

SYDNEY AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL 2008

26TH – 28TH SEPTEMBER 2008



FRIDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER

Opening Night – tickets \$30:

6pm arrivals for 7pm start

The evening will feature photographic exhibition by Hamish Gregory while on location in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia, as well as live African music and complimentary drinks.

A Walk to Beautiful (Ethiopia, 2007, 85mins)

A Walk to Beautiful Tells the story of five Ethiopian women who suffer from devastating childbirth injuries and make the journey to reclaim their lost dignity. Rejected by their husbands and ostracised by their communities, these women are left to spend the rest of their lives in loneliness and shame. The trials they endure – and their attempts to rebuild their lives – tell a universal story of hope, courage and transformation.

Ayehu, Almaz, Zewdie, Yenenesh and Wubete suffered through prolonged, unrelieved obstructed labour in a country with few hospitals and even fewer roads to get to them. Although they survived the often-fatal childbirth experience, they were left with a stillborn baby and feeling, as Ayehu tells us, that "even death would be better than this." The obstructed labour has left each of them incontinent. We discover Ayehu, 25, living in a makeshift shack behind her mother's house where she has hidden for four years, shunned by siblings and neighbours alike. She hesitantly begins her journey on foot, but once she arrives at the Fistula Hospital in Addis Ababa, she realizes for the first time that she isn't the only person in the world suffering from this problem. At the hospital we meet Almaz, a woman also in her 20s who was abducted by her now-husband in a village market and has suffered from double fistula for three years.

[Purchase ticket -](#)

For more information regarding films, event or interviews and images please contact:

Sarah Lally – Sydney African Film Festival Organiser 0412 931 345 sarah.lally@handsofhelp.org

SATURDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER

3pm Cinema 1

Tickets \$18

Who's Gonna Take The Weight? (US/South Africa, 1997, 55 min)

This provocative documentary blends interviews with young black people in New York City and in Soweto, South Africa, focusing on the similarities and the contrasts between the lives of black teenagers in both countries. At a time when President Clinton has announced an Initiative on Race Relations in America when the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is hold hearings in South Africa, this video presents timely reflections from black youth on both continents on pressing racial matters. The video features fast paced editing, eye-catching graphics and the music of Tupac Shakur and Bayete, a popular South African ensemble, which are designed to make the video especially appealing for young viewers.

Where are They Now? (US/South Africa, 2001, 55mins)

In this upcoming sequel, we meet again with the unforgettable youth from *Who's Gonna Take The Weight?* Now twenty-somethings, they have gone on to pursue higher education, start families, join the workforce, and even the military. This production comments forcefully on the shifting social and political landscapes in South Africa and the United States. Keeping to its urban origins, the follow-up production recreates the edgy attitude that prevailed in the original documentary.

[Purchase tickets –](#)

3pm Cinema 2

Tickets \$18

Story A Beautiful Country (South Africa, 2004, 73mins)

Story of a Beautiful Country is the journey of Khalo Matabane, a young black filmmaker in search of his "new country," the promised land — the new South Africa. Matabane, travelling with a hand-held camera throughout nine provinces of his country, films entirely from the seat of a mini-bus taxi, capturing the physical beauty of a still troubled land. The taxi also serves as an open forum for ordinary people to talk about their feelings and impressions of the new South Africa, which broke away from apartheid in 1994. Following the format of talk radio, a national obsession, topics range over controversial issues such as land, race, language, globalization, democracy, identity, and violence.

[Purchase tickets –](#)

5:15pm Cinema 1

Tickets \$18

War/Dance (Uganda, 2007, 105mins)

An academy award nominee from the Sun Dance Film Festival, *War/Dance* is a feature documentary following the children from Patongo Primary School on their personal and musical journey as they travel from their refugee camp in Patongo to Kampala, to compete in National Music Competition. The children in the film are children of the long civil war in the North of Uganda. The war has stolen their homes, parents and childhood.

[Purchase tickets –](#)

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SUNDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER

3pm Cinema 1

Tickets \$18

3 Peaks, 3 Weeks (USA, 2007, 52mins)

In January 2007, a team of ten women from Australia and the United States met in the heart of East Africa to take on three of Africa's tallest peaks in an effort to assist in the fight against poverty. The team did more than just climb – they struggled for over two years prior to raise money and awareness for three peak issues affecting Africa today; HIV/AIDS, education and the environment. Though the hard work was complete, the mountains still loomed in the distance. Rush HD made it possible for Serac Adventure Films to trek with the team capturing each struggle, tear and hardship. They documented the incredible women as each put her heart and soul into every step. And even more importantly, they documented the individuals who were directly impacted by the challenge.

One of the ten women from the 3 Peaks team will be at the festival for the screening of this movie and will be talking about their experience after the documentary!

[Purchase Tickets -](#)

5:15pm Cinema 1

Tickets \$18

Iron Ladies of Liberia (Liberia, 2007, 77mins)

After fourteen years of civil war, Liberia is a nation ready for change. On January 16, 2006, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was inaugurated President, following a hotly contested election which she won with the overwhelming support of women across Liberia. She is the first elected female head of state in Africa. Since taking office she has appointed other extraordinary women to leadership positions in all areas of government, including the Police Chief and the ministers of Justice, Commerce and Finance. Can the first female Liberian president, backed by other powerful women, bring sustainable democracy and peace to such a devastated country? Iron Ladies of Liberia gives behind-the-scenes access to President Sirleaf's first year in government, providing a unique insight into the workings of a newly elected African cabinet.

[Purchase tickets -](#)

Tickets available from www.iwannaticket.com.au



Anyone who attends the festival will be helping Hands of Help achieve their goal of building equality in communities of Uganda and Kenya with ALL money raised from the festival going directly to the projects.

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