



# Discussion Guide

Season 3.0, 2011

*Haiti: One Day, One Destiny (Haiti), 25 minutes*

Supported by



# Introduction

This guide contains suggested discussion questions to orient viewers and discussion facilitators on how best to frame conversations about the films featured in AfroPoP: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange, Season 3 (2011).

First there is a short list of general discussion questions that can be used to initiate a discussion of all the films after the screening or broadcast. These general questions provide a solid platform for channeling the immediate emotional response of the audience into a collective experience or narrative.

After the General Discussion Questions, each of the AfroPoP films contains content for a discussion guide to frame the historical, aesthetic and emotional reactions of the viewer in a participatory way.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Prior to screening the film, remind the audience that there will be a discussion afterwards (with the filmmaker if s/he is in attendance). It's generally a good idea to start the discussion immediately after the film with a few broad questions.

Following are some suggestions:

- What are your immediate reactions to this film?
- What did you learn from this film?
- Describe a moment in the film that you found particularly moving. What was it about that scene that was especially compelling to you?



## **HAITI: ONE DAY, ONE DESTINY**

A Film by NBPC & Michele Stephenson

<http://blackpublicmedia.org/haiti>

TIME: 25 minutes

### Targeted Audience

- Haitian-Americans
- Haitian Immigrants
- Disaster relief workers
- Human rights activists
- African-Americans

### Film Summary

Haitian American filmmaker, Michele Stephenson visits Haiti six weeks after one of the world's most devastating earthquakes. There to document the personal stories of the Haitian people, Michele's gives us a glimpse of the emotional impact this tragedy has from the perspective of the thousands of Haitians living outside of Haiti who have been engaged in the recovery from the onset and will most likely be the one's to continue it once the story has retreated from the world stage.

### For Discussion

- It's been over a year since the devastating earthquake in Haiti. What did you learn from this film about the earthquake's impact that you didn't know before?
- How helpful is it to learn about a particular moment in history from one person's perspective (in this case, the filmmaker's)? What kind of balance does it offer?
- One scholar has written, "Testimonial documentaries thus work on an affective level by exposing audiences to stories of pain with which we cannot help but identify on the basis of our shared humanity." What issues does this film help you as a viewer understand that you may not have experienced from either a written report or even television news coverage?
- There were numerous examples of young men and women taking action to make a difference. Which of them did you find most compelling? Why?
- "The earthquake is a physical act. The earth moves. Once you're moving, you have life." What do you think about the comparison of the earthquake to a living thing, to something that has life?

- Contrast the reaction of the gentleman who declared that the people near his property “are gonna have to go,” to the reaction of the filmmaker who came upon people living on her family’s property. What do you understand about the source or causes of these two reactions?
- What do you know about the tensions between Dominicans and Haitians? How did the 2010 earthquake affect this relationship? One year later, what is the current state of affairs?
- In what ways are catastrophic events opportunities? What the factors that determine who does and who doesn’t benefit? Where there are changes for the better that have come about, what are the best ways to ensure that those changes are supported so they can survive?
- Religion serves as a source of comfort and understanding for many in the grip of cataclysmic events. What different roles did you notice religion playing in this film? Did you notice different forms of religion?
- At one point the filmmaker reflects, “What I’m coming back to has very little connection to what I know.” What do you think she meant by this?
- “Everyone I’ve encountered has a huge devastating story to tell. It’s too much devastation.”
  - Does this film help lighten the weight of the devastation encountered? How so?
  - How are the stories of “devastation” different from the dizzying frenzy of stories of suffering on the mainstream media?
- Contrast the two narratives offered on Haiti’s origins as an independent nation. One highlighted the will and determination of the former slaves; Pat Robertson offered the other as a “pact with the devil.”
- “Charity is a voodoo principle.” Do you recall this being a part of the news stories on “aid in/for Haiti” after the Earthquake 2010?