

Sudan documentary wins big at Durban International Film Festival

Beats of the Antonov was a big winner at the 36th Durban International Film Festival, taking home both Best Documentary and the freedom of expression award. The documentary is a celebration of the people of the Blue Nile and Nuba Mountains in Sudan, who fought with the South for independence but now remain trapped in a civil war in the North.

The jury awarded Beats of the Antonov R25,000 for Best Documentary "for its story, characters, relevance and visual interpretation", and for a "story told with grace, while honouring the integrity of the people who gave them access as well as the subject matter".



The jury for Arterial Network's Artwatch Africa Award for freedom of expression, which carries a cash prize of R15,000, added: "This compelling film shows how the power of music, dancing and culture sustains the displaced people living in the remote war-ravaged areas of Southern Sudan."

SA flouts court order

The documentary reopened debate over the South African government's decision to allow Sudan's current president, Omar al-Bashir, to leave South Africa last month, flouting a court order and international convention.

Beats of the Antonov has won The People's Choice Documentary Award at The Toronto International Film Festival and four other international awards. Sudanese filmmaker hajooj kuka directed and shot the documentary over two years, at immense personal risk. He also produced alongside South African Steven Markovitz, as a co-production between Sudanese production company Refugee Club and South African company Big World Cinema. South African Khalid Shamis edited the documentary with hajooj in Cape Town.

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