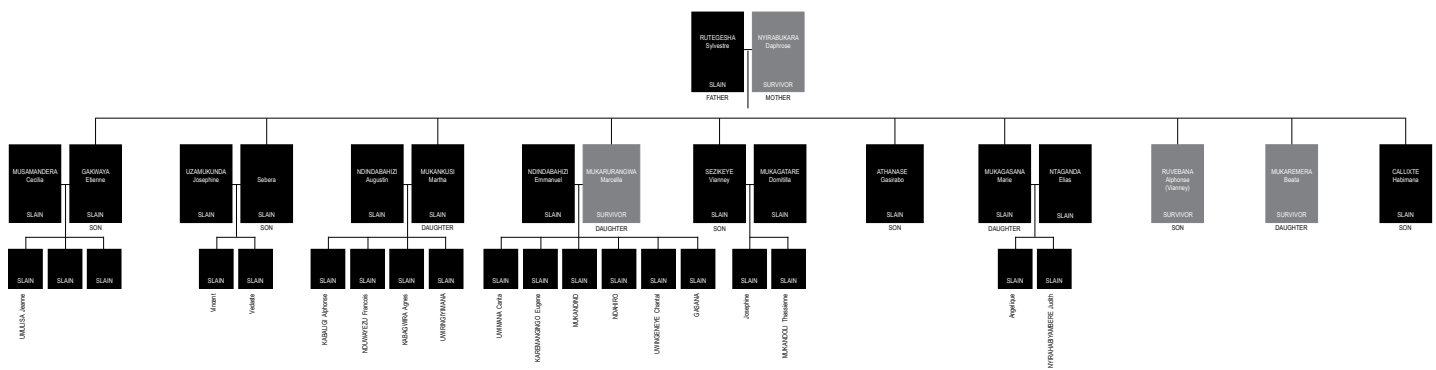
Angela Blakely and David Lloyd

How do you begin to describe losing your family? How can you describe this to an audience that cannot really imagine the extent of that loss? Marcella told us about her family: A family of thirty-seven people across three generations. Only four survived the genocide. But these are just numbers – numb expressions of loss.

We meticulously copied down everything that Marcella could remember. Her brothers' and sisters' details, the names of the children, the hint of those yet to be baptised. At times she couldn't remember their names and things she did remember were confused. Traumatic memory 'they' call it.

To ask her to recall it in detail was a burden on her but one she shared with us so that others might know her family once existed.

This is Marcella's family tree.



RUTEGESHA

Sylvestre
1918 - 1994
SLAIN

78yrs



MUSAMANDERA

Cecelia
1994
SLAIN

UZAMUKUNDA

Josephine
1994
SLAIN

Sebera
1961 - 1994
SLAIN

33yrs

KABALIGI

Alphonse
1994
SLAIN

1st child

NDUWAYEZU

Francios
1994
SLAIN

2nd child

KABAGWIRA

Agnes
1994
SLAIN

3rd child

UWIRINGIYIMANA

1994
SLAIN

not yet baptised

KAREMANGINGO

Eugene
1994
SLAIN

2nd child

MUKANDINDA

1994
SLAIN

not yet baptised

NDAIHIRO

1994
SLAIN

not yet baptised

UWINGENEYE

Chantal
1994
SLAIN

5th child

GAKWAYA

Etienne
1959* - 1994
SLAIN

35yrs

UMULISA

Jeanne
1994
SLAIN

1st child

1994
SLAIN

2nd child

1994
SLAIN

3rd child

Vincent
1994
SLAIN

1st child

Vedaste
1994
SLAIN

2nd child

NDINDABAHIZI

Augustin
1984
SLAIN

MUKANKUSI

Martha
1963* - 1994
SLAIN

31yrs

NDINDABAHIZI

Emmanuel
1959* - 1994
SLAIN

35yrs



UWIMANA

Carita
1994
SLAIN

1st child

GASNA

1994
SLAIN

Not yet baptised

SEZIKEYE

Vianney
1967* - 1994
SLAIN

27yrs

MULAGATARE

Domitilla
1994
SLAIN

Josephine
1994
SLAIN

1st child

MUKANDOLI

Thassienne
1994
SLAIN

2nd child

ATHANASE

Gasirabo
1970* - 1994
SLAIN

24yrs



MUKAGASANA

Marie
1973* - 1994
SLAIN

21yrs

NTAGANDA

Elias
1994
SLAIN

Angelique
1994
SLAIN

1st child

NYIRAHABIYAMBERE

Judith
1994
SLAIN

2nd child

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I MET A MAN TODAY

Angela Blakely and David Lloyd

Over a quarter of a century has passed since the 1994 Rwanda genocide and there remains a strong sense of sadness. On our return visits to Rwanda we met survivors who struggle to exist. Many carry the scars of the genocide – both physically and emotionally. They share their stories with us in the hope that people in the West will care. We carry their stories so people will know.

Working in collaboration with the survivors, the following are their stories.

I MET A MAN TODAY



I met a woman today. She was sitting on a gravestone at the memorial museum, weeping quietly. She held a tissue in her hand and wiped her tears. Walking past, I didn't want to interrupt her. She was sitting on one of the nine tombs that hold the bodies of 250,000 people - only some of those killed in Kigali during the genocide.

I wondered for whom she was crying?

Wahay / Ward
Sunday 4th May 2008

I met a man today. He was a policeman at the Ruhanga memorial burial. He told me I could not photograph a survivor who had run from the church to the crying room. Grace Uwamurera was giving her testimony but became too distressed to finish. I told him I did not want to photograph her. I had followed her only to catch her tissue if she dropped it. I wanted to bring her tears back to Australia.

I went back and photographed the grief in the Church and taped the sorrow in the crying room.

Wahay / Ward
Sunday 13th April 2008



I met a man today. His name is Alphonse. He is a survivor from the massacre at the Cyahinda Church where the burgomaster had directed Tutsis to take refuge. Alphonse told me he was thrown into the latrine pit at the side of the Church. He survived. During the night, he crawled out of the pit and hid.

I asked him what he would do if the former burgomaster came walking down the road. He said he would fear that he had come back to kill him. I told him what I would do. It was not nice nor was it forgiving. He smiled and said his country was attempting reconciliation. I thought it was empty rhetoric but he told me he sometimes shares a drink with the man who killed his mother.

Wahay / Ward
Thursday 24th April 2008

I MET A MAN TODAY



I met a man today. He was at the Ruramba Health Centre in front of which stands a lonely gravesite. Flowers had been planted around the edges of a long flat chamber with a single headstone at one end. A nun appeared. I asked her about the history of the site. She said she didn't know and called the man to speak with me. He told me during the genocide people gathered here and were killed. I asked him how many bodies were buried. He said he didn't know. He said, simply, "There were too many".

I thanked the nun as I left. She asked if I had the information I wanted and I said I hoped he could have been more specific. She explained that the man couldn't answer my questions because his wife and children were buried in the grave.

Kalaly/Moya
Tuesday 29th April 2008

I met a man today. Thierry is twenty-one - he was seven during the genocide. He lives in a household of orphaned boys who carry with them the memories of the atrocities they witnessed. The boys have formed a new family group - one that is not uncommon in Rwanda today: households headed by children.

We sat together in his room where the walls were decorated with an array of pop, political and religious images. Tucked in to these spaces were salvaged photos of family - his parents who were killed and a sister who survived. When Thierry passed them to me he touched the surface gently.

Kalaly/Moya
Monday 21st April 2008



I met a man today. At the Central Hospital in Kigali I visited Francois. He is twenty-five-years-old and in danger of being murdered. His story is complicated in its detail and frightening in its outcome. As a survivor of the genocide he testified in the Gacaca courts against others who killed his family. He is the only family member to survive. And, as a survivor, he is a witness to the events of 1994.

Francois was attacked two weeks ago - the second attempt to murder him. It was violent and deliberate. He fought them as they poured petrol over him and set him alight. They continued beating him and tied a rope around his neck, attempting to hang him. But a stranger saved him.

He was lying in a ward in a hospital that relies on family to cater for patients' needs. As an orphan, Francois is lucky to have the support of other genocide survivors - a network of care. As I stood by his bed I noticed the gauze bandages on his neck appeared old and unchanged. Tape was peeling away and starting to unravel. I brushed away a persistent fly.

Outside this ward he is in danger of a third and fatal attack. It is certain that the killers will try again as Francois's testimony poses a danger to their life and freedom. Francois recalled the killers saying to him, "Tutsis are nothing. The only thing to do to them is to kill them". Was this a persistent ideology or a personal threat?

Kalaly/Moya
Saturday 3rd May 2008

