

Bakary Diallo | Tribute

Tribute Boubacar Diallo: *TOMO* (Abandoned territory)

By Fatima Kyari Mohammed, Jury Member 2014 | Executive Director, WACAS (West Africa Conflict and Security) Consulting,

Boubacar Diallo's work *TOMO* brings to the forefront the realities of the impact of conflict and war on the most abandoned, the most rural, the furthest from our minds; articulating the unseen, the hidden, the mysterious when the presence of the living evaporates, the realities of the impact of conflict resides. Even without a narrative, *TOMO* provokes something very powerful. The short film is disturbing without being violent, underlining the savagery and brutality of conflict and war without being explicit.

The back drop of a rural environment as well as the sounds evokes a semblance of normality or continuity with just the embers of what once was. It awakens the reality of the wounds of the body and of the mind through the illustrative burnings, butchery, and abandoned villages, with just the embers and ghosts of life that once existed.

With the frequency of war and conflict souls become statistics and communities become forgotten - we come to cultivate a certain immunity and indifference to it. This work is not about the figures but about the stories and what is left behind after a conflict in an 'abandoned territory'. Coming from a Sahelo-rural society's perspective it can easily be associated with different contexts, underscoring 'the disturbance that war causes to all the psyches in the world'. This plea for non-violence by conjuring the realities of violence leaves us contemplative and sober long after the images have dispersed.

Through this work, Boubacar has shown us not only the great potential of an emerging artist and but reminds us that even with the absence of the physical, the essence of its soul still lingers. Thus, we are reminded that the spirit of the artist is interminable in his work. Even though Boubar is no longer with us, the essence of his work still lives on.