

Written by Ernest Kanjo

Tuesday, 18 September 2012 07:24 - Last Updated Thursday, 20 September 2012 13:24

{jb_redbox} {/jb_redbox} {jb_greenbox}|f there is one thing that is certain, it is the fact that the film industry in Cameroon is alive. Described by observers as embryonic, the industry grows from lips and bounds, defying all odds. Every blessed day, movie shooting crews are spotted on the country's numerous locations. Editing studios are increasingly
being charged with assignments from impatient producers who want their products thrown out for public consumption. Movie premieres are fast becoming desirable social rendezvous in the country.
{/jb_greenbox} {jb_redbox}Even when some of the movies shot and edited delay in the drawers, many others get exposed and win prizes at renowned international film festivals. Unfortunately, this progress almost goes unnoticed by the Cameroonian media. Very little of it is reported by the newspapers, television and radio to the utter dissatisfaction of the people who make the sector tick. This seemingly deaf-ear attitude of the fourth estate to the detriment of a sector that could possibly be the biggest employer after government has not left concerned Cameroonians indifferent.{/jb_redbox} {jb_bluebox} Through tireless efforts, some initiatives have emerged not only to pay tribute to film makers, but also to promote their works in a bid to place Cameroon on the world stage. One of such initiatives is
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font-family: 'Berlin Sans FB Demi','sans-serif';">EK: But why did you stay in oblivion all this while  your fans had been anxiously waiting to know who was behind the curtains

FK: Hahaha that, I know so well, but I opted to stay anonymous because I care more about what I do and not whether people know me.

FK: Well, if you say so Ernest.

EK: Thats a good display of humility there Fred

FK: Cam Movies is all about promoting the Cameroonian film industry, from the movies to the people who make them and the faces they project. Cam Movie is also about providing constructive criticism on films and their makers in a bid to encourage good practice in the industry. We do that by way of advertising events, interviewing actors, directors, and producers and publishing monthly classifications. This is done via social network forums, especially facebook.

EK: How did this initiative come about?

FK: Cam Movies was created in Cape Town, South Africa by Fred Keyanti. I was later joined by Tatah Gwendoline, a lecturer at the University of the Western Cape, Chia Standley Kisuh of Chikista Film Productions and Olga Chungu, a Zambian actress and singer. We recently co-opted Nkanya Kwai the producer of The African Guest as content Editor.

EK: What inspired the project?

FK: We realized that there were so many talented Cameroonians in the film making who go unnoticed because of the minimal media coverage of the sector. We then we decided to use the available social media forums such as facebook, HI5 and google blog, to promote and unify our people and productions. Since its creation, Cam Movies has reached out to Cameroonians in Belgium, Holland, China, Germany, USA, Ghana, Nigeria, Canada, South Africa, Zimbabwe you name them. Some film makers only get to know others through our monthly celebrity Top10 and Top20 classifications.

EK: For how long has the project been running?

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EK: Cam Movies film critic movie awards soon

FK: Cam Movies training academy eminent

EK: Cam Movies hang-out party to award certificates to Top20 stars

FK: Cam Movies has been on since 2010, but our activities intensified after our Executive Producer Gwendoline Tatah visited Cameroon in early 2011 and reported back to us how Cameroon was boiling with talented

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young people in film making. She actually met many of these enthusiasts. I then decided to fly down some actors from the US so that we can explore this potential. In that regard we flew down Mairo Sanda and Pridine Fru and with some home-based artists, we shot Trouble Kingdom. After that project I returned to South Africa richer in information to kick-start the CFI promotion process.

EK: What exactly do you guys

do?
FK: We do in-depth research into the professional lives of film makers living both in Cameroon and abroad. We gather information about them and their works. We browse youtube to watch their movies and be able to proceed with the classification. We promote even those who are not on our Top20 list. The list is not permanent. When you get to our Top20 list, it does not mean you will stay there forever. Rather, it simply means while we are research on others, you remain the best.

EK: What is the rationale behind this monthly classification?

FK: We seek to make those who are not on the classification work harder and those in inferior positions work even harder to climb to the top. Mark you inferior here is not used in negative terms. Our classifications are a way of instilling confidence amongst our film makers and make them strive for the best and refuse to give up, even when the working environment is at times hazardous. We also intend to let our film makers know that there are people out there who are watching them and appreciating their works and willing to help them achieve their goal.

EK: Tell us more about this research aptitude of Cam

Movies
FK: I agree with you that we are very research focused. We use every means available to get information about who is who in the Cameroon film industry. This includes general google search with key words such as Cameroon Films, Cameroon Movies, Cameroon actors, and names of artist being searched. Just to let you know without any flattery that Tiptopstars is our number one research stop point. Apart from internet search, we also work with directors, DOPs, producers and the artists who feed us with information. Film makers such as Akim Macauley, Allenne Menget, Neba Lawrence, Agbor Gilbert, Agbor Steve, Mairo Sanda, Simon Timah, Eric Ntang, Crystal Beauty, Samson Tarh, Aurelien Henry Obama, Kamwah Anthony, Taka Tani, Trina Takoh and Inorie Fotso have been very resourceful in providing Cam Movies with information about film makers and their works.

EK: What are some of the difficulties faced by the project so far and how do you intend to deal with these?

FK: The difficulties we are facing pertain to the fact that some artists are not users of facebook and other social media. As a result, most of their works go unnoticed. Secondly, most artists are slow in responding to our requests for information. Thirdly, we have difficulty in knowing every film maker. To overcome these problems, we are intending to recruit Cam Movies Volunteers otherwise called CMVs this November in three places, Bamenda, Buea and Yaounde. These volunteers will be our information focal points, regarding any film activities happening in their respective regions. When need be, we will cover their cost of attending premieres, parties, shootings taking place out of their city and in returned, they will furnished us with still photos and short video clips of the events. We plan to equip them with digital cameras with HD video recording for this purpose. We will also appoint reps in all countries we have

