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# VIDEO: Cristina de Middel, Benedicte Kurzen and Robin Maddock show different sides of Nigeria

Written by Tom Seymour and Jon Max Spatz



Main image from the series *This Is What Hatred Did* © Cristina de Middel, courtesy TJ Boulting

**Shine Ur Eye, a photography collaboration between Cristina de Middel, Benedicte Kurzen and Robin Maddock, brings together and explores their recent response to living in Lagos, Nigeria, while contrasting each photographers' dramatically different photographic process.**

It isn't often a group photography show can boast the names of Cristina de Middel, Benedicte Kurzen and Robin Maddock.

This collaboration, titled *Shine Ur Eye*, brings together and explores their recent response to living in Lagos, Nigeria, while contrasting each photographers' dramatically different photographic process.

Each photographer found themselves in Nigeria for different reasons, and have responded to the complex layers of Nigerian society in different ways. Exhibited together, their work forms an original photographic essay on Nigeria, recognising the intermingling traditions and practices that shape Nigerian culture.

British photographer Robin Maddock is displaying, for the first time, digitised images he discovered in the Nigerian National Museum archive.

It contains, he says, "piles of slides, many in a state of decay, like a treasure trove."

The slides are presented as found, with no interference from the photographers, save to present these ethnographic images of masks and other objects as significant insights into Nigerian cultural history and heritage, as well as fascinating photographic records in their own right.

The Spanish photographer Cristina de Middel, a former photojournalist, began working conceptually with the first self-published book *The Afronauts* in 2012. After exhibiting at the Lagos Photo Festival in 2013, she developed a series is entitled *This Is What Hatred Did*, inspired by the 1964 magical realist novel *My Life In The Bush Of Ghosts* by Nigerian writer Amos Tutuola, which follows a young boy separated from his family when his village is attacked by militia.

With the conviction that contemporary issues should be described in a way that includes the ancient traditions and perspectives of Nigerian native people, De Middel's series aims to provide a contemporary version of this story by setting it in the floating village of Makoko, Lagos.

Benedicte Kurzen, a photojournalist with Noor photography agency, has lived in Nigeria for the past few years, covering stories in the news from Boko Haram to the recent presidential elections. Kurzen still works in a more conventional photojournalistic way, her work expressing "the functioning chaos of daily life, the dramatic events on the streets, with an affection and affiliation she has for the people."

Maddock began with photographing Lagos with a Polaroid camera, taking portraits on the street, often as double exposures, giving the 'good' print to the subject and keeping the smeared and smudged processing sheet for himself. It was, he says, "a device for getting to know people, to encounter the place."

*'Shine Ur Eye' is at TJ Boulting, London, from May 21 until June 27; [tjboulting.com](http://tjboulting.com)*

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