

Wednesday, March 14th, 7PM

"Haiti: We Must Kill the Bandits"
powerful new film by Kevin Pina

Introduced by Annette Auguste "So An"

Grand Lake Theatre, 7:00 3200 Grand Avenue, Oakland

Blood literally runs in the streets through the chronicle of Feb. 2004's forced ouster of Haiti's elected President Jean Bertrand Aristide and the terror of its citizens that followed.

Aristide and his Lavalas political party were democratically elected in 2000 by Haiti's poor majority. The film shows thousands of Aristide supporters gathered to celebrate his inauguration; he promised political and social change, better education, food, and healthcare for the masses.

But not everyone was in favor of change. Haiti's business community and intelligentsia worked against Aristide from the very beginning. And they wouldn't accept, it seems, that a poor man's vote is worth as much as a rich man's.

Internationally, most mainstream media reported only negatively on Aristide. At his ouster, they gave the impression that Aristide fled to South Africa out of concern for his safety.

A transitional government was put in place as tens of thousands of pro-Aristide people took to the streets to demand his return. Over and over again the film shows marches and rallies of hope-filled people uniting in peaceful protest. Their voices fell on deaf ears.

Calling the demonstrators bandits, the Haitian police commit well-documented shootings, arrests and killings. Ironically, members of the UN are filmed telling people to listen to and respect the police.

Although this documentary is a chronicle of oppression, the courage and hope of the poor masses of the Haitian people is by far the most unforgettable element of the story.