



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Africa in Motion celebrates the diversity of African Cinema: classics, Nollywood, animation, horror and more**

Stop and Stir Arts Ltd is delighted to announce the third Africa in Motion film festival, taking place from 23 October - 2 November 2008 at Edinburgh Filmhouse. AiM 2008 will be a celebration of Africa's diverse cinematic output, with a greater focus on under-represented regions and a more adventurous programme than ever before.

AiM 2008 will open with Egyptian director Youssef Chahine's feature *The Earth* (El Ard), as a tribute to this hugely important pioneering African filmmaker who passed away on 27 July this year. We are extremely excited to announce that two of the continent's most celebrated and distinguished directors will be joining us in person at the festival: Malian director Souleymane Cissé (whose extraordinary coming-of-age feature *Yeelen* was awarded the Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival in 1987), and Burkinabe director Gaston Kaboré (whose feature film *Buud Yam* won the grand prize at the FESPACO film festival in 1997) will both be in attendance to present retrospectives of their work.

AiM 2008 will feature a programme of animation short films from all over the continent, consisting of various types of animation including 2D, 3D, cut-out, claymation, stop frame animation, and computer animation. Animation film screenings will be accompanied by African storytelling events and a film animation workshop.

Nollywood, the prolific Nigerian video industry that has taken the continent by storm over the last few years, will receive a special focus with the screening of *Bleeding Rose*, winner of Best Nigerian Feature Film at the 2007 Lagos International Film Festival, followed by a discussion with director Chucks Mordi.

For the first time at AiM, there will be a series of late-night screenings of African horrors and experimental work. This audacious programme will include the Namibian-set cult classic *Dust Devil* by South African director Richard Stanley, and *SMS Sugar Man*, the first feature-length film to be shot entirely on mobile phone cameras, by experimental South African director Aryan Kaganof.

Contemporary films will feature prominently; festival highlights are Nigerian director Newton Aduaka's *Ezra*, a hard-hitting film that deals with the pressing issue of African child soldiers and won the grand prize at the FESPACO film festival in 2007; and Guinean director Cheick Fantamady Camara's *Clouds over Conakry*, the closing screening of the festival and a film which offers an interesting twist on the tradition-versus-modernity theme.

Feature films from East Africa will also be screened (an area hugely under-represented in African cinema), including the UK premiere of an exciting new film from Tanzania.

Documentaries screened at the festival will include a range of films exploring African identity through various themes such as sport, music and dance. The screening of Nigerian-born broadcaster and filmmaker Zina Saro-Wiwa's documentary *This is My Africa* will be accompanied by a discussion with Zina after the screening.

*"This year we are hoping to challenge and delight our loyal audiences, and draw new audiences, with a programme more diverse and daring than ever before. AiM 2008 is a celebration and exploration of the multiplicity of forms, themes, styles and approaches we find in the African film industries today",* says Lizelle Bisschoff, director and founder of Africa in Motion.

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 eight 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.

Rt Hon Jack McConnell MSP, First Minister of Scotland (2001 - 2007) has said recently of the festival, *"AiM is a brilliant addition to Edinburgh's annual programme of festivals. Too often the common perception of Africa is a continent plagued by poverty and disease. It does face many, many, challenges, but it also has wonderfully rich and diverse cultures, and I'm particularly pleased that Scotland provides this great showcase for African filmmakers."*

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

Tickets go on sale Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September from the Filmhouse: Box Office 0131 228 2688 or [www.filmhousecinema.com](http://www.filmhousecinema.com). Concessionary discounts and ticket deals will be available.

## **ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors**

- 1) For all press queries, please contact Press Officers Leo Wood ([leo@africa-in-motion.org.uk](mailto:leo@africa-in-motion.org.uk) 07876 403 648) or Kirsty Dickson ([kirsty@africa-in-motion.org.uk](mailto:kirsty@africa-in-motion.org.uk) 07914 431 609).
- 2) AiM is funded by Scottish Screen National Lottery; the School of Languages, Cultures and Religions at the University of Stirling; the Centre of African Studies at the University of Edinburgh; the School of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Edinburgh; Global Concerns Trust; Tools for Self Reliance; and the Scottish Documentary Institute.
- 3) AiM is organised by *Stop and Stir Arts Ltd* ([www.stopandstir.org](http://www.stopandstir.org)), a not-for-profit arts company that aims to make marginalised and underrepresented art more widely available to Scottish audiences. Lizelle Bisschoff is the artistic director of both AiM and *Stop and Stir Arts Ltd* ([lizelle@africa-in-motion.org.uk](mailto:lizelle@africa-in-motion.org.uk))
- 4) AiM 2008 will include a UK-wide touring programme, to take place from November - December 2008. Dates and venues will be confirmed in September 2008.
- 5) During the AiM festival, Filmhouse Cinema will be transformed into a hub to celebrate African culture, with an arts exhibition in the Filmhouse café, music performances by Edinburgh-based African musicians after evening screenings, and a DVD and bookstall in the foyer of the cinema for the duration of the festival.
- 6) 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, senior lecturer 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, senior lecturer in African Politics at the Centre Studies at the University of Edinburgh.