



PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 10AM
WEDNESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER, 2021

THE 16th AFRICA IN MOTION ANNOUNCES FULL 2021 PROGRAMME

15th – 31st October 2021

A vibrant programme of over 90 films from Africa and the Black diasporas including 65 premieres:

- 4 World premieres
- 1 International premiere
- 6 European premieres
- 25 UK premieres
- 29 Scottish premieres
- Opening with the Scottish premiere of **Siji Awoyinka's ELDER'S CORNER**
- Closing with **Kamir Aïnouz's Scottish premiere of HONEY CIGAR**

Glasgow, embargoed until Wednesday 22 September, 10:00am Africa in Motion (AiM) will present the 16th festival edition entirely online (15 - 31 Oct 2021) to increase the festival's accessibility and broaden its UK audience. Africa in Motion is Scotland's major annual celebration of African cinema, bringing a wide variety of creative stories from across the African continent. Since its inception in 2006, AiM has introduced over 45,000 audience members to the brilliance and diversity of African cinema. This year's edition will include over 90 films, as well as events, poetry, music, filmmaker Q&As, workshops and masterclasses.

Liz Chege, Africa in Motion Festival Director, says: *"Our purpose is to empower and awaken imagination through the power of film. I'm delighted that even during these extraordinary circumstances, our festival has continued to support African artists and filmmakers in the wider Black diasporas to celebrate their talent and heritage. A heartfelt thank you to our audience who continue to champion African voices so passionately and to our committed, diligent team."*

As previously [announced](#), the festival has commissioned new poetry from three Black female poets with support from the **Scottish Poetry Library** and **Obsidian Foundation**. Each poet will produce a film of their poem which will world-premiere at the festival, and they will also present a talk about their new work. These poems are part of a special strand that is a response to the COP26 climate change conference taking place in Glasgow in November 2021. The poetry commissions will present an inquiry into the embodied experience of Blackness and being in the environment, the changing climate, and the need for communion with nature as a means of healing and resistance. The selected poets are **Tjawangwa Dema**, **Clementine Ewokolo Burnley** and **Zakia Carpenter-Hall**. **Nick Makoha**, founder and director of The Obsidian Foundation, says,

"Like Africa in Motion, we're trying to encourage Black artists to presence themselves and grow. Making alliances like these, where the intersection between mediums gives permission for experimentation, is encouraging to see. I'm inspired by the long-term impact we've had in the growth of our community and how those within it continue to encourage and support one another."

OPENING & CLOSING FILMS

This year's Opening Film will be the Scottish Premiere of **Siji Awoyinka's ELDER'S CORNER** (2020) which sets the tone for the festival and music strand. The film celebrates Nigerian musicians who have spearheaded some of Africa's most prominent musical movements. The Festival closes with the Scottish premiere of **Kamir Aïnouz's HONEY CIGAR** (2020) coming-of-age drama that examines the conflicting tensions between heritage, familial expectations and teenage desire.



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STRAND PROGRAMMES

To inspire exploration and discovery, the festival has programmed strands to assist the audience with navigate the festival and encourage new audiences.

Setting Pace is a music strand celebrating some of the greatest African musicians, past and present, from a wide array of music genres. Named for John Coltrane's 1961 album, this strand takes the audience on a journey from the cradle of Afro-Cuban music with *Soy Cubana* (**Jeremy Ungar, Ivaylo Getov**, Cuba /USA, 2020), to the outskirts of Naples with *James* (**Andrea Della Monica**, Italy, 2020) and allows us to witness pre-independence classics from Tanzania brought back to life in *Wahenga* (**Amil Shivji** and **Rebecca Corey**, Tanzania, 2018). A special double-bill of films by documentary filmmaker **Christopher Austin** also features in this strand. The two films are *A Brother with Perfect Timing* (South Africa, 1987) about Abdullah Ibrahim, one of the world's greatest jazz composers and pianists, and *Brenda Fassie, Not A Bad Girl* (South Africa/UK, 1997) about powerhouse musician and activist Brenda Fassie, who died tragically young. A masterclass with Austin who has a long esteemed career in both film and TV having made films for BBC, Channel 4, PBS, WDR and ZDF (Germany), will be presented in partnership with the Scottish Documentary Institute (SDI). As an extension of this strand, AiM has partnered with **Jazz Re:Freshed**. Opening night features online performances from rising stars **Balimaya Project** and **Jas Kayser**. These performances were filmed on-location at Subfrantic Studios with thanks to Arts Council England, PRS Foundation and The Culture Recovery Grant.

Family Matters is a strand exploring tender and haunting observations about parenthood, familial ties and how they impact us. *A Fish Tale* (**Emmanuelle Mayer**, Israel, 2019) is a moving documentary portrait, pieced from ten years of intimate footage, exploring profound ideas of choice versus fate. *For Maria Ebun Pataki* (**Damilola Orimogun**, Nigeria, 2020) and *Born Again* (**Candice Onyeama**, UK, 2020) examine the complex realities of child loss and post-partum depression. *Garderie Nocturne* (**Moumouni Sanou**, Burkina Faso, 2021) follows an elderly woman who has taken care of toddlers for decades while their mothers take to the streets at night to work. *When a Farm Goes Aflame* (**Jide Tom Akinleminu**, Germany, 2021) and *Zahlvaterschaft* (**Moritz Siebert**, Germany, 2021) examine abandonment, colonial entanglements and the concept of birthright.

As conversations about the under-representation of women in cinema continue to reverberate, the festival continues to draw attention to women who steadfastly blaze the trail. The **Women in Focus** strand includes the festival's closing film *Honey Cigar* (**Kamir Aïnouz**, Algeria, 2020) a tender coming-of-age tale set in 1993, about a young woman from a bourgeois, secular Berber family and the heavy rules of patriarchy impacting her journey into romance and intimacy. Included in this strand, is a special retrospective of **Rosine Mbakam**'s work, with a trio of films *Delphine's Prayers* (Cameroon, 2021), *Chez Jolie Coiffure* (Cameroon, 2019) and *The Two Faces of a Bamileke Woman* (Cameroon, 2016). Alongside the masterclass with Austin, the festival has also partnered with the Scottish Documentary Institute to present a second masterclass with Mbakam. This strand also presents the UK premiere of the deeply affecting *As I Want* (**Samaher Alqadi**, Egypt, 2021) that takes a personal look at the increase of sexual assaults that took place in Tahrir Square on the second anniversary of the revolution. *Min Alesh?* (**Amleset Muchie**, Ethiopia, 2019) tells the inspiring story of 21-year-old Selam, whose love of sport and perseverance in the face of hardship transforms her life. A moment of levity in this strand is *Tales of the Accidental City*, (**Maïmouna Jallow**, Kenya, 2021) a comedy about an anger management class that takes place over zoom.

In **Great Expectations**, the festival presents thought-provoking films about the dreamers among us who are shifting perspective on ideas of legacy, influence and survival for better, or worse. *The African Who Wanted to Fly* (**Samantha Biffot**, Gabon, 2016) is based on the incredible true story of Luc Bendza who left Gabon for China at 15 years old due to his love of Wushu and KungFu movies, and under the tutelage of Grand Master Meng Huifang, eventually becomes a world Kung Fu champion. *Play It Safe* (**Mitch Kalisa**, UK, 2021) looks at stereotypes, unconscious bias and the unrealistic expectations a racist society places on people of colour. This year sees the growth of the festivals' ethos to continue with participatory programming and in partnership with Vimeo, the festival presents *Our Legacy: Stories of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, a free programme of select short films



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commissioned by Vimeo and Mailchimp from their 'Stories in Place' project; *Harriet's Bookshop* (**Raishad Momar**, Aidan M. Un, USA, 2021), *Kanyoko Boutique* (**N'gendo Mukii**, Kenya, 2021), *Mitchell's the Bowl* (**Troy Brown**, United Kingdom, 2021) and *Rebyrth Wellness* (**Cydney Tucker**, USA, 2021). These films chronicle small businesses as they navigate a world in flux and this small programme sets to explore how we are working collectively to build and improve on the legacies in a world that actively seeks to impair the agency of marginalised people.

Wacera Kamonji, programme curator says, "*I want us feel proud of how far we have come but also acknowledge that we have a lot of healing within ourselves in order to understand the past, build on the present and flourish in the future.*"

Pachedu (companions) is a heart-warming selection, that examines intricate details of friendship and close relationships. In the ChiShona language, the word 'pachedu' invokes a feeling of familiarity and kinship shared between individuals. In *Sing, Freetown* (**Clive Patterson**, UK, 2021) we follow Emmy-winning journalist Sorious Samura on his quest to change the narrative he has been telling about Africa into a more positive one with the support of his best friend and mentor, Sierra Leone's iconic playwright, Charlie Haffner. They soon discover that while they have a shared ambition, they have very different lives and perspectives. The festival also presents two UK premieres from Tribeca Studios, *Cupids* (**Zoey Martinson**, USA, 2021) is a playful comedy about three children who worry that their beloved school bus driver will be lonely over the summer, while the animation *She Dreams at Sunrise* (**Camrus Johnson**, USA, 2020) follows an elderly woman who escapes her mundane reality with the help of her great-nephew. *Jebel Banat* (**Sharine Atif**, Egypt 2018) is an epic retelling of a melancholic 19th century Egyptian legend about two Bedouin sisters escaping forced marriages and a life-or-death decision that will change the future of Bedouin women forever. In *Ici c'est Paris* (**Léa Magnien & Quentin Chantrel**, French Guiana, 2020), an introverted teenager does everything in his power to fulfil a dreamy girl's desire to see Paris. Two estranged lovers who also happen to be Gods must make amends in *Arachnid* (**Carl Earl-Ocran**, Ghana, 2020) and in *Blaké* (**Vincent Fontano**, France, 2019) two car park security guards must contend with their personal life philosophies, past troubles, and dreams.

Not Yet Uhuru is composed of rousing portrayals of individuals and communities ceaselessly speaking truth to power. Named for Letta Mbulu's 1996 album of the same title, at a time that is otherwise disempowering, the stories told in these films present communities around the world that are galvanising to demand a better future. This is the international premiere of *Zo Reken* (**Emanuel Licha**, Canada, 2021) part road movie, part documentary, following a driver in Port-au-Prince as he tries to make his way between barricades and the demonstrations. This also marks the UK premiere of several North-African titles grappling with the reality that freedom is yet to arrive for their nations. *The Colonel's Stray Dogs* (**Khalid Shamis**, Libya, 2021) tells Ashur Shamis' story of exile and how his dream of a 'free' Libya almost cost him his life and his family. *Before the Dying of the Light* (**Ali Essafi**, Morocco, 2020) examines the 70s counterculture that arose in Morocco from Marxist student movements, which saw cinema as an instrument for sensitization and self discovery. Several titles explore the racist history of Brazil; *The White Death of the Black Wizard* (**Rodrigo Ribeiro**, Brazil, 2020), is a harrowing visual poetic essay, reflecting on the silencing and invisibility of Black people in diaspora, *Seeds: Black Women to the Front* (**Rodrigo Ribeiro**, Brazil, 2020) examines the response to the execution of Marielle Franco, which turned the 2018 Brazil elections into the biggest political uprising led by Black women that Brazil has ever seen with candidacies in every state, and in the mysterious *Memory House* (**João Paulo Miranda Maria**, Brazil, 2020), a man confronted with xenophobic conservative people, discovers an abandoned house that leads him to reconnect with his roots, where he begins a metamorphosis.

The **Queer Africa** strand is a spotlight on the shifting landscape of African queerness. This includes *The Art of Fallism* (**Aslaug Aarsæther, Gunnbjörg Gunnarsdóttir**, South Africa, 2020) following Queer Black students who protest and demand decolonization of the university, and the end to all forms of repression in the former apartheid state, the poetic meditation *BMB - Black, Muslim and Bi* (**Heidi (Jade) Ramírez**, Spain, 2021), *Cosmopolitan* (**Moran Nakar**, Israel, 2019) about the first gay party a man ventures to, only to discover that his skin colour prevents him



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from being accepted in the community, *A Cemetery of Doves* (**Adé Sultan Sangodoyin**, Nigeria, 2019) about queer desire in an unsafe community, *Half A Life* (**Tamara Shogaolu**, Egypt /USA, 2016) a timely story of activism and hope, set in the increasingly dangerous, oppressive, and unstable social climate of present day Egypt and *Baltringue* (France, 2019) by rising star **Josza Anjembe** about a young man's apprehension on his impending release from prison.

SHORT FILM COMPETITION

As [previously announced](#), our competition jury comprises **Yared Zeleke**, Ethiopian-American director and writer, whose first feature, *Lamb*, was screened in the Un Certain Regard section of the Cannes Film Festival in 2015 and shortlisted for the 2016 Oscar's Best Foreign Language Film Award. **Eloise King** is an award-winning filmmaker and former Global Executive Producer at VICE, overseeing the brand's digital channels in the UK and i-D's globally. **Ntare Guma Mbaho Mwine** an actor, playwright and director. He has portrayed recurring roles in Steven Soderbergh's series *The Knick*, David Simon and Eric Overmyer's HBO series *Treme*, Amazon series *Bosch*, and Tim Kring's NBC series *Heroes*. Mwine is set to direct an upcoming documentary on Ugandan studio photographer Kibaate Aloysius Ssalongo, which Steven Soderbergh is Executive Producing.

The selected films for the Short Film Competition are; *Wolves Dream of the Lord's Lamb* by **Carlos Garcia** (Dominican Republic, 2020), *Tang Jér* by **Selly Raby Kane** (Senegal, 2020), *Dorlis* by **Enricka MH** (France, 2021), *When the Flame Speaks* by **Ikaye Masisi** (South Africa, 2020), *Potlako* by **Pretty Renae Mangena** (South Africa, 2020), *The Beckoning* by **DeMar Walker** (United States, 2020), *Lizard* by **Akinola Davies** (United Kingdom, 2020), *Ethereality* by **Kantarama Kahigiri** (Rwanda, 2020), *Heaven Reaches Down to Earth* by **Tebogo Malebogo** (South Africa, 2020), *Al-Sit* by **Suzannah Mirghani** (Sudan, 2020), *Seeking Aline* by **Rokhaya Marieme Balde** (Switzerland, 2020), *Life on the Horn* by **Mo Harawe** (Somalia, 2020), *Rehearsal* by **Michael Omonua** (Nigeria, 2020), *Miss (El Sghayra)* by **Amira Géhanne Khalfallah** (Algeria, 2020), *Vanille* by **Guillaume Lorin** (Brazil, 2020), *\$75,000* by **Moise Togo** (Mali, 2020). Africa in Motion will host panel discussions with directors featured in the short film competition.

Additional screenings and events will be announced within the next week. Over the past 8 months, the festival has [presented a series](#) titled *Transgressing Citizenship in the Black Imagination* drawing on the concepts of citizenship, the relationship to our environment and inter-faith relationships, and has examined how people have migrated, sought refuge, and settled, in and out of Africa. This year marks 30 years since **Operation Solomon** which brought more than 20,000 Ethiopian Jewish people to Israel. The festival will mark this anniversary with a special double-bill and event exploring this, and other, African Jewish histories of refuge and migration. In the lead up to the COP26 climate change summit, the festival will announce further details about the strand presented as a reflection of the climate change crisis.

View the festival programme from **Wednesday 22 September** here: www.africa-in-motion.org.uk

Media Contact

For further information, screeners, press tickets, hi-res images and interviews please contact:

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Images, logos and press releases will be available for download from: www.africa-in-motion.org.uk/press

Notes to Editors

- Africa in Motion is an audience-based festival, founded in 2006. The main aims of the festival have been, since its inception, to introduce Scottish audiences to the brilliance of African cinema and to overcome the underrepresentation and marginalisation of African film in British film-going culture.
- **Principal funder:** The National Lottery through Screen Scotland



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- **Other funders:** Film Hub Scotland, Scottish Poetry Library, University of Strathclyde, University of Glasgow, Scottish Documentary Institute and University of Edinburgh.
- **Press images, logos and downloads:** <https://app.box.com/s/c9vt39198qqdijf3wswlkvpbnjpp294>

About the Scottish Poetry Library

The [Scottish Poetry Library](#) (SPL) is a charitable organisation committed to collecting and presenting Scotland's poetic works. In other words, it is the nation's bookshelf for poetry: a unique, inclusive place that inspires creativity, nurtures talent, supports learning and literacy, and fosters and promotes well-being. The SPL brings people and poems together through lending books, developing creative writing practice, facilitating shared reading experiences and showcasing poets. The SPL celebrates and shares poetry by engaging diverse audiences in its building and across Scotland through a programme of activities, commissions and partnership projects. The SPL recognizes that Scotland is home to a plurality of cultures, languages and communities, and that we make an important contribution not only to how the country sees itself but also to how others see us.

About Obsidian Foundation

Founded in 2020, [Obsidian Foundation](#) is an international organization committed to cultivating the artistic and professional growth of Black poets. Obsidian runs a one-week retreat for Black poets of African descent selected by application who want to advance their writing practice, and led by five Black acclaimed tutors. Inspired by the achievements of the Afro Style School, Black Arts Movement, Caribbean Arts Movement, Malika's Kitchen, The Complete Works, and Octavian; they aim to create a community of Black creative diversity where poets are fully self-expressed free from racism.

About Jazz Re:freshed

Jazz re:freshed is more than a label, it is a cultural and global movement. At its core, Jazz re:freshed's mission is to globally elevate, amplify and spotlight the breadth of expression in UK Jazz, while breaking down the boundaries for audiences to access the music. From humble beginnings in 2003, tastemakers, jazz re:freshed have gone on to launch the careers of countless artists such as Richard Spaven, Nubya Garcia, Shabaka Hutchings and Ashley Henry. Despite the barriers of 2020, Jazz Re:freshed are still on a mission to celebrate a genre and musicians whose performance opportunities are severely reduced right now, and to showcase the incredibly diverse, colourful, expressive and creative world of jazz music and alternative culture in the UK.