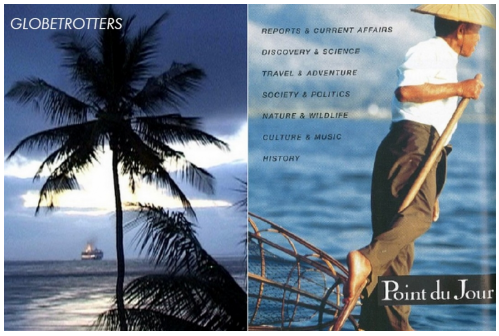

SOUTH AFRICA: THE SHEMBE CHURCH

Director(s): Catherine MONFAJON

Writer(s): Catherine MONFAJON

Ishaiah Shembe, founder of the church that carries his name, wanted to prove to black South Africans that it is possible to become a Christian without renouncing their African traditions, considered as pagan by the white missionaries. Shembe wanted to preserve the Zulus' identity and bolster their self-esteem. With stunning costumes and dances that are a physical expression of their prayers, the Church of Shembe - one of 800 in South Africa - aims to provide a sanctuary for its disciples in Natal, a region greatly scarred by violence.

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