

## Kalunga Lima: scientific niche

**A**ngolan-Canadian Kalunga Lima manages the company LS Filmes. He started his cinematic career in institutional films for the oil industry, making his jump to producing wildlife documentaries when he accompanied biologist Dr Pedro Vaz Pinto during his search for the giant sable antelope or *Palanca Negra Gigante*.

“Because I was in Angola and had high-definition gear, I was in an ideal situation to make a film about the quest to save our national symbol,” Lima says in his modest office in the centre of Luanda. “Luckily, this was the year Pedro actually captured the giant sable. The documentary is more about his six-year, often solitary, quest than about the animal itself.”

Once Lima had the footage of the giant sable, Angola’s national symbol, he was able to get sponsorship to finish the documentary. The funds also allowed him to start a second science-related documentary, this time on dinosaur research in Angola.

Attending a presentation by US palaeontologist Professor Louis Jacobs, Lima was surprised and fascinated to learn that Angola is extremely rich in dinosaur fossils.

“Nobody seemed to know about this! The PaleoAngola group had no money to continue their research, so I asked them, ‘If I find a sponsor, can I make a documentary?’”

LS Filmes gained funding from the Vida Foundation of Angola for two expeditions and a full-size dinosaur replica, while Esso Angola supported a project-related children’s book and a brochure.

“The PaleoAngola project opened my eyes to the possibility of doing science-related projects more systematically,” says Lima. “Combining academic research, documentary films for the general public and children’s books is where I’ve found my niche. I want to use the same three-level formula for other wildlife projects.”

LS Filmes is still looking for sponsors for its current production, a documentary on the African manatee. “The manatee is a bizarre, very rare, walrus-like mammal



that lives in the Kwanza River,” explains Lima. “Manatees in Angola have never been photographed or filmed. They are almost completely unknown to the general Angolan public and the scientific community.”

His documentary about the Giant Sable was shown at Expo 2010 in China. Lima is now producing several films for the Angolan Pavilion at Expo 2012 in Korea.

The wildlife-documentary maker has suggested bringing the material LS Filmes produced for Expo 2012 back to Angola.

“If you do that at every Expo, you’ll be constantly enriching Angola’s museums and schools,” he says. “A start has already been made. We also have a strong link with the Angolan Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. That’s why the PaleoAngola dinosaur replica will soon be seen at the new Museum of Science and Technology in Luanda.”

Lima always produces work with a young Angolan audience in mind. “We must bring science to young people in Angola if we want to have scientists in the



Angola's emblematic giant sable antelope



Lima and his dinosaur replica

‘I can bring science to a larger Angolan public. **That’s what I can do to make Angola a better place**’ – Kalunga Lima

future,” he says. “Growing up in Canada, I was a big fan of scientific film-makers Jacques Cousteau and David Suzuki. I don’t think I would be making science documentaries had I not watched their programmes as a child.”

Lima feels he can inspire children the same way scientists like these inspired him. “In Africa, we are still struggling with basic literacy, so science is seen as a luxury. Still, African intellectuals have been talking about an African renaissance for decades. But how can we ever have a true African renaissance without science?”

Lima has also started a PhD in Science Communication. “By making documentaries and children’s books, I can bring science to a larger Angolan public. That’s what I can do to make Angola a better place. I’m trying to do it at an international level, because to get international attention and sponsorship you need a high level of quality. It’s a challenge, but I don’t see it as work. I love what I do, that’s the beauty of it.”

### Paulo Azevedo: discovering new values

After completing degrees in Film Studies in Cape Town and English and Contemporary Dance in the UK, Paulo Azevedo worked as a professional dancer for seven years before he went back to filmmaking.

He has made two short video-art documentaries, *Estação dos Musseques (Shanty-town Train)* and *Next Station Kubal*, which were shown during Luanda’s Triennial in 2010.

In *Next Station Kubal*, Azevedo films his journey and fellow passengers on the Benguela railway line, up to what used to be the last station during the Angolan Civil War, Kubal.

*Estação dos Musseques* is about Azevedo’s chaotic train journey from Luanda’s outskirts to the nearby industrial town of Viana. “It represents an important part of Angolan society, including the omnipresent but unrecognised post-traumatic



Paulo Azevedo

disorder that plagues many Angolans,” Azevedo explains in a soft voice from behind a desk in one of the Elinga Theatre’s beautiful but derelict rooms in Luanda.

He will start producing his first low-budget fiction movie *The Diary of a Musician* at the end of 2011. It’s about a young man from Luanda’s slums who wants to record an album.

“It’s a metaphor for Luanda’s big, materialistic, rich world versus its poor outskirts. At the same time, it’s about the need to put Angolan music down on paper, so that it can be read and played all over the world,” he says.

French film producer Gregory Bernard donated half of the film’s \$250,000 budget. Azevedo is still looking for sponsors for the second half.