

Sisters of the Screen: African Women in the Cinema

A film by Beti Ellerson



Documentary, 2002
61 min, Video, Color and B/W

Credits

Producer/Director/Writer: Beti Ellerson
Cinematography: Christophe Poulenc
Editing: Beti Ellerson and Christophe Poulenc



Synopsis

Exploring the extraordinary contributions of women filmmakers from Africa and the diaspora, Beti Ellerson's engaging debut intersperses interviews with such acclaimed women directors as Safi Faye, Sarah Maldoror, Anne Mungai, Fanta Régina Nacro and Ngozi Onwurah with footage from their seminal work. With power and nuance, Ellerson also confronts the thorny question of cultural authenticity by revisiting the legendary 1991 FESPACO (Pan-African Festival of Cinema and Television of Ouagadougou), in which diasporian women were asked to leave a meeting intended for African woman only. This film is both a valuable anthology and a fitting homage to the pioneers and new talents of African cinema.

Festivals and Exhibitions

- Pan-African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO)
- Reel Women International Film Festival - *Honorable Mention*
- Athens International Studies Film and Video Festival
- African Cinema Conference
- African Studies Association Conference

Director's Biography

Beti Ellerson teaches visual culture courses in the Art History and Visual Culture Program at Howard University. She was producer/host of *Reels of Colour*, a 27-episode program about filmmaking by people of color televised locally in the Washington, D.C. area from 1997 to 2000. As a 1996-97 Rockefeller Humanities Fellow she conducted research on the cultural politics of African women in the visual media. The research culminated in the book, *Sisters of the Screen: Women of African on Film Video, and Television* (Africa World Press, 2000), which features most of the women in the documentary. Beti Ellerson has published several works on African and African Diasporan Visual Culture.

"A superb instructional tool...of great use for teachers of African Cinema, African History,
African Politics and also Women's Studies."

Dr. Gloria Emeagwali, Professor of History/African Studies, Central Connecticut State University