

It's time for the Lions to tell their story

Monday 17 August, 2020

I Will Tell International Film Festival announced its 14th annual film festival today ... from the top of the plinth from which the Colston statue in Bristol, UK was recently pulled down.

As Festival Director, Jenny Lee, stood on the plinth with her right arm lifted high in the Black Power salute, car and truck drivers honked their horns. One shouted "Take it back!" A few early morning workers smiled politely as they walked past. One walked past twice. The soul of racial justice is still alive.

"There's an old African proverb", Jenny began, "Until the story of the hunt is told by the Lion the tale of the hunt will always glorify the hunter."

The entire message was delivered with Jenny facing the opposite direction to which Colston faced before he was taken down. Explaining the reason for this Jenny, a Trinidadian born African descendant, cites the intense interest in topics related to race and racism around the time of the death of George Floyd and the dramatic fall in interest just two months later. "Even if the hashtags are no longer trending, our change of perspective and focus on fighting for justice must be permanent, not a temporary emotional reaction." She added.

So what does all this have to do with a film festival? One of the greatest barriers to racial equality is a lack of representation. The importance of telling a diversity of stories about the Black Community and indeed of other groups that are discriminated against, cannot be under-estimated and I Will Tell delivers just that. More than 60 films from over 30 countries that will challenge perspectives and, the organisers hope, act as a catalyst for continuing the change that has already begun. For the filmmakers, a festival such as I Will Tell is as refreshing as cold water on a hot day. In the UK, for instance, more than 90% of films that are distributed are in the hands of less than 10 companies who have all admitted openly that there is still a lot of work to be done concerning racial equality within the industry. Black filmmakers in particular find it incredibly difficult to get their films distributed.

This year, for the first time, the festival will be hosted online which means many more people can join in from the comfort of their own home. Screenings will be followed by a Live Interactive Q&A with the Directors.

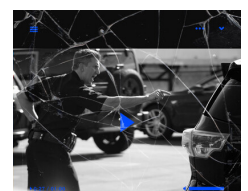
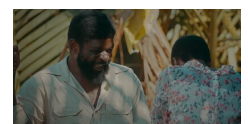
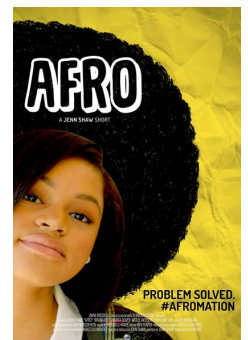
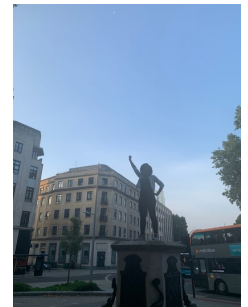
The films address race issues such as police brutality, beauty, identity, family and the justice system as well as modern-day social disconnectedness, education, migration, abuse, the environment, faith and more. There is also a Children's Corner and a special Quarantine Creatives section which will be available throughout the festival showcasing short films and micro-shorts created by filmmakers in quarantine during Covid-19 lockdown.

Distribution companies often reject excellent films on the basis that there are questions about their commercial viability. If you want to see more films like these in the mainstream, it starts with supporting festivals such as I Will Tell.

Festival Dates: 30 August to 09 September

Website WWW.IWILLTELL.TV

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