



BROUGHT TO YOU  
BY  
THE ROYAL  
AFRICAN SOCIETY  
30 OCT - 8 NOV 2020



## Nigerian film exploring postpartum depression wins Film Africa 2020 Audience Award

London, Thursday 12 November 2020

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Film Africa, London's biggest celebration of African and African diaspora cinema presented by the Royal African Society, returned for its 9<sup>th</sup> edition from **Friday 30 October to Sunday 8 November 2020**. Thousands of people attended socially-distanced screenings at the BFI Southbank and Rich Mix, watched films on the BFI Player and joined our Online Watch Parties, Dine & View Screenings, panels and masterclasses. The festival showcased **45 titles** from **14 African countries**, including **25 UK, European and World premieres**, with 50% of this year's films being directed by women.

Winning this year's **Audience Award** was *For Maria Egun Pataki*, the debut feature tackling postpartum depression, from Nigerian screenwriter and film director Damilola Orimogunje. You can watch a Director's Q&A with Damilola [here](#).

Damilola said: "I would like to thank everyone at Film Africa, for a warm and lovely festival despite the current madness in the world. To everyone that voted, you've blessed us greatly with this gift. To everyone that's been part of the project from inception till now, thank you for embarking on this crazy journey with me. I would like to dedicate this award to everyone that's suffered postpartum depression, this film is a representation of you and I hope it becomes light to you and everyone who will find themselves experiencing it."



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In addition to the Audience Award, the festival once again presented a programme of innovative shorts in competition for the annual **Baobab Award for Best Short Film**, judged by a panel of industry experts. This year's award went to Egyptian debut film director Morad Mostafa for his film *Henet Ward*, which offers an emphatic look into the experiences of Sudanese refugees in Egypt. You can watch an online conversation with Morad and jury member Gakuru Gachoki [here](#).

Film Africa is delighted to be partnering for the first time with Leeds International Film Festival to host two shorts programmes featuring the 10 titles nominated for this year's Baobab Award for Best Short Film. This year's nominated shorts will be available for viewing online on the Leeds Film Player [leedsfilm.com/](https://leedsfilm.com/) until 19 November.

Audiences can continue to enjoy the festival for a little longer with the BFI Player extending the availability of the Film Africa Collection until 30 November. There is also a wonderful selection of online Director's Q&A's, panel discussions and a masterclass available to watch on the Film Africa Facebook page [facebook.com/FilmAfricaUK](https://facebook.com/FilmAfricaUK) including the BSL-interpreted **Here / Not Here** cast and crew panel discussion in partnership with Deaffest and BSL Zone.

Film Africa 2020 has been made possible thanks to the support of the BFI Audience Fund, awarding funds from the National Lottery, and the Miles Morland Foundation.

For more information about Film Africa, visit [filmafrica.org](https://filmafrica.org).

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### Notes to Editors

1. **The Royal African Society** is a membership organisation that provides opportunities for people to connect, celebrate and engage critically with a wide range of topics and ideas about Africa today. Through our events, publications and digital channels we share insight, instigate debate and facilitate mutual understanding between the UK and Africa. We amplify African voices and interests in academia, business, politics, the arts and education, reaching a network of more than one million people globally. Join as a member today [royalafricansociety.org/join-us](https://royalafricansociety.org/join-us).
2. **Film Africa** is the Royal African Society's biennial festival celebrating the best contemporary cinema from Africa and its diaspora. Established in 2011, the festival offers a respected platform for African film and increased film choice for London audiences.
3. **BFI Player** <https://player.bfi.org.uk/> is the greatest global cinema on demand; the go-to destination for all film lovers in the UK, that offers a different type of streaming experience. There are brand new releases to watch on rental and a subscription service expertly curated by BFI programmers and special guests, offering classic and cult films. Recent collections include selections by Tilda Swinton and Bong Joon Ho and a huge range of Japanese cinema in JAPAN2020. Also available, completely free for anyone to view, are films and collections from the BFI National Archive and regional archives, including 120 years of



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BRITAIN ON FILM. BFI Player is accessible through the BFI website and through a range of video platforms, including Amazon Prime Video and Apple TV.

4. The **Miles Morland Foundation** is a London-based registered charity, which makes grants in areas reflecting its founder's interests. The Foundation's main aim is to support entities in Africa, which allow Africans to get their voices better heard with a particular focus on contemporary African writing. The Foundation awards a small number of annual writing scholarships for works of fiction and non-fiction. The scholars receive £18,000.00 paid over the course of a year.
5. The **BFI Audience Fund** invests £5.6m of National Lottery funding each year to expand access and encourage greater enjoyment of cinema by connecting audiences with great films - in venues, at events and online. We do this by supporting:
  - a. leading exhibition organisations, including film festivals, to deliver culturally rich and nationally significant programmes and events on a year-round basis
  - b. projects which help exhibitors and distributors bring the best of UK and international cinema to audiences across the UK through events, distribution releases, multiplatform distribution proposals, touring film programmes and more
  - c. initiatives that address under-representation and are innovating audience development [bfi.org.uk/audience-fund](http://bfi.org.uk/audience-fund)
6. The **National Lottery** Thanks to National Lottery players, up to £600 million of funding has been made available to support communities across the UK during the Coronavirus crisis. The National Lottery is playing a critical role in supporting people, projects and communities during these challenging times. By playing The National Lottery, you are making an amazing contribution to the nationwide-response to combatting the impact of COVID-19 on local communities across the UK.