



The family tree bends, but it does not break.

Catalyst for Peace presents  
a film by Sara Terry

# fambul tok



Catalyst for Peace presents  
a film by Sara Terry

# fambul tok

A film about the power of forgiveness

## Production Notes

Directed and Produced by Sara Terry  
Produced by Rory Kennedy and Libby Hoffman  
*Theatrical Version: Runtime 82 minutes.*

## Press Contacts

### New York

Marian Koltai [marian.koltai@pmkbnc.com](mailto:marian.koltai@pmkbnc.com)  
Freida Orange [freida.orange@pmkbnc.com](mailto:freida.orange@pmkbnc.com)

### Los Angeles

Rachel Aberly [rachel.aberly@pmkbnc.com](mailto:rachel.aberly@pmkbnc.com)

### US Sales

Glen Reynolds [glen@circusroadfilms.com](mailto:glen@circusroadfilms.com)

### International Sales

Louise Rosen [lrosenltd@aol.com](mailto:lrosenltd@aol.com)

## Log Line

Victims and perpetrators of Sierra Leone's brutal war come together for the first time  
in an unprecedented reconciliation program of tradition-based truth-telling  
and forgiveness ceremonies.

## Television/Educational Version

Includes new, previously unreleased footage.

Directed by Henry Jacobson. Produced by Libby Hoffman. Runtime 52 minutes.

## Book

Accompanying 140-page hardcover book  
published by Umbrage Editions.

## Benefit Album

From zones of conflict comes music for peace.  
Catalyst for Peace presents *Wan Fambul/One Family*,  
produced by Modiba Productions.



## Fambul Tok Short Synopsis

Victims and perpetrators of Sierra Leone's brutal civil war come together for the first time in an unprecedented program of tradition-based truth-telling and forgiveness ceremonies. Through reviving their ancient practice of fambul tok (family talk), Sierra Leoneans are building sustainable peace at the grass-roots level – succeeding where the international community's post-conflict efforts failed. Filled with lessons for the West, this film explores the depths of a culture that believes that true justice lies in redemption and healing for individuals – and that forgiveness is the surest path to restoring dignity and building strong communities.

## Fambul Tok Expanded Synopsis

Fambul Tok tells the story of healing in post-conflict Sierra Leone through the intimate stories of perpetrators and victims, including:

- **Esther and Joseph** – family members who were caught in the horrors of the war. At age 12 Esther was captured by rebels, and raped by 15 men. Among them was her uncle, Joseph. He, too, had been caught by the rebels and ordered to rape Esther – or be killed.
- **Sahr and Nyumah** – best friends whose lives were forever changed by the conflict. Rebel forces turned the two boys on each other, forcing Nyumah to beat his best friend so severely that he crippled him – and then forcing him to cut the throat of his best friend's father.
- **The villagers of Foendor and Tamba Joe**, the native son who killed and beheaded 17 members of his own clan.

Our guide through these stories, and across the landscape of one of the poorest nations in the world, is John Caulker, a Sierra Leonean who has a vision of peace for his country. He is the creator and director of Fambul Tok, an unprecedented grass-roots reconciliation program that brings perpetrators and victims face-to-face in truth-telling and forgiveness ceremonies – an initiative which steps into the void left by failed international efforts to create peace and justice in the wake of the country's eleven-year-long civil war. Caulker believes Fambul Tok is his country's only hope. He has given his life to the program – moving out of his long-time career as a human rights activist and committing himself to the work of a peacebuilder.

In Fambul Tok, these stories of forgiveness and reconciliation are woven to paint a vivid portrait of post-conflict healing in Sierra Leone, seen through the lens of family, friends and community. The film explores a culture of forgiveness that is nearly incomprehensible to a Western mindset – a culture that values the restoration of relationships and the wholeness of community rather than measures of punishment and retribution.

As the stories of the central characters develop, we witness bonfires where victims and perpetrators come together, surrounded by their communities, to testify about crimes – to acknowledge responsibility and to ask for forgiveness. We see ceremonies that have not been performed since before the war – cleansing rituals for victims and perpetrators, as well as the pouring of libations to ancestors, to ask their blessings on the community's attempts to reconcile.

We learn about the war itself – through interviews with survivors, local journalists and the use of archival footage. Understanding the horrors of this war – and the toll it took on Sierra Leone's culture of unity – illumines the magnitude of Sierra Leoneans' willingness to forgive and the desire for reconciliation.

We experience the countless hours of work that go into creating Fambul Tok conversations and ceremonies, as John and his team of volunteers cover miles and miles of destroyed roads and single-lane jungle footpaths. As they reach out to communities devastated by the war, where victims and perpetrators often live virtually side by side, avoiding contact, living life in an uneasy, post-conflict holding pattern where no one discusses what happened in the past.

We are present in the most intimate of moments – at the bonfire where Esther tells her story and pulls her uncle out of the crowd to hear his confession and apology; at the dramatic meeting between Sahr and Nyumah, the first time they have spoken in 17 years, when a haunted Nyumah admits to killing his best friend's father; on the



## Fambul Tok Expanded Synopsis (continued)

country-wide search for Tamba Joe, with one of his former classmates, sent by Foendor's elders to find Joe and bring him back to the village. And we wait with the people of Foendor on the night of the bonfire where they hope to see their native son return and apologize for what he has done.

We also witness the healing effect of Fambul Tok – revisiting villages months after they have held bonfires and cleansing ceremonies to see perpetrators and victims now living and working side by side. We visit community farms that have sprung up as a result of Fambul Tok – a reflection of the community's desire to find ways to continue working together, building the bonds of reconciliation that have been newly forged. We discover a culture being reborn.

All these stories are seen through the eyes of Sierra Leoneans, who often repeat a local saying – “There is no bad bush to throw away a bad child,” meaning that even bad members of the community are needed and must be rehabilitated for the community to thrive. We learn from village chiefs and “mommy queens” (women leaders), from elders and youth, victims and perpetrators, about a culture that values the wholeness of community, that defines peace as being able to eat from one bowl, as one family.

Our crew has been given the remarkable privilege of being the only film crew allowed access to these events. We have not approached this film as Westerners bearing Western norms of crime and punishment, expecting Sierra Leoneans to “prove” to us that forgiveness is possible, to “prove” that their methods of justice are viable. We are unabashedly committed to exploring this story through the hearts and lives of Sierra Leoneans themselves. We believe that the West has long looked at Africa as a continent that needs to be “fixed” by the international community, too often ignoring the answers that Africans themselves bring to solving their own problems.

Fambul Tok provides insight into the answers that can be found in post-conflict African countries for creating sustainable peace. With its intimate exploration of a powerful grass-roots program created and led by Sierra Leoneans themselves, the film raises questions about the international community's efforts in Africa to create peace through Western-based traditions of crime and punishment – and searches for answers in African traditions which are based on cultural norms of confession, forgiveness and restorative justice.

Fambul Tok challenges the neo-colonial concept that Africa needs to be “saved” by the West, and explores community-based traditions as a viable form of building sustainable peace, that have proven – in Sierra Leone – to be more successful than Western efforts to heal divided communities. And we hope it encourages individuals and communities in other parts of Africa and the West to engage in the kind of grass-roots transformation that leads to peace.



## Fambul Tok Director's Statement

When I was in high school, I remember reading a newspaper story about a village in Africa – and the way that villagers dealt justice to one of their own who had committed a crime (a theft, I think it was). When the offender was caught, he was brought into the middle of the village to acknowledge his crime, and all of the residents formed a circle around him. One by one, each person addressed the offender by name – and then identified something good about him, something of value in his character. And so it went around the whole circle, the rendering of one judgment after another – not of condemnation, but of affirmation, a determination to bring the offender back to an awareness of his true self, to remind him so forcefully of his own inherent goodness that he would not commit a crime again.

I have thought often of that story – particularly so over the past three years as I have been making Fambul Tok. For a western mind-set, convinced that law and order – and justice – are maintained by punishment and imprisonment, it is a shock to encounter a culture and a people who believe that true justice lies in redemption and healing for individuals, and that truth-telling and forgiveness is the surest path to restoring dignity and building strong communities. It's more than many of us can wrap our minds around.

In fact, when I first shared these incredible stories of apology and forgiveness from Sierra Leone with a colleague who would eventually become closely involved with the film, his response was, "Wow, so we're going to look at all these horrible things that happened during the war, and then ask, How on earth can these people forgive it?" I had to explain several times, that no, I did not want to stand outside this culture, apart from these people, and make a film from an incredulous point of view, that demanded them to prove the reality and practicality of these acts of forgiveness. My standpoint as a filmmaker would be to take their standpoint, to let their words, their stories, their lives show me, show all of us, why forgiveness was possible for them. Because maybe then, we might begin to learn why forgiveness is possible for the rest of us.

It was a tricky thing to make a film that tries to let a culture speak for itself while being mindful of a Western audience that I fully expected would be baffled by the idea that truth-telling and forgiveness equate with justice. I was always doing interviews in the field, and working in the edit room, with those viewers in mind, try-

ing to make a film that takes viewers deeper and deeper into this culture of forgiveness, into the fabric of communities that are bound by what South Africans call *ubuntu*, which means essentially, "Because you are, I am."

That's why the film doesn't build in a traditional way, doesn't step up from horrific story to ever more horrific story. The film spills out more gently, more subtly – tracking the story of a culture that is being reborn before our eyes, and of a people who themselves are being renewed as they revive their ancient practice of fambul tok, of resolving conflict through conversation.

At the heart of this film, too, is a decision made early on, that there would be no Western voices in this narrative – no Western experts, no Western reporters who covered the war, no Western archival footage. I believe the West has had more than its fair share of opportunity to tell Africa's stories, to tell the stories of Sierra Leone, to be the arbiters and filters of a culture we don't even begin to understand. I believe, quite firmly, that we should stop talking about saving Africa – and start coming to this continent and its people – to the people of Sierra Leone -- with the humble desire to learn from their great wisdom. In making Fambul Tok, I have tried to answer the call of Nigerian writer and Booker Prize winner Ben Okri, who wrote:

"We have to re-discover Africa. The first discovery of Africa by Europe was the wrong one. It was not a discovery. It was an act of misperception. They saw, and bequeathed to future ages, an Africa based on what they thought of as important. They did not see Africa. And this wrong seeing of Africa is part of the problems of today. Africa was seen from a point of view of greed, of what could be got from it. And what you see is what you make. What you see in a people is what you eventually create in them. It is now time for a new seeing. It is now time to clear the darkness from the eyes of the Western world. The world should now begin to see the light in Africa, to see its sunlight, to see its brightness, its brilliance, its beauty. If we see it, it will be revealed... Only what we see anew, is revealed to us. Africa has been waiting, for centuries, to be discovered with eyes of love, the eyes of a lover. There is no true seeing without love."

**Sara Terry**

Los Angeles, February 2011



# Fambul Tok Cast and Crew Bios

## **SARA TERRY** Producer/Director

*Fambul Tok* is Sara Terry's first feature-length documentary. A former award-winning reporter for the *Christian Science Monitor* (and founding member of Monitor Radio, the *Monitor's* public radio program), Sara Terry made a mid-career transition into photojournalism and documentary photography in the late 1990s. The focus of her work since has been post-conflict societies. Her long-term project about the aftermath of war in Bosnia – "Aftermath: Bosnia's Long Road to Peace" – was published in September 2005 by Channel Photographics, and chosen as one of the best books of the year by PDN (Photo District News). Her work has been widely published and exhibited at such venues as the United Nations, Moving Walls/Open Society, the Museum of Photography in Antwerp, and the Leica Gallery in Solms, Germany. She is the founder of The Aftermath Project ([theaftermathproject.org](http://theaftermathproject.org)), a nonprofit grant program helping photographers cover the aftermath of conflict and building educational outreach and partnerships around the understanding that "war is only half the story." She is currently in production on her second documentary, *FOLK*, about three singer-songwriters trying to make it in the changing sub-culture of American folk music. She is also the frequent guest host of *To the Point*, and *Left, Right and Center* – public radio shows produced by KCRW, Santa Monica, and distributed to stations nation-wide by Public Radio International.

## **LIBBY HOFFMAN** Producer/Executive Producer

Libby Hoffman has been active in peacebuilding for 25 years in a variety of capacities – professor, trainer, facilitator, program director, consultant, and funder. A former Political Science professor at Principia College, she left academia to focus on the practice of peacebuilding with an emphasis on making the link between individual and community transformation. She has developed and led conflict resolution training programs in corporate, congregational, educational and community settings. She founded Catalyst for Peace (a Portland, Maine based private foundation) in 2003, in order to mobilize and support locally rooted peacebuilding around the world, and to pioneer in communications to bring the stories of this work to the world.

It was in her capacity as President of Catalyst for Peace that she first began working with Sara Terry to document stories of forgiveness and reconciliation in post-conflict Africa. In the course of this work, she met John Caulker and they began the partnership that led to the founding of Fambul Tok in Sierra Leone, alongside the commitment to document the process in film. With the growth and success of the Fambul Tok program, and an increasing demand to share the model in other parts of the world, Fambul Tok incorporated as an international organization in 2009 with Hoffman serving as its first President. Catalyst for Peace is still the US program partner for Fambul Tok, and continues to focus on ways to share its stories and lessons more broadly.

Hoffman holds a Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy from The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, and a BA in Political Science from Williams College. *Fambul Tok* is her first feature length film.

## **JOHN CAULKER**

John Caulker founded and has led the implementation of the Fambul Tok program since its inception in 2007, initially through his position as the founding Executive Director of Sierra Leonean human rights NGO, Forum of Conscience, and currently as the Executive Director of Fambul Tok International.

Mr. Caulker became a human rights activist as a student leader during the initial years of the war in Sierra Leone. Risking his life to document wartime atrocities, he infiltrated rebel camps disguised as a rebel to gather information and stories to pass along to international organizations such as Amnesty International, Article 19, and Human Rights Watch. He founded Forum of Conscience as a human rights NGO in Sierra Leone in 1996.

As Executive Director of Forum of Conscience, Mr. Caulker strove to prevent recurring violence by connecting the root causes of Sierra Leone's brutal conflict to the need for rural community participation in the national decision making process and acknowledgement of wrong doing to victims through the reparations program.

As the national chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Working Group, Mr. Caulker pressured the government of Sierra Leone to implement the recommendations of the TRC's 2004 report. Specifically, he has fought to ensure that some of the revenues from the sale of Sierra Leone's natural resources benefit Sierra Leoneans themselves in the form of a special fund for war victims. As part of this effort to raise awareness and guarantee protection for the rights of victims of the conflict, Mr. Caulker also mediated an agreement that allows members of the Amputees and War Wounded Association to participate in the TRC and Special Court process.



## Fambul Tok Cast and Crew Bios

### **RORY KENNEDY** Producer

Rory Kennedy is an Academy Award nominated and Emmy Award winning independent documentary filmmaker, as well as co-founder and president of Moxie Firecracker Films. Her films cover an array of issues ranging from poverty to politics to human rights. You may have seen her work on HBO, A&E, MTV, Lifetime and PBS. Kennedy has directed and produced feature documentaries including, "Ghosts of Abu Ghraib" (Primetime Emmy Award winner for Best Non Fiction Film, 2007), Thank You, Mr. President: Helen Thomas at the White House, American Hollow, A Boy's Life, and Pandemic: Facing AIDS.

### **BRIAN SINGBIEL** Editor

Brian Singbiel focused his film education on editing at Chapman University, which earned him many honors including a student nomination at the 2003 A.C.E. Eddie Awards. He honed his craft by editing short films, spec commercials and music videos while working with established editors on feature documentaries such as Seamless and America the Beautiful. Singbiel's first feature documentary as lead editor was the 2008 Sundance hit "Bigger, Stronger, Faster." His other credits include the 2010 Toronto doc directed by Ondi Timmoner, "Cool It!," the 2009 Sundance doc, "Dirt! The Movie" and "Exporting Raymond."

### **HENRY JACOBSON** Director of Photography

"Fambul Tok" is Henry Jacobson's first feature-length documentary. He began working in documentary film after graduating from Hampshire College with a project called Bilwas, a film about the lingering effects and public health disaster following twenty years of war in a small Miskito village in eastern Nicaragua. After moving to Los Angeles, he began working for Steven Bernstein, ASC, who became his mentor in cinematography. Henry soon started work on his own documentary feature "Jesus Goes to Hollywood," and is currently the Director of Photography on two documentary features; "FOLK," Sara Terry's second documentary, and "Truth in Translation," directed by Michael Lessac. This work has taken him around the globe and inspired his latest photo project "Phoenix Flown" which marries his work at home as a fashion photographer with his experience in international post conflict peace building - photographing the work of visionary young designers working in post conflict countries.

### **KATE AMEND, A.C.E.** Consulting Editor

In December 2005, Kate Amend received the International Documentary Association's inaugural award for Outstanding Achievement in Editing for her work which includes two Academy Award-winning documentary features: "Into the Arms of Strangers" and "The Long Way Home." Amend also received the 2001 American Cinema Editors' Eddie award for "Into the Arms of Strangers," and edited the 2001 Oscar-nominated documentary short ON TIPTOE: Gentle Steps to Freedom.

### **ISSAR SHULMAN** Composer

Israeli composer Issar Shulman won an Emmy in 2008 for his soundtrack for the HBO documentary, "To Die in Jerusalem." A graduate of the Royal Conservatory in the Hague, Holland, he composes for television, theater, dance, commercials and movies. He also plays double bass with the Israeli Chamber Orchestra.

For complete credits, visit  
[fambultok.com/press/press-kit/](http://fambultok.com/press/press-kit/)



## Fambul Tok Selected Reviews and Press

### **Fambul Tok: Film Review** The Hollywood Reporter, March 14, 2011

Director Sara Terry brings a career's worth of journalism experience to this assured filmmaking debut that examines John Caulker's Fambul Tok organization, which addresses the deep wounds created by a decade of civil war in Sierra Leone.

AUSTIN – The healing power of forgiveness may sound like a syrupy or pie-in-the-sky subject for a documentary. But in the engrossing Fambul Tok, the staggering nature of the sins in question and the directness with which they're confronted make for something more rock-ribbed than the average do-gooder doc. The film has a shot with a niche theatrical audience and, given smart promotion, could enjoy a broad reach on the small screen.

Director Sara Terry brings a career's worth of journalism experience to this assured filmmaking debut, organizing her material into chapters that escalate in drama and illuminate her main subject's mission without ever getting distracted by his personal life or history.

Sierra Leonean John Caulker created the Fambul Tok organization to address the deep wounds created by a decade of civil war. The name is Creole for "family talk," referring to village-wide gatherings around bonfires – in this case, meetings in which victims of violence publicly accuse those who wounded them and, remarkably, grant immediate forgiveness when it is requested sincerely.

We watch as a man who was forced to rape his 12 year-old niece kneels before her to apologize; a boy who crippled and blinded his best friend does the same. In each case, victim and aggressor (who often was being forced into the act at gunpoint) wind up embracing, smiling and dancing just moments after reliving the darkest moments of their lives.

Terry follows Caulker from village to village as he convinces locals to mend their communities with his ritual – a home-brewed alternative to hugely expensive courts built by foreigners and to sweep-it-under-the-rug blanket amnesties.

Aided by Henry Jacobson's artful cinematography, she captures the rifts violence caused in these tightly knit villages and conveys how essential moving on is to everyone involved, not just emotionally, but in terms of survival.

The level of atrocity increases, and the filmmakers watch as Caulker tries to find a man who beheaded over a dozen members of his own clan. The result is an on-camera moment of soul-searching that will not fail to move viewers. –*John DeFore*

### **The 12 Best Films of SXSW** Paste Magazine, March 24, 2011

"People of the African nation of Sierra Leone practice an ancient ritual of family talk called Fambul Tok in this incredible documentary. Citizens whose lives were horrifically changed by civil war, where family members became killers of their own families, where torture and cruelty were every day occurrences, demonstrate a remarkable amount of tolerance and forgiveness as they gather to heal the emotional scars of war."

### **Sara Terry: On Film and Forgiveness** The Jakarta Post | April 27, 2011

"The film is beautifully shot, the tenderness, grief and guilt of victims and perpetrators bleed through Terry's frames, blending in the act of forgiveness. This forgiveness is best witnessed when best friends, estranged since the war, again come together."

### **Fambul Tok Review** Mambo Magazine | June 19, 2011

"The central metaphor of the Fambul Tok ritual is the bonfire, around which whole communities stand eye to eye with former-rebels, accusing them of their crimes and inviting them to repent ... I will never forget two men embracing after their Fambul Tok ceremony ... One only hopes that this peace spreads ..."

### **SXSW Preview: Fambul Tok** The Austinist | March 14, 2011

This documentary echoes the recent grassroots revolutions in the Middle East, and it teaches international communities that real hope for peace comes from the strength of local community and forgiveness.

Read the reviews in full at [Fambultok.com/press/news-and-reviews](http://Fambultok.com/press/news-and-reviews)





# Fambul Tok Awards and Recognition

## **Fort Myers Film Festival 2011**

WINNER Best Documentary

## **Nashville Film Festival 2011**

WINNER Human Spirit Award and HONORABLE MENTION Best Documentary

## **Global Social Change Film Festival 2011**

WINNER Best of Fest

## **Heartland Film Festival 2011**

WINNER Crystal Heart Award

## **Rhode Island Film Festival 2011**

WINNER Viola M. Marshall Audience Choice Award for Best Documentary

## **Zanzibar International Film Festival 2011**

WINNER SIGNIS Award

## **Show Me Justice Film Festival 2011**

WINNER Best Feature

## **Queens World Film Festival 2012**

WINNER Best Documentary

## **Reynolda Film Festival 2012**

WINNER Best Documentary

## **Non Violence International Film Festival 2012**

WINNER Jury Grand Prize

## **Mountainfilm 2012**

WINNER Norman Vaughan Indomitable Spirit Award

## **Portugal Underground Film Festival 2012**

WINNER Jury Special Prize (Documentary)

## **San Francisco Black Film Festival 2012**

WINNER Best Documentary (St. Clair Bourne Award)

## **Chagrin Documentary Film Festival 2012**

WINNER Best Human Spirit Documentary

## **Portland Maine Film Festival, 2012**

WINNER Best Documentary

## **Beloit International Film Festival, 2014**

WINNER Best Documentary Film



# Fambul Tok Festival Appearances

WORLD PREMIERE **SXSW Film Festival**, Austin, TX

**Raindance**, London, UK

**Bend Film Festival**, Bend, OR

**Bergen Film Festival**, Bergen, Norway

**Cucalorus Film Festival**, Wilmington, NC

**DocUTAH**, St. George, UT

**Africa in Motion**, Edinburgh, Scotland

**Red Rock**, Zion Canyon, UT

**Nashville Film Festival**, Nashville, TN

**DocuWest International Film Festival**, CO

**Idaho Peace Story Festival**, Boise, ID

**Rhode Island Film Festival**, Providence, RI

**Roxbury International Film Festival**, Boston, MA

**Maine International Film Festival**, Waterville, ME

**Zanzibar International Film Festival**, Zanzibar, Tanzania

**Kandy International Film Festival**, Kandy, Sri Lanka

**SouthSide Film Festival**, Bethlehem, PA

**Little Rock Film Festival**, Little Rock, AK

**DeadCenter Film Festival**, Oklahoma City, OK

**Gold Coast International Film Festival**, Westchester, NY

**Global Social Change Film Festival**, Bali

**Fort Myers Film Festival**, Fort Myers, FL

**DOC NYC**, New York, NY

**Heartland Film Festival**, Indianapolis, IN

**Move IT! Film Festival**, Dresden, Germany

**St. Louis International Film Festival**, St. Louis, MO

**New Orleans Film Festival**, New Orleans, LA

**Bahamas International Film Festival**, Nassau, Bahamas

**The On Screen/In Person Tour**

**The Council on Foundations Film and Video Festival**, Los Angeles, CA

**Show Me Justice Film Festival**, Warrensburg, MO

**San Diego Black Film Festival**, San Diego, CA

**Texas Black Film Festival**, Dallas, TX

**ScreenPeace Film Festival**, Notre Dame, IN

**LUMS International Film Festival**, Lahore, PAKISTAN

**Opin Yu Yi Film Festival**, Freetown, SIERRA LEONE

**Peace On Earth Film Festival**, Chicago, IL

**Queens World Film Festival**, Jackson Heights, NY

**Women's History Month Film Festival**, Newark, NJ

**Talking Pictures Festival**, Evanston, IL

**NY Peace Film Festival**, New York, NY

**Sebastopol Documentary Film Festival**, Sebastopol, CA

**Santa Cruz Film Festival**, Santa Cruz, CA

**YES Film Festival**, Columbus, IN

**Portugal Underground Film Festival**, Portugal

**Africa World Documentary Film Festival** (traveling)

**Female Eye Film Festival**, Toronto, Canada

**Lewiston Auburn Film Festival**, Lewiston, ME

**Reynolda Film Festival**, Winston-Salem, NC

**Langston Hughes African American Film Festival**, Seattle, WA

**Non Violence International Film Festival**, Ontario, Canada

**Rainier Independent Film Festival** Ashford, WA

**Pineapple Underground Film Festival** Hong Kong

**San Francisco Black Film Festival** - San Francisco, CA

**Interrobang Film Festival** Des Moines, IA

**Urban Diary Film Series** New York, NY

**Feel Good Film Festival** Los Angeles, CA

**Santa Rosa Film Festival** Santa Rosa, CA

**Montreal International Black Film Festival** Montreal, Canada

**Salento International Film Festival** Tricase, Italy

**BolderLife Film Festival** Boulder, CO

**Chagrin Documentary Film Festival** Chagrin Falls, OH

**Global Issues/Human Rights Film Festival** Flint, MI

**Rainier Independent Film Festival**, Ashford, WA

**Biografilm Festival/International Celebration of Lives**, Bologna, ITALY

**Pineapple Underground Film Festival**, HONG KONG

**San Francisco Black Film Festival**, San Francisco, CA

**Interrobang Film Festival**, Des Moines, IA

**Urban Diary Film Series**, New York, NY

**Feel Good Film Festival**, Los Angeles, CA

**Santa Rosa Film Festival**, Santa Rosa, CA

**Montreal International Black Film Festival**, Montreal, CAN

**Salento International Film Festival**, Tricase, ITALY

**BolderLife Film Festival**, Boulder, CO

**Chagrin Documentary Film Festival**, Chagrin Falls, OH

**Portland Maine Film Festival**, Portland, ME

**New Hampshire Film Festival**, Portsmouth, NH

**Washington West Film Festival**, Washington, DC

**Weyauwega Film Festival**, Weyauwega, WI

**Global Issues Human Rights Festival**, Flint, MI

**Beloit International Film Festival**, Beloit, WI

**SENE Film Festival**, Providence, RI

# Fambul Tok Publicity Stills

Photo by Sara Terry

Nyumah (left) and Sahr, just a few days after the dramatic bonfire ceremony that restored their friendship.



Photo by Sara Terry

Women celebrating a rice harvest on a community farm in Madina, Kailahun District, which brought victims and perpetrators to work together after a local Fambul Tok ceremony.



Photo by Sara Terry

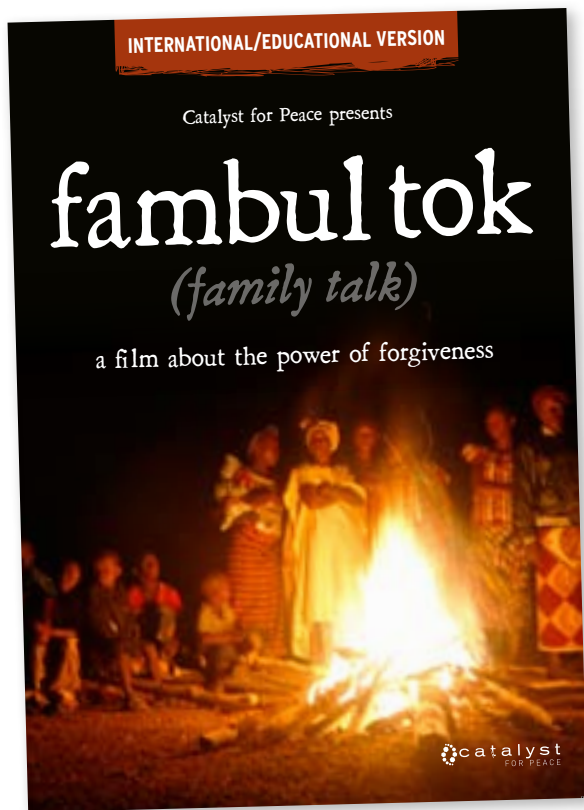
A community gathers to hear the testimony of victims and perpetrators at a bonfire ceremony in Gbekeedu, Kailahun District.



Photo by Sara Terry

Site of the Community Consultation in Kailahun, where Fambul Tok Staff met with local stakeholders to ask whether they wanted to launch the program in their district.

# Fambul Tok Television/Educational Version



52 MINUTES, COLOR, 2012, IN ENGLISH  
AND KRIO W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES

INTERNATIONAL/EDUCATIONAL VERSION

Editor EMMA TAMMI

Produced by LIBBY HOFFMAN

Directed by HENRY JACOBSON

A CATALYST FOR PEACE Film

## Fambul Tok: Forgiving Savage

Television/Educational Version

### Contains Exclusive New Footage

Seven years after the last bullet was fired, a decade of brutal fighting in Sierra Leone finds resolution as people come together to talk around traditional village bonfires. Some had perpetrated terrible crimes against friends or family. Some had faced horrible losses: loved ones murdered, limbs severed. But as they tell their stories, admit their wrongs, forgive, dance, and sing together, true reconciliation begins. This is the story of "Fambul Tok" (Krio for "family talk"), and it is a story the world needs to hear.

In Fambul Tok, this story is told by the people who are living it. Our guide is human rights activist John Caulker, a Sierra Leonean with a vision of peace for his country. Village by village, Caulker organizes a grassroots program to help communities hold reconciliation ceremonies - and hold fast to the new peace. He finds his people eager to turn ancient customs towards healing contemporary wounds, and the result is stories viewers will never forget.

Bonfire to bonfire, dark memories move into the light. Sahr and Nyumeh, childhood friends torn apart when Nyumeh was forced to cut Sahr's father's throat. Esther, raped as a child by a group of soldiers - among them her uncle Joseph, just 13 years old himself at the time. The radical forgiveness they request or receive is shocking - and inspiring. Their stories challenge Western perceptions of justice and provoke new ways of thinking about crime and punishment, conflict and community.

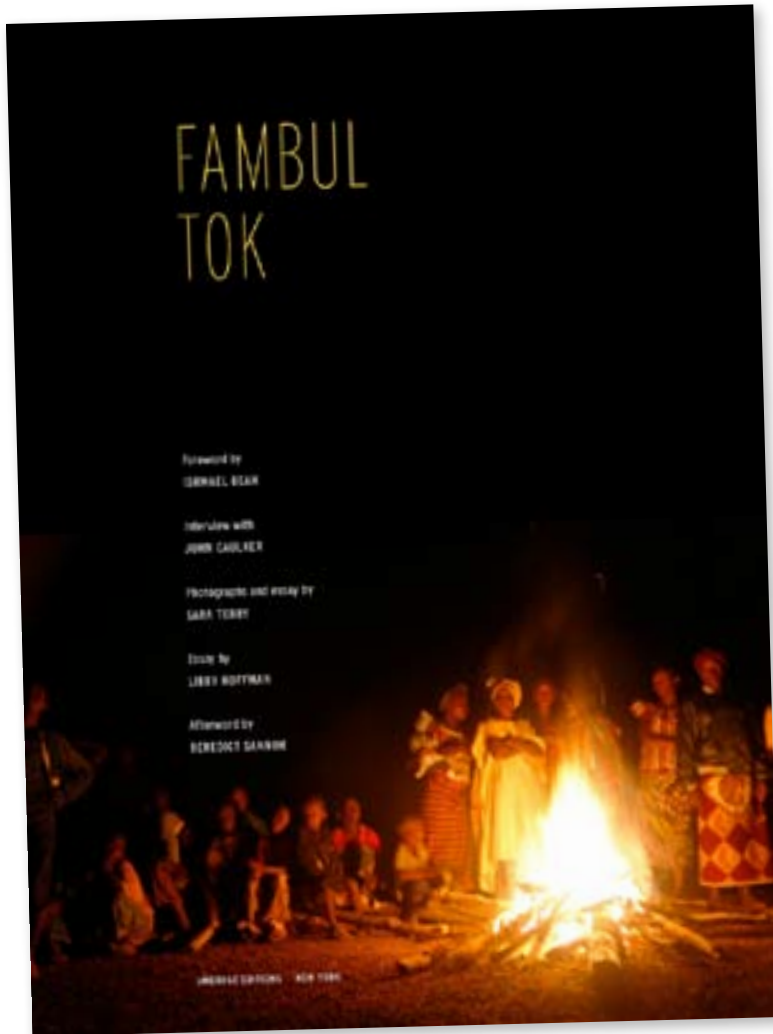
Never is this more true than when Captain Mohamed Savage, the notorious rebel commander believed to have committed some of the worst atrocities in the war, is onscreen. A defiant, menacing voice in his first encounters with Caulker, Savage travels a great personal and physical distance to the region where he allegedly committed his worst atrocities. As he listens to his victims speak and begs for their forgiveness, we see how Sierra Leoneans have turned personal pain into the power to heal their country.

Fambul Tok raises questions about the international community's efforts in Africa to create peace through Western-based traditions of crime and punishment, and it challenges the neo-colonial concept that Africa needs to be "saved" by the West. By illuminating a successful peace process that is based on reviving communal traditions of confession, forgiveness, and restorative justice, the film encourages individuals and communities around the world to engage in the kind of grassroots transformation that leads to peace.

### NEW Educational Guide

Featuring extensive background material, curriculum outline, and classroom activities.

# Fambul Tok The Book



## **Fambul Tok: The Book**

Published by Umbrage Editions

Experience an extraordinary journey of reconciliation, one that offers new insights and an original model for peacemaking to the rest of the world. A hardcover companion volume to the acclaimed documentary film, Fambul Tok marks another chapter in the story of groundbreaking, grassroots peacebuilding in Sierra Leone.

Introduction by Ishmael Beah  
Essay and Photographs by Sara Terry  
Interview with John Caulker  
Essays by Libby Hoffman  
Afterword by Benedict Sannoh

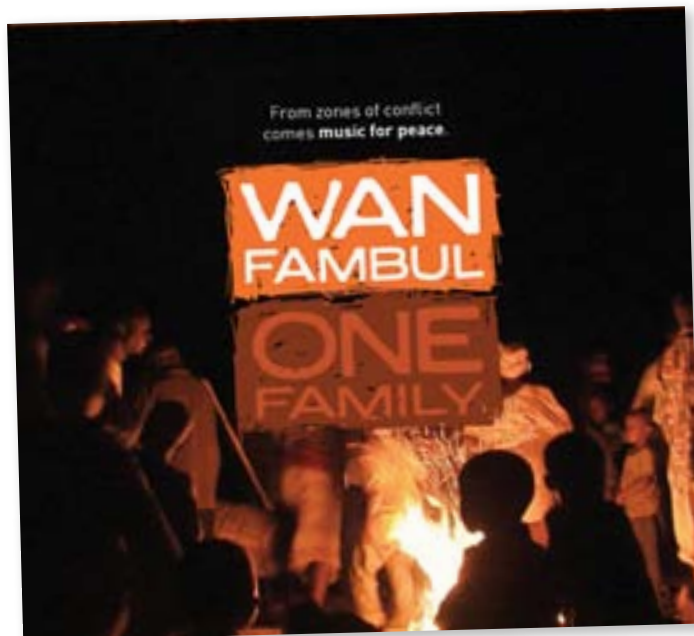
ISBN 1-978-1884167-21-8

Available at fine bookstores everywhere, on Amazon.com and at **FambulTok.com/store**





# Fambul Tok Wan Fambul/One Family Benefit Album



Catalyst for Peace presents  
**Wan Fambul/One Family**

**From zones of conflict comes  
music for peace.**

Wan Fambul/One Family is a high-energy, urgent call for forgiveness and deep dialogue from edgy DJs and soulful singer-songwriters, from hard-hitting reggae outfits and transnational pop explorers. This groove-powered compilation is only available by a donation to the groundbreaking grassroots peacebuilding efforts of Fambul Tok in Sierra Leone.

## Track List

Wi Na Wan Fambul **Bajah + the Dry Eye Crew**  
featuring **Angie and Jocelia**

Nasle Man **Abjeez**

Say God **Idan Raichel Project**  
featuring **Vieux Farka Toure**

Ba Kae **Vusi Mahlasela**

Guttersnipe **Bhi Bhiman**

Shim El Yasmine **Mashrou Leila**

Ahoulaguine Akaline **Bombino**

Global Threat **Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars**

Seeing Hands **Dengue Fever**

Wansi Wagulu **Saba Saba**

Gun Thing **Bajah + The Dry Eye Crew**

New Day **Noble Society**

BONUS TRACK Ahoulaguine Akaline **The King Britt Remix**

BONUS TRACK Wi Na Wan Fambul **The Eccodek Remix**

A Catalyst for Peace album. Produced by Modiba Productions.

AVAILABLE BY DONATION ONLY.

Preview tracks, access bonus content and behind-the-scenes video and donate to download at:

**FAMBULTOK.COM/WANFAMBUL**





This film is supported by:



© 2014 Catalyst for Peace. All rights reserved.

Catalyst for Peace is the author of this motion picture for purposes of copyright and other laws.

This motion picture is protected by the copyright laws of the United States of America and other countries. Any unauthorized duplication, copying, distribution or use of all or part of this motion picture may result in civil liability and/or criminal prosecution in accordance with applicable laws.

Eleventh Draft January 2014

