

Repeating Islands

September 11, 2017

Caribbean Filmmakers recognised for human rights



The importance of film as a vehicle for raising awareness about human rights issues and advancing inclusion and social justice, will once again be highlighted at the trinidad+tobago film festival through the awarding of the Amnesty International Human Rights Film Prize.

Established in an effort to support the promotion of human rights in Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean, the Amnesty International Human Rights Prize will be awarded to a Caribbean filmmaker whose film best highlights a human rights issue.

The winning film will be chosen by a three-person jury, which this year comprises Gregory Sloane-Seale, National Coordinator, Citizen Security Programme in the Ministry of National Security; Dr Gabrielle Hosein, Head of Department and lecturer, Institute for Gender and Development Studies, at The University of the West Indies, and Pamela Carmona, Regional Youth and Activism Coordinator at the, Amnesty International Americas Regional Office, in Mexico.



The films in competition are:

Cargo – Kareem Mortimer, The Bahamas

Kevin owns a battered boat, but a living from fishing won't keep him afloat. Desperate, he puts his boat to another use: transporting equally desperate Haitians from the Bahamas on their way to enter the US illegally. He's taken risks before — this time he must pull off the biggest one of all.

Entre 2 Rives: De Saint-Domingue à Pointe-à-Pitre – Mariette Monpierre, Guadeloupe

A chronicle of the struggle of two Dominican women, who left everything behind, including their own children, to move to Guadeloupe in hope of a better life. More than ten years later, they still fight everyday to bring their children across to their new home. Two women, two shores, one dream.

Jeffrey – Yanillys Perez, Dominican Republic

Twelve-year-old Jeffrey's mother wakes him not for school but to clean windshields in traffic to pay the rent, as he's done for 6 years. His older brother sings reggaeton, and – anxious to break free of their crushing poverty – he hopes to follow suit as "Jeffrey the Nightmare".

In addition to receiving a trophy, the winning filmmaker will also be given a cash prize of TT\$5000.

According to Annabelle Alcazar, programme director of the tfff: "Films have the power to give voice to those most affected by injustice, and to inspire individuals and communities to stand up and speak out against injustices such as racism, sexism, LGBT discrimination, poverty, broken justice systems and other issues that impact communities and suppress the notion of democracy for all."



Pamela Carmona, at Amnesty International Americas Regional Office, in Mexico, added: “Caribbean filmmakers have been fearless in crafting powerful stories of human struggle, sacrifice and triumph – reaching across cultures and countries, transcending language barriers to speak eloquently on the issues of human rights and social justice. As long as human rights violations exist, there will always be a need for such films, and this prize is our way of acknowledging the important work being done by filmmakers and activists in the Caribbean region.

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than three million members, supporters and activists in over 150 countries and territories. The organisation exposes human rights violations and campaigns for their full enjoyment for everyone around the world. It is independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion, and is funded mainly by its membership and public donations.

The trinidad+tobago film festival (ttff) celebrates films from and about the Caribbean and its diaspora, as well as from world cinema, through an annual festival and year-round screenings. In addition, the ttff seeks to facilitate the growth of Caribbean cinema by offering a wide-ranging industry programme and networking opportunities. The ttff is presented by Flow; given leading sponsorship by BP Trinidad and Tobago and the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts; supporting sponsorship by the Inter-American Development Bank and UN Women; and contributing sponsorship from RBC Royal Bank.

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