

5TH ANNUAL MPENZI

BLACK WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL®

ONE NIGHT, MANY JOURNEYS
FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2009
RECEPTION 5:30
PROGRAM 6:30 – 9:00

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
MEDICAL SCIENCES
BUILDING AUDITORIUM
1 KING'S COLLEGE CIRCLE

TORONTO, ON--March 17, 2009

One Night Many Journeys: film and video fest mixes love & sexuality, beauty, role-play, history and bravery into jubilation... *in the Black*

On Friday, March 27th, *MPENZI*: Black Women's International Film and Video Festival® turns 5 and boasts five provocative premiere films and videos in celebration.

"This festival creates a forum for stories that often go untold in more mainstream film festivals," says Adonica Huggins, local activist and *MPENZI* festival founder and program director. "Our mission is to identify, screen and promote works from established and emerging directors, producers and writers from Black Straight, Lesbian, Bisexual, Queer or Questioning women, and Transgendered, Transsexual and Intersexed women and men", says Huggins. *MPENZI* is a Swahili word with many English translations the essence of which is 'one who loves' and 'one who is loved.'

Alongside the films and videos, *MPENZI*'s legendary *FilmTalk* panel Q&A featuring special guest moderator **Trey Anthony**, executive producer, co-creator and writer of the Gemini award-winning series *'da Kink in my hair*, is also part of *MPENZI*'s 5th year anniversary.

This year's five screenings are *Jay Dreams (USA)* by Trans writer Jai Brooks and described as "a slice of Black Baltimore Lesbian life" delving into the ins and outs of Dom-Fem culture; *Hairstory: A Loc Doc (CAN)* by Toronto director Laurie Townshend who takes viewers through to the climactic moment of that first cut; *Inkanyezi Yobusuku*, English title *Night Star (South Africa)*, directed by Kekeletso Khena—a tale of dreams, womanhood and menstruation; *I Love You (CAN)* directed by Sabrina Moella puts lovers in the ultimate test space and director Grace Channer in *But Some Are Brave (CAN)*, *MPENZI*'s first paint-on-glass animation, weaves a tale of suffering, survival and rebirth effortlessly on screen.

MPENZI's growth over the years has been phenomenal and largely in part due to the dedication of many community partners. "In particular, we are proud to announce this year marks the first ever *What We Create: Filmmaker Conversations & Workshops* organized by the *Women & Gender Studies Institute (WGSi) at the University of Toronto* in partnership with *MPENZI*," says Huggins. "It is collaborations like these that fuel the creative breadth of *MPENZI*." Moderated by former CBC counterSpin and ZeDtv host **Sharon Lewis**, who is also an acclaimed actor and director, *What We Create: Filmmaker Conversations & Workshops* takes place on Friday March 27, 12:30- 4:00pm at the Women & Gender Studies Institute (WGSi) Lounge (20 Willcocks St. 2nd Floor).

For more on the *MPENZI* festival and WGSi's *What We Create* visit www.mpenzi.ca and www.utoronto.ca/wgsi. The festival is wheelchair accessible.

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Media Accreditation/Interviews

JAM Productions, media@mpenzi.ca Cc: info@jillandrewmedia.com, 416-540-6659

Stills, photos, complete film and videomaker bios available at www.mpenzi.ca.

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