



The Berlin Annual African Film & Media Festival 2013

*"Africa on Screen:
Through the Eyes of Africa"*

(Berlin, Germany; August 22nd - 25th, 2013)







The Berlin Annual African Film & Media Festival 2013

"Africa on Screen: Through the Eyes of Africa"

(Berlin, Germany; August 22nd - 25th, 2013)

Festival Overview

Africa's sustained growth and development has permeated into many areas of society across the continent. In wake of rapid advancements in new communication technologies across Africa, a greater number of people have access to media and film than ever before. Improved infrastructure and telecommunications have stimulated the emergence of a booming film industry in many parts of the region, and have allowed the media to achieve a far greater circulation of readers and viewers, resulting in a more educated, informed population and presenting the people of Africa with greater opportunities for personal development both within the continent and internationally.

In the area of African media, the increased advances in technology and communications have strengthened the ability of different forms of media to be used as original platforms to encourage further interaction between Africa and the wider international community not only in a cultural sense, but also in regards to politics, economics, and society.

The expansion of the African film industry is clearly demonstrated by the numerous African Film Festivals taking place across the world, as well as the growth of "Nollywood", Nigeria's film market, which is now the second largest producer of films worldwide. This mass production of cinema has permitted the transmission of African film abroad, in turn offering the international community an insight into the African way of life. This has, perhaps inadvertently, served as a nation branding tool for Nigeria and Africa as

a whole, redefining the image of the continent abroad. By telling their stories, African artists are effectively battling stereotypes and common perceptions that dominate discourse in the West. The growth and variety of African mass media have also resulted in the rise of many prominent journalists and writers who, despite limited resources, have now made their mark in digital media and internet reporting.

The Institute for Cultural Diplomacy has therefore established the Berlin African Film & Media Festival 2013 in order to explore the rise to prominence of cinema and mass media in Africa and to debate the potential domestic and international effects of these rapidly growing industries. The conference will explore the power of cinema to bring people together and provoke universal emotion; a power that must be cultivated and developed to ensure African filmmakers continue to receive recognition and that their work gains as much exposure as possible.

Through the mediums of fiction, documentaries and short films, the festival aims to take participants on a journey of Africa, and showcase the talents of artists. In addition, film screenings, interactive discussions and musical performances, all portrayed through diverse African perspectives, will further engage artistic expression and innovation, providing an all-round intercultural experience for participants and offering unique insights into the political, social, cultural, religious and historic elements of contemporary Africa.





The Berlin Annual African Film & Media Festival 2013

"Africa on Screen: Through the Eyes of Africa"

(Berlin, Germany; August 22nd - 25th, 2013)

Festival Locations

Based in Berlin, the festival will be hosted at a number of important political, historic, and cultural locations across the city, and will consist of excursions to the country's top institutions and landmarks. Featured locations during the

Symposium will include: German Parliament, Berlin City Hall, European House Berlin, the German Foreign Office, the Brandenburg Gate, and various foreign embassies.

Festival Participants

The festival is open to applications from artists, civil society, governmental and diplomatic officials, civil society practitioners, young professionals, students and scholars, private sector representatives, journalists, and other

interested stakeholders from across the world.

If you would like to reserve a position and participate in the conference, please click on the **"Apply Now"** link and **fill out the online application form**.

Participant Papers

The Institute for Cultural Diplomacy encourages academic research and analysis of issues related to the goals of the conference, and

would therefore like to welcome conference participants to submit a paper they would like to be considered for presentation at the conference.

Certificate of Attendance

All Conference participants will be awarded an official certificate of attendance upon completion of the program, which will provide

details of the high-profile speakers who took part in the event, and list the topics which were discussed.

Sustainable Network »

During the program participants will have a number of opportunities to network with one another, with the speakers, and with ICD Advisory Board Members and partners. Conference participants will become part of the ICD Alumni, a growing international network of people of diverse interests and backgrounds from around the world who share a commitment to intercultural exchange. Members of the ICD

Alumni Group will benefit from the following opportunities: Alumni online forum, Advisory Board Networking, ICD support for individual Leadership Initiatives, free access to all ICD research, videos and photos as well as other event documentation. Participants will be able to remain in touch with each other through the ICD Networks. (**more »**)

Festival Performers & Speakers

Performers and speakers during the Festival will include NGOs, HR Activists, filmmakers, screenwriters, producers, actors, artists, civil

society organizations, politicians, diplomats, academics, authors and journalists as well as figures and experts of Cultural Diplomacy.







The Berlin Annual African Film & Media Festival 2013

"Africa on Screen: Through the Eyes of Africa"

(Berlin, Germany; August 22nd - 25th, 2013)

Festival Components & Agenda

Cultural exchange centering on the exploration of art is not a novel trend; however the growth of cinema in Africa has gained remarkable momentum, despite obstacles such as censorship and restricted funding. African film is rapidly emerging and occupying an increasingly prominent position in world cinema, providing a genuine chance for promoting African cultural awareness. The Berlin African Film & Media Festival 2013 will therefore celebrate Africa's multifaceted cultural and artistic landscape through the gathering of a wide range of artists and leaders from a variety of fields, including politics, diplomacy, activism, the media and the private sector, with the goal

of superseding imagined cultural boundaries and increasing the exposure of African talent worldwide.

The continued growth of both film and media will allow Africans to share their perception of the myriad of cultures present within Africa, as well as their image of Africa as a whole. This increased cultural exchange will lead to a deeper global understanding of African issues and developments, as well as providing an accessible and effective forum for the promotion of Cultural Diplomacy between African nations and countries around the globe.

The Festival will give special emphasis to the following areas:

- The Rise of the African Film Industry: Social, Political and Economic Implications
- Film as an Educational Tool: A Visual Insight into Africa
- The Impact of New Communication Technologies in promoting African Development & Prosperity
- Media as an Essential Platform for Promoting Awareness of African Culture
- The Domestic and International Impact of a Growing African Mass Media Sector
- Strengthening Political, Economic & Social Ties Through an Increased African Media Presence
- Promoting Peace, Development and Prosperity Through Film & Art
- The Power of Film & Media as Uniting Mechanisms and Reconciliatory Tools in Africa
- Exploring New Opportunities to further Promote African Cinema Abroad
- Film & Media as Effective Tools for Cultural Diplomacy



The Berlin Annual African Film & Media Festival 2013

"Africa on Screen: Through the Eyes of Africa"

(Berlin, Germany; August 22nd - 25th, 2013)

In cooperation with:



BMW Berlin



**Embassy of the
Republic of Burundi
to the Federal Republic of Germany**



**The Embassy of
the Kingdom of Lesotho
in Berlin**



**Embassy of
The Kingdom of Morocco
to the Federal Republic of Germany**



**Embassy of
The Republic of Malawi
to the Federal Republic of Germany**



**Embassy of the Federal
Democratic Republic of
Ethiopia to Germany**



**Embassy of
The Republic of Mali
to the Federal Republic of Germany**



**Embassy of the
Republic of Ghana
to the Federal Republic of Germany**



**Embassy of The
Republic of South Africa
to the Federal Republic of Germany**



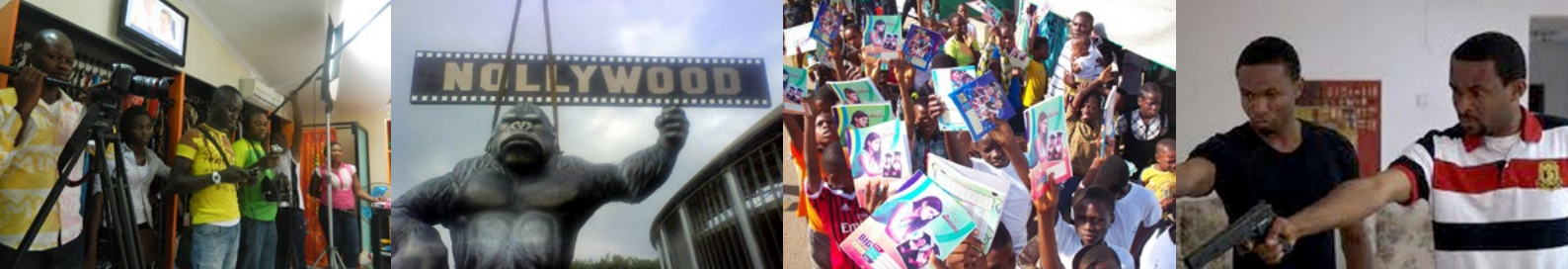
**Embassy of the
Republic of Rwanda
to the Federal Republic of Germany**



**Embassy of the
Republic of Kenya
to the Federal Republic of Germany**



**Embassy of
The Republic of Tunisia
to the Federal Republic of Germany**



The Berlin Annual African Film & Media Festival 2013

"Africa on Screen: Through the Eyes of Africa"

(Berlin, Germany; August 22nd - 25th, 2013)

History of African Film Industry

An Introduction

The rise of the African film industry can be traced back to the decolonization period of the continent. Despite the prior existence of such an industry under foreign rule, the African film industry did not reflect an accurate portrayal of the cultures it was intending to represent. Instead, the film industry was permeated by stereotypes and Africa was utilized merely as an "exotic" background for Western cinema. However, this underwent a significant change during the 1960s, when numerous African countries obtained their independence. This is especially true of the former French colonies, whose local filmmakers received technical and financial support from the French Ministry of Cooperation.

Spearheaded by individuals such as François Mitterrand, efforts to encourage the integration of African film production as a part of the

cultural, political and economic development of the continent were further strengthened in the 1980s. Also, as the vast majority of films made before the countries' decolonization were explicitly racist, many African directors who gained prominence post-independence, such as Ousmane Sembene and Oumarou Ganda, used the art of filmmaking as a political instrument in order to rightly restore their image which had been wrongly depicted by Westerners. Thus, African cinema came to strongly feature social and political themes and the neocolonial condition.

However, Africa is a vast continent and its countries and cultures have their own specific cultural, political and geographical backgrounds and elements that are uniquely expressed in a myriad of manners in their films.

Examples of Film Industries in Africa

To illustrate the rich variety among the African film industry, it is worth looking at a few examples.

South Africa

South-Africa, for instance, established itself as the financial and technological "superpower" of Africa in the final years of the 1990s (which marked the end of Apartheid rule), having overcome prior restrictions imposed on

international access and production. Also, the first African film to win an Academy Award for Foreign Language Film was Tsotsi (2006), a South-African production.

Nigeria

Another African nation that is boasting a rapidly growing international cinematic industry is Nigeria. 'Nollywood's' expansion is seeing the production of over 1000 films per year, albeit low-budgeted productions. This is reflected in the fact that the average cost of a Nollywood film is between \$25.000 and \$70.000, whereas the

average cost of a Hollywood movie is \$250mn. These films are generally geared towards the lower classes and poorer communities more than towards an international audience. This thriving industry holds much promise for the African film industry which is witnessing attempts to achieve greater autonomy from Western



The Berlin Annual African Film & Media Festival 2013

"Africa on Screen: Through the Eyes of Africa"

(Berlin, Germany; August 22nd - 25th, 2013)

financial support. The Nigerian film industry is indisputably diversifying its economy by creating jobs in a country that depends principally on oil and agriculture. The Nigerian film industry is

known to be the most popular on the African continent. The estimated annual revenue of Nollywood is \$590mn.

Egypt

The cinema of Egypt is part of the Arabic-spoken film industry, and is annually animated by the Cairo International Film Festival. Since 1896, more than 4000 films have been produced in

Egypt, which accounts for three quarters of the global Arab film production. Egypt occupies the position of one the biggest film producers of the Middle East.

Kenya

In the case of Kenya, the film industry is still relatively modest, and rather than fictional movies, Kenya mostly focuses on documentary films about the poor living conditions of the people in its cities. However, the country lacks the financial means required to produce wider scale films and pay professional actors. In response, the Kenyan government has made a strong effort to enable the Kenyan cinema to become an established and prosperous industry, with the creation of the Kenyan Film Commission in 2006 (under the Ministry of Information and Communication), whose goal

it is to raise international awareness about its developing industry with the aim of attracting potential investors. In addition, Nairobi now houses the Hot Sun Foundation, an organization dedicated to the discovery and cultivation of new young talent in poor areas which lack access to education and professional acting training. The internationally renowned film 'Out of Africa' (1985), portraying Kenya's colonial history, demonstrates the vast potential of the Kenyan film industry. In addition, the movie 'Nairobi Half Life' (2012) was nominated for the Best Foreign Language Film.

Algeria

In Algeria, during the era of French colonization, movies were predominately a propaganda instrument for the French colonial state. However, European domination of the means of cinematic production ended in the early days of the Algerian War, when several Algerian

nationalists from the National Liberation Army (ALN) obtained basic film-making equipment which they used to create four short programs. Along with decolonization and the Algerian War, the plight of urban youth is another common theme.

Morocco

In Morocco, cinema forms a considerable part of the economy as many foreign movies are shot in the beautiful landscapes of the country, such as in the Ouarzazate area. Furthermore, the country holds many festivals and events alike in the cinematographic industry. In 1944,

the Moroccan Cinematographic Center (CCM), the nation's film regulatory organization, was established. Studios were also opened in Rabat. In 2001, the first International Film Festival of Marrakech (FIFM) was held in Marrakech.



The Berlin Annual African Film & Media Festival 2013

"Africa on Screen: Through the Eyes of Africa"

(Berlin, Germany; August 22nd - 25th, 2013)

Somalia

In Somalia, the earliest forms of public film display in the country were Italian film-documentaries of key events during the colonial period. The first few Somali films and cinematic festivals emerged in the early 1960s, immediately after independence. Following the creation of the Somali Film Agency (SFA) regulatory body in 1975, the local film scene began to expand rapidly. In the 1990s and 2000s, a new wave of more entertainment-oriented movies emerged. Referred to as Somaliwood, this neophyte, youth-based cinematic movement has given

great momentum to the Somali film industry and contributes to the introduction of innovative storylines, marketing strategies and production techniques.

Evidently, each country is pursuing its own strategy at a different pace in order to establish its film industry on the world stage. Discussed above are just a few instances which exemplify the overall increased efforts of the development of the continental film industry.

The Potential of the African Film Industry

The African cinema industry acknowledges undeniably the need to develop its own way of making films, support their local initiatives, and invest in cinematic cultures such as films festivals. Although the African film industry does not currently attract the same levels of popularity claimed by the well-developed European and American industries, it has shown significant growth and progress in the beginning of the 21st century, a fact reflected in part by the creation of a Journal of African Cinema and African TV channels.

Such mediums act as awareness raising mechanisms and promote the diffusion of films, allowing the African film industry to attract genuine interest from the international community. The media and entertainment industries are registering above average growth in many African countries and are expected to grow at 5% GDP per capita up until 2015. Many countries such as Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa offer the great opportunities for content producers and distribution platforms for film,

television, digital media, mobile and other forms of entertainment.

Urbanization, young demographics, and the expanding and emerging middle-class are the success drivers for the industry and are likely to contribute to its rapid growth in the future. Perhaps one of Africa's greatest assets is its highly diverse cultural, historical and social composition. An ever-growing film industry, encouraged by increased investments and the abolition of censorship, will further add impetus to an already booming sector by allowing creative minds to harness this cultural capital. Furthermore, an expanded film industry translates into a flourishing labor market, providing new opportunities for young talent and thus helping to combat the global contemporary phenomenon of youth unemployment.

Thus, in the long term, investments in the film industry of Africa will aid African countries in their quest for the universal goal of sustainable development.





The Berlin Annual African Film & Media Festival 2013

*"Africa on Screen:
Through the Eyes of Africa"*

(Berlin, Germany; August 22nd - 25th, 2013)

icd

Institute for Cultural Diplomacy
Ku'damm Karree, Kurfürstendamm 207-208, D-10719 Berlin
Tel.: +49 (0) 30 2360 768 0
E-mail: info@culturaldiplomacy.org
Website: www.culturaldiplomacy.org