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- Entertainment
- Features
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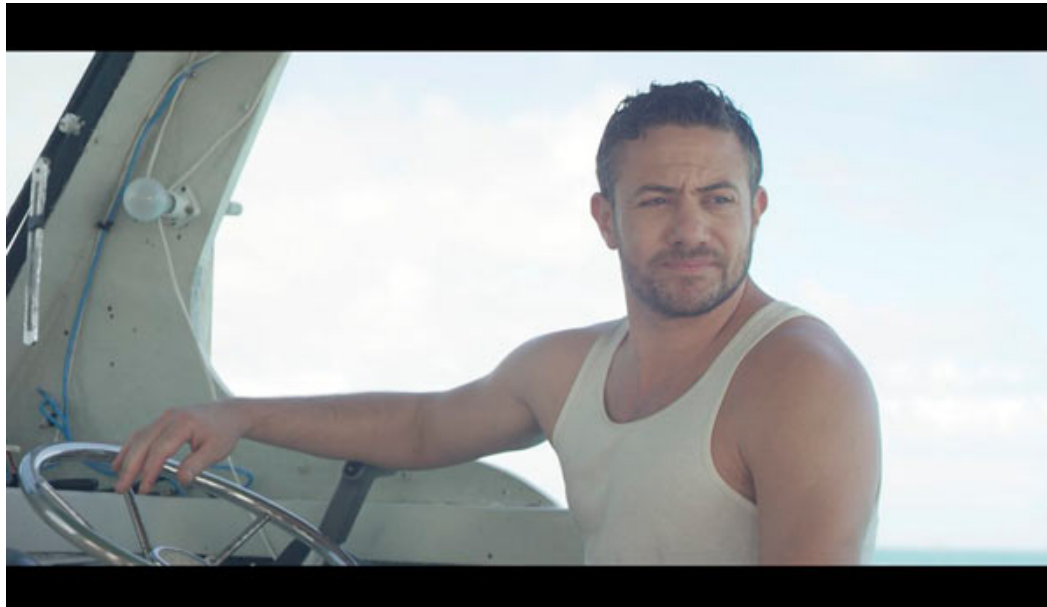


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[October 19, 2017](#) / [Arts & Entertainment](#) / [Movies](#)

Amnesty International awards Bahamamian film

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Cargo

Filmmaker Kareem Mortimer's film "Cargo" was awarded with the Amnesty International Human Rights Prize at the Trinidad and Tobago film festival. In the film, one of the main characters commits to smuggling Haitian migrants for a living.

By **Alexandra Simon**

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A recognition for a crisis in the Caribbean.

The Trinidadian and Tobago Film Festival came to a close last week and the Amnesty International Human Rights Prize went to "Cargo," a Bahamian film about the Haitian migration crisis. Its filmmaker Kareem Mortimer was thrilled at the honor and said his project speaks to a larger story to tell.

"It feels incredible and not even for me, but for the film — because it's important for films to raise awareness about things that are important for us and our community," he said.



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Although he was not one of the deciding judges for his award, he has an idea as to why his film stood out among others and the type of message it brought to the light.

"I think all over the world there's a sort of a migration crisis happening and a type of language we use for migrants and sources, and this is happening all over the Caribbean, Africa, Europe —

and it's a global topic," said Mortimer.

The film 'Cargo' is based in The Bahamas and highlights the issues surrounding Haitian migration to the island and the United States. In the film, two characters battle between doing what they believe in, and doing what they think is right. And the issues it explores expands beyond the Caribbean, added Mortimer.

"I think the specificity of 'Cargo' being a Bahamian film and its universal appeal maybe why the judges chose it," he said.

He recalled being a child and seeing the bodies of Haitian migrants brought by waves to beaches in The Bahamas all over local news, and that imagery stuck with him even into adulthood and eventually inspiring this film.

"The crisis has been happening for a long time. I grew up in The Bahamas and I remember the first time I saw a dead body and it was a news footage of bodies ashore," said Mortimer. "A lot of those bodies had to be buried in mass graves and there was no one there to claim them, and it was a shocking experience for me at nine years old."

Mortimer said the moral of the film forces people to question their thought process when it comes to humanitarian issues.

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Cargo

Actress Persia White, left, in "Cargo."

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The film has two protagonists and it begs the question, "What are you willing to do to provide a better life for people and are you willing to abandon your morals for it?," he said.

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