Brown University's

Africana Film Festival

Wednesday - Sunday
April 13-17 2005

Cable Car Cinema
204 South Main Street, Providence, RI

Brown’s Africana Film Festival brings to Providence the latest and greatest in cinema from around the African diaspora. Fifteen films by Africana filmmakers will be shown, from Burkina Faso, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Great Britain, Guinea Bissau, Algeria, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Rwanda, United States.

FESTIVAL DIRECTORS:
Karen Allen Baxter, Managing Director Rites & Reason, Africana Studies
Anthony B. Bogues, Chair, Africana Studies
Claudia Esposito, PhD Candidate, French Studies
Richard Manning, Film Archivist, Modern Culture and Media
Philip Rosen, Professor of Modern Culture and Media

With thanks to Susan McNeil (MCM), Liza Hebert (MCM), Donna Mitchell (Africana Studies), Sheila Grant (Africana Studies), Eric Bilodeau (Cable Car), Meadow Dibble-Dieng (French Studies), Shahrzad Zahedi (French Studies) and Allison Fong (French Studies).

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For more information contact Claudia Esposito at Claudia_Esposito@brown.edu
Film Schedule

WEDNESDAY 4/13
6:45pm  Paul Robeson: Here I Stand, Director's Intro: Bourne
9:30pm  Madame Brouette

THURSDAY 4/14
10:00am  PANEL I: Writing for Theatre & Screen in the Democratic Republic of Congo
3:00pm  Agogo Eewo
5:00pm  Dirt for Dinner
7:00pm  Babymother, Director's Introduction: Henriques
9:30pm  My Footsteps in Baragua / Oggun: An Eternal Presence

FRIDAY 4/15
2:00pm  Paul Robeson: Here I Stand
4:00pm  PANEL II: Identity and Filmmaking in the African Diaspora
6:45pm  The Governor's New Clothes, Director's Intro: Ngangura
9:30pm  Agogo Eewo

SATURDAY 4/16
12:00pm  Moolaade
2:30pm  Shorts: Histoire de Tresses / Pour La Nuit / Kounandi
4:30pm  PANEL III: African Cinema, Today and Tomorrow
7:00pm  Vive L'aldjérie
9:30pm  Tree of Blood, Director's Intro: Gomes

SUNDAY 4/17
1:30pm  Some Kind of Funny Porto Rican (Sneak Preview)
        Director's Intro: Andrade-Watkins
4:00pm  Babymother
7:00pm  Moolaade
9:30pm  Cosmic Africa

Panels with Filmmakers, Writers & Critics

Thursday 4/14 @ 10:00am
"Writing for Theatre & Screen in the Democratic Republic of Congo"
Location: Watson Institute Joukouwsky Forum, 111 Thayer St.
  ~ Pierre Mujomba, Playwright (DRC)
  ~ Mweze Ngangura, Filmmaker (DRC)
  ~ Ngwarsungu Chiwengo, Critic (DRC)
  ~ Mbala Nkanga, Critic (DRC)

Friday 4/15 @ 4:00pm
"Identity and Filmmaking in the African Diaspora"
Location: Cable Car Cinema, 204 South Main St.
Moderator: Anthony Bogues, Chair, Africana Studies, Brown University
  ~ St. Clair Bourne, Filmmaker (USA)
  ~ Julian Henriques, Filmmaker (Great Britain)
  ~ Claire Andrade-Watkins, Filmmaker (USA)

Saturday 4/16 @ 4:30
"African Cinema, Today and Tomorrow"
Location: Cable Car Cinema, 204 South Main St.
Moderator: Philip Rosen, Modern Culture & Media, Brown University
  ~ Flora Gomes, Filmmaker (Guinea Bissau)
  ~ Olivier Barlet, Critic (France)
  ~ Mweze D. Ngangura, Filmmaker (DRC)

Sunday 4/17 @ 9:00pm
Open Reception at the Xxodus Cafe
Black Repertory Theater (cash bar)
276 Westminster St.

TICKETS:
Students:  $3.00/show, $15.00 pass (8 shows)
General:  $5.00/show, $20.00 pass

All tickets and passes must be purchased in person at the Cable Car Cinema. Available for advance purchase for all shows starting Wednesday April 6th.

All panels are free and open to the public.
Special Guests

Mweze D. Ngangura
(Democratic Republic of Congo)
Born in Buvak (Zaire) in 1950 Mweze Dieudonné Ngangura studied film art at the Institut des Arts de Diffusion (Brussels) where he received a Director's Diploma in 1976. He was a professor at the "Institut National des Arts" (I.N.A.) and at the "Studio-Ecole de la voix du Zaire" (SEVOZA) in Kinshasa from 1976 to 1985. During this period he directed the documentary Chéri Samba, a portrayal of a young popular painter from Zaire. This was followed by Kin Kiesse, which won the "Best Documentary" at the 1983 FESPACO. In 1986, he finalised the screenplay of the successful feature film entitled La Vie est Belle which he co-directed with Benoît Lamy in 1987. His 1993 documentary Changa-Changa focuses on music and the meeting of cultures in Brussels. His film Le Roi, la Vache et le Bananier (The King, the Cow and the Banana Tree) won two prizes: the "Documentary Prize" and the "Special Prize of the Jury" at Vues d'Afrique in Montreal in May 1994, and was followed in 1995 by another documentary: Lettre à Makura: les derniers bruxellois about an african ethnologist on the Marolhens. His 1997 documentary Le Général Tombeur reports the history of Bukavu. In 1998 he directed the successful feature film Pièces d'identités which won many international awards including the famous "Yennenga Stalion" at FESPACO '99. In 2001, he directed the documentary Au nom de mon père about a young Congolese hospital attendant whose obsession is to return to his native country.

Julian Henriques (Great Britain)
Julian Henriques is the producer and director of numerous television dramas and documentaries including Derek Walcott: Poet of the Island, The Green Man, States of Exile, and Dictating Terms (produced by BBC Music & Arts), and Carimac (produced by the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication, Jamaica), among others. He is a lecturer at Goldsmiths College, Department of Media and Communications, and resides in London, England.

Ngwarsungu Chiwengo
(Democratic Republic of Congo)
Dr. Chiwengo is a Congolese scholar of African and African-American literature, political activist, and Director of the World Literature Program at Creighton University where she is a professor of English. She has been a member of a number of political organizations in the Congo where she has served as a US representative for the PDSC. Dr. Chiwengo has taught at the University of Lumumbashi (DRC), at Samford University and at Creighton. She has written numerous articles and given many papers on wide-ranging issues in African and African-American literature and politics. Her forthcoming book is entitled Understanding 'Cry, the Beloved Country'.

Mbala Nkanga
(Democratic Republic of Congo)
Mbala Nkanga is Assistant Professor (theatre studies, world drama) at the University of Michigan. He is a native of the Democratic Republic of Congo where he grew up and worked as a teacher, director and scholar. Since 1979, he has taught directing, scenography and dramaturgical analysis at the Institut National des Arts in Kinshasa. He directed plays in various professional companies, such as Bernard Dadié's Béatrice du Congo, Wole Soyinka's A Dance of the Forests, René Kalisky's Aïda Vaincue. From 1982 to 1986 he directed the recording of radio drama for the prestigious Radio France-Internationale's Concours Théatral Interafrique. One of the plays is Diur Numbu's Ziama (Grand Prix 1982), which he brought to the stage and screen. He adapted for the stage and directed Maryse Condé's Segu. He was the head of the research center in performing arts and music (CEDAR) at Institut National des Arts. He has completed extensive research in French theatre and drama, and Central African performance traditions. He is a former Fulbright scholar and winner of Northwestern University's Gwendolyn Carter Award for Academic Excellence. He holds a PhD in Performance Studies from Northwestern University, an MA in Theatre and Drama from Indiana University, and a BA in History and Directing from the Institut National des Arts in Kinshasa.
Flora Gomes (Guinea Bissau)
Flora (Florentino) Gomes was born in 1949 in Cadique, Guinea Bissau. He studied film in 1972 at the Cuban Institute of Arts and Cinematography under the direction of Santiago Alvarez before working with filmmaker Paulin S. Vieyra in Senegal. He later co-directed two short films *La reconstruction* (The Reconstruction) and *Anos no oça lura*. In 1987, he directed his first feature film *Mortu nega* which received two special commendations from the jury at the Venice Film Festival in 1988, then *Blue Eyes of Yonta* selected for the "Un certain regard" section at the Cannes Film Festival in 1992. *Po di sangui* (*Tree of Blood*) was his third feature film, screened in the official competition at Cannes in 1996. Gomes was the featured filmmaker at Brown's First Annual African Film Festival in 2004, where he additionally presented *Nha Fala*.

Pierre Mumbere Mujomba
(Democratic Republic of Congo)
Congoles playwright and novelist, Pierre Mumbere Mujomba is the author of seven plays and a novel, *Ecce Ego*, which was published in France in 2002. His conflict with the Congolese government began in January 2003, after the performance in French of his play, *The Last Envelope*, in Kinshasa. A 'commedia-style' farce with extravagant language, a detailed plot and underhanded allegory, the play reveals excesses of the Mobutu regime in the former Zaire. Shortly after its first performance, Mujomba was threatened and his landlord was kidnapped. With the intervention of PEN International, he was able to leave the Congo and to undertake a residency at Villa Aurora, the Foundation for European-American Relations in Pacific Palisades, California. Although most of Mujomba's work is not yet available in English, *The Last Envelope* was translated and performed in New York in 2002 by the Lark Theatre Company. The Last Envelope won Le Grand Prix at the Prix Nemis in Chile in 1988 and the Decouverte RFI Theatre Sud Prize in 1999. Mr. Mujomba will be leading a screenwriting panel in this year's Africana Film Festival.

Olivier Barlet (France)

Claire Andrade-Watkins (USA)
Dr. Andrade-Watkins, a historian and filmmaker, has published extensively on French- and Portuguese-speaking African cinema in leading academic journals and film publications. She is co-editor of *Blackframes: Critical Perspectives on Black Independent Cinema* and was a 1995-96 Fulbright Scholar in Cape Verde, where she conducted research on indigenous cinema. With a 1997 grant from the American Philosophical Society, she researched colonial cinema in Lisbon. In the early 1990s, she hosted the US premiere of Flora Gomes' *Blue Eyes of Yonta* at the Coolidge Corner Theater. She is currently working on an award-winning “documemoire,” *Some Kind of Funny Porto Rican*, about the Cape Verdean community in Providence. Other documentaries she produced include *The Spirit of Cape Verde*, a celebrating the bonds between New England, Cape Verde and President Aristides Periera's historical first visit to the US in 1983. She was an Associate Producer on “Odyssey”, a national PBS anthropology and archaeology documentary series, and assistant to the Producer on Sankofa, an internationally acclaimed feature film on slavery by filmmaker Haile Gerima.
St. Clair Bourne (USA)

St. Clair Bourne was born in 1943 in Harlem, New York. While attending Georgetown University in the 1960s, he became active in the peace movement and left college to join the Peace Corps. Stationed in Lima, Peru, Bourne became something of a local celebrity when he took on the editing and publishing duties of the Spanish newspaper El Comenio. His work on the paper led to him being written up in a feature article in Ebony magazine.

After his service, Bourne attended Syracuse University where he graduated in 1967 with a dual degree in Journalism and Political Science. On a scholarship, Bourne continued his education at the Columbia University Graduate School for Arts where he studied filmmaking. He was expelled, however, after his involvement in a peace movement demonstration ended in the takeover of the administration building. Not long after leaving the University, Bourne was recommended to executive producer William Greaves to work on a series called The Black Journal (notable for becoming the first black public affairs television series in the United States) for public television. In his three year tenure on the series, Bourne helped the program to win an Emmy award and earned a John Russworm Citation for Excellence in Broadcasting. Bourne left the program in 1971 and formed his own production company, "Chamba". With Chamba, Bourne continues to write, produce, and direct award winning and highly acclaimed features and documentaries. Starting in 1972, Bourne also served as publisher of the highly regarded newsletter Chamba Notes. Bourne continues to contribute articles to major publications that promote discussion of political and cultural issues as well as the art of filmmaking. He is known as the father of the African-American documentary and has made 42 films, among which, the making of Spike Lee's Do the Right Thing.

FILMS

About Braids (Histoire de Tresses), Jacqueline Kalimunda
Rwanda/France 2003, 23 min. French with English subtitles.
A magical encounter between a mysterious young woman and a gifted African hair-braider who is asked to recreate a completely unconventional style. Winner of the Best Short Film at Milan and Zanzibar 2003, as well as the People's Prize at Cannes.

Agogo Eewo, Tunde Kelani
Nigeria 2002, 100 min. Yoruba, English subtitles.
In this sequel to Saworinde, the death of Lagata, the military usurper of the Jobo throne, allows the corrupt chiefs to install Adebosipo, a retired police officer whom they think will not rock the boat of greedy exploitation of Jobo resources. To their surprise, Adebosipo's resolve to serve the people and his refusal to loot the treasury set him on a collision course with the powerful chiefs who are bent on bringing down his rule. With this critical allegory of Nigerian politics, Tunde Kelani grabbed the prize at the Nigerian National Film Festival.

Babymother, Julian Henriques
UK 1998, 62 mins in English
A single mother determined to make it as a singer puts together an all girl reggae group named Neeta, Sweeta, & Nastie with her friends. Living in a housing project with little support, the odds are obviously against her. Emotionally she struggles too as she learns at her mother's death that her actual mother is the woman she had thought was her older sister. With the help of a female agent, the group starts to get some exposure and rises above their setting.

Cosmic Africa
Craig Foster and Damon Foster
An extraordinary personal odyssey of African astronomer, Thebe Medupe, who journeys into this ancient continent's astronomical past unveiling the deep connection humans have with the cosmos. Medupe embarks on a quest to reunite his science with the origins of celestial knowledge in Africa, a journey that takes him to the ancestral lands of the Ju‘hoansi in Namibia; to the Dogon people of Mali, whose night sky maps provide signposts on how to live on earth; and deep into the Sahara, where a cosmic clock attests to the African origins of astronomy. A beautifully shot, densely layered meditation on the influence of the cosmos on our daily lives.
Dirt for Dinner (Dreckfresser), Branwen Okpako  
Germany 2000, 75 min. German with English subtitles.
Sam Meffire is the son of an African father and an East-German mother living in the former GDR. In 1992 he was the first black East German policeman and became famous thanks to an advertising campaign in a local newspaper featuring his face under the headline “A Saxon.” Unfortunately, East Germany wasn’t ready for multiculturalism, and Sam had a hard time in the police force. In 1996, Sam picked up a gun and chose a career of crime. He is now serving a 10-year prison sentence. This documentary tries to find answers to the intriguing question of how a man who was once seen as the poster boy of a new Germany could ultimately sink so deep. First Steps Award 2000, Bavarian Documentary Award “Young Lion,” 2001.

Kounandi, Apolline Traore  
Orphaned and rejected by her village for being a dwarf, Kounandi gradually falls in love with the only person to offer her aid and kindness, Karim. This love is greatly complicated, however, by the fact that he is already married.

Madame Wheelbarrow (Madame Brouette), Moussa Sene Absa  
Canada/Senegal/France 2002, 104min. Franch & Wolof, English subtitles
“Men make our lives impossible,” lament the village women. But enough to kill? In Niayes Thiokeer, a Senegalese shantytown, the day after the crazy transvestite festival of “Tajaboom” gunshots ring out. The victim: Naaga the policeman, an ever-jovial goat-between at the ghetto’s shady border of law and the criminal underworld. The suspect: Matti, a proud, divorced single mother who earns her livelihood and nickname by selling goods out of a push cart. Storytelling that mixes tribal giblets with modern sensationalist newscasters.

Moolaade, Ousmane Sembene. France/Senegal 2004, 120 min. 
French & Bambara with English sub.
Latest film from the esteemed “Father of African Cinema”. Six girls escape from an African ceremony of female circumcision. Two flee to the city while Colle Ardo Gallo Sy, one of the wives of a village tribesman, takes four in. Colle puts the spell of Moolaade, protection, over the girls, to keep them safe.

Pou La Nuit, Isabelle Boni-Ciaverie  
France 2004, 26 min. French with English Subtitles
On the eve of two events that mark an emotional and rapid departure from all that is familiar, Muriel and Sam are thrown together in a chance encounter. With her mother’s funeral the next morning, Muriel, the daughter of a French father and African mother, struggles to escape her sorrow and unrest. Meanwhile, Sam faces an equally emotional and daunting event: his wedding day. As the evening unfolds, both characters try to find comfort in the face of monumental changes, even if that comfort only lasts “For the Night.”
The Governor’s New Clothes, Mweze D. Ngangura
Belgium/Democratic Republic of Congo 2005, 86 min. French with English subtitles
The Hans Christian Andersen tale, The Emperor’s New Clothes has now been set in an African village. Director Ngangura, whose promise shined in Pièces d’identité and La vie est belle, crafts an accessible cultural and political narrative. While set in an African village, Ngangura reaches for something more. With this latest film one can sense the director’s intent of “putting first and foremost the aspect of cinematographic play for the larger audience”. A work of art which provokes both laughter and reflection.

Tree of Blood (Po di Sangui), Flora Gomes
Guinea Bissau, 1996, 90 min. In Portuguese and Creole with English subtitles
In the village of Amanha Lundgu every time a child is born a tree is planted. These trees grow as the children grow up and outlive them thus becoming the souls of the village people. But day after day, out of necessity, the villagers cut the trees and wood becomes a rare commodity. One day drought and death will come. When Dou returns to the village, his twin brother Hami has just died. Tensions are running high but Dou doesn’t understand what is happening. What did Humi die of? What evil is eating away at Amanha Lundgu? In the eyes of the community Dou must take the place of his twin brother and become a husband to the dead man’s wife and a father to his daughter.

Viva L’adjérie, Nadir Mokneche
Algeria, 113 min. French and Arabic with English subtitles
Winter 2003; following fundamentalist threats in and around Algiers Goucem and her mother Papicha, a once-famous cabaret dancer reminiscent of an Almodóvar character, are forced to live in a downtown hotel. Goucem tries as best she can to live an emancipated life, working in a photo shop and spending weekends in the clubs. Her mother stays in their one room watching television and eating pizza, reminiscing about her past life as a celebrity. Populated with intense and powerful characters, this film is a poignant look at resilience and complex social relations.