

FESPACO NEWS

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AFRICAN CINEMA AND CULTURAL
DIVERSITY

A fight for survival

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OPENING CEREMONY OF FESPACO 2007

C'est parti pour la 20eme édition

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The Yeleen Group calls for peace



“Show Tahiti Nui” at FESPACO opening ceremony

During this 20th edition of FESPACO, the song and dance group “Show Tahiti Nui” will perform.

Through dancing and singing, this group will contribute to FESPACO's opening ceremony. The creator Théo Tahiti will be remembered like the famous Francis Lopez.

Théo Tahiti distinguished his brilliance by creating a truly Polynesian ballet. After this, he became the producer of his own group. As a choreographer, he needed to learn from two artists: Agnie Léon and Tehau Mado. Together, they created some spectacles which inspired admiration from Polynesia and other countries.

“Show Tahiti Nui” creates a lot of visual extravagance. From Africa to

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Entertainment gallore with the Tahiti Nui show Band



Pub

PRIX RURART, jeune public lycéen

Le réseau d'action culturelle des lycées agricoles publics de la région Poitou Charente participera à cette 20^{ème} édition du FESPACO en offrant un prix spécial. Ce prix dénommé prix RURART, jeune public lycéen, est destiné à primer les œuvres qui sont parmi les films en compétition dans la sélection officielle du festival.

Le prix RURART sera décerné aussi bien en long métrage qu'en court métrage. Les lauréats recevront un trophée, une prise en charge de la copie de l'œuvre et un billet aller-retour pour Paris pour le réalisateur lors de la diffusion de son œuvre en région Poitou Charente et en France. Ce prix sera coordonné par Monsieur Robert Vieuille et ne peut être décerné à une œuvre dont le contenu pourrait contrevenir à la loi française. Et seules les œuvres en langue française ou sous-titrées en français dont le réalisateur est d'origine africaine seront primées.

"Show Tahiti Nui" at Fespaco

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Europe through America and Oceania, the group has given more than 3,200 performances. Their spectacles are diverse: the dance of the pig from Marqueses island, the dance of the flower from Tiare, the dance of the sorcerer, the dance of fire, the war songs.

In brief "Show Tahiti Nui," brings out the richness of the Maori culture and their expression and nobleness.

Twenty artists (musicians, dancers and singers) make up the Théo Tahiti group. Wearing extravagant dresses, the performers give public and private shows, anime galas, balls, entertainment and



Performers of the Tahiti Nui Show band

play during fairs and festivals. With his cultural group, Théo Tahiti wants to engage in a noble cause: to return the prestigious identity to Polynesia.

Sita TARBAGDO

CÉRÉMONIE D'OUVERTURE C'est parti pour la 20ème édition

Acette occasion, le délégué général du FESPACO, Baba Hama, a rendu un hommage soutenu à ceux qui ont écrit les plus belles pages de l'histoire du cinéma africain et à « ceux qui nous ont quitté depuis la dernière édition ».

Pour le premier responsable du FESPACO, Ouagadougou sera en l'espace de 8 jours, le Centre d'attraction des cinéastes africains en quête d'un signal fort. Au cours de la présente édition du FESPACO, dira-t-il, des ateliers et tables rondes permettront de porter la réflexion sur la cohabitation du cinéma, d'auteur avec le cinéma populaire, collant aux réalités africaines.

Le ministre de la Culture, des Arts et du Tourisme, Aline Koala, a pour sa part invité les cinéastes africains à s'approprier le FESPACO. Elle a aussi rendu un hom-



A rendez vous of spectacular movements

mage appuyé au président d'honneur du FESPACO 2007, l'artiste musicien camerounais Manu Dibango et surtout au président burkinabé et à la marraine du FESPACO, madame Chantal Compaoré, pour leur implication au rayonnement, du plus grand rendez-vous du cinéma africain.

En reconnaissance à son immense contribution à la promotion du cinéma

africain et à l'expression du dialogue culturelle, l'UNESCO a décerné au FESPACO, la médaille Frédéric Fellini, au cours de la cérémonie d'ouverture de la biennale du cinéma africain. Selon le Directeur Général adjoint de l'UNESCO, cette médaille est la plus haute distinction de l'institution, attribuée au cinéma. Celle du FESPACO est seulement la 3^e après les distinctions des festivals de Cannes et de Marrakech.

L'UNESCO par la voix de son directeur général adjoint, a félicité le Burkina pour son rôle de pionnier dans la promotion du FESPACO. Il a par ailleurs marqué le soutien constant de l'UNESCO au FESPACO, car le thème de la 20^{ème} édition du FESPACO « Cinéma et diversité culturelle », entre dans les objectifs de l'institution Onusienne qui s'illustre aussi dans la promotion des expressions culturelles. Après la cérémonie d'ouverture riche en hommage, en sons et lumière, les vingt cinéastes en compétition retiennent désormais leur souffle pour le sacré final du 03 mars prochain.

Gabriel SAMA

AFRICAN CINEMA AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

A fight for survival

The theme of FESPACO 2007 is “African Cinema and cultural diversity”; and it is an agenda, a vision and ambition. Far from being a simple film festival, FESPACO wishes to enable the expression of all cultures.

CThe theme is a negation of global standardisation, to preserve diversity and to further the plurality of cultural expression. It is both a political and economic fight.

According to the convention for protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expression, “cultural diversity refers to the multiplicity of forms by the means of which some groups or societies express themselves.”

Diversity is expressed not only through varied forms in which the cultural heritage of humanity is expressed, enhanced and transmitted through the

variety of cultural expressions. Diversity is also expressed through different forms of artistic creation and the production, dissemination and distribution of cultural treasures, whatever the means and technology is used. In this context, the young African cinema – with its strengths and weaknesses – should be able to make its way through a globalized world.

In front of the cultural imperialism of developed countries, it is natural for Africa to be concerned and look for means of protection. Today, it is irrefutable that Africa is invaded by Hollywood-made films. On the economic

level, the trade balance deficit is getting worse; another threat is the disappearance of the African ways of seeing, thinking and being.

With external influences, Africans are gradually giving up their “Africanity” to become something else: wandering souls. Cultural diversity aims to promote the African film industry; this implies preserving African culture.

It is a fight for survival, a laudable, difficult but necessary fight due to a vital issue; preserving a people and its individuals. This requires taking action as Africans cannot and must not submissively allow the destruction or disappearance of their culture. Such a situation will not only impoverish Africans but also take away their reason for being Africans.

Rabahanki ZIDA

National Cinema Centre, a mainspring for film production

The 20th Edition of FESPACO offers the opportunity to show, once more, the National Cinematography Centre (CNC), a mainspring in national film regulation and production.

CNC, the new name of the National Film Direction (DCN), is the think-tank regarding film and audiovisual regulation and production in Burkina Faso. Therefore, it supports FESPACO in the broadcasting and development of African cinema. CNC ensures the unity of guideline relating to film policy and the coordination of various structures and organisations in the film and audiovisual sector.

Moreover, it keeps the public register of cinematography and controls the entry fees collected in movie halls, funds films produced or co-produced by the Burkinabé government.

As for the 20th edition of FESPACO, CNC co-produced Burkinabé feature



M. Ismaël Ouédraogo, director of the Centre

films like “Djanta” by Tasséré Ouédraogo, “le Monde est un ballet” by Issa Traoré de Brahima”, “ Code phoenix” by Aoubacar Diallo that have been selected in the official competition.

CNC’s Director, the filmmaker Ismaël Ouédraogo, explains the reasons that accounted for the change of its name as follow: “the change of DCN into National Centre is meant to provide it with a legal status and financial autonomy. You know quite well the artistic nature of the cinematographic activity does comply with the status of ministry department. This new legal framework will allow CNC to be more operational on the field, since it meets the organisational demands set by donors and partners in the country of upright people.

Salifou OUÉDRAOGO

PHOTO DIRECTOR

A guardian of the image

Cinema production is a complex business requiring skills from many different domains. From script writing to direction, many stakeholders are involved in the design of a film's final product. The photo director is no doubt the mainspring of this production line. He must present the feelings of the filmmaker through images.



Joseph Kondé setting a camera

The photo director is the closest collaborator of the filmmaker on the film set. He brings the proper light for a quality film. Once he has the script, he determines the proper light for each shot (day light, artificial light, etc). Depending on the weather, the photo director can figure out the adequate equipment for film making. For Joseph Kondé, a photo director for Burkina National Television (TNB), "All the feelings of the filmmaker must be felt by the photo director so the film reflects the director's feelings. In fact, the photo director must be in permanent contact with the filmmaker and must feel some of the aspects in order to express them through images. It is the hardest and most delicate job. It's all about giving beauty to the image through lighting."

Of course, the profession is interesting, but it is sometimes hard, if not very hard. In fact, the photo director remains in "stand by" 24 hours a day. He must always be ready for his tasks, no matter

what day it is. Also, he can hardly leave his job for a long time since production may commence anytime. There are also administrative constraints. For Joseph Kondé: "A photo director supervises a number of technicians as far as the lighting is concerned. He has to follow and monitor the lighting engineers' work. The monitoring involves technicians in charge of the continuity of interiors and exteriors."

As with any profession, photo directors have many advantages. "One of the major advantages of the profession is the fact of watching images expressing the sensitivity and the work required by filmmakers," Joseph Kondé added. "Of course there are per diems here and there, but this cannot compensate the physical and intellectual effort on the site." The satisfaction from a job well-done could be one of the advantages of this difficult profession.

In Africa, despite the good faith of photo directors, they work under inade-

quate means. However, photo directors don't feel professionally inferior compared to their counterparts from well-off countries. There are no specific university degrees issued for those wanting to join the profession of photo director. After studying in this domain, one could become a photo director. A confirmed cameraman can become a photo director, but to be an expert in the field, one needs to undergo internships under the supervision of other photo directors.

As for Joseph Kondé, he worked with two "masters" in the field: Didier Debauve and Serges Dealmas. "They led me toward photo direction," he said. In fact, after attending INAFEC and before furthering his studies in Paris at the International Academy of Arts (ESEC), Joseph Kondé worked for these two directors at CINAFRIC during the nineteen-eighties.

He also worked as a deputy photo director on several sets with filmmakers such as Idrissa Ouédraogo, Sanou Kollo and Gaston Kaboré. All these filmmakers allowed him to see several aspects of cinema and served as good examples toward the profession of photo direction. In 1987, he acted for the first time as photo director on the set of Mustapha Dao, a Burkinabé filmmaker. It was a wonderful adventure, wasn't it? Would you do it again?

Kondé: "Yes, I would because this adventure strengthened and made me morally mature. My profession is exciting and requires a spiritual, mental and moral concentration and an extreme sensitivity. I like art and what we are doing beyond technical mastery is art."

Fernando GUETABAMBA

Pub

“Pass Cinema” for pupils and students



Group photo of authorities with first year students beneficiaries of the “Pass Cinéma”

For this 20th edition of FESPACO, TV5 World in collaboration with ACCOR Afrique, granted more than 210 accreditations to students and pupils of Ouagadougou.

This grant has become a tradition for TV5 World to give the opportunity to young Africans to discover African renowned filmmakers, said Mrs. Denise Epote Durand, the manager of TV5 World for Africa. This initiative was started in 2003 with only form IV pupils. It is now extended to those of form I as well as to students at the University of Ouagadougou.

For this third edition, in addition to 100 form IV pupils, 100 other form I pupils and 100 students at the University of Ouagadougou will benefit from these “passports” to the celebration of African cinema.

The Minister of Secondary, Higher Education and Scientific Research commended the initiative and said that sometimes, the youth view FESPACO from afar, and this is an opportunity for them to participate and to broaden both their knowledge and culture.

In addition to these passports to FESPACO, beneficiaries of the grant by

TV5 World also benefited from several gadgets, including TV5 bags and notebooks. The objective, according to Mrs. Durand, is to ensure a continuous training for African youth.

The need for training youth has pushed ACCOR to support TV5 in this initiative, said the Director General for Africa.

Firmin OUATTARA



La valise des films

To make African films known in France

To the attention of films directors and producers

Since 1987, the festival of African Cinema has been showing films in France from the African continent, by selecting short and feature films.

For the 11th festival (Angers, from 24th to 29th April 2007), we are setting up a “Film Valise”, which helps event organizers and professionals watch African films and have access to all related information.

The valise receives:

- . Films from the whole African continent
- . Short and feature films, documentaries and fictions
- . Video or film shootings

The valise is an efficient means to make African films known in France

To two types of professionals:

Independent film theatres
Institutions, associations that develop events about Africa

On their request, they will be able to watch the valise films during this festival of African cinema. We are providing them with a technical description of each film, as well as with the address of the producer or distributor.

Legal framework

The legal framework refers to the provision of a VHS or DVD copy of the film, without any broadcast fees. Screening is exclusively reserved for event professionals and organizers.

Participation

Those willing to have their films in this valise, should send a DVD or VHS copy, together with their email address to Saida Ragui at Hotel Continental (AV. Loudun Ouagadougou), by 4 March 2007

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FESPACO 2007

Film Critics set the tone

Since February 19, 2007, some West African film critics have been attending a sub-regional workshop for the training of film reading and criticism at the High Institute of Film and Sound of Ouagadougou, or ISIS. This workshop enables critics to create thought-out pieces on film during FESPACO.

The workshop, which is in its second year, is jointly organized by the African Federation of Film Critics, known as FACC, and the Association of Film Critics of Burkina Faso, known as ASCRIC_B and under the patronage of the filmmaker Gaston Kaboré.

The previous training was held in 2003 and brought together 24 journalists from

four West African countries. This time, about 15 cultural journalists and film critics from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali and Togo are building their capacities in image reading and film criticism.

This workshop aims at endowing the participants with the necessary tools for the establishment of traditional criticism. Like in 2003, the critics will give their viewpoints of selected films.

Clement Tabsoba, the chairman of FACC and ASCRIC_B, called on film professionals to further their reflection of African film. Paulin Soumanou Vyera, an established film critic,

s a i d :
 "Accepting criticism means accepting that one thinks that no one holds the absolute truth." He expressed gratitude toward the



partners, including the International Organization of Francophonie, Africalia, FESPACO; the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Burkina Faso's Ministry of Culture and the ISIS.

A minute of silence was observed at the beginning of the meeting in memory of Jean Servais Bakyono, a famous film and art critic who died in Abidjan a few months before.

Aimé OUÉDRAOGO



A special Prize for innovation in job creation

Hundreds of Original Projects for Employment (HOPE'87), une ONG Internationale autrichienne dont le Bureau Régional Afrique de l'Ouest est basée à Ouagadougou, décerne pour le présent FESPACO, un Prix spécial d'une valeur de 2 Millions de FCA (3000 Euros), à une œuvre cinématographique africaine. Ce prix est dénommé : « Prix Spécial HOPE'87 pour l'innovation dans la création de l'emploi pour les jeunes hommes et jeunes femmes ».

Cette récompense spéciale que se propose de décerner HOPE'87-Burkina dans le cadre du FESPACO, est une première, depuis la création de ce festival du cinéma de Ouagadougou, qui en est allégrement à sa vingtième édition. En effet, c'est la première fois qu'une ONG participe aux « prix spéciaux Fespaco », en mettant l'accent sur le thème de la trilogie : « Jeunesse-Emploi-

Développement »

HOPE'87-Burkina entend par là élargir son domaine d'appui à la création cinématographique des pays africains en développement.

Le jeune réalisateur africain dont l'œuvre va dans le sens de la lutte contre la pauvreté à travers la création d'emplois, sera donc récompensé à ce 20ème festival du cinéma de Ouagadougou. L'œuvre à primer devra mettre l'accent vers une proposition de solutions innovantes, adaptées et porteuses d'espoir dans la résolution des problèmes d'emplois, de chômage et de pauvreté en Afrique. Ce qui constituera pour la jeunesse africaine, le tremplin de la lutte contre la pauvreté et pour son épanouissement.

La mise en valeur des idées de projets en vue de créer des opportunités de formations et d'emplois, non seulement pour les promoteurs eux-mêmes, mais aussi pour leur entourage, devra être bien perceptible dans l'œuvre en compétition au cours de ce festival du « donner et du recevoir ».

Jean Bernard ZONGO

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