

In the past few years the Nigerian video production industry has caused great astonishment and fascination around the world. A confluence of factors – the collapse in the exchange rate which made it unviable to import 35mm film, the wide-spread presence of low-cost VCRs, and the entrepreneurial spirit of Nigeria – sparked what is commonly referred to as the straight-to-video model. Eschewing 35mm production an incredibly successful industry has been built around the production of videos. Operating on miniscule budgets by conventional filmmaking standards, Nigerian producers and directors churn out vast numbers (around 1000 per year) of films which go on to sell hundreds of thousands of copies.

The Nigerian phenomenon has not gone unnoticed in Africa; Ghana, notably, and more recently Kenya, have also followed this trend. As a distribution model the making of videos offers a relatively low-risk opportunity for filmmakers, and this presents an intriguing option for developing countries in particular.

What relevance the Nigerian model has in the South African context is explored, as it was at DIFF 2002, in a seminar entitled “The Nigerian Distribution Model – Reclaiming the Marketplace” on 23rd June at DIT Department of Journalism. Meanwhile, experienced Nigerian producer/director Francis Onwochei will present a selection of films during the festival that exemplify some of the trends in Nollywood.

DANGEROUS TWINS

Nigeria 2004 English, video, 157 min
Director: Tade Ogidan

Identical twin brothers Taiye and Kehinde, try to help each other but end up sworn enemies in this emotion-filled epic. A dramatic and inventive representation of the classic brother-against-brother tale. 17-ST 12h00; 23-K 18h00



order to recover his wealth. The film examines inherent weaknesses in character and takes this as its point of departure. 23-ST 16h00; 24-K 18h00

MISSING CROWN

Nigeria 2003, English, video, 120 min
Director: Charles Awurum

You will never be able to determine a man’s true character until he tastes wealth and power. Here we meet a man who schemed his way to power, but is destined to head the way of all power-hungry men who lose control. A fascinating look at one man’s fall from power. 15-CL 18h00; 19-K 12h00



SAVING ALERO

Nigeria 2001, English, video, 110 min
Director: Francis Onwochei

Alero sacrifices her career to devote herself to her husband, Nduka. When Nduka is accidentally killed in a quarrel with his wife, his family kidnaps Alero and takes her to the village where she must face an agonising mourning ritual. The ensuing drama that follows demonstrates the conflicts and contradictions between tradition and modernity. 22-K 18h00; 25-ST 14h00



TIME TO KILL

Nigeria 2001 English, Video, 110 min
Director: Zik Okafor

A man who commits rape pleads to be hanged as he is plagued by a continued desire to commit this heinous crime. The legacy of shame has become unbearable for him and only death will redeem him. An unusual and riveting exploration of a subject that remains hugely topical in current society. 22-ST 16h00

RAGING STORM

Nigeria 1998, English, video, 87 min
Director: Francis Onwochei

This thriller exposes the pitfalls of the get-rich-quick syndrome. A young man who has everything going for him gets involved with gambling and then with a cult that insists that he commit incest in



FRANCIS ONWOCHIEI began his career in 1985 as an actor at the National Arts Theatre in Lagos. Since 1990 he has been working in the newly created film scene in Lagos and has produced the feature films *Raging Storm* (1998), *Final Onslaught* (1998), *Tansi* (1999) and *Saving Alero* (2000) among others. He has also directed several TV series, film reports and commercials. He is currently general secretary of Independent Television Producers Association of Nigeria (ITPAN) and general director of Frankochei Productions Limited, a film and television company in Lagos.



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF THE DURBAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

on view at Kwa Muhle Museum,
 130 Ordnance Road
 from 9 June 2004
Enquiries: 311 2223

