

**Winner of the Teddy Special Jury Award, Berlinale 2015**  
**2nd Place Panorama Audience Award, Fiction Film, Berlinale 2015**  
**Honorable Mention for Best Narrative Feature, TLVFest 2015**  
**Winner of the Best Film in the Volunteer of the Year Award, Frameline 2015**  
**Honourable Mention for First Feature Jury Award, Frameline 2015**  
**Winner of the Special Programming Award for Freedom, Outfest 2015**  
**Winner of the Audience Award, GAZE 2015**  
**Winner of the Audience Award for Best International Feature Film, MixBrazil, 2015**  
**Winner of the Best of Africa and the Africa Diaspora award, Rapid Lion – The South African International Film Festival 2016**

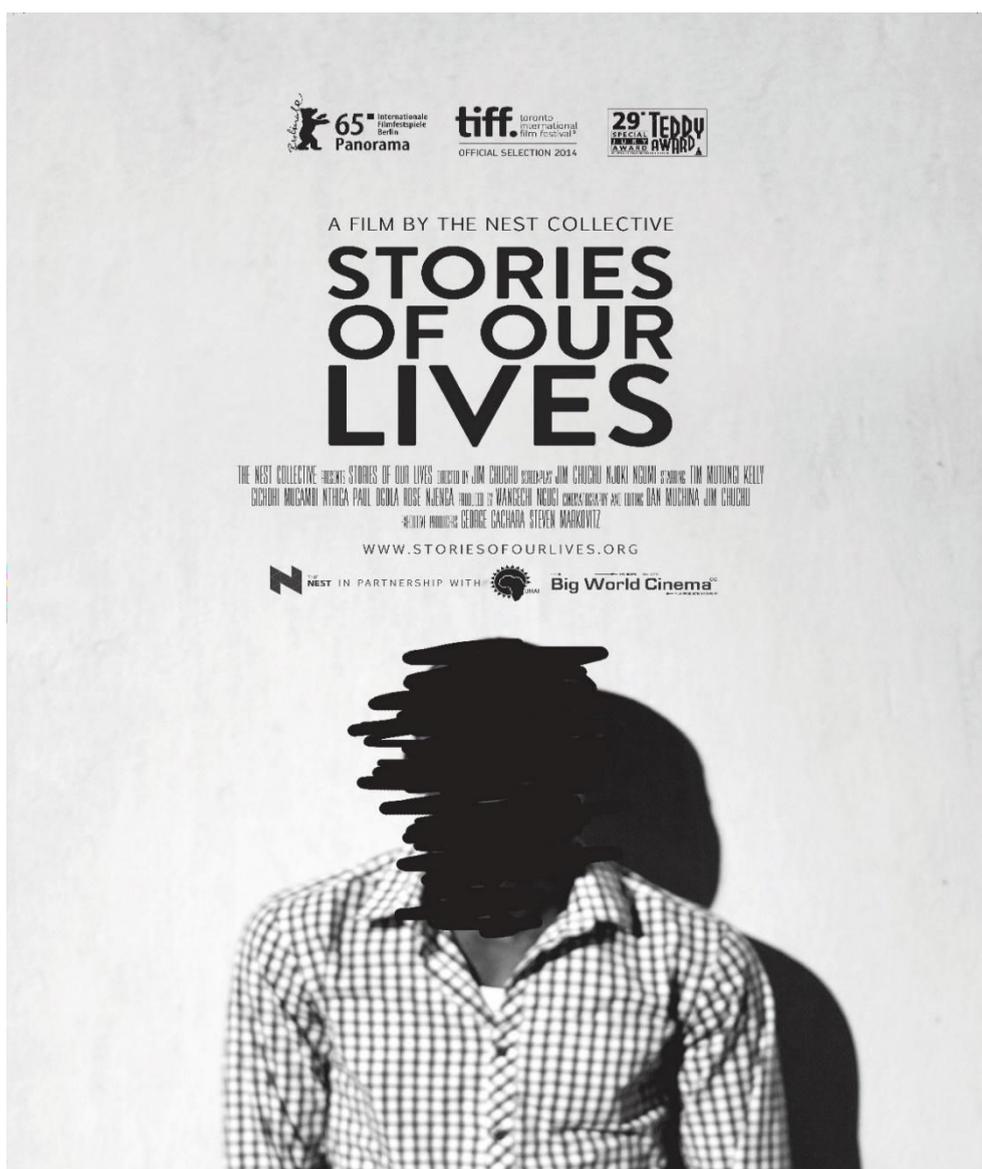
*Stories of our Lives documents the hidden personal stories of lovers, fighters, rebels and the community histories that characterize the queer experience in Kenya*

**PRESS ENQUIRIES**

Mia A. Farrell  
International Publicity  
T: +44 7791 670 465  
E:

**FESTIVALS AND SALES**

Steven Markovitz  
Big World Cinema  
T: +27 83 2611044



[miafarrell@mac.com](mailto:miafarrell@mac.com)

E: [steven@bigworld.co.za](mailto:steven@bigworld.co.za)

**Duration: 60 minutes**  
**Format: DCP**

**Sound: 5.1**

**Production Country: Kenya**

**The Nest in Partnership with Uhai/Eashri**

**Directed By**

Jim Chuchu

**Screenplay**

Jim Chuchu

Njoki Ngumi

**Produced By**

Wangechi Ngugi

**Starring**

Kelly Gichohi

Paul Ogola

Tim Mutungi

Mugambi Nthiga

Rose Njenga

**Executive Producers**

George Gachara

Steven Markovitz

**Cinematography & Editing**

Dan Muchina

Jim Chuchu

Based On Stories Collected For The Stories Of Our Lives Project



## **STORIES OF OUR LIVES - SYNOPSIS**

A series of vignettes based on true stories collected for the Stories Of Our Lives project.

### **ASK ME NICELY (ITISHA POA)**

Kate, a rebellious young high school student, meets first-love Faith, a fellow student. When school authorities separate the two, Kate impulsively has a sexual encounter with a boy in her neighborhood. Two weeks later, Kate and Faith have an awkward reunion.

### **RUN**

After negotiating a business deal, Patrick stumbles upon a local gay bar with his homophobic best friend, Kama. Patrick later returns to the club for a night out, hoping no one will find out.

### **ATHMAN**

Farm workers Raymond and Athman have been close friends for years. Hurt by Athman's flirtatious relationship with newcomer Fiona, Raymond has to make a difficult choice.

### **DUET**

Jeff is waiting in a hotel room far away from home. He has been saving for months to fulfill his ultimate fantasy of having sex with a white guy. Finally, there is a knock at the door.

### **EACH NIGHT I DREAM**

When local legislators threaten to enforce anti-gay laws, mobs gather to evict people suspected of being homosexuals. As tension in their neighborhood increases, Liz visualises dramatic escape plans for herself and partner Achi.



## **Festivals**

Toronto International Film Festival, 2014  
Berlinale, Berlin, 2015  
If Istanbul International Film Festival, Turkey, 2015  
MoMA Documentary Fortnight, NYC, 2015  
Massimadi LGBT Film Festival, Montreal, 2015  
Mardi Gras Film Festival, Sydney, 2015  
Design Indaba Film Festival, Cape Town, 2015  
Batho Ba Lorato, Botswana, 2015  
AFI: New African Film Festival, Maryland, 2015  
Roze Filmdagen -Amsterdam LGBTQ Film Festival, 2015  
Outfest Fusion, Los Angeles, 2015  
BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival, 2015  
Movies that Matter, Amsterdam, 2015  
FCAT - Festival des Cine Africano, Cordoba, 2015  
Stockholm International Film Festival, 2015  
BAFICI (IFF), Buenos Aires, 2015  
Afrykamera, Warsaw, 2015  
31st Gay Film Festival Freiburg, Germany, 2015  
DOXA Film Festival, Vancouver, 2015  
Off Plus Camera, Krakow, Poland , 2015  
Helsinki African Film Festival, 2015  
The New York African Film Festival, 2015  
Rome Independent Film Festival – RIFF, 2015  
Inside Out - Toronto LGBT Film Festival, 2015  
Queer Film Fest, Johannesburg, 2015  
Seoul International Women's Film Festival, 2015  
Tel Aviv International LGBT Film Festival, 2015  
Frameline Film Festival, San Francisco, 2015  
Miami Jewish Film festival, 2015  
Nuevo Leon Cinemateque, Mexico, 2015  
Outfest, Los Angeles, 2015  
Durban International Film Festival, South Africa, 2015  
GAZE Film Festival, Dublin, Ireland, 2015  
Wotever DIY Film Festival, London, UK, 2015  
Harlem International Film Festival, USA, 2015  
Cinema Queer International Film Festival, Sweden, 2015  
CinemAfrica, Stockholm, Sweden, 2015  
Take One Action, UK, 2015  
Afrikamera, Germany, 2015  
Afrykamera, Poland, 2015  
Syracuse University Human Rights Film Festival, USA, 2015  
Watch Africa, Cardiff, 2015  
Rio International Film Festival, Brazil, 2015  
Mix.Copenhagen LesbianGayBiTrans Film Festival, Denmark, 2015

Portland Queer Film Festival, USA, 2015  
Image Out The Rochester LGBT and Video Film Festival, USA, 2015  
Seattle LGBT Film Festival, USA, 2015  
Hamburg Queer Film Festival, Gemrnay, 2015  
Cambridge African Film Festival, UK, 2015  
Africa in Motion, UK, 2015  
Taiwan Queer Film Festival, Taiwan, 2015  
Molodist International Film Festival, Ukraine, 2015  
Film Africa, UK, 2015  
Mix Brasil LGBT Film Festival, Brazil, 2015  
Frameline Encore, USA, 2015  
The Goa International Film Festival, India, 2015  
African Film Festival Munich, Germany, 2015  
Ljubljana LGBT Film Festival, Slovenia, 2015  
Pink Panorma, Switzerland, 2015  
Image Nation Gay Lesbian Bi Trans Film Festival, Canada, 2015  
International Film Festival of Kerala, India, 2015  
Movies That Matter Foundation, Netherlands, 2015  
this human world: International Human Rights Film Festival, Austria, 2015  
Legacy Films, United Kingdom 2016  
Kentucky University, USA 2016  
Malmo Queer, Sweden 2016  
University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA 2016  
New Voices in Black Cinema, USA 2016  
Fragment Film Festival, Austria 2016  
ACT Human Rights Film Festival, USA 2016  
Rainbow Reel, Canada 2016  
Global health and human rights Seattle, USA 2016  
Cinepride LGBT FF - Nantes, France 2016  
Salaam Kivu Festival, DRC 2016  
Sanaa Africa Arts Festival, South Africa 2016  
Ciclo Rosa Bogota, Colombia 2016  
Centro Niemeyer, Spain 2016  
Fire! Muestra, Spain 2016  
Rapid Lion – The South African International Film Festival, South Africa 2016  
Brighton Museum, UK 2016  
Ndim Ndim Cinema, Black Filmmakers Film Festival, South Africa 2016  
Festival de Cinema de la ville de Quebec, Canada 2016  
Greater Cleveland Urban Film Festival, USA 2016  
CAL Luxemborg, Belgium 2016  
Everybody's Perfect, Switzerland 2016  
Vinokino, Finland 2016  
Baltimore International Black Film Festival, USA 2016  
CPH Pix, Denmark 2016  
Black Film Festival Hamburg, Germany 2016  
Cheris Cheris FF, France 2016

CPH PIX, Denmark 2016  
Fan Cine Gay Extremadura, Spain 2016  
Cinewax - Clap Afrique, France 2016  
Martha's Vineyard Film Festival, USA 2016  
Afrika Filmfest Leuven, Belgium 2016  
Afrika filmfest Leuven, Belgium 2017  
Bernie Grant Arts Centre, 2017  
Durban International Film Festival, 2017

## **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

On June 30, 2013, The NEST - a multidisciplinary art collective in Nairobi - began collecting and archiving the stories of persons identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex from Kenya. The project, dubbed "Stories of our Lives" - was intended to document the hidden personal stories of lovers, fighters, rebels and the community histories that characterize the queer experience in Kenya.

After a month of conducting interviews across different Kenyan towns, the team - inspired by the vivid stories and patterns observed - began exploring the idea of turning some of the collected stories into short films. The scripts were written and developed by the team over a period of eight months, during which the films were shot as and when the scripts were completed.

The collective were aware that for several reasons, these films would be a challenge to cast and shoot. First, while there is an ongoing public conversation, living an open and free LGBTI life in Kenya can be a difficult experience owing to strong cultural and religious attitudes and discriminatory laws. Second, Kenyan films tend to shy away from depictions of taboo topics such as human sexuality. Several Kenyan actors who have appeared in films touching on queer stories have found themselves embroiled in sensationalist inquiry into their personal lives.

Initially the team wanted to cast only LGBTI identifying actors as a response to the conversation on representation, but after careful consideration, decided to allow all actors interested in playing the parts give the roles a go - regardless of their gender or sexual identity. Every actor in the film was aware of the potential personal and professional risks that came with being part of this project, and were incredibly game for everything the crew asked of them.

The five films were shot over a period of eight months in and near Nairobi with a total budget of 15,000USD. The films were shot using a Canon DSLR, two LED lights (one of which stopped working during production), a portable digital recorder, a shotgun mic and lots of enthusiasm, on-set laughter and hugs. Seed funding for the film was graciously provided by Uhai/EASHRI and the Open Society Initiative of East Africa.

The NEST Film Collective is a ten-member crew consisting of artists, social workers and entrepreneurs working at the NEST - a multidisciplinary art space in Nairobi that designs

programs and interventions which allow for exploration, experimentation and the development of artistic outputs. Together, they have worked on numerous music, fashion and photography projects since 2012. This is their first narrative film project.

The collective has no formal training in filmmaking, and as such applies a vigorously collaborative and non-hierarchical approach to their filmmaking, operating under the belief that it is imperative to test new techniques that allow them to tell stories creatively while working with small budgets, limited production time and low production overheads. The team has had several chances to test this collaborative approach whilst working on music and fashion video productions - and now, short films. Since then, they have worked to improve their technical capacities and explore visual storytelling driven by their diverse fields of expertise and interest.

Having completed this film, the collective are looking forward to making more films, challenging themselves technically, remaining friends and telling stories that ask questions and dare to imagine.

The Nest Film Collective are (in alphabetical order): George Aloo, Jim Chuchu, Sunny Dolat, George Gachara, Noel Kasyoka, Dan Muchina, Wilfred Mwangi, Wangechi Ngugi, Njoki Ngumi and Wakiuru Njuguna.

[www.becauseartislife.org](http://www.becauseartislife.org)

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### **JIM CHUCHU – DIRECTOR**



Jim Chuchu is a visual artist, filmmaker and musician from Nairobi, Kenya. He is also the co-founder and Creative Director at the NEST, a multidisciplinary art space in Nairobi. His first short film (Homecoming) was one of six short fiction films that formed the African Metropolis series and screened at TIFF, Rotterdam, Locarno and over 10 other festivals. *Stories of Our Lives* is his first feature film, created as part of the ten-member NEST Collective.

[www.jimchuchu.com](http://www.jimchuchu.com)

### **STEVEN MARKOVITZ – EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**



Steven Markovitz has been producing fiction and documentaries for 20 years. He has established an extensive network in production and distribution across Africa. His fiction work has screened at Cannes, Berlinale, Toronto and Sundance, and received an Oscar nomination.

He executive produced *Stories of Our Lives* (Toronto 2014, Berlinale

Panorama 2015) and produced the Sudanese documentary *Beats of the Antonov* which won the Peoples Choice Documentary Award at Toronto14. Other titles include *Love the One You Love* (Winner of Best South African Film and Director, Durban 2014), *Viva Riva!* (Berlinale, Toronto), *Congo in Four Acts* (Berlinale, Hotdocs, IDFA) *Proteus* (Berlinale, Toronto) and *Project 10* (Berlinale, Sundance, Hotdocs).

Steven is currently producing films in Libya, Japan, Liberia, Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria. He has sat on selection panels and juries including Silverdocs, Cinemart, IDFA Bertha Fund and Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC), and co-founded the Encounters Documentary Festival, Africa's main documentary Festival. He is a founding board member of the Independent Producers' Organisation of South Africa and is on the Board of the African Cinema Unit at the University of Cape Town.

### **SELECTED PRESS BREAKS:**

#### ***Kenya Bans Toronto Fest Film 'Stories of Our Lives' Over Gay Themes***

***Variety*, By Christopher Vourlias**

**October 7, 2014**

Just weeks after its Toronto premiere, a film that explores life in Kenya's LGBT community was banned by that country's government on the grounds that it "promotes homosexuality."

"Stories of Our Lives," a collection of five fictional vignettes based on the real-life experiences of gay Kenyans, was denied distribution and exhibition rights Oct. 3 by the Kenyan Film Classification Board, which in its ruling censored the film for "obscenity, explicit scenes of sexual activities and (for promoting) homosexuality, which is contrary to...national norms and values."

Helmer Jim Chuchu, executive producer George Gachara, and screenwriter Njoki Ngumi said by email that while the ruling didn't surprise them, they were still saddened by the government's decision to ban "Stories."

"We applied because we didn't want to have to screen the film under the radar, as if it was something we were ashamed of," they said. "We hoped that the board would look at the film for what it is and make a decision outside the politics."

Homosexuality in Kenya is punishable by law — though rarely prosecuted — and has been at the center of a contentious debate in the east African nation in recent months. With "Stories," the filmmakers — part of the Nest, a Nairobi arts collective — hoped to broaden the conversation by reflecting on the hopes, struggles and stigmas faced by members of the local LGBT community.

Aware that making the movie might subject them to both legal action and personal attacks, the filmmakers chose to remain anonymous throughout the filming, only revealing their identities at the TIFF premiere.

In their email, the filmmakers were critical of the Board's stated mission to "safeguard national values and norms."

"How exactly does restricting a film, thus stifling a necessary conversation about society, safeguard the national values and norms?" they wrote. "How flimsy are these national values and norms if they can be dramatically shaken by a 62-minute film?"

Since the ban, the filmmakers said they were "drowning in requests to see the film."

"The clear disconnect between the aims of the board and the interest of Kenyans, and the assumption that Kenyan adults aren't mature enough to watch films without needing protection from a Censor, surely requires reflection," they wrote.

The filmmakers were given 14 days to appeal the ban, and said they are currently looking at "many options on the table."

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***TIFF 2014 Review: 'Stories of Our Lives' (Anthology Film Asks "If We Are Not Africans, What Are We?")***

**Shadow and Act / Indiewire, By Zeba Blay**

**September 5, 2014**

It's a sentiment that echoes the overall theme of the film, the need for gay, lesbian, trans, and intersex Kenyans to assert their own identities, indeed their own existence, in a cultural landscape that often tells them that they simply shouldn't exist.

"If we are not Africans, what are we?"

It's the question that lies at the core of "Stories of Our Lives", the anthology film presented by the collective known as The Nest.

Based on an archive of true stories from the LGBTI community in Kenya, the film is broken down into several black & white vignettes, ably filmed, and beautifully acted. With the names of those involved withheld to protect them from possible retribution, the separate but thematically linked shorts give brief but vivid glimpses into the lives of lesbian, gay, and trans Kenyans living in a country and continent notoriously hostile towards their identities.

In one story, a schoolgirl gets suspended for her budding relationship with a fellow female student. In another, a young man eager to explore his sexuality at a clandestine gay club in Nairobi has to contend with the explosive reaction of his homophobic friend. The strongest short of the bunch, titled "Athman," explores the difficult relationship of a closeted gay man in love with his understanding but befuddled straight best friend.

The common party line of those with anti-gay attitudes on the continent tends to always

hinge on the idea that “gayism is un-African,” as one politician in the movie declares. The question of the African identity, of course, is one so hard to pin down - a character in one short corrects a British rent boy who calls him African - “We don’t like to all be lumped together like that,” he explains.

It’s a sentiment that echoes the overall theme of the film, the need for gay, lesbian, trans, and intersex Kenyans to assert their own identities, indeed their own existence, in a cultural landscape that often tells them that they simply shouldn’t exist.

Because, no, homosexuality is not a Western construct. Often, the main motivation for those who condemn it is Christian doctrine, perhaps the most “Western” thing ever brought to Africa, (next to slavery). So, while these kinds of stories about gender and sexuality on the continent seen here are rare, what’s particularly refreshing about the several tales presented is that, because they are by Kenyans, about Kenyans, they employ a brave honesty and simplicity that doesn’t seek to sensationalize African attitudes towards the LGBTI, to demonize and condemn. Thankfully, this isn’t a movie about “Africa’s homophobia problem” that we’ve seen before. This is a beautiful little film about love, about humanity, about one of the many facets of what it means to be African.

*Zeba Blay is a Ghanaian-born film and culture writer based in New York. She is a contributor to Huffington Post, Africa Style Daily, and Slant Magazine. She co-hosts the weekly podcast Two Brown Girls, and runs a personal movie blog, Film Memory. Follow her on Twitter @zblay.*

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### ***“Stories of Our Lives’ Sheds Light on Kenya’s Gay Community”***

***Variety, By Christopher Vourlias***

**September 5, 2014**

A brave new film looks to shine light on the lives of millions who have been affected by the rising tide of anti-gay sentiment on the African continent. “Stories of Our Lives,” a collection of five vignettes about Kenya’s LGBT community, will have its world premiere Sept. 5 at the Toronto festival.

According to helmer Jim Chuchu, pic is an attempt to go beyond the headlines and explore a world that is often marginalized or ignored within Kenya.

“We’re really interested in telling stories that are different from the mainstream Kenyan culture, which denies a lot of things,” he says.

Chuchu is a co-founder of the Nest, a Nairobi art space where roughly a dozen members from different walks of life collaborate on multi-disciplinary projects. Last year the group decided to travel across Kenya, conducting hundreds of anonymous interviews with gay men and women as part of a multi-media project documenting LGBT lives in Kenya.

The stories they collected inspired them to rethink their initial project. With time, they started to see the potential to bring some of those stories to the screen.

The film was a collaborative, by-the-bootstraps effort. Though many of the cast and crew have worked on music videos and multi-media projects, none have formal film production training.

Pic was lensed on a \$15,000 budget, using a Canon DSLR. Though passions ran high throughout the eight-month production process — when each of the scripts was written, developed, and shot — expectations were low when production wrapped.

“TIFF was a complete surprise to me and the whole team,” says Chuchu.

The helmer is making his second trip to Toronto after his first short, “Homecoming,” premiered last year as part of “African Metropolis,” a collection of six shorts filmed in six African cities.

South Africa’s Big World Cinema, which produced “Metropolis,” is a co-producer on “Stories.” Funding came from the East African Sexual Health and Rights Initiative, while the Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa and Hivos East Africa provided support for the original documentation project.

Though “Stories” received generous support from Kenya’s vibrant activist community, there are still concerns about how the movie will be received back home, where homosexuality is punishable by law, though rarely prosecuted. The filmmakers remained anonymous during production, out of concerns that “Stories” would run afoul of Kenya’s anti-gay laws, only choosing to reveal their identities at Friday’s premiere.

“We’re not entirely sure what will happen to us as individuals, and us as an institution,” says Chuchu. “We’re still kind of in uncharted territory.”

Perhaps even more significant is the social stigma that remains in Kenya. But Chuchu — who is traveling to Toronto along with executive producer George Gachara and screenwriter Njoki Ngumi — says the film’s powerful message is worth the risk.

“It’s been very emotional,” he says. “It’s made us see that it was important to do this film.”

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***Stories of Our Lives is an Intimate, Masterly Portrayal of Kenya's LGBT Community***

**Huffington Post, By Diriye Osman**

**September 22, 2014**

The poet Audre Lorde once said, “When we speak we are afraid our words will not be

heard or welcomed. But when we are silent, we are still afraid. So it is better to speak."

This act of voicing one's truth in the face of tremendous hostility is precisely what the filmmakers behind one of the most poetic and masterly cinematic depictions of queer life have done. Said filmmakers, Jim Chuchu, Njoki Ngumi and George Gachara of Nairobi-based arts collective The Nest, set themselves the considerable challenge of documenting and archiving the poignant personal stories of Kenya's LGBT community. Although Kenya is far more sexually liberal than its neighbors Somalia and Uganda, homosexuality is still illegal there; a state of affairs that is spiced with violence and gossip-policing, religiosity and morality-mongering.

What makes The Nest's film, *Stories of Our Lives*, which was featured at this year's Toronto International Film Festival, such a mesmeric and immersive experience is that the tales told are everyday stories of what it means to fall in love, what it means to explore one's identity and, ultimately, what it means to be human in a culture where one's existence is derided and repeatedly mocked as representative of the worst of Western traits.

Over the course of five vignettes, filmed in exquisite, gently-paced black-and-white, *Stories of Our Lives* offers us an intimate look into the lives of schoolgirls, tea-pickers, academics, bootleggers and beautiful club-kids, all expertly portrayed by a group of gifted actors who chose to leave their names off the credit list for fear of retribution. The filmmakers themselves initially declined to disclose their identities for the same reason. When they came out, this is what they had to say:

"This film is about fighting openly for the right of Africans to have different opinions, different worldviews, different identities and dreams - and for all these multiple identities to co-exist," said Jim Chuchu, the film's director.

We decided to reveal our identities as the creators of this film because we believe strongly that the fight for this right to define one's self, this right to be complex and different and unique, should be fought for proudly and openly.

The film is not a didactic document but a testament to joy, courage and passion. Filmed on a budget of \$15,000, it has the feel of a gorgeously constructed tone-poem that taps into something deeply universal: the desire to belong, the impulse to feel wanted and needed and free.

*Stories of Our Lives* is one of the most triumphant and stunning films of the year. For more info about the film, visit [www.storiesofourlives.org](http://www.storiesofourlives.org)

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**'Stories of Our Lives': Film Review**  
**The Hollywood Reporter, By Stephen Dalton**

**April 10, 2015**

*A fresh, warm, visually ravishing look at queer life in East Africa.*

Defying a climate of discrimination and homophobia, this award-winning anthology film dramatizes true accounts of gay experiences in Kenya.

A mix of journalistic chronicle, political protest and gorgeous visual poem, *Stories of Our Lives* is an anthology of five minidramas with LGBT themes from the East African republic of Kenya. It was made by the Nairobi-based art and activist group The Nest Collective, many of whose members prefer to conceal their identities to avoid possible persecution under Kenya's notoriously draconian anti-gay laws. Last year, the project's executive producer George Gachara was arrested briefly for filming without an official permit.

*Stories of Our Lives* remains banned in Kenya, despite picking up acclaim and awards abroad. Last week, it made its U.K. debut at the BFI Flare festival in London. The topical theme and positive buzz should ensure further festival interest, though the compact 60-minute running time will stunt its theatrical potential.

The five dramas are mostly personal and domestic, but snippets of real news footage bring a broader political context. In 2012, an Anglican bishop in Mombasa called gays and lesbians a bigger threat to Kenya than terrorists. Last year, an attempt was made to pass a bill mandating that LGBT people could be stoned to death. It failed, but even consensual adult same-sex relations remain an imprisonable felony.

Given this backdrop, we might well have expected *Stories of Our Lives* to be an angry soapbox movie, or at least a worthy slice of preachy docudrama. But not so. Shot over several months on a single digital camera, the film has a luminous monochrome look and slickly edited polish that defies its minimal \$15,000 budget. The music, by first-time director Jim Chuchu, is ambient and sensual. And the stories here are emphatically not what Chuchu calls "pathologized NGO tales." Instead, they cover a broad spectrum of queer experience, from tragedy to comedy, unrequited love to defiant romantic bliss.

*Stories of Our Lives* began as a documentation project of real case studies that Chuchu and his team then turned into dramatic vignettes, each compressed into 12 minutes or less. The most bittersweet is "Athman," about a rural farm laborer with a secret crush on his co-worker. A tense confession of repressed desire is met more with bafflement than hostility, but it still drives the two apart. The most overtly sexual chapter is "Duet," about a black Kenyan researcher hiring a white British escort, Roman, during a business trip to the U.K. Their hotel-room encounter progresses from a comically awkward discussion of cultural and racial differences to erotic massage and more.

A pair of lesbian love stories bookend the film. In "Ask Me Nicely," two teenage girls begin an affair that earns both disgust from their teachers and temporary suspension from school. At home, one meets a boy and sleeps with him to test whether she is "totally

purely gay," but her experiment ends badly. In the closing chapter, "Each Night I Dream," two female lovers struggle in the face of angry mobs and government homophobia. Their escapist fantasy is a magical dream world of hand-held sparklers and idyllic wood land, a magical-realist sequence that has strong echoes of *Beasts of the Southern Wild*.

Making impressive use of limited resources, *Stories of Our Lives* is clearly a passion project. A handful of the chapters feel too slight, and some of the unschooled performances feel a little stiff. All would have benefited from the extra breathing room afforded by the running time of a full-length feature. Even so, Chuchu and his team have made a brave, beautiful, timely film, which boldly stands up for hope and love in the face of bigotry and bullying.

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**CBC'S *THE NATIONAL* INTERVIEWS THE FILMMAKERS IN TORONTO:**

"Kenyan filmmakers behind *Stories of Our Lives* reveal identities"

[http://youtu.be/UdEpKHni\\_\\_I?list=UUKjU3KzdbJE1EFcHVqXC3\\_g](http://youtu.be/UdEpKHni__I?list=UUKjU3KzdbJE1EFcHVqXC3_g)

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