



## **AiM 2019 End of Year Report**

### **Overview**

2019 marked the 14th edition of the Africa in Motion (AiM) Film Festival. The main festival took place from 25 October to 3 November, with 59 events in 28 venues across Edinburgh and Glasgow. The programme was comprised of film screenings, complementary events, family and children's days, music performances, art exhibitions, a digital hub and more, and included over 80 films including shorts, documentaries and features. Throughout the year we held around 24 screenings as part of our year-round programme in addition to around 59 events during our annual festival, totalling 83 events throughout the year.

### **Some highlights of this year's programme include:**

- Working with 16 curators to put the programme for this year's festival together, this included curators from the African diaspora based in Scotland and also curators based in Rwanda, Cameroon, Morocco and Brazil. This culminated in a wide range of exciting and diverse events, and is something we would like to continue in future editions.
- We collaborated with a number of different organisations including festivals and arts collectives to create events throughout the year.
- The virtual reality (VR) and games lounge was the first time we were able to showcase VR films and games from the African continent to audiences in Scotland. It is something we hope to replicate and the package of VR films has already been requested by the Belfast Film Festival.
- Our opening film *Talking About Trees* was screened in Filmhouse, and we partnered with the Sudanese Cultural Collective who brought a number of Sudanese audience members and also gave a music performance at the end of the screening.

**Our audiences for 2019 reached over 5,183 people, a similar number to 2018 and recent years.**

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

The festival recognises the lack of African and Black voices in the arts and creative industries in the UK and in response we have actively undertaken a new and robust diversity strategy tackling white privilege in our own organisation.

The strategy was developed through a group consultation with the entire team, moderated by board member Clr. Graham Campbell. While the festival has always prioritised marginalised Black and African voices, we also strive for a diversity of voices in our curatorial practices.

**Curatorial approach:** We take a collaborative approach to curation, ensuring that no one voice has sole auteurship within the curation of the festival. Through what we have termed *participatory programming* we have created a non-hierarchical space with a variety of voices curating, selecting and suggesting films for the festival. This comes out of a recognition of white privilege and the space white people take up in the arts industry in Scotland and the fact that the festival was dominated by white curators for a number of years, which necessitated opening up space for new voices within the organisation. We work with community groups, BAME artists, curators of colour and students, including them within the selection of films.

In our effort to diversify the festival team and also expand those who have access to curate films in Scotland we ran a series of paid curatorships as part of this year's festival. We appointed seven locally based curators from the African diaspora, and others from Cameroon, Rwanda, Brazil, the US and Morocco to bring this year's programme to fruition. The team worked to watch and select films for the main programme, and to curate events for the main festival programme. The international curators programmed one film each and the locally based curators each worked to devise a programme of three films/events.

Bringing a diverse array of voices together gave rise to an extremely rich and interesting programme of films and events. The remit given to the curators was very broad, and included anything relating to African and African diaspora identity as we wanted to give space to different perspectives and ideas. The African continent and diaspora is a very broad area both geographically and culturally and it is therefore impossible for one or two people to keep abreast of all the film movements. By bringing in a variety of different curators we were able to give audiences in Scotland access to a wide range of films that they would not otherwise have access to.

Managing such a large team of curators was not without challenges and in future a smaller and more concentrated team would be advised. The curators mostly worked remotely with 4 days in the office in total, this was intended to give greater flexibility to the freelance position, however in future a smaller team with more office time might work better. More office time would provide the curators with the opportunity to be involved in team decisions, and have the opportunity to have any questions they have or advise they might need answered.

**Some of the events the curators programmed included:**

**Within Our Gates (Oscar Micheaux US 1920):** This was the first film to be directed by an African American filmmaker. It is a silent film created in response to D.W. Griffiths' controversial and racist *Birth of a Nation*, and shows the reality of racism in the 1920s when a Black man could be lynched for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. The curator, Victoria Jones, worked to screen the film alongside a specially composed live musical accompaniment, she also provided an extended introduction ensuring that the film was

contextualised. The screening took place in the Clubroom at the Centre for Contemporary Arts.

**Black to the Future:** Was a programme of films and a party focused around Afrofuturism, curated by Natasha Ruwona. Afrofuturism has been described as reimagining the histories and futures of African people to include a scientific, technological and philosophical contribution that is typically overlooked. It is a genre that is displayed across various art forms. The films selected as part of this programme showcased Afrofuturism within the diaspora as a mode of connecting with Africa itself, they included *Earth Mother*, *Sky Father* (Kordae Henry, USA 2019), *Last Angel of History* (John Akomfrah, UK 1996), *Ori Inu: In Search of Self* (Chelsea Odufu, USA 2015). The directors took inspiration from their Western surroundings as well as making Africa visible through themes such as spirituality, history and identity. The screenings were held at 50 George Square at the University of Edinburgh, and it was followed by a party inspired by the Black to the Future theme in the Wee Red Bar.

**The People vs. The Rainbow Nation:** This was an evening looking at architecture, space and power programmed by Thulani Rachia in collaboration with 'other' and artist chan teck guan jee with a film screening and discussion. *The People vs The Rainbow Nation* goes behind the scenes of mass student movements such as #rhodesmustfall and #feesmustfall, and asks what happened to Mandela's Rainbow Nation and what's next for South Africa? The film screening was followed by a discussion between student collective 'other' and artist chan teck guan jee, drawing parallels to their experiences as students. 'other' is a research and design project by GSA People of Colour Collective profiling people of colour working in architecture.

**Sunday Best:** This was an evening of music, dance and music videos curated by Glasgow-based DJ Plantainchips held at the Saramago cafe in CCA.

Other events including films selected by the curators are outlined throughout the report.

### **Sliding Scale:**

In order to make Africa in Motion more accessible to those on a low income, we implemented a sliding scale ticket price of £0-£8 for our events where possible. We joined several festivals in Scotland and beyond who have similarly introduced this system in order to make arts and social events as accessible as possible.

For events in cinema venues where we are not able to implement a sliding scale ticket system, such as Filmhouse and the Glasgow Film Theatre, we were able to offer a number of free tickets available to those who would otherwise be unable to attend. These were given to those who emailed our [accessibility@afrika-in-motion.org.uk](mailto:accessibility@afrika-in-motion.org.uk) to reserve their tickets and were also given to groups such as the Sudanese Cultural Forum, Central and West Integration Network, and Maryhill Integration Network.

**POC only events:** For the first time this year in the festival a few of the events were for People of Colour (POC) only. This was informed by a number of the PoC curators and because as a festival we understand that arts events are often overwhelmingly white, and sometimes a POC-only event can provide a more comfortable and affirming environment for

participants. These events were labelled in the brochure and on the website as being PoC only.

### **Year-round screenings and events**

Partnerships are key to the success of the festival and this year we have collaborated with a number of organisations and festivals to hold screenings and events, ensuring a year round presence and also expanding our audience reach. Partners included:

**BAME community groups:** This year we held year-round screenings in collaboration with Central and West Integration Network (CWIN), Kinning Park, Leith Community Centre, Sudanese Cultural Forum, Afroroots Scotland, and Scotch Bonnet.

**Take One Action:** We again exchanged screenings with Take One Action Film Festival, holding three collaborative screenings across the two festivals, in Edinburgh and Aberdeen. In Take One Action we screened the new documentary *Everything Must Fall* (Rehad Desai, South Africa) in both Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and we partnered on the screening of *Dying for Gold* (Richard Pakleppa and Catherine Meyburgh, South Africa 2018) in Filmhouse.

**Afro Kulture:** The Afro Kulture Festival brought together African art, music, food, performance and film. We partnered with them to present two packages of short films, one for children and families and another focused on African science fiction.

**Femspectives:** We supported Femspectives by providing them with our mobile cinema screening equipment throughout their festival in February, and also partnered with them on screening of *Fatima 75* in Milk Cafe.

**Havana Glasgow Film Festival (HGFF):** We worked with HGFF to screen the Cuban film *Fatima* as part of their festival.

**European Conference of African Studies (ECAS):** This year the ECAS conference took place in Edinburgh between 11-14 June, it is attended by local, national and international delegates who discuss a variety of topics relating to African studies. We worked with them to present a series of screenings as part of the conference including *Frontieres* (Apolline Traore, Burkina Faso 2018), *Rafiki* (Wanuri Kahiu, Kenya 2018) and *Everything Must Fall* (Rehad Desai, South Africa 2018).

**LUX Scotland:** We once again collaborated with LUX Scotland a successful partnership we would like to continue. Their support in programming moving image work opened up a new network for us and gave us access to films that would have proven difficult to find without this partnership. With them, we screened *An Opera of the World* (Manthia Diawara USA 2017) with a post-screening performance by Ashanti Harris.

**Ayr Film Society:** We partnered with the Ayr Film Society to screen *Rafiki* as part of their programme in October. The screening was well attended and was one of four African films they have ever screened there. This is something we hope to continue next year.

## **International reach:**

**FESPACO Exhibition:** We partnered with the June Givanni Pan African Film Archive to support an exhibition at the FESPACO film festival in Burkina Faso. The exhibition provided visitors to the festival the opportunity to learn about the history of African cinema through mounted boards and video clips.

**Rafiki screening at Gibara Film Festival:** We worked with the Havana Glasgow Film Festival to bring the Kenyan film *Rafiki* (Wanuri Kahiu, Kenya 2019) to the Gibara Film Festival where it screened and won the award for best actress.

**Curation Workshop in Rwanda:** In February we worked with the University of Glasgow to deliver training in film curation to aspiring film curators in Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, culminating in teams of curators implementing film events in their own countries. It was led by Africa in Motion Film Festival and supported by film professionals in each of the countries who acted as mentors on the project, and each appointed three trainees all of whom attended a three day training workshop in the Kwetu Film Institute where they learnt about film curation from experts in the field. Following the training they were given a budget and worked to curate the film events in their own countries.

## **Main programme of films and events**

AiM's extensive and diverse film programme consisted of over 80 films – including fiction features, shorts, documentaries and television shows – and spanned 30 African countries.

## **We programmed under various strands and themes including:**

### **Music on Film**

Audio and visuals collided in our eclectic array of music films in this festival. From documentaries about the legendary Fela Kuti, to experimental beats in *Euphoria*, *Earth Mother*, *Sky Father* and the *Kaniama Show*, to the *Afrobeats of Cuba* these films provided a space to inspire, entertain and inform viewers about African music from across the continent and beyond.

### **Artists' Film**

Continuing from previous years, we selected an array of fantastic artists' film. We partnered with LUX Scotland for the second year, this time to present *An Opera for the World* by esteemed filmmaker and scholar Manthia Diawara. In addition to this we presented a special selection of artists' film from Morocco this included *Friday Couscous*, a dine-and-view at the Project Café in Glasgow, and *Acrobatie and The Hole*, the opening event for Hicham Benhoud's exhibition at Alliance Française. In Edinburgh, we voyaged into Afrofuturism with screening programme *Black to the Future*.

### **Queer Africa**

We presented a collection of shorts chronicling queerness in Africa and the diaspora. From Brazil to Madagascar, this series featured documentary, narrative fiction as well as more experimental works mapping out a picture of contemporary queer identity in Africa.

**Exhibitions:**We held three exhibitions as part of this year's festival. One in Filmhouse through our partnership with the Sudanese Cultural Forum, showcasing Sudanese protest art through a selection of images. Working with the University of Glasgow we held an exhibition in the Digital Hub displaying digital art and games from across the continent (outlined below), and we also collaborated on the exhibition of *Acrobatie and the Hole* in the Alliance Francaise (outlined above).

**Venues:** We have found that the use of space is extremely important for ensuring the festival is inclusive, so in addition to our core venues (Filmhouse, Glasgow Film Theatre and the Centre for Contemporary Arts) we use a variety of pop-ups in bars, community centres, churches, integration networks and arts spaces. This year we used 32 venues across Edinburgh and Glasgow, these cut across a variety of socio-economic and geographic locations in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Using different spaces in this way helps us to attract diverse audiences, as each venue is frequented by people from specific demographics.

#### **Venues included:**

**Community venues:** Garnethill Multicultural Centre which we use in collaboration with the Central and West Integration Network, they run a food bank on a Friday and we hold a screening here using our mobile cinema for refugees and asylum seekers using centre. We also worked with Leith Community Centre, Kinning Park Complex (Glasgow), Grassmarket Community Centre (Glasgow) and Pollokshaws Burgh Hall (Glasgow).

**Arts spaces, universities and bars:** Alliance Francaise (Glasgow), Appleton Tower Lecture Theatre (University of Edinburgh), Brass Monkey (Edinburgh), Centre for Contemporary Arts (Glasgow) Civic House (Glasgow), Dirty Martini (Edinburgh), Gallery of Modern Art (Glasgow), Glasgow Women's Library (Glasgow), GMAC (Glasgow), Moving Image Archive (Glasgow), Pearce Institute (Glasgow), Pleasance Theatre Cabaret Bar (Glasgow), Reid Lecture Theatre (Glasgow), Scottish Storytelling Centre (Edinburgh), Stereo (Glasgow), The Glad Cafe (Glasgow), The Project Cafe (Glasgow), The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (Glasgow), The Rum Shack (Glasgow), The Space (Edinburgh), The Wee Red Bar (Edinburgh), Transmission (Glasgow), 50 George Square (University of Edinburgh), Andrew Stewart Cinema (University of Glasgow).

## **Edinburgh Events**

### **Filmhouse**

Filmhouse was the main venue in Edinburgh with a total of 14 screenings across the 10-day festival. We held screenings of a wide range of films from across the continent, including documentaries, fiction features and shorts. We endeavoured to show the latest films emerging from Africa, including some new features that have recently been shown in Toronto International Film Festival and others including *Mercy in the Jungle*(Joel Karakezi, Rwanda 2018), *Weldi*(Mohamed Ben Attia, Tunisia 2018), *Sew the Winter to My Skin* (Jamil Quebeka, South Africa 2018). We programmed a number of new documentaries followed by panel discussions relating to topics in the films, these included *The State Against Mandela and the Others* (Nicolas Champeaux, Gilles Porte, South Africa/France 2018), *Fanon Yesterday, Today*(Hassane Mezine, Algeria 2018), and *Dying for Gold* (Catherine Meyburgh and Richard Pakleppa, South Africa 2018). This provided an opportunity for Scottish audiences to further explore the making of the film and topics covered. Filmhouse screenings were extremely well attended this year with an average capacity of 47 people.

**Opening screening and reception:** The opening film *Talking About Trees* was an uplifting documentary from Sudan that follows four charismatic, retired film directors who are united by their love for film and passion to restore and reopen their local cinema. The screening took place in Filmhouse cinema, to an audience of around 250 people. The screening was held in partnership with the Sudanese Cultural Forum whose members gave a musical performance following the screening. We also offered their members complimentary tickets through our access fund, which meant that there were around 30 Sudanese audience members at the screening, many of whom expressed afterwards how important and rare it is to see Sudanese culture represented in events in Scotland. We are going to continue to work with the group year-round to host screenings and events.

**Afri-Adventures at Scottish Storytelling Centre:** We again worked with the Scottish Storytelling Centre to present a programme of children's animations from across the African continent and the diaspora. The screening followed a storytelling performance from Scottish Kenyan storyteller Mara Menzies.

**Taste of the Caribbean:** Curator Lisa Williams provided a taste of the Caribbean with her three films and events from Jamaica, Grenada and St Lucia. These included the new documentary *Bakosó: Afrobeats De Cuba* (Eli Jacobs Fantauzzia, Cuba/US 2018) about the influence of Afrobeats in Cuba, this was presented with a salsa dancing class and co-hosted by Caledonia Worldwide. *Sprinter*(Storm Sautler, Jamaica 2019) a new film from Jamaica focused on a young man's dream of being a track and field champion, this was followed by a music performance by Jamaican musician Claudius England. The final screening of the series was *Forward Ever: The Killing of a Revolution*, and screened as part of a special event marking the 40th anniversary of the Grenada Revolution. This was followed by a panel discussion with high profile academics including Jacob Ross (author and editor at Peepal Tree Press), and Professor Richard Drayton (King's College London), and was chaired by Lisa Williams.

### **Glasgow Events**

The Glasgow programme is now on par in scope and breadth with Edinburgh, with the festival ran simultaneously across the two cities. This year we worked with around 20 venues across the city including different arts, integration and community organisations.

**Artists Moving Image:** This year, we continued to build upon the work we have done in recent years of including artists' moving image work within the festival programme. This has been a curatorial focus of Programme Co-ordinator Myriam Mouflih, but has also been built upon by the wider programming team. Screenings included *An Opera of the World* at the Moving Image Archive in partnership with LUX Scotland and *Mother, I'm Suffocating. This is My Last Film About You.* programmed with the Race, Rights and Sovereignty programme at Glasgow School of Art.

**Two events combining food and artists moving image were programmed:** a screening of Khalik Allah's film *Black Mother* accompanied by Caribbean food at Kinning Park Complex and a collection of short films about women's subjectivity in post-colonial Morocco, accompanied by Moroccan food cooked by long-time Africa in Motion collaborator Omar Afifi.

### **Africa in Motion Digital Hub**

As a new initiative this year, we ran the Africa in Motion Digital Hub at Civic House in Glasgow for the final weekend of the festival, 1-3 Nov. The hub consisted of a VR lounge, screening 5 virtual reality shorts from all over the continent on 6 Oculus headsets; an African video games exhibition; and evening screenings of films preoccupied with digital technology. The games exhibition, entitled **Game On, Africa!** was installed by We Throw Switches and consisted of 10 video games from different African countries, some playable and some with watchable demos. These games showcased the exciting developments in the African video games industries, with different types of games and aesthetics indicating the range of genres, styles and themes explored by African games developers. The digital hub was extremely well received, with around 300 people visiting the hub over the weekend, and 95% of visitors rating it "excellent". The hub was generously funded by the University of Glasgow's Knowledge Exchange Fund.

### **Introductions & Discussions**

In line with the festival's ethos to provide a platform for African films to not only be seen but also contextualised, questioned, discussed and reflected upon, all screenings were introduced by filmmakers, film historians, theorists and critics, who also took part in post-screening panel discussions and Q&A sessions, during which audience members were encouraged to participate and ask questions. This element of the festival puts the films into context, and promotes conversations around the films, the geographic, social and political context in which the stories take place, and the subject matters addressed in them.

### **Short Film Competition**



We have successfully run our annual Short Film Competition for the past twelve years. This year, the shortlist was selected from over 380 entries. African and African diaspora filmmakers were invited to submit short films of up to 30 minutes, and the final shortlist boasts a diverse and captivating collection of work from across the continent, including Senegal, Martinique, Egypt, Morocco, Belgium, the US and South Africa. The Short Film Competition is central to AiM's commitment to nurturing young African filmmaking talent. The shortlist was compiled by Master's students in Film and Television Studies at the University of Glasgow.

The winner was decided by a jury of high profile academics and filmmakers, composed of Noe Mendelle (Director of the Scottish Documentary Institute), Mykel Parish (President of the Pan-African Film Consortium), Lara Utian Preston (Co-Founder of the Ladima Foundation), and Edima Otuokon (Co-Founder of the Ladima Foundation). An Audience Choice Award is also attributed, based on audience votes for their favourite film after the screenings.

The winner of the Jury Prize for this year's competition was Martiniquen film Doubout. The winning director received £500 sponsored by the Scottish Documentary Institute.

### **Guests**

Every year it is apparent that one of the experiences that makes AiM so special is the opportunity to invite guests to attend screenings and events in person. Their attendance provides an important and rare chance for audiences, festival staff and volunteers and filmmakers to interact and engage with the artists of the films they're engaging with through the festival. Its importance not only lies in bringing people together, but also exposing filmmakers from the continent to new audiences and for audiences in Scotland to engage with work they otherwise don't have access to.

Meeting the artists that work behind the scenes of African filmmaking is a highlight for many people when attending AiM screenings and events. It is a chance to hear filmmakers and producers speak about their work, and ask them questions in Q&A sessions. These interactions deepen the experience the audiences have of the films they watch, by giving context to the films but also to the process of making the films. This then can broaden the audience's overall understanding of African cinema and filmmaking in general. It is also an opportunity for African audiences in Scotland to engage with film from their country of origin.

Simultaneously, our special guests have expressed how much they appreciate the opportunity to engage with their Scottish audiences post-screenings and how valuable it is to network closely amongst each other and with representatives of the Scottish industry. This is apparently, according to the guest attendees, a unique aspect of AiM given the relaxed atmosphere that is present in the 'smallness' of the festival and its space, and which is nurtured by the academic and informative angle given to so many of the discussions of films and other scheduled events.

As in previous years AiM hosted a number of international and UK based guests during the festival, from filmmakers to film festival founders to scholars for whom we organised and

paid for their travel and/or accommodation. Invited guests were: Samuel Olanrewaju (filmmaker, Nigeria), Tresor Senga (filmmaker/curator, Rwanda), Emma-Lee Kasbergen (producer, Belgium), Aiwan Obinyan (filmmaker, UK), Dhivya Kate Chetty (scholar, UK), Olivia Windham Stewart (Scholar, UK), Firdoze Bulbulia (activist, South Africa), Manthia Dawara (filmmaker, USA), Joel Karekezi (filmmaker, DRC/France) and Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese (filmmaker, Lesotho).

Unfortunately, this year, Manthia Dawara, Lemohang Jeremiah and Joel Karekezi had to drop out and their events had to be remedied. We worked hard at making sure that the panel discussions were held, but Manthia's masterclass had to be cancelled. The festival still benefited from the attendance of the rest of the guests who all partook in post-show discussions and were engaged with festival throughout their stay.

Samuel Olanrewaju was able to join us from Nigeria, for a screening of his film *The Wall* at the Digital Hub. He was able to attend the opening reception and we had post-film discussion with him about his experience in making the film.

*'I couldn't have been happier to be present at the festival'* **Samuel Olanrewaju (filmmaker)**

This year we were also able to host one of our curators and jury member of the Short Film Competition, Tresor Senga. He programmed our event *Rwanda in Focus*, which showcased the burgeoning Rwandan film scene, bringing to Scotland the new talent Rwanda has to offer. He was able to attend the screenings in person and have a post-screening discussion with our audience. Back in Rwanda he runs his own film festival, Mashariki Film Festival, and his attendance provided him with the opportunity to attend several screenings and make connections in preparation for programming his own festival.

*'Africa in Motion fully understood what Wax Print is about and created an immersive, integrated experience that really complimented the film. An excellent, beautifully curated festival. Deep discussions on the panel'* – **Aiwan Obinyan (filmmaker)**

Lastly, we invited, Emma-Lee Kasbergen, the producer of *EUphoria*, a film that was part of our Short Film Competition and part of the event *Our Stories*, which had two back to back screenings alongside a performance by the Scottish spoken word artist Courtney Stoddart. The event spoke about the experience of being part of a diaspora and how creativity is used as a weapon of and for resilience. Emma-Lee participated in all the screenings of *EUphoria* in both Edinburgh and Glasgow and took part in post-film discussions.

### **Management and Organisation**

The festival was managed and organised by the following people:

**Festival Producer:** Justine Atkinson

**Programme Coordinator:** Myriam Mouflih

**Curators:** Soukaina Aboulaoula, Lizelle Bisschoff, Ana Camila, Zoë Charlery, Victoria Jones, Évodie Nguelyi, Thulani Rachia, Natasha Ruwona, Trésor Senga, Tahliah Simumba, Carmen Thompson, Stefanie Van de Peer, Lisa Williams

**Programming Trainee:** Naomi Gessesse

**Hospitality Coordinator:** Sara Shaarawi

**Marketing Coordinator:** Carmen Thompson  
**Volunteer Coordinator:** Fiona Halliday  
**Short Film Competition Coordinator:** Callum Creaney  
**Graphic Designer:** Jamie Young  
**Web Development:** James Cocker  
**Website Design:** Darling Forsyth Design  
**Short Film Competition Submissions and Selections Team:** University of Glasgow Film and Television Studies Masters Students

The festival was supported by AiM's Board of Trustees which consists of:

**Lizelle Bisschoff:** Africa in Motion film festival founder, Lecturer in Film Studies, University of Glasgow

**Stefanie Van de Peer:** North Africa Programme Coordinator

**Cllr Graham Campbell:** Glasgow City Council and Co-Convener African Caribbean Cultures Glasgow

**Olumide Fadeyibi:** Filmmaker

**Joanna Keating:** Head of International Development Team at Scottish Government

**David Murphy:** Professor, School of Languages, Cultures and Religions, University of Stirling

**Raquel Ribeiro:** Lecturer in Portuguese, University of Edinburgh

**David Sorfa:** Senior Lecturer in Film Studies, University of Edinburgh

**Marenka Thompson-Odlum:** PhD researcher at the University of Glasgow examining Glasgow Museums collections and their connections with New World Slavery

**Peter West:** Malawi's Honorary Consul in Scotland

### **Volunteers**

This year we were pleased to welcome 68 volunteers to participate in the festival (23 in Edinburgh and 45 in Glasgow). The volunteers who committed their time were extremely enthusiastic and motivated to promote African film in Scotland. All volunteers expressed an interest in film and were keen to meaningfully engage with Africa In Motion as a platform for improving their knowledge and experience of a film festival environment. We were more than happy to facilitate such enthusiasm and as such several volunteers took on photography and social media roles.

### **Outreach and Recruitment**

A call out was made for volunteers 1 month prior to the festival start date. This was advertised on Africa in Motion's website and on various social media platforms. The call out was also advertised on Creative Scotland as well as circulated amongst film and media University students with contacts that the festival has in various universities and colleges throughout Scotland.

In order to increase accessibility and reach those who do not have internet access a flyer was also printed and distributed across various community centres, cafes, universities and arts venues in Glasgow and Edinburgh. The flyer provided details to apply via whatsapp, by telephone, email or post. Despite this, all applications were made via the online application form and we received no postal applications.

Several community organisations - a few of whom the festival has collaborated with in the past - were contacted with the hope of expanding our volunteer opportunities to wider demographics. The following integration networks were approached in Glasgow: Maryhill Integration Network, Rosemount Lifelong Learning, Central & West Integration Network, Glasgow NightShelter, Govan Community Project, North Glasgow Integration Network, International Women's Group, South East Integration Network, BEMIS, CEMVO, Refuweegee, Radiant and Brighter, The Unity Centre, Maslows Community Shop, The Well, Multi-cultural advice centre, REACH, Andescot, Saheliya, The Pearce Institute, The Hub, African Challenge Scotland, Mama Africa Social Club, Action for Southern Africa, Amina, Plantain Productions. In Edinburgh, the following organisations were contacted: The Lighthouse bookshop, EUSA Liberations Campaigns, Re-Act, Saheliya, The Welcoming, Edinburgh Churches for Sanctuary, Immigration and Asylum support team, Edinburgh city mission, LINK Net, Edinburgh Women's Interfaith Group, Edinburgh Interfaith Association, Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh, East African Communities in Scotland.

Despite offering to visit organisations in person to talk about the festival and volunteering opportunities, very few of the organisations contacted were available to meet with. Some of the organisations replied with enthusiasm for the festival and stated that they would circulate the opportunity within their communities.

### **Accessibility and inclusion**

Africa In Motion is committed to ensuring that the team of festival volunteers is diverse and accessible to a wide range of people wanting to engage in the festival. In the volunteer response survey 0% of volunteers expressed encountering any access barriers to participating in the festival, whether they be physical, financial, social or cultural barriers. Despite this, it is crucial to reflect on the methods used for reaching out to engage volunteers and any factors that would have influenced the demographic of people who were aware of the festival and its volunteering opportunities.

In order to make volunteering opportunities as accessible as possible, all volunteers were able to reclaim up to £15 of travel expenses per shift worked. There were a number of volunteers from lower income backgrounds who joined the festival team. These volunteers were offered a meal for every shift worked.

### **Community**

Throughout the festival, we were committed to creating a community environment for the volunteers. This began by conducting informal interviews in a group setting, which enabled an initial meeting between smaller groups of volunteers.

A week prior to the opening of the festival we hosted volunteer inductions in both Glasgow and Edinburgh. These events provided a space for all the volunteers to meet and ask questions about their voluntary roles. The induction events were intended to be fun and enjoyable for the volunteers. After a brief talk from the festival staff the volunteers we shared some food together from local African restaurants and then watched the opening film of last year's festival, *Rafiki*. As the volunteers were predominantly in groups of 2-3 people for their festival shifts it was important that they were able to meet and feel part of a wider festival team. Written below is a handle of the volunteer's feedback from the training:

“Yes, the induction was comfortable and gave a good sense of team culture.”

“Everything was clear and the volunteer induction was really fun!”

“Schedules were clearly communicated and duties were discussed right before the start of the shift.”

“Although I missed out on the training before the event, I was provided with a volunteer booklet which carried the important aspects about preparing for the event.”

Throughout the festival volunteers were primarily supported through a WhatsApp group and facebook group. Due to the nature of the festival being across two cities and involving a number of pop up venues, the use of digital platforms was the most effective way to communicate collectively. We encouraged the volunteers doing social media to publish any photographs on the group chats to create a positive environment for sharing festival experiences.

### **Feedback from volunteers**

Volunteer responses to the festival programme were hugely positive and 92% of volunteers expressed above average satisfaction with their festival experience. Some general feedback from volunteers was that Africa In Motion could provide more capacity building opportunities for volunteers who are interested in pursuing film professionally. We will take this on board for future festivals and consider running events more focused around networking and building film communities in Scotland.

The following quotes are responses from volunteers about their experience of festival events:

“My shifts were a good place to interact with people and develop people skills. I particularly enjoyed events that were followed by open discussions and Q&As.”

“I found the events very engaging. I thought the Q&A and voting at the short film competition was great and the Game On exhibition and VR shorts fascinating.”

“I enjoyed the events and learned about things I wouldn’t have thought of researching before. The event was an eye opener for me. I have appreciated the discussions around the events I engaged at”.

### **Reception of the festival**

The 2019 edition of the festival was well received by audiences, guests and volunteers alike.

#### **Glasgow audience figures were as follows:**

- Cinema screenings: 72
- Pop-up screenings: 904
- Exhibitions: 500

· **Total Glasgow audiences: 1,415**

**Edinburgh audience figures were as follows:**

- Cinema screenings: 851
- Opening reception: 200
- Pop-up screenings: 531
- Exhibitions: 1000

**Total Edinburgh audiences: 2,582**

**Year-round screenings:**

- Outreach screenings (Garnethill x2, Maryhill x1, Kinning Park Complex): 128
- Project Cafe (We'll Cherish You): 25
- GMAC (Watermelon Woman): 67
- CCA (Upon The Shadow): 22
- Afro Kulture Festival (two short film packages): 48
- Alliance Francaise (Fête de la francophonie - African short films): 40
- Milk Cafe (Fatima 75): 17
- Decolonising the Academy: 103
- Teviot Dining Hall (Finding Fela): 62
- ECAS Conference (Standing on their Shoulders, Rafiki, Everything Must Fall): 262
- Gilmorehill screening room (Psychosis of Whiteness): 80
- The Space, Media Education (Psychosis of Whiteness): 25
- The Space, Media Education (Foreign Body): 35
- CCA (Vanity 3.0): 52
- Film Education Conference, University of Glasgow: 102
- The Glad Cafe (Bakoso: Afrobeats of Cuba): 25
- CCA (Kuxe Kunema): 32

**Total year-round screening audience: 1,125**

**Overall festival attendance (Edinburgh, Glasgow and year-round): 5183**

The festival is showing clear signs of continual growth and we are happy to create an inclusive festival programme cutting across a variety of different demographics, including age, gender, sexual orientation and race. We feel that strategies that encouraged this growth were our collaborative programming initiative creating space for new voices within the festival programme, use of space as different audiences are attracted to the various spaces we use across the city, and our strategic partnership development.

**Audience Feedback**

We distributed feedback questionnaires at almost all screenings and events, and obtained feedback from 582 audience members. Forms were broken down into four simplified cards to ensure that feedback was as accessible as possible. The information was broken down into demographic feedback questionnaires that provide insight into who our audiences are, their experiences of the festival and how they found out about it.

97% of audiences rated the films they had seen in the festival as either excellent or good.

When asked what are the main reasons for coming to AiM 28% of audiences said that they had an interest in, or a personal connection to Africa. 10% of respondents were regular cinema attendees, and 18% said that they came to try something different.

When asked how they found out about AiM 36% of audiences said through the AiM brochure or website, 16% through the venue brochure or website, 24% through word of mouth and 15% through social media. Only 1% of respondents stated that they had heard about the festival through press and publicity.

Feedback showed that 61% of people attending the festival were female, compared to 35% of male and 4% identified as 'other'. Almost half our audiences (56%) were between the ages of 20-34, and were predominantly white (74%). Around 36% AiM audiences were from a BAME background, which is significantly higher than the national average of 16% of BAME communities who attend arts events in Scotland (Scottish Arts Council, 2010) and an increase from the 2018 edition of 28%.

This year we expanded our audience reach through the inclusion of a number of different curators in the programme. By bringing in more curators from the African diaspora in Scotland and across the world it visibly increased diversity in the festival, feedback from these events showed that 53% of audiences were from BAME backgrounds, 27% identified as LGBTQ+, 63% were below the age of 34.

Many audience members commented on how important AiM is as a platform for learning about Africa. One person stated that the event was, *'I learnt something about modern-day Rwandan filmmaking and its influence. Enjoyed the French. Merci / thank you!'*, *'I'll take away a taste of a culture which is unfortunately not widely included in the film circuit'*. and *'Better understanding of queer culture in Cape Verde and a want to learn more about it. Very vibrant and uplifting film'*.

**Comments about screening and events which audiences particularly appreciated included:**

*'A greater appreciation for this queer community and the importance of carnival'*. (**Tchindas - The Glad Cafe**)

*'Interest of a film made from a simple transcript. Story of inspiring mental strength. bringing protagonists together at the end brings home ongoing struggle'*. (**The State Against Mandela and Others - Filmhouse**)

*'The film was very inspirational to make a stance against oppression in all its forms'*. (**The State Against Mandela and Others - Filmhouse**)

*'I've listened to Fela's music for a long time - now I've heard his stories'*. (**My Friend Fela, Filmhouse**)

*'My first experience of VR - incredible in itself. Aside, there were very rich vivid scenes and concepts it was a privilege to be immersed in the locations so close to people and visuals. Shocking and thrilling. Unforgettable'*. (**Virtual Reality Short Films - Civic House**)

*'I want to visit Ghana! This experience makes me think about the opportunity VR brings to open art and culture to the world. The VR experience made me feel much more like I experienced Ghanaian culture than if I watched a straight film. Has made me think about voyeurism and what it feels as a VR voyeur taking part in cultural experiences'*.

*'Coming out of this experience I have a new appreciation for the power of VR. I especially loved Spirit Robot and the other Dakar. The way the films were made helped me gain a sense of place in Accra and Dakar. I felt that I understood better the energy of the pace, the temperature, smells and everyday lived experience. The films made me want to go there and experience it for myself'. (Virtual Reality Short Films - Civic House)*

## **Supporters**

As always, the festival was supported, financially and otherwise, by a wide range of organisations:

### **Principal Funder**

Screen Scotland

### **Funders and Supporters**

Young Start Big Lottery Fund

Voluntary Action Fund

Film Hub Scotland

Film Audience Network

University of Glasgow Knowledge Exchange Fund

University of Strathclyde

School of Arts and Humanities, University of Stirling

Africa Week, University of Edinburgh

Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh

Scottish Documentary Institute

Alliance Française

### **Event Partners**

Central and West Integration Network

Küche

Caladonia Worldwide

GSA Students Association

History Hit

Mashariki Film Festival

Take One Action

Femspectives

Mixed Roots Scotland

Edinburgh Caribbean Association

Document

LUX Scotland

Nollywood Travel Film Festival

Havana Glasgow Film Festival

### **Venue Partners**

Filmhouse

GFT

CCA

GMAC

Glasgow Women's Library



## **TANO - Supporting Festivals**

Afrika Eye  
Cambridge African Film Festival  
Film Africa  
Watch-Africa

## **Media Partners**

The List  
The Skinny

## **Press/ Marketing**

### **Press**

As in previous years, AiM developed media partnerships with the two leading local cultural papers *The Skinny* and *List Magazine* which guaranteed coverage of the festival. In the lead-up to the festival, we also enjoyed coverage from the *Edinburgh Reporter* and two student newspapers *Qmunicate* (Queen Margaret University) and the *Glasgow Guardian* (University of Glasgow).

Online coverage and write-ups in e-newsletters were, as usual, numerous and extensive and included articles and listings on regional, national and international blogs, news, arts listings, film and other websites including Pat's Guide to the West End, Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights, Black History Month, Screen Africa, That's TV, Smash Magazine and The Fountain.

We disseminated our main press releases advertising the programme which contained information about the overall festival, and two announcing the shortlist and winners of our short film competition . These were sent out to our database of contacts across the UK and Africa.

### **Here is a selection of our press publicity:**

'Africa in Motion Festival Preview 2019' (The Skinny, 2019):

<https://www.theskinny.co.uk/festivals/uk-festivals/film/preview-africa-in-motion-2019>

'Africa in Motion continues its mission to introduce Scottish audiences to the brilliance of African cinema':

<https://film.list.co.uk/article/111874-africa-in-motion-continues-its-mission-to-introduce-scottish-audiences-to-the-brilliance-of-african-cinema/> (The List, 2019)

'Africa in Motion Film Festival 2019' (Pat's Guide to the West End, 2019)

<https://www.glasgowwestend.co.uk/africa-in-motion-film-festival-2019-glasgow/>

### **Print publicity**

9,000 copies of the beautifully-designed festival brochures were printed and distributed at Filmhouse, Glasgow Film Theatre, our partner venues and through Door-to-Door Distribution to over 200 locations in Glasgow and Edinburgh (cultural venues, cafes, educational

institutions, etc). The main image of the festival was an artistic interpretation of African fabric, designed by Moroccan visual artists Untitled. The striking image attracted a lot of attention and positive feedback from audiences and partners. The green and black colours of the main image were also transferred to all our other branding, including our pop-up banners, posters, t-shirts and goodie bags. This ensured that the festival had a consistent and noticeable visual branding.

A3 and A1 posters for the festival were also distributed to cinemas and cultural venues by local distributors and the AiM team. Our visual presence during the festival was also enhanced by a number of pop-up banners displayed in the main festival hubs as well as the venues used for our pop-up screenings.

Flyers were created for special events and distributed by our volunteers and team members and inserted in the goodie bags distributed to audiences at the opening night at Filmhouse.

### **Online marketing**

The festival programme launched on Monday 23 September. We posted daily from this date across our three major social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We used a regular format called the “#AiMfilmfest Spotlight”, highlighting a different event each day to help people navigate their way through this year’s eclectic programme. We prompted various digital partners and supporters to then share and retweet these posts to increase engagement. In the time between programme launch and the start of the festival we received over 70,000 impressions, 260 likes and 130 retweets for our posts on Twitter and our Facebook content had a total reach of nearly 105,000. We created Facebook events for all special events (Q&As, performances and discussions) and boosted them for the weeks leading up to the dates. In addition, we used tailored advertising to promote specific events, as well as the festival programme as a whole. We used a keyword strategy to target Scottish audiences from within the African diaspora, as well as those with an interest in film from the African continent (and the diaspora) and the topics/issues explored in individual films, as well as those with a general interest in cinema more broadly.

We also developed a niche marketing strategy for all events to ensure special interest audiences were reached. Different interest groups, organisations and influencers were highlighted and email marketing used to recommend specific films/events to them to share with their follower bases or to raise general awareness of the festival. Just for example, the Scottish Queer International Film Festival (SQIFF) helped to promote our Queer Africa strand by sharing across their social media platforms and including in their regular newsletter. General social media sharing/retweeting support was received from a wide range of accounts, including (but not limited to): *Femspectives*, *Scottish BAME Writers Network*, *Fringe of Colour*, *Take One Action Film Festival*, *Global Justice Now Scotland*, *Hippodrome Silent Film Festival*, *Edinburgh BME Network*, *Scottish Documentary Institute*, *Kenyan Women in Scotland Association*, *Scalarama Glasgow* and *Project Myopia*. In addition, all staff members, curators and volunteers were able to share and promote in their own networks.

As part of a media partnership with The Skinny Magazine, we were able to take over their Instagram stories for our opening day on the 25<sup>th</sup> October. We shared highlights from the festival programme as well as live action from our opening night event at Edinburgh’s Filmhouse to their 14,500 followers. We also formulated a live tweeting strategy for during the festival, ensuring that all key events were covered in order to generate buzz and interest.

We recorded discussions live to our Facebook and utilised Instagram stories to build an immersive sense of engagement with the festival. There was a noticeable increased engagement with these “live” posts, as well as with event photos (taken by our professional photographers) which were uploaded daily across all three platforms.

Just in the ten days of the festival our Facebook content gained a reach of over 25,000 and our Twitter posts received nearly 30,000 impressions, 180 likes and 80 retweets. Our overall social media followers also increased significantly. Our Facebook followers grew from 6,500 at launch to nearly 6,800 by the end of the festival and we also gained 120 Twitter followers (total now 4,380). However, the most notable increase was on Instagram, with our following growing from 650 to nearly 1,200.

We received sustained positive feedback and comments about events from attendees on social media throughout the festival. Some posts included:

*Saw a great doc tonight at the @AiMfilmfest (yet again). The State Against Mandela and Others. Really incredible animations of the recently published Rivonia Trial tapes. Along with interviews from Ahmed Kathrada and Winnie Mandela before they both sadly passed. Really moving.* (Audience member, about The State Against Mandela and the Others, Filmhouse, Edinburgh)

*@AiMfilmfest fully understood what @WaxPrintFilm is about & created an immersive, integrated experience that really complemented the film. An excellent, beautifully curated festival. Deep discussions on the panel tonight. Thank you 🙌🏾👍🏾 😊* (Filmmaker Aiwan Obinyan, about ‘Waxing Lyrical: The Power of Printed Cloth in Africa’, GoMA, Glasgow)

*Just had my mind blown a little bit by this piece of film-making thanks to Africa in Motion (AiM) film festival. It's made me see a few things in a different light, not least the link between the African-American experience and science fiction. And its from 1995. Featuring amazing contributions from Derrick May, Goldie, George Clinton among others. MUST WATCH!!* (Audience member, about The Last Angel of History, part of ‘Black to the Future’, 50 George Square, Edinburgh)

*Wonderful film. Diawara's humanity shines through it. Beautiful tone. Fatou Diome's words resonate and relate.* (Audience member, about An Opera of the World + Performance Lecture, Kelvin Hall, Glasgow)

*Report compiled by Africa in Motion Film Festival, November 2019*