

3 Important Documentaries You Should Check Out

Written by DRE OBAA ID4593

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Here are three documentaries that you should take time to check out. The subjects range from hip hop in Senegal to a young mother who was sentenced to two life sentences for her first drug offense. The third is about a mother of two, powerful advocate and activist, sister, friend and fighter for people's rights, who is living with HIV.

AFRICAN UNDERGROUND: HIP HOP IN SENEGAL – Directed by Magee McIlvaine, Ben Herson, Chris Moore. Step into the AFRICAN UNDERGROUND and listen to a new voice inspired by religion, politics, old school Hip Hop and Senegalese culture.

Our longer film, **AFRICAN UNDERGROUND: DEMOCRACY IN DAKAR**, of which this piece is just one part, explores the transformative role of Hip Hop on politics in Senegal, West Africa during the February 2007 presidential election campaign. Looking at the election through the eyes of Hip Hop artists around Dakar, Senegal's capital, this documentary mixes interviews, freestyles and commentary from journalists, artists and politicians.

Senegalese society is seen on the brink of democratic change, where Hip Hop artists are one of the few groups not afraid of speaking out, despite real attempts at intimidation. Originally shot as a series of shorts distributed online, **AFRICAN UNDERGROUND: DEMOCRACY IN DAKAR** explores the boundaries of guerrilla-style film production and distribution. <http://www.mediathatmattersfest.org/8/index.php?id=4>

PERVERSION OF JUSTICE - Director Melissa Mummert

Perversion of Justice focuses on **HAMEDAH HASAN**, a young mother who was sentenced to two life sentences for her first drug offense. Shot over the course of four years, **Perversion of Justice** follows **HAMEDAH** on an emotional roller coaster as she navigates her many appeals. We witness her suffering daughters growing up as best they can hundreds of miles from their incarcerated mother. This short piece, as well as a longer 30-minute documentary, weaves **HAMEDAH** and the girls' stories along with criminal justice experts who provide context about the misguided U.S. War on Drugs. While the film details an American tragedy, it is ultimately hopeful and calls the audience to action.

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DIANA - Melissa Krodman, Producer and Director

DIANA is a young woman living with HIV. A mother of two, powerful advocate and activist, sister, friend and fighter for people's rights, DIANA'S story is one of many in a world where HIV has been a reality for nearly three decades. DIANA and her sister KATHY are incredible young women living with a disease that has wracked the common consciousness for over 25 years now. This film is an inspirational look at the reality of HIV today.- Mother, daughter, sister, friend and fighter. DIANA and KATHY share their views about living with HIV. <http://www.mediathatmattersfest.org/8/index.php?id=5>