

▶ FESTIVALS

BEST OF THE FESTIVALS
FOR AFRICAN MUSICMONTREUX JAZZ
FESTIVAL

1-16 JULY, MONTREUX, SWITZERLAND
A fortnight-long celebration of jazz and world music, this festival attracts headline acts from across the world. On the bill alongside Santana, Sting and B.B. King will be Senegalese Mbalax legend Youssou N'Dour, Nigerian/French singer Asa, Ivorian reggae star Alpha Blondy and Femi Kuti with his 21st-century brand of Afrobeat.

WOMAD CHARLTON
PARK 28-31 JULY,
WILTSHIRE, UK

DENIS BALBOISE/REUTERS

After touring New Zealand, Abu Dhabi and Spain, the World of Music, Arts and Dance (WOMAD) festival that Peter Gabriel started in 1982 returns for its annual visit to the British countryside. African acts already announced are Senegal's Baaba Maal and South Africa's Nomfusi & The Lucky Charms.

BAIA DAS GATAS FESTIVAL 2011
5-7 AUGUST, SÃO VINCENTE, CAPE VERDE
10km east of Mindelo, the home of Cesaria Evora, the beach of Baía das Gatas will play host to a mix of local and international artists.

▶ FILM

Africa First Showcasing shorts

Focus Features' funding programme gives young African film-makers the chance of a jump start

Focus Features has released the first DVD of short films made by winners of its Africa First funding programme. Now in its fourth year, the programme by the New York-based producer of *Brokeback Mountain* and *Atonement* awards \$10,000 each to up to five African short film projects to use on pre-production, production or post-production.

Proof of the pudding is in the watching. The films completed through the first year of the programme are already winning international recognition. Sci-fi thriller *Pumzi* by Kenyan director Wanuri Kahiu won the Best Short Film award at the 2010 Cannes Independent Film Festival, and *The Abyss Boys*, by South African Jan-Hendrik Beetzge,



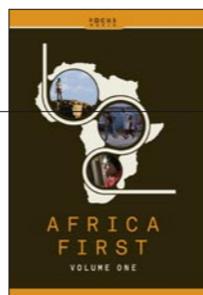
MARK WESSELS

Pumzi imagines a dystopian world torn apart by water wars

won the Best Short Film at the 2010 African Movie Academy Awards. They are joined on the DVD by *Saint Louis Blues* by Senegal's Dyana Gaye and *The Tunnel* by South Africa's Jenna Bass.

Although short films are not easily marketable, they can be useful calling cards for film-makers to show off their skills at international

festivals. "Very often first time film-makers are working in isolation," says June Givanni, former programmer of the Planet Africa series at the Toronto International Film Festival and who sits on Africa First's advisory board. The scheme provides winners with a support network, and they are invited to New York for a workshop.



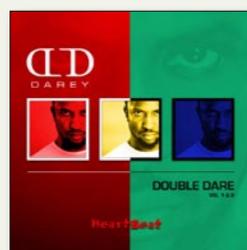
Applications are open for the 2011 programme: African film-makers are invited to submit a 5-25 minute project before 22 August. The narrative of the film must take place exclusively in Africa and the project must use local production staff, facilities and locations. For films that receive award financing Focus Features retains distribution rights for North America, as well as non-exclusive rights to use the project on its website.

Givanni's advice to would-be applicants is to stick with their cultural integrity but be unconstrained by genre. Winning ideas have included sci-fi, musicals and animation. The 2010 class included Nigerian director Ebele Okoye, part of Abuja-based animation studios Shrinkfish, for the screenplay *The Legacy of Rubies*. ●

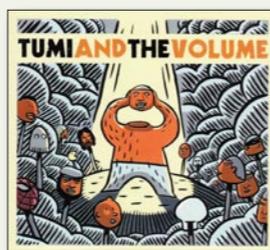
Gemma Ware

> For more see <http://focusfeatures.com/africafirst>

▶ MUSIC RELEASES

Double Dare (vol 1 & vol 2)
Darey

Nigeria's 'King of R&B' is not joking with the title of his new album. On CD 1 are 11 smooth R&B cuts. On CD 2, the singer flaunts a versatility that is alien to many of his contemporaries: highlife, pop, soul and classic stuff make this part, including a remake of 'Sweet Mother' by Nico Mbarga. ●

Pick a Dream
Tumi and the Volume

South Africa's always-banging hip-hop outfit has a new album out, and its first single, 'Asinamali', is getting major radio play. Expect to hear their original, dirty hip-hop beats but also listen out for a mix of more experimental and distinctly African sounds. ●

Toumastin
Tamikrest

They are here, the young heirs to Tinariwen, the Tuareg pioneers of Sahelian blues. Tamikrest, founded in 2008 in northeast Mali, has launched its second opus, *Toumastin*, in which garage-rock riffs overturn throbbing traditional melodies. ●

MeStissage
Teofilo Chantre

The artist is better known as the inspired composer of Cesaria Evora, with whom he has had several successful albums since *Miss Perfumado*. Navigating between morna and coladeira, Teofilo Chantre presents Cape Verdean bossa nova. ●



Stephan Senghor (below) has found a way of turning plastics found on the beach into paving stones and other building materials

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▶ RECYCLING

Senegal An empire built on rubbish

A Senegalese entrepreneur is turning the refuse at local beaches into a source of revenue



The beach at Petit Mbao on the outskirts of Dakar is awash with rubbish, like most other beaches in this Atlantic city. But the rubbish at this beach is different: it's heaped into neat piles and a man in a high-visibility vest is scooping it onto the back of a horse-cart. The man works for Stephan Senghor, a Senegalese businessman who's trying to find a way to turn Senegal's love of plastic into a profitable business, whilst cleaning up Dakar along the way.

The cupboards of Senghor's house, just behind the beach, are filled with rubbish. "I'm seeing what companies pile up," he says, picking up a tin can made by a French supermarket chain, which has the 'please recycle' symbol printed on the label, despite being distributed in a country where there is no formal recycling system. "Then I'll find out how those companies can be part of the solution."

Senegalese-born Senghor returned from living in Canada 18 months ago to help with the clean-up operation after heavy rains flooded Dakar's outskirts well into the dry season. Working with a local team, he emptied water canals and natural drainage lakes that had become blocked. The clean-up team were left with plastic bottles, sachets, bags, rice sacks, shoes, buckets and tyres.

Senghor decided to find a way he could make this discarded plastic into some-

thing profitable, which would employ local people. He started melting different plastics with sand to create different products - paving stones, bollards, and pylons - to see what would work. "The idea of plastic recycling has been around in Europe for a long time, we are all used to it now. But here it is a relatively new thing," he says.

The business angle is threefold: to produce high-quality construction materials at a competitive price (the base materials are largely free, after all); to sell the low-grade plastic as fuel to companies such as cement producers who are keen to find an alternative to oil and gas; and to re-use as much as possible - viable in a country where small-scale producers struggle to find affordable packaging for their products.

The side effects of the business have also been encouraging. The beach at Mbao has bins on it and people are using them. Senghor employs a team of 50 people during the rainy season to pump out flood water and clear the canals of plastic, and a team of 10 during the rest of the year. He wants to turn Mbao into a tourist spot, with its beautiful clean beaches and proximity to Dakar.

"I'm not a non-profit organisation," he says, looking out across the turquoise bay to Dakar shimmering in the distance. "I'm a business. I'm just finding ways to make money out of cleanliness." ●

Rose Skelton in Dakar