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Film Festival for Women
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(A project of Women Filmmakers of Zimbabwe)

NEWSLETTER #2

THE REAL FILMMAKERS, PLEASE STAND UP!

Tearing down the walls, building up the industry.
Zimbabwe Film Industry Development Platform (ZFIDP) chairperson, Anthony Mutambira said it is time for Zimbabwean filmmakers to stand up and be counted.

This was said at the first session of the Film Industry Forum, hosted by the International Images Film Festival, where filmmakers gathered to discuss a way forward. Mutambira said the country used to produce big productions between the years 1990 to 2000 to the late 2007 but after that most productions were low budget.

He said people in the film industry need to come together and break the barriers that have seen the film industry go down, adding that the media should also be there in the fight as it also affects them.

Government has not really done much, there is no ministry representing film. All the efforts to engage government have not been successful. The effort from the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ) is a welcome move, as the grants that are issued to the filmmakers work well for them, but will only take them to a certain stage. The film industry, in general, needs serious funding for it to grow, something which the government of Zimbabwe has not engaged in at all.

Cosmo Itayi Zengeya, one of the panellists said Zimbabwe needs more films schools, including refresher courses and workshops for those who are already in the industry. Zengeya went on to say that collaborations with other institutions, international organisations and film festivals from different parts of the world can also help boost the local film industry as they get to network with filmmakers from different places.

A topical issue during the discussion was the barrier posed by censorship from various arms of government. A lot of the filmmakers present highlighted the problems they have faced just to obtain the clearance to shoot their films.

During the open discussion session, three resolutions were passed and these are meant to improve relations both within the industry and also with policy-



Some of the Film Industry Forum's Day 1 attendees

makers and the law enforcers, who are some of the film industry's biggest challenges.

The first was for ZFIDP to engage the other film institutions in Zimbabwe and work on the formation of a shadow representative body that will allow the filmmakers to influence policy. After all fruitless efforts to engage government, this is the only way that will enable the industry to really grow.

The second was for information on the extent of police jurisdiction in terms of their engagement with film production. This information should be made available to young and upcoming filmmakers so that they may seek police clearance from an informed point of view.

The third was to promote a culture of crowd-funding within the local industry. This will kick off with a project suggested to Mutambira by IIFF guest, Kudzai Chimbaira.

ZFIDP was also asked to consider funding young filmmakers with registration fees for the Zimbabwe Media Commission, as a way of easing the challenge of acquiring clearance.

The Film Industry Forum continues on Tuesday 30 August, with the Zimbabwe Film and Festival Trust (ZIFFT) leading the forum's Day 2 discussions.

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African Women Filmmakers' Hub Inaugural Meeting
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HOUSE OF NWAPA: A FILMMAKER'S DREAM



Onyeka poses with a fan after 'House of Nwapa' screening

"HOUSE OF NWAPA" is Onyeka Nwelue's first documentary project. One could easily call this a passion project, a personal journey for the filmmaker to re-discover a lost relative. Onyeka Nwelue traces the life of Flora Nwapa, who is considered Africa's first female novelist to be published in the English language.

Onyeka Nwelue film comes at the right time as Flora's first novel "Efuru" will be fifty years old this year. "Efuru" is the female contemporary of the famed "Things Fall Apart", but not only that, Flora herself was Achebe's contemporary and best friend according to Onyeka.

CAPRI COMES TO FILM!

Watching films at IIFF is always a win-win situation, as you always get something out of the films, but this year IIFF has taken the winning a step further.

Enter Capri. There is nothing as beautiful as industry leaders coming together. Leaders in home appliances, Capri have joined hands with the film industry leaders IIFF and WFOZ by sponsoring audience prizes. During the festival, audiences will fill out raffle vouchers which they deposit at the film screening venues. At the end of the festival there is going to be a grand draw to pick out winners who will walk away with fantastic Capri products, chief among them a double door Capri fridge.

Well, watching films has always been cool, but whoever will win this fridge can definitely brag about chilling at the movies.

Not much has been said about Flora or her work, but with this film that is about to change. Flora was a powerful activist who did a lot for the women.

The documentary was two years in the making, taking the filmmaker from France to Sweden, to Norway to India, all across Nigeria, Ghana in search of the story of Nwapa. Nwelue faced a lot of challenges, as he did not have enough resources and not many people were open enough to talk about Flora.

IIFF 2016 had the privilege of premiering the film, which has not been shown anywhere else in the world, including its country of origin, Nigeria. The filmmaker Nwelue was present for the screening and had much to say in the Q and A session.

Zimbabwean filmmakers have a lot to learn from Nwelue's experience. We need to document and tell our stories. Nwelue's passion for his subject and his drive is a marvel to watch and those coming to IIFF must take a minute to meet and talk to this man.

Due to the current economic pinch, corporate bodies are freezing their social responsibility purses, but Capri - the best name in refrigeration, has unfrozen their pockets so to speak - don't pardon the pun, it's intended!

Still on winning, IIFF is conducting mini raffle draws during screenings and audience members get to walk away with various prizes: T-shirts, bags, USB flash drives and much more. We suppose we can now also say "If its winning, surely it's at IIFF".

To win at IIFF, visit any of the IIFF venues at Ster-Kinekor Borrowdale, Alliance Française, Stimulus Hub, Rutendo Hall in Mufakose and the National Gallery and stand a chance to win.

WHAT THE PEOPLE SAID

"This is great! IIFF bringing filmmakers together for such forums, I am happy we have made resolutions, for resolutions are a step towards implementation and action" - Donald Mabido, filmmaker, on Film Industry Forum

"As an aspiring filmmaker, its encouraging to be amongst senior peers in the industry. This motivates me even more in my desire to make good films. Being here I realise it's just not a dream, it's possible - it can be done" - Vimbai Taiya

"Its interesting watching all these films with such a strong focus on women" - Viola Milton, visiting academic