

PRESS RELEASE

Africa in Motion Film Festival

21 September 2009



### **Africa in Motion film festival 2009**

**Africa in Motion** (AiM), the UK's largest African film festival, returns to Edinburgh's Filmhouse for its fourth edition; taking place from 22 October to 1 November 2009. Providing a platform to challenge, engage with and explore issues surrounding the African continent and its films, the festival includes a range of over 50 classic and contemporary films – long, short, fiction and documentary.

AiM 2009 will open on Thursday 22 October with the UK premiere of **My Secret Sky** (Izulu Lami). Hailed as South Africa's answer to *Slumdog Millionaire* and acclaimed for the brilliant acting of its main child characters, themselves from an impoverished background, *My Secret Sky* is a poignant tale of suffering and redemption. The closing night film, **Jerusalema**, offers a realistic and unwavering look into the gritty underbelly of crime, corruption and transgression in the new South Africa.

In recognition that 2009 is the United Nation's International Year of Reconciliation, the opening weekend will focus on filmic representations of conflict and reconciliation. A highlight will be the award-winning feature film **Flame**; a powerful tribute to female freedom fighters in Zimbabwe's War of Liberation. The director of *Flame*, Ingrid Sinclair, will be in attendance at the festival. Continuing the theme, AiM is co-hosting a symposium on art and trauma with the Centre for African Studies at the University of Edinburgh on Saturday 24 October. There is also a complementary photography and painting exhibition in the Filmhouse café bar entitled **A Truth in Black and White**.

AiM are delighted to have a number of filmmakers in attendance at the festival to take part in discussions about their work. These include Wanuri Kahiu, director of **From a Whisper**, one of the most talked-about African films from the past year, having won an array of awards at the African Movie Academy Awards in Nigeria, and Esdon Frost, director of **Notice to Quit!**, one of the first anti-apartheid films made in South Africa.

Continuing from the popularity of last year's late-night screenings, AiM presents another late-night Halloween package of spooky, scary and downright strange South African short films.

As part of AiM's commitment to supporting filmmaking activity on the continent, the festival is hosting a short film competition for young and emerging African directors. The shortlisted films will be screened during the festival and the winner announced at a prize-giving ceremony. The winner is to be selected by a high-profile jury consisting of African filmmakers and Edinburgh-based film practitioners.

For the first time this year, a selection from the AiM 2009 programme will tour to the Scottish Highlands and Islands from early November. Funded by Regional Screen Scotland, this is an exciting addition to the festival and a way to promote African cinema amongst film-loving communities who have very limited access to African films.

Lizelle Bisschoff, Director and Founder of Africa in Motion, comments:

"This year AiM looks at the bright future of African filmmaking with young directors in attendance and films screened from traditionally under-represented areas of African filmmaking such as Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia. A range of recent award-winning features, a variety of fascinating new documentaries and a number of experimental films in the short film competition completes a diverse line-up of over 50 films."

For full programme details please visit [www.africa-in-motion.org.uk](http://www.africa-in-motion.org.uk).

Tickets are available from the Filmhouse on 0131 228 2688 or [www.filmhousecinema.com](http://www.filmhousecinema.com). Concessionary discounts and ticket deals will be available.

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### **Notes to Editors**

- 1) For press enquiries, please contact Kirsty Dickson on 07803 602 767 or [kirsty@africa-in-motion.org.uk](mailto:kirsty@africa-in-motion.org.uk)
- 2) Publicity images are available to download from [www.africa-in-motion.org.uk/press](http://www.africa-in-motion.org.uk/press)
- 3) AiM is co-directed by Lizelle Bisschoff ([lizelle@africa-in-motion.org.uk](mailto:lizelle@africa-in-motion.org.uk)) and Stefanie Van de Peer ([stefanie@africa-in-motion.org.uk](mailto:stefanie@africa-in-motion.org.uk))
- 4) AiM is funded and supported by Scottish Screen; Regional Screen Scotland; University of Edinburgh's Centre of African Studies; Scottish Documentary Institute; University of Stirling's

School of Languages, Cultures and Religions; University of Edinburgh's International Office; Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Edinburgh; Global Concerns Trust; Tools for Self Reliance; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the Tanzania High Commission in London.

- 5) AiM is supported by a Board of Advisors including popular film critic Mark Cousins; Noe Mendelle, Head of Film and TV at the Edinburgh College of Art and Director of the Scottish Documentary Institute; David Murphy, Professor at the University of Stirling and a leading scholar on African film; Paul Nugent, Professor of Comparative African History and Director of the Centre of African Studies at the University of Edinburgh; and Andrew Lawrence, lecturer in African Politics at the Centre Studies at the University of Edinburgh.