WOMEN VISUALIZING AFRICA FILM SERIES

A Film Series at the University of Michigan

This film series highlights poetic images produced by African women filmmakers. Throughout Africa, women have emerged from the double oppression of patriarchy and colonialism. As producers, directors, actresses, scriptwriters, financiers, promoters, marketers and distributors of film, television, and video, they have become the unsung heroines of the moving image in postcolonial Africa. Unfortunately, these immense contributions by women are underrepresented, both in industry debates and in academic research. There are now many cases in which African women in front of and behind the camera lens have overcome social barriers, yet this is often overlooked.

Organizers: Professor Frieda Ekotto (Afroamerican and African Studies and Comparative Literature) and Marie Stell, PhD Candidate (Romance Languages and Literatures)

Free and Open to the Public

All of these films will be shown at
2435 North Quad (4-6 pm), 105 South State Street.
Q&A with the filmmakers will follow each film.

Tuesday January 10, 2012

Documentary: *Paris mon Paradis* (Paris my Paradise, 2011) directed by Eléonore Yameogo (Burkinabé)

This documentary is about how the myths of return and of Eldorado keep revealing the influx and suffering of the African migrants in the Occident. In the quest for "salvation" and wealth, Africans are quite regularly heading to the West, their dyadic Eldorado. Their dream has to come true once they set foot in the Eldorado. Shame haunts those who fail to share their "good fortune" or who go back empty-handed without living up to that myth, that golden image of Paris. Yet reality is ruthless. The lives of the African immigrants in Paris are generally tireless struggles. French w/ English subtitles.

Monday January 23, 2012

Film: *Notre étrangère* (The Place in Between, 2010) written and directed by Sarah Bouyain (Franco-Burkinabé)

This feature length film is the second one by a woman from Burkina Faso. Mariam, a mixed race, returns to Bobo in Burkina Faso to visit her mother whom she has been separated from since she was 8. Upon arrival, she only finds her aunt there, and the family house is both crowded and reassuring in a town where she has no more landmarks. Mariam, a 45-year-old Burkinafée, has been clearing households in Paris for many years; she is only a fugitive shade that slides to life's edge. French w/ English subtitles.

Tuesday January 24, 2012

Documentary: *Les enfants du blanc* (Children of the White Man) (Burkina Faso/France, 2001) written and directed by Sarah Bouyain

Through the discovery of her family's history, Sarah unveils the hidden history of these half devil/half god mixed-race children born from abused African mothers and, as it is written on their birth certificate, "legally unknown (white) fathers." French w/ English subtitles.

Tuesday February 14, 2012

Documentary: *La femme invisible* (The Invisible Woman) (Franco-Cameroonian, 2009) directed by Jihan El-Tahri

From 1961 to 1991, the Dark Continent was a battleground for four different competing interests. From Che Guevara's efforts in the Congo to the triumphant battle at Cuba Cusacavale, Cuba: An African Odyssey tells the story of those internationalists who won their battles but ultimately lost the War. French w/ English subtitles.

Tuesday March 6, 2012

Documentary: *The Witches of Gambaga* (Ghana/UK, 2010) directed by Yaba Badoe

This documentary deals with a community of women outlawed from society. Accused of witchcraft, they decide to talk about their condition as victims of a wide range of horrendous abuses, which many women are subjected to in the African context. French w/ English subtitles. For more information on the film and Bado visit http://www.witchesofgambaga.com/about/.

Tuesday April 10, 2012 • Double Feature

Documentary: *La femme invisible* (The Invisible Woman) (Franco-Cameroonian, 2009)

Film: *Calypso at Dirty Jim’s* (Franco-Cameroonian, 2010)

Both films were directed by Pascale Obolo.

La femme invisible is a six-minute poetic tale about how African women are invisible in the city of Paris. Calypso is the soul of Trinidad. For the past three centuries, Calypso storytellers have been the "Chantwell" of the Creole world. While improving and resisting any kind of censorship, the calypsonians tell stories of slavery, freedom, war and everyday life through their poetry. Calypso emphasizes love, along with a high dose of humor and sex. With captivating melodies and timeless hits, their rhythms free the bodies of the audience who sing with them the joy and drama of the journey of these Caribbean nations. Calypso at Dirty Jim’s tells the story of with a gathering of this generation of artists in the heart of the Calypso City and on stage at the infamous "Dirty Jim’s Salutete Club" in Trinidad. French w/ English subtitles.