

Lakaywood Aims to Transform Cinema into a Powerful Engine for Haiti's Cultural and Economic Development

The third edition of the Lakaywood Film Festival brought together filmmakers, actors, and film lovers around a shared ambition: Haiti Socio-Economic Development

MIAMI, FL, UNITED STATES, August 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Haitian [cinema](#) wants to tell Haiti's story differently—through its own images, its own voices, and its own stories. It was around this vision that the Lakaywood Foundation organized the third edition of the [Lakaywood Film Festival](#) on Saturday, August 15, 2026, at Cap-Haïtien City Hall, under the evocative theme "Haiti in the World Cup – Ayiti Nan Mondyal."



Lakaywood Special Guest: Smoye Noisy

In the historic city of Cap-Haïtien, filmmakers, actors, film enthusiasts, entrepreneurs, and prominent guests gathered to celebrate Haitian creativity. Filmmakers traveled from different regions of the country, some to present their productions as part of the annual competition, and others simply to watch the films, meet fellow creators, and share their passion for cinema.

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Our dream is that one day filmmakers will produce major works such as, "The Battle of Vertières," bringing the achievements of the founders of Haiti to life on screen and sharing them with the world.”

Pierrot Mervilier

Renowned Haitian actor and son of the Greater North, Smoye Noisy, was the special guest of this third edition. Michel Saint-Croix, President of the Interim Municipal Commission of Cap-Haïtien, participated as the festival's guest of honor.

A “Wood” to Tell Haiti’s Story:

Behind the festival lies a much greater ambition. For Pierrot Mervilier, CEO of the Lakaywood

Foundation, the goal is not simply to organize annual film screenings and an awards ceremony. The broader objective is to gradually contribute to the development of a genuine Haitian film industry.

Hollywood has helped shape the American imagination. Bollywood has become one of India's most recognizable cultural symbols. Nollywood has enabled Nigeria to share its stories and creative talent far beyond the African continent. Lakaywood, in turn, wants to give Haiti a symbol around which its film industry can be structured, developed, and promoted.

The ambition, however, is not to simply reproduce these models. Lakaywood seeks to develop a distinctly Haitian identity—one rooted in the country's history, culture, heroes, music, heritage, and the imagination of its youth.

"Our dream is that one day Haitian filmmakers will be able to produce major works such as Jean-Jacques Dessalines the Great, The Battle of Vertières, Bois Caïman, or 1804, bringing the achievements of the founders of our nation to life on screen and sharing them with the entire world," said Pierrot Mervilier.

A New Generation Steps Behind the Camera:

This commitment to discovering and promoting new talent was demonstrated through the 2026 Lakaywood Film Competition.

The First Prize was awarded to Ronald "Rondy_P" Petit-Homme for *Ayiti Yon Lòt Fwa Ankò*. Originally from Haiti's Northern Department and a resident of Cap-Haïtien, the filmmaker celebrated his victory at home, before an audience in the historic city.

The Second Prize went to Moïse Mirabeau, director of *La Voie des Grenadiers*, who comes from Haiti's Western Department and resides in Port-au-Prince. Carlin Estima, known as "Artiste Metkok," from the Northern Department and a resident of Bois Caïman, received the Third Prize for *Bwa Kayiman Reaksyon Sou Mondyal 2026*.

Lakaywood Special Awards were also presented to Youbentha Preval and Smoye Noisy in recognition of their contributions and support. Organizers also acknowledged the presence of entrepreneur Jude Charles Faustin and extended special thanks to Loucite Hector for her managerial support.

Cinema as an Economic Force and Cultural Diplomacy:

Lakaywood also promotes an essential idea: culture can create economic opportunity and generate wealth.

Behind every film are actors and directors, but also screenwriters, technicians, camera operators, editors, makeup artists, costume designers, musicians, graphic designers, drivers, caterers, and many other professionals. Film productions can also generate business for hotels, restaurants, transportation companies, and local service providers.

For a historic and tourist destination such as Cap-Haïtien, cinema could become an additional showcase for the city. Its monuments, landscapes, architecture, and cultural heritage already provide a natural setting capable of inspiring filmmakers and attracting audiences.

Cinema is also a powerful form of cultural diplomacy. When a Haitian film travels abroad, a part of Haiti travels with it. For Lakaywood, developing the film industry therefore means giving Haitians the opportunity to tell their own stories to the world while strengthening cultural connections between Haiti and its diaspora.

Lakaywood has already set its next gathering with filmmakers and Lakaywood has already set its next gathering with filmmakers and cinema lovers for August 15, 2027, in Cap-Haïtien, Haiti.

Until then, one idea continues to gain momentum: that one day, when the world speaks about Haitian cinema, one name will naturally come to mind—Lakaywood.

Pierrot Mervilier

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