

The African Diaspora International Film Festival presents the "Music and Society Film Series"

Music, besides being a source of entertainment, is also a container of social commentary, a reflection on a culture, and a healing force behind social change.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, April 23, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Musical genius defies societal traditions as shown by "Mary Lou Williams: The Lady Who Swings the Band," the most important woman jazz musician in the first part of the 20th century. In addition to facing the normal obstacles confronting African-Americans in that pre-civil rights era, she challenged an environment dominated by men and strove for decades as a renowned contributor to the art form.



Mary Lou Williams: The Lady Who Swings the Band

Music from many cultural influences blend into new genres that can be embraced, rejected, deflected or censored. The contributions of music made by Africans who were enslaved can be found in many societies. This is well illustrated though the musical documentary "Tango Negro, The African Roots of Tango" set in Argentina and Uruguay and with the musical and religious tradition in Tunisia explored in the documentary "Stambali."

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Reggae Music is life, Reggae music is love, Reggae music is salvation, Reggae music is redemption.”

Reggae artist Capleton in "Made in Jamaica"

Music serves as a forum for public debate about manners, morals, politics, and social change. Musicians and their audiences are social actors. In 1960's Brazil, young musicians – including "Maria Bethania" – created the Tropicalism movement by fusing American and Afro-Brazilian music to question Brazilians' political conformism and prejudice. In

South Africa, ["Miriam Makeba"](#) became an international spokesperson against Apartheid through her music while explaining: "I don't sing about politics; I sing the truth."

Songs tell us what concerns people, how they see issues, and how they express their hopes, ideals, anger, and frustrations. As shown in "Wild Women Don't Have the Blues," classic blues of the 1920s provided many female African-American singers a new public space to discuss their lives and assert control over their own careers and images.

Music is a healing force that can bring positive change in society. In "The Story of Lovers Rock," young Black British created the musical genre of Lovers Rock as a means to cope with systematic

racial discrimination in the '70s and '80s UK. In "100% Arabica," music is a healing force for the young Rai musicians fighting religious intolerance in their housing projects on the outskirts of Paris. In "[The Miracle of Candéal](#)," famous Brazilian artist Carlinhos Brown leads underprivileged youth to exchange their guns for musical instruments in a Brazilian favela.

Reggae artist Capleton maybe best explains the healing force of music in "Made in Jamaica" when he says: "Reggae Music is life, Reggae music is love, Reggae music is salvation, Reggae music is redemption."

Join us April 28 to 30, 2017 and enjoy a weekend of riveting films that explore the connection of music to society!
Special Event: Q&A with director of Mary Lou Williams: The Lady Who Swings the Band on Friday. April 29 @ 8PM

WEB SITE: <http://www.NYADIFF.org>

Diarah N'Daw-Spech
African Diaspora International Film Festival
2128641760
email us here



Mama Africa: Miriam Makeba



Khaled in 100% Arabica

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