

Ibogaine— Rite of Passage

[Editor's Note: As mentioned in the article on page 8, research may take place in Israel into the use of ibogaine in subjects with opiate addiction. The following report is about an excellent documentary about ibogaine that MAPS helped in a small way to bring to fruition.]

Ibogaine—Rite of Passage is a documentary about the use of the controversial substance ibogaine for the treatment of addiction. After the appeal for funds that was written in the Summer 2004 *MAPS Bulletin*, this project was finished successfully, thanks to Custom House Publishers, For A Better World, Inc., and The Rotary in Antwerp, who provided us with the needed funds. The working title *Retrospection of the Future* which was stated in the article has been replaced with a new one: *Ibogaine—Rite of Passage*.

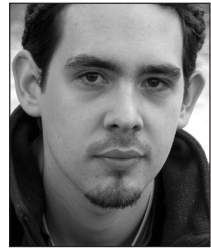
A short synopsis of the film:

Ibogaine is a substance derived from an African plant, which is used during initiations of the Bwiti culture in Gabon. In the sixties the anti-addictive properties were discovered by Howard Lotsof, who was a heroin addict at that time. Shortly after his discovery, ibogaine became illegal in the US. Ibogaine is surrounded by controversy, and the pharmaceutical companies show no interest in this substance. Is it because of economic reasons or its hallucinogenic effects?

Cy (34) has been using a mixture of heroin and amphetamine for about 11 years, but his three children and his ambitions are more valuable to him. Kicking his addiction is a tough job for him. It reveals all his suppressed emotions.

Massavou (22) lives in the village Mitoné in Gabon. For her, the traditional African initiation is part of a healing process. She suffered from an illness for more than a year,

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and she hopes that eating the holy plant will be the starting point of a new phase in her life.

This revealing documentary shows the different aspects of this special substance by means of personal experiences and explanations of ex-addicts, treatment providers, and “experts.”

On September 25, 2004, the premier took place at the Dutch Film Festival in Utrecht, Holland. On October 18, it was presented for 450 women at Actueel Denken & Leven, a Belgian organization. On November 11, it was presented at the 5th annual Harm Reduction Coalition Conference in New Orleans.

The DVD is now completed; it will have subtitles in five languages that can be selected: English, French, German, Spanish, and Dutch. The DVD will include the trailer as well as information pages about the treatment centers, organizations, and sponsors that cooperated, a list of websites, and a filmography of the director.

I would like to thank MAPS for giving me the opportunity to publish the appeal for funds, which brought us in contact with the right people. The trailer is online on the MAPS website at: <http://www.maps.org/ibogaine> and the entire DVD is for sale from MAPS for \$20 plus \$4 shipping. You can also visit the website of the film's production company [www.lunartproductions.com], where all the info on this project is online.



View of Haifa,
overlooking the
Cave of Elijah.
Photo by John Halpern.