

PRESS RELEASE

Africa in Motion Film Festival

Oct 2009



Seven films by emerging African directors shortlisted for the Africa in Motion short film competition

Seven short films by up-coming young African filmmakers have been shortlisted for the 2nd annual Africa in Motion (AiM) short film competition.

The films come from across the continent, spanning fiction and documentary, including: a silent and visually stunning experimental from South Africa; a Tunisian love story set in an unlikely place; a passionate tale of courage in a Mozambique fishing village; a haunting South African tale of three friends harboring a dark secret; a beautifully shot story about outsiders in a Moroccan village; a superbly acted story of a Rwandan friendship tested to its true limits; and a Malian exploration of freedom and independence.

All shortlisted films will be screened on Monday 25 October as part of the Africa in Motion Film Festival (22 Oct - 1 Nov), the UK's largest African Film Festival, which takes place at the Filmhouse in Edinburgh. The winner will be announced at a special awards ceremony directly after the screenings and awarded £1,000 to help them with their filmmaking career. There will also be an Audience Choice Award, announced at the end of the festival.

The judging panel will consist of acclaimed Algerian filmmaker and director of *The Yellow House*, Amor Hakkar; filmmaker, journalist and regular on BBC 2's *The Culture Show*, Zina Saro-Wiwa; Director of the Scottish Documentary Institute, Noe Mendelle; and respected film critic, writer and producer Mark Cousins.

Jury member Mark Cousins says of the competition:

"Short films are the spurts of life, the new shoots, of the film world. It is great that Africa in Motion is focusing on them. That's where the discovery and vitality is. The short film competition, and its considerable prize, is a brilliant way of putting the festival's money where its mouth is, and giving a fillip to the zingy and daring new African directors. I am delighted to be part of it."

Festival Co-director Stefanie Van de Peer comments:

"In our experience at AiM, shorts often act as a platform for the next new sensation of African filmmaking. One of them might be on the screens during our shortfilm competition on Monday 26th October. A prize of 1,000 pounds will be awarded to the best short by a jury of film professionals from Scotland and Africa. With films from as far as Mali, Mozambique and South Africa, and as diverse in genre as they are in origin, we are sure our audiences will find it exciting to vote for their favourites as well!"

For full programme details please visit www.africa-in-motion.org.uk

Tickets are available from the Filmhouse on 0131 228 2688 or www.filmhousecinema.com.

Concessionary discounts and ticket deals will be available.

-ENDS -

Notes to Editors

1) The shortlist includes:

- *A Rite of Passage*, Paul Emmanuel, South Africa, 2008
- *The Young Lady and the Teacher*, Mohamed Nadif, Morocco, 2007
- *Hidden Places (Fithla)*, Jamie Beron, South Africa, 2008
- *A History of Independence*, Daouda Coulibaly, Mali, 2009
- *Borderline*, Sonia Chamkhi, Tunisia, 2007
- *Waramuteseho!*, Auguste Bernard Kouemo Yanghu, Cameroon, 2009
- *The Storm (Tempestade)*, Orlando Mesquita, Mozambique, 2008

A Rite of Passage | Paul Emmanuel | SA | 2008 | Experimental | 14mins

In this silent and visually stunning documentary, the viewer is challenged to empathise with fresh recruits at the 3SAI military base while their obligatory hair shave changes them irrevocably. Undercut with ambiguous and abstracted images of the vast plains of the Karoo, the monotony of the action and their initial indifference evolve to reveal intimate mirror images of their faces and feelings, exposing a vulnerability behind the rhythms of a production line set-up.

The Young Lady and the Teacher | Mohamed Nadif | Morocco | 2007 | Fiction | 16mins 30

This is the beautifully shot and sensitively acted story of a meeting between a teacher Hakim and a young woman in the settlement he moves to. The young woman has taken leave of her senses as her brother drowned while crossing the Mediterranean to get to Italy. Carrying a terrible secret of his own, Hakim manages to change the woman's state of mind. These two outcasts transform the dynamics of the village and bring peace back to the lives of the children and the elders.

Hidden Places (Fithla) | Jamie Beron | SA | 2008 | Fiction | 12mins

This story follows three childhood friends who are still haunted by the accidental killing of a shop owner's son. Twelve years on, the police uncover the body of this young man, while they thought

it was buried forever. Their worlds are turned upside down as they are propelled back into the past, and their future becomes uncertain. Their individual paranoia influences their precarious friendship as they come to terms with their dark secret.

A History of Independence | Daouda Coulibaly | Mali | 2009 | Docu-Fiction | 21mins

In the early 1960s, Nama and Siré got married. Nama decides to settle in a cave to lead a secluded life and to devote himself to God. One day, God sends an angel to Nama to thank him for being so devoted and asks Nama to make three wishes. Monologues in the voice-over clash with the images, while establishing a compelling parallel between marriage and freedom; and women's independence and mistaken values. The different voices express different interpretations of freedom and independence.

Borderline | Sonia Chamkhi | Tunisia | 2007 | Fiction | 25mins

Borderline is a love story set in an unlikely place. It tells about the encounter and relationship of a man and woman at the crossroads of a city that seems inhospitable and forbidding. Both having come to the city to find work, they are living amongst dilapidated buildings and construction sites that – like their burgeoning love affair – contains a promise for the future. But a naive belief in the promise of the city makes the disillusionment even more painful.

Waramutseho! | Auguste Bernard Kouemo Yanghu | Cameroon | 2009 | Fiction | 21mins 46

Kabera and Uwamungu are two Rwandan students who live together in the suburbs of Toulouse. Chaos erupts in their country and Kabera learns that members of his family took part in the massacre of his friend's family. The two remarkable performances of the main characters make the frustrations of their powerlessness palpable to the audience. This film continues AiM's theme of trauma and reconciliation as two friends are torn apart due to the events in their home country.

The Storm (Tempestade) | Orlando Mesquita | Mozambique | 2008 | Fiction | 24mins

This film shows how it takes real courage to change what is wrong. In a small fishing village in Mozambique a young fisherman Noé must confront his father's domestic abuse. Beautifully shot with vibrant colours and passionate acting, the story reveals several layers, connected by the strength of the women in this village. In particular Rosa stands up to her father-in-law and manages to reignite the women's self-respect that will ultimately lead to a more close-knit community.

- 2) The prize money for the short film competition is partially sponsored by the African Movie Channel and Scorpion TV
- 3) For press enquiries, please contact Katie Miller on 0759 553 1744 or email katie@africa-in-motion.org.uk
- 4) Publicity images are available to download from www.africa-in-motion.org.uk/press

- 5) AiM is co-directed by Lizelle Bisschoff (lizelle@africa-in-motion.org.uk) and Stefanie Van de Peer (stefanie@africa-in-motion.org.uk)

- 6) 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.

- 7) 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.