

# *Participation Proposal for*



*Zambia's first dramatic narrative feature film*

*Written by famed Zambian playwright Samuel Kasankba*

*Adapted and directed by Zambian Jabbes Mvula*

*Starring Zambian actors and actresses*

*Shot on location in Lusaka and Livingstone, Zambia*

*Principal Photography begins August 8, 2006*

*and*



*A documentary about the making of the first Zambian feature film*

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# Zambian Film Projects

## Fact Sheet

### **How it all started ...**

Jabbes Mvula had been working in the broadcast industry in his native Zambia when he had a life-changing experience that sent him on a journey to do something important and make a difference.

To understand what propelled him on this journey, watch his digital story at:

[http://www.cyndigreening.com/2006/05/the\\_digital\\_story\\_that\\_started.html](http://www.cyndigreening.com/2006/05/the_digital_story_that_started.html)

So Jabbes started his journey in the Digital Filmmaking program at Mesa Community College. He asked Cyndi Greening, his professor, to help produce his film and his passion started to spread. A plan was made and some funding secured through a school grant. As a result, in early August, students from MCC are going to Zambia to help Jabbes make Zambia's first full-length feature film to honor the memory of his son.

### **The First Zambian Feature Film ... BAD T!MING**

Based on a stage play by renowned Zambian playwright Samuel Kasankha, BAD T!MING is very contemporary tale that combines the dramatic narrative of modern life with the rich customs and culture of the Zambian people. BAD T!MING is the story of Chiku, a respected social activist who is invited to lead the U.N. Task Force to investigate and improve the Future of the African Child. During this period, Chiku is also preparing for his wedding. The son of a Ngoni chief, he is to marry Mutinta, the daughter of a Tonga leader. Shortly before he marries, he is nearly seduced by a seemingly innocent neighborhood girl. When the police arrest him at his wedding, his bride is horrified to discover that her new husband is accused of rape. Wanting to avoid a life sentence in prison, Chiku begins an epic struggle to restore himself personally and professionally. A tale of failure, corruption, forgiveness and redemption, BAD T!MING reveals the rich culture and social interactions of contemporary Zambians, set against the rich backdrop of Zambian countryside.

### **The Documentary ... VOICE OF AN AFRICAN NATION**

Simultaneously, a documentary about the making of the first Zambian film and the establishment of the film industry in Zambia is being produced. It will reveal the cultural exchange that occurs between the American "crew" comprised of MCC students and faculty and the Zambian citizens. The documentary follows them from their relatively affluent, predominantly white community to this economically challenged nation in Africa. It will explain the efforts of the "crew" to provide digital filmmaking training and technology to Zambian producers, directors and teachers.

Through the making of the films, our goal is to bring the stories and the voices of a previously unrepresented African nation to the global cinema. We hope to support the expansion of the film industry in Zambia and to reveal the beauty of Zambia for potential tourist, visitors and investors.

## **Positive Economic Impact ...**

Making this film has the potential to greatly impact the Zambian economy. It has the potential to:

- Establish the film industry in Zambia thereby creating new jobs and career opportunities for many people
- Enhance interest in and awareness of Zambian Fine Arts including performance arts, visual arts, graphic arts and traditional fine arts.
- Increase Zambian tourism revenues and expand tourism-related jobs because people will see the natural beauty and rich culture of the nation and want to visit
- Feature scenes from Victoria Falls, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, encouraging visitors to tour Zambia's national parks and other areas of beauty
- International distribution of the film will generate revenues for the nation and stimulate future projects
- International distribution of the film will also present the Zambian people and the Zambian nation to the world so they may be represented in the global cinema and the global community at-large

## **Cultural and Educational Exchange ...**

Making this film will greatly impact the students and faculty from Mesa Community College. It will also impact teachers, directors, artists and filmmakers in Zambia. The exchanges we expect to occur during the making of these films includes:

- Making the films will be a powerful and positive experience for the MCC students. They will participate in making the first feature film for a nation. They will have the opportunity to help others with the certain knowledge that they are making a difference.
- They will experience life in a third-world country where it is remarkable if your child reaches adulthood as opposed to life in the U.S. where we expect all of our children to see adulthood. This will increase their sensitivity to their role as global citizens.
- MCC students will benefit professionally and personally by participating in this project. They will have the opportunity to return to the community and share all that they have learned with other students and Arizona citizens.
- MCC faculty will be teaching digital filmmaking to interested Zambian directors, artists and filmmakers so that even more Zambian stories can be shared with the world.
- Students will assist in the training that will encourage future film production and distribution of additional Zambian films.
- In addition to providing training, the intent is to leave the technology and tools behind with the Zambian National Arts Council for use by Zambian filmmakers to strengthen the artistic voice of the nation and positively affect the economy.
- Finally, the University of Lusaka and the Evelyn Hone Technical College have requested the opportunity for an ongoing faculty and student exchange program to stimulate further growth, learning and cooperation between our two nations.

## Interest and Support Have Skyrocketed ...

- **Sundance Film Festival** programmers have added both **BAD TIMING** and **VOICE OF AN AFRICAN NATION** to their tracking sheets for the 2007 festival.
- Cyndi and Jabbes have been selected for the **Independent Producers Conference** at the Sundance Institute in August. The conference guides participants in fund-raising and securing the greatest possible domestic and international distribution.
- The **Zambian Film Projects** have been presented to the **Vice President of the Zambian Nation** and he has endorsed the projects. While the MCC crew is in Zambia, there will be a government dinner in their honor.
- The **Zambian Ambassador** will visit Mesa to meet with school officials and the Governor of Arizona to express the gratitude of the Zambian government. The Ambassador will formally recognize and thank the students and faculty for their contribution to the nation.
- Award-winning cinematographer **Nancy Schreiber** (Courtney Cox's **NOVEMBER** and **SHADOW MAGIC**) has agreed to shoot the feature film if funding becomes available.
- Award-winning documentary filmmaker **David Mallin** (**ZAMBIAN FORGE**) has agreed to shoot the documentary if funding becomes available.
- **Zambian singer Danny** has agreed to write two songs for the film and promote the film at all of his concerts. Wildly popular in southern Africa, Danny's song **KAYA** was the longest #1 running single in Zambian history
- **Zambian National Broadcast** has already begun publicity and promotion for the film. They will broadcast the interview Cyndi and Jabbes did with **Colin Boyd for The Big Picture on FM101.5**. They will air a video package that features MCC President Larry Christiansen and Vice President Gail Mee discussing the contribution the film is making to the college.
- **Zambian Arts Patron Dr. Edgar Ng'oma** has pledged accommodations and transportation for the entire film crew for the duration of the film shoot and training sessions.
- Recently, we got a call from the neighboring nation of Zimbabwe. They have requested that the Zambian films submit an official application so they can be featured as the opening films for the 2006 **Zimbabwe International Film Festival**.
- The State of Arizona has committed several million dollars to expanding the film industry in the state. This sort of high-profile project supports the **goals of Governor Napolitano** for economic development in the State of Arizona. The governor's office is aware of and supportive of these projects.

## **Initial Funding From MCC Grant ...**

When Cyndi returned from Sundance in January of 2006, Jabbes asked for her support in returning to Zambia to make the first feature film in his country. **He asked her to produce his film.** She wanted to know what that meant to him. He wanted the use of **two high-end digital video cameras.** He explained that all of the digital video cameras in Zambia were very small and that there were very few of them. He explained how little equipment was available in his country. Cyndi was concerned.

She said that she was certain she could get two cameras but she didn't think he'd be able to finish it alone. She told him that it was just too much for one person. She thought a few minutes and offered to go with him. She suggested that they put together a **small student crew.** She added that they could document the process so others could know what everyone went through. He was shocked and pleased. "Oh, Mum, don't tease me like this" he said, "That would be the most wonderful thing. I would be so grateful. This would truly honor my son!"

So, Cyndi wrote an **MCC Innovative Project Grant** to cover the transportation cost for a small crew. Included in the grant was the use of the school equipment, including a Sony HVR-Z1U and Panasonic DVX-100A, several light kits, microphones and tripods. These high-definition cameras ensured that they had the opportunity for international distribution. Since the flights are quite costly (\$1800 to \$3500 per seat) and there was a limit to the amount that could be requested in the grant, she made the initial crew request for two faculty and four students. In late April the announcement was made; they had been **awarded** an Innovative Project grant! They were going to Zambia to make the film!

**As you can see, what started out as a modest little project has grown tremendously.** In addition to producing Zambia's first feature film and companion documentary, they had the opportunity for ongoing educational exchange, technical filmmaking training and distributing donated equipment.

**Cyndi started looking for more funding so they could do the project to the best of their ability. They decided they should use a larger crew.** Fifteen students had committed themselves to working on the project from the beginning. More students would allow for better lighting, set design, make-up and hair. When the educational exchange and training component was added, four additional faculty and one administrator committed themselves to the project. Funding needs were growing.

With the Innovative Project Grant, there is funding from MCC for four (4) students and two (2) faculty members to travel to Zambia. The grant also allows the use of MCC equipment. Logistics, lodging and transportation support for the projects is being provided by the Zambian government and Zambian Arts Patron Dr. Edgar Ng'oma.

## Funding Wish List

- **\$24,200 to send eleven (11) more students** to be part of the crew. This allows more students to participate in and benefit from the project. It also means the film will be more competitive visually because the lighting, set design, sound design, production design, costuming, hair and make-up will be handled by a dedicated crew member.
- **\$8,800 to send four (4) more faculty** to participate in the University and College educational exchange program. They would also expand the number of people who could be reached in the training sessions for Zambian artists, filmmakers and teachers
- **\$15,000 to buy filmmaking and editing equipment** to leave behind with the Zambians who we have trained so they can carry on our mission for the expansion of the film industry in Zambia. This will increase the number of Zambian stories that will be told and reveal the beauty of the nation and the people. (At this point, we have been seeking equipment donations from manufacturers. Assistance to secure equipment—new or used—would be equally valuable.
- **\$4800 for consumables** (DV tapes, bulbs, gels, etc.) needed for the production process. This would also include the cost of a new boom microphone setup and the insurance rider for the equipment in the event of theft, loss or damage during the production.

## Participation and Support Wish List

Endorsement from a celebrity deeply committed to African causes would be very helpful. Celebrities such as **Oprah Winfrey, Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie, Bono, Sting, George Clooney or Matt Damon** would be invaluable.

Perhaps, if one of these individuals wanted more personal involvement, they would cordially invited to do the voice-over for the documentary. That sort of participation would enhance the distribution options for the film and greatly expand the audience.

Support in contacting **manufacturers** such as Sony, Sennheiser, Lowell and Apple to donate equipment for the training sessions (that would be left behind with the Zambian National Arts Council and the schools) would be really helpful.

## Funding Miracle List

- **\$405,000 to shoot the feature on 35mm film with Nancy Schreiber.** Currently, everyone is donating their time and effort to the cause. None of the students, faculty, actors or Zambian crew are being paid. The films are certainly a labor of love but they have a greater chance of being powerful and visually compelling if they are shot on film by an award-winning cinematographer. A detailed budget could be provided. The addition of a cinematographer dramatically increases the marketability of the film.
- **\$160,000 to secure the participation of David Mallin as the videographer on the documentary project.** David shot ZAMBIAN FORGE, a documentary about the Meheba Refugee Settlement in Zambia. Familiar with Zambian culture and filmmaking needs, David would ensure a visually viable product. A detailed budget could be provided upon request.

## Student and Faculty Quotes

During our last meeting we spoke about why we wanted to help on this project and what impact it will have on the future, not only for our careers and aspirations locally, but for Zambia. I had not realized the impact until the words left my mouth, “We are going to help a COUNTRY.” This is a realization that is greater than I could have ever imagined and I am even more honored to be a part of the revolutionary experience. ~ Katie Greisiger

*I've been to Sundance for the last four years. I am hoping that we will get the Zambian documentary and dramatic narrative done in time to submit to the festival. It would be a dream come true (and a miracle) to have our film at Sundance. For Jabbes' sake and to honor this historic moment for Zambia, it would be really cool if it could debut at Sundance. If we all commit ourselves to it and do our best work, the gods might smile on us! ~ Alec Hart*

At some point we must choose to give back, or at the very least become a facilitator of growth for others and further, empower and enable them to flourish on their own. I have the opportunity to facilitate the growth of a nation, to assist in delivering the message of a country, and expose the face of a people. ~ M.K. Racine

*You can tell right away that he has this big ambition not only for himself but for his country. ~ Michael Montesa*

Why is it that one person's loss can cause us to look at our own lives and appreciate what we have? Every time I hear Jabbes's story about how he lost his son I get a feeling of guilt. Maybe this would be better described as empathy. All the love and hopes I know Jabbes had for his son, I also have for mine. ~ Jason Werner

*It's exciting to be a part of a team that will help create a path for a country that is not well known by others. It's a chance to help the country find its own voice and become successful, a journey well worth taking. ~ Jeniece Toranzo*

I have limited information and no experience with what it's really like in Africa. I realize that most Americans find it hard to understand the problems that these cultures face on a daily basis: genocide, starvation, epidemics. The lack of understand of these issues is what motivates me the most to help with these projects. I know that they will motivate others to take action and help the African nation. And in what better way than through independent film can we bring other cultures and the issues they face to the world? We are going to make a difference. ~ Katie Greisiger

*Shortly after the project began, I attended the **South By Southwest (SXSW) Film Festival** in Austin. I had the opportunity to talk with an industry professional who specializes in funding films to be distributed in Europe and Asia. I shared what we were doing in Zambia and questioned him about where I might find funding. He was a kind and gracious fellow so I was completely surprised when he said, “There is NO money for Africa.” How could an entire continent be unable to secure funding, I questioned. He explained that the only news that came out of Africa was bad — genocide, HIV and AIDs, the janjaweed, corruption, starvation, refugee camps. “There will likely be no funding for Africa,” he said, “**until a different voice can be heard, a different face shown to the world.**” ~ Cyndi Greening*

## Link List

Jabbes' Digital Story

[http://www.cyndigreening.com/2006/05/the\\_digital\\_story\\_that\\_started.html](http://www.cyndigreening.com/2006/05/the_digital_story_that_started.html)

Podcast: The Big Picture with Colin Boyd on FM101.5

[http://www.cyndigreening.com/more/podcasts/060518\\_Cynematik\\_BigPicture.mp3](http://www.cyndigreening.com/more/podcasts/060518_Cynematik_BigPicture.mp3)

Blogs for the Zambian Feature the companion Documentary:

- <http://www.filmzambia.com/badtiming/>
- <http://www.filmzambia.com/africanvoice/>
- <http://www.filmzambia.com/>

Press Kit & Media Coverage

<http://www.filmzambia.com/more/FilmZambiaPressKit.pdf>

<http://www.filmzambia.com/more/TribuneJabbes.png>

<http://www.filmzambia.com/media1.htm>

<http://www.filmzambia.com/more/GrantPressRelease.pdf>

David Mallin's ZAMBIAN FORGE site:

<http://web.mac.com/dmallin/iWeb/CloudchaserFilmsLLC/Zambian%20Forge.html>

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<http://www.cyndigreening.com>

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