'THE FOOLISHNESS OF GOD' TO OPEN FIFDA PARIS WITH A POWERFUL GLOBAL EXAMINATION OF JUSTICE AND FORGIVENESS

Karen Hayes' intimate documentary journey with Archbishop Desmond Tutu comes to Paris supported by producer/international diversity advocate Sandra Evers-Manly



LtoR: Karen Hayes, Director/Filmmaker and Sandra J. Evers-Manly, Producer/Advocate

PARIS, FRANCE, September 3, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Can a society pursue justice while making room for forgiveness? "The Foolishness of God: A Forgiveness Journey with Desmond Tutu" brings that urgent question to Paris as the opening-night film of the 16th Festival International des Films de la Diaspora Africaine (FIFDA) on Friday, 4 September 2026, at 19:00 at Cinéma CGR Paris Lilas.

The opening marks a milestone for two Black Women committed to expanding whose stories reach the screen. Presented in collaboration with the Observatoire de la Diversité Culturelle, the screening will be followed by a discussion with director Karen Hayes and story editor/producer Rana Kazkaz, who will join Hayes at the opening, and an opening-night reception.

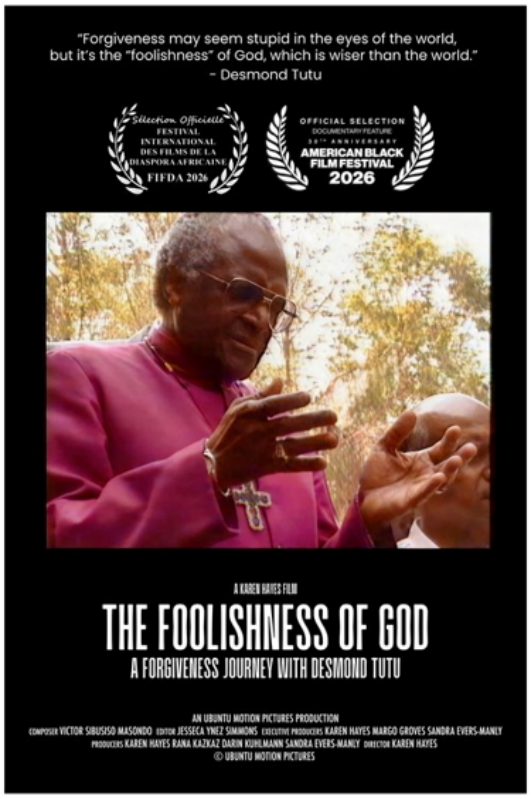
> "I thought Archbishop Tutu invited me to make a film about justice," Hayes said. "Instead, he challenged me—and the world—to consider forgiving the unforgivable."
>
> *Karen Hayes, Director*

Filmed across more than 15 years, The Foolishness of God follows Hayes as she accompanies Tutu through defining chapters of modern history. Beginning with South Africa's first democratic election, the documentary moves through the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide, South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and later reconciliation efforts in the Solomon Islands.

Hayes begins the journey expecting to make a film about justice. Her assumptions are shaken in Rwanda when, after weeping at a massacre site, Tutu visits imprisoned perpetrators and asks survivors to consider forgiveness. Hayes questions whether forgiveness can coexist with accountability—or whether it asks too much of people who have endured unimaginable harm.

“When Archbishop Desmond Tutu invited me to film his life and work, I thought I was going to be making a film about justice,” Hayes said.
“But he had a different intention: to persuade the world to forgive the unforgivable.”


Rana Kazkaz, Producer/Story Editor



"Foolishness Of God"

Through rare footage, encounters with survivors and perpetrators, and Hayes’ candid questioning of Tutu, the film examines forgiveness not as forgetting or excusing injustice, but as a possible means of reclaiming dignity and power. It asks whether truth-telling can restore dignity, whether reconciliation is possible without accountability and whether forgiveness can release survivors without diminishing the harm they endured.

The journey becomes personal as Hayes questions Tutu about childhood violence and his regret of never reconciling with his father, prompting her to confront unresolved family pain. The portrait becomes an intimate exploration of restorative justice, healing and breaking cycles of violence.

Producer and executive producer Sandra J. Evers-Manly has been an ardent supporter of Hayes and the film’s international journey. The Emmy Award-winning founder and president of the Black Hollywood Education and Resource Center (BHERC) has spent more than three decades championing Black women and diverse filmmakers.

“For more than 33 years, I have worked to ensure that Black women and diverse filmmakers have the resources, visibility and freedom to tell stories through their own cultural lens,” Evers-Manly said. “Karen Hayes brings an essential voice to this global conversation. Her film does not offer forgiveness as a simple solution. It asks audiences to wrestle with truth, justice, memory

and healing—and demonstrates why the world needs filmmakers whose lived experiences allow them to ask different and more difficult questions."

Evers-Manly also executive produced A Better Way: James Lawson, Architect of Nonviolence, Hayes' documentary about nonviolence and social change.
As story editor and producer, Kazkaz helped shape the film's exploration of justice, memory and reconciliation. In Paris, she will discuss its creative journey and relevance.

A FILM ALIGNED WITH FIFDA'S GLOBAL MISSION
The selection of The Foolishness of God reflects FIFDA 2026's exploration of spiritual, political, social, colonial and personal memory. Founded in Paris in 2009, the festival presents stories from Africa and the global African diaspora. Its 4–6 September programme features 15 films from 13 countries and territories. FIFDA is not affiliated with FIFA.

ABOUT KAREN HAYES
Karen Hayes is an African American filmmaker, producer and activist with an M.F.A. from UCLA. A Tribeca All Access and American Film Institute Directing Workshop for Women alumna, she creates films through Ubuntu Motion Pictures that generate dialogue and advance justice and healing.

ABOUT RANA KAZKAZ
Rana Kazkaz is an award-winning filmmaker and Northwestern University Qatar professor whose work has screened at Cannes, Sundance, Toronto, Tribeca and Tallinn. A member of the Académie des César, she directed The Translator and Mare Nostrum and is and story editor producer of "The Foolishness of God".

ABOUT SANDRA EVERS-MANLY
Sandra J. Evers-Manly is an Emmy Award-winning producer and founder of BHERC, established in 1996 to advance and preserve Black images in film and television. She is a producer and executive producer of "The Foolishness of God".

OPENING-NIGHT INFORMATION
Film: "The Foolishness of God: A Forgiveness Journey with Desmond Tutu"
Director: Karen Hayes
Producer/Executive Producer: Sandra Evers-Manly
Co-producer/Story Editor: Rana Kazkaz
Date and time: Friday, 4 September 2026, at 19:00
Venue: Cinéma CGR Paris Lilas, Place du Maquis du Vercors, 75020 Paris, France
Programme: Screening, discussion with Karen Hayes and Rana Kazkaz, and opening-night reception
Program and tickets: www.FIFDA.org
Film information: www.tutuandforgivenessfilm.com

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