



That's a wrap! Film Africa 2015 comes to a close
60+ films. 27 countries. 10 days. 10 cinemas. 2 Awards. Live Music, Events & More.

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Film Africa 2015, the Royal African Society's annual 10-day film festival, drew to a close on Sunday, 8 November, with the UK Premiere of Lyès Salem's epic historical drama, *The Man from Oran*, followed by a Q&A with the director.

Celebrating its 5th anniversary, this year's edition of Film Africa screened over 60 titles from 27 African countries, representing the breadth and depth of filmmaking talent in the continent and the diaspora.

With sold out screenings and events, Film Africa 2015 was yet another success and featured numerous highlights, including an appearance from internationally renowned British actor, **Idris Elba**, who dropped by the Hackney Picturehouse to introduce the festival screening of *Mandela, My Dad and Me* - an intimate feature-length documentary, which he produced and starred in. During his visit, Elba stated:

"I want to thank Film Africa for supporting my film and African film in general. The festival should keep introducing us to new African cinema."

Over the last 5 years, Film Africa has programmed over 350 African films and attracted a total of 16,000 attendees, providing extended film choice to diverse London audiences and placing African cinema firmly on the capital's cultural map.

Beyond the screenings and events, the festival also works to support African filmmakers through the annual Baobab Award for Best Short Film, selected by a rotating jury of African filmmakers and film industry figures.

Vying for the £1,000 cash prize against 11 other titles, Sélim Gribâa's *The Purple House* was announced the winner of the 5th Baobab Award on the Closing Night Gala. Tunisian director Sélim Gribâa said:

"Receiving this award is a great honour for me. I wanted to show in the film the universal values that have claimed the Tunisian revolution. This award goes straight to my heart!"

This year Film Africa also introduced a new audience award, supported by the African Union Foundation, and consisting of a £1,500 cash prize. For the first edition of the AUF Audience for Best Feature Film, festival goers recognised the courage and beauty of *Stories of our Lives*, a collection of short stories based on true experiences within Kenya's LGBTI community, produced and directed by the Nest Collective. Director Jim Chuchu, from the Nest Collective, said:

"This film was a labour of love for us, and every one of the over 250 stories we collected for the Stories of Our Lives project was an incredible gift. So we'd like to thank everyone who shared themselves with us, and walked this road with us this far. We want to thank our incredible actors, with their grace, and strength, and beautiful souls, and incredible talent. We love them so much, and this award



is theirs as well. We also want to send love to the audience, who were so warm and wonderful, for sparing an hour to watch our little collection of Kenyan queer love stories.”

Another new initiative launched this year was the artwork competition through which the festival found the lead image to grace all Film Africa 2015 publicity materials. Aimed at supporting emerging visual artists, this year’s competition was won by Paris-based Eritrean artist, Daniela Yohannes, through a public vote on social media. On having her artwork selected, Daniela Yohannes said:

“Film Africa is such an important platform for African creatives and African cinema. I consider it a great opportunity to have been able to produce the publicity artwork for the festival. It’s wonderful to think that it could bring me a new audience from Africa - one which I wish to engage with.”

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Notes to Editors

- **The Royal African Society** is a membership organisation that fosters a better understanding of Africa in the UK and throughout the world. Our goal is to promote Africa globally in the spheres of business, politics, academia, arts and culture. We disseminate knowledge and insight to make a positive difference to Africa’s development and celebrate the diversity and depth of African cultures.
- **Film Africa 2015 took place at the following venues:** Hackney Picturehouse, Ritzy Brixton, BFI Southbank, Ciné Lumière, The British Library, Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), The South London Gallery, Rich Mix, SOAS – University of London, and University of Westminster.
- **Film Africa 2015 supporters and sponsors** included: The African Union Foundation, BFI Film Festival Fund, Miles Morland Foundation, Ethiopian Airlines, MOFILM, the Centre for African Studies, Brockmans, Aduna, SABMiller and Divine Chocolate.
- **The African Union Foundation** is an institution emerging from the African Union established as part of promoting domestic resource mobilisation for African development. The Foundation promotes programmes in human resources and skills development, youth development, the empowerment of women and the management of diversity and integration. It also mobilizes resources for the programme budget of the AU Commission, and works in support of Agenda 2063, the AU’s 50 year mission to establish ‘the Africa we want’.
- **MOFILM** has built a privately held, creative crowdsourcing platform for filmmakers to develop their careers by connecting them with iconic brands. It’s headquartered in London with offices in Los Angeles, Bangalore, Mexico City, Beijing, Sao Paulo and Sydney.
- **Sélim Gribâa** is a Tunisian filmmaker who also teaches video and photography at the Higher Institute of Fine Arts in Tunisia. Gribâa started his own production company in 2010 and in 2012, he self-financed and directed his first documentary, *A Feather in the Wind*. *The Purple House* is his first short film.
- **Jim Chuchu** is a visual artist, filmmaker and musician from Nairobi, Kenya. He is also co-founder and Creative Director at [the NEST](#) - a multidisciplinary art space in Nairobi - and a member of the NEST Collective.
- **Daniela Yohannes** is a visual artist hailing from Eritrea, raised in Italy and educated in England. After completing an Illustration degree and working within the field, Daniela decided to make the transition from digital to material canvases in 2010. She has since had solo and group exhibitions and held residencies across the world. Daniela is currently working on new works from her Paris studio.