

Africa in Motion (AiM) Film Festival  
Press Release  
27th October 2010



### **Africa in Motion (AiM) announce the winner of the 2010 Short Film Competition**

Africa in Motion (AiM) for the third consecutive year, invited African filmmakers to submit short films of up to 30 minutes, for the festival's 2010 Short Film Competition. AiM's Short Film Competition is part of the Festival's commitment to nurturing young filmmaking talent; short films often act as a springboard for aspiring filmmakers, with many of today's established filmmakers having started this way.

A shortlist of eight films was selected from all the entries, with a focus on films that are well made, stylistically innovative and original, with interesting and captivating subject matter and storylines.

The Africa in Motion (AiM) Short Film Competition winner 2010 is ***The Abyss Boys***, written and directed by Jan Hendrik Beetge from South Africa in 2009. The film is in Afrikaans with English subtitles. One of the judges, Zina Saro Wiwa described it as, "confident, bold, beautifully acted."

Set in the slums of a small fishing community on the Southern coast of South Africa, the drowning depths of illegal abalone poaching has become a dangerous life that Jimmy, a legendary ex-diver, wants to escape from. Hoping to save his rebellious young brother from this lifestyle too, Jimmy devises a plan to give him and his brother a new beginning. With intriguing characters and expansive coastal landscapes, the story draws to its tragic conclusion on a stormy winter's day.

Jan Hendrik Beetge started his writing and directing career after finishing cum laude at film school in 2001 with his short film ***Triomfeer***. He worked as Commercials Director in Johannesburg for three years. Wishing to take a break from commercials in order to complete his feature film script he resigned to take up a teaching position at the Cape Town Film School. He then rejoined the commercials industry in 2007 and produced ***The Abyss Boys*** in participation with the Goethe Institute and Focus Features in New York. The film has just won Best Short Film at the African Movie Awards (AMAA) in Nigeria.

The winner, who receives £500 in cash, kindly sponsored by The Africa Channel ([www.theafricachannel.co.uk](http://www.theafricachannel.co.uk)) and African Movie Channel ([www.africanmoviechannel.tv](http://www.africanmoviechannel.tv)), was selected by our high-profile jury, chaired by last year's Short Film Competition winner, Paul

Emmanuel (3SAI: *A Rite of Passage*). All the shortlisted films were shown on Wednesday 27 October at Edinburgh's Filmhouse cinema and the winner was announced directly after the screenings.

Commenting on this year's shortlist, Mark Cousins said: "The standard was, once again, high. A theme ran through many of the films: The false dream of being something you are not, the way that comparing yourself to others is the root of unhappiness."

The audience will also get an opportunity to vote for their favourite and the winner will be announced at the closing screening of the festival on 5 November.

- ENDS -

#### Notes to Editors

1. The films shortlisted for the AiM 2010 Short Film Competition were:

##### Father Christmas Doesn't Come Here

Bheki Sibiya | South Africa 2009 | 14m | Zulu with English subtitles

A young Zulu girl with low self-esteem writes to Father Christmas asking for long, straight hair. Her dream is almost ruined by a cynical man who gives her a cruel dose of reality, but with the help of her grandmother, she eventually learns that being beautiful isn't about what you look like but about being yourself. This poignant and beautifully made film is director Bheki Sibiya's first fiction film, a filmmaking talent to watch.

##### La Métaphore du Manioc (The Cassava Metaphor)

Lionel Meta | Cameroon / France 2010 | 15m | French with English subtitles

Dawn in Yaoundé. Coco, a twenty-something Cameroonian taxi driver picks up a melancholic but attractive young woman. On the way to the airport he tries to chat her up, but she seems absent, immersed in her own thoughts. This short film is humorous and sad in equal measure, poignantly interrogating the notion of home and belonging.

##### Killing of the Imam

Khalid Shamis | South Africa 2010 | 10m | Documentary

In 1969, Imam Abdullah Haron was incarcerated and killed in detention under the terrorism act of 1967 in Cape Town. His was one of the early deaths in detention under the brutal Apartheid regime. Mixing animation, documentary and archival footage, this story, told by the Imam's grandson, is an important document of a little-known part of South African history.

### No Absolution

Oluniyi Laguda | Nigeria 2009 | 21m | English and Nigerian Pidgin with English subtitles  
Kole Giwa, a shy Nigerian student living in Los Angeles, is anxious about his fast-approaching birthday. He is certain there is a curse on his family that kills men on their 25th birthday, and in an attempt to escape the curse he boards up his apartment with himself inside. Told through a mixture of drama, comedy and fantasy, this entertaining film touches intelligently and humorously on the question of the place of traditional African beliefs in the modern world.

### The Souls of Black Folks

Liban Jama | Somalia 2010 | 4m

Beyond the hoodies, baseball caps, violence and aggression, there is a lost youngster whose place in the world is somewhat opaque. This experimental short film examines identity and belonging from the point of view of the ethnic minority youth. Based on a W.E.B. DuBois poem.

### Me Broni Ba (My White Baby)

Akosua Adoma Owusu | Ghana 2008 | 22m | Twi and English with English subtitles | Documentary

This innovative experimental documentary is a lyrical portrait of hair salons in Kumasi, Ghana. The tangled legacy of European colonialism in Africa is evoked through images of women practising hair braiding on discarded white baby dolls from the West. The film unfolds through a series of vignettes, gradually uncovering the meaning behind the Akan term of endearment, me bronni ba ("my white baby").

### The Essence

Ebele Okoye | Nigeria 2010 | 6m | No dialogue | Animation

An isolated community is plagued by famine and distress until the fabulous and mysterious bird-women arrive and save them! This is a magical, thought provoking animation that reflects on the need to respect Mother Nature.

2. For press enquiries, please contact Gillian Cook on 07790 200471 or [gillian@africa-in-motion.org.uk](mailto:gillian@africa-in-motion.org.uk)

3. Publicity images are available to download from [www.africa-in-motion.org.uk/press](http://www.africa-in-motion.org.uk/press)

4. 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)).

5. AiM is funded by Creative Scotland; Commonwealth Foundation; Awards for All; and Regional Screen Scotland, with sponsorship from University of Edinburgh's

Centre of African Studies; Scottish Documentary Institute; University of Stirling's School of Languages, Cultures and Religions; Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Edinburgh; Global Concerns Trust; Society for Francophone Postcolonial Studies; The Africa Channel; African Movie Channel; and Scotland Food and Drink.

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