



**AFRICAN RHYTHMS:
ANIMATED STORIES FOR CHILDREN**
is a compilation of three animated
films that explore various traditions of
the African diaspora.

C 9104 152



AFRICAN RHYTHMS
ANIMATED STORIES FOR CHILDREN



In **The Magic Lion (2004)**, an African boy goes on a quest to save his gravely ill grandfather. He must find a mysterious village where healers create medicine with special properties. On his way, the boy meets a strange lion caught in a trap.
Director **Charles Githinji**

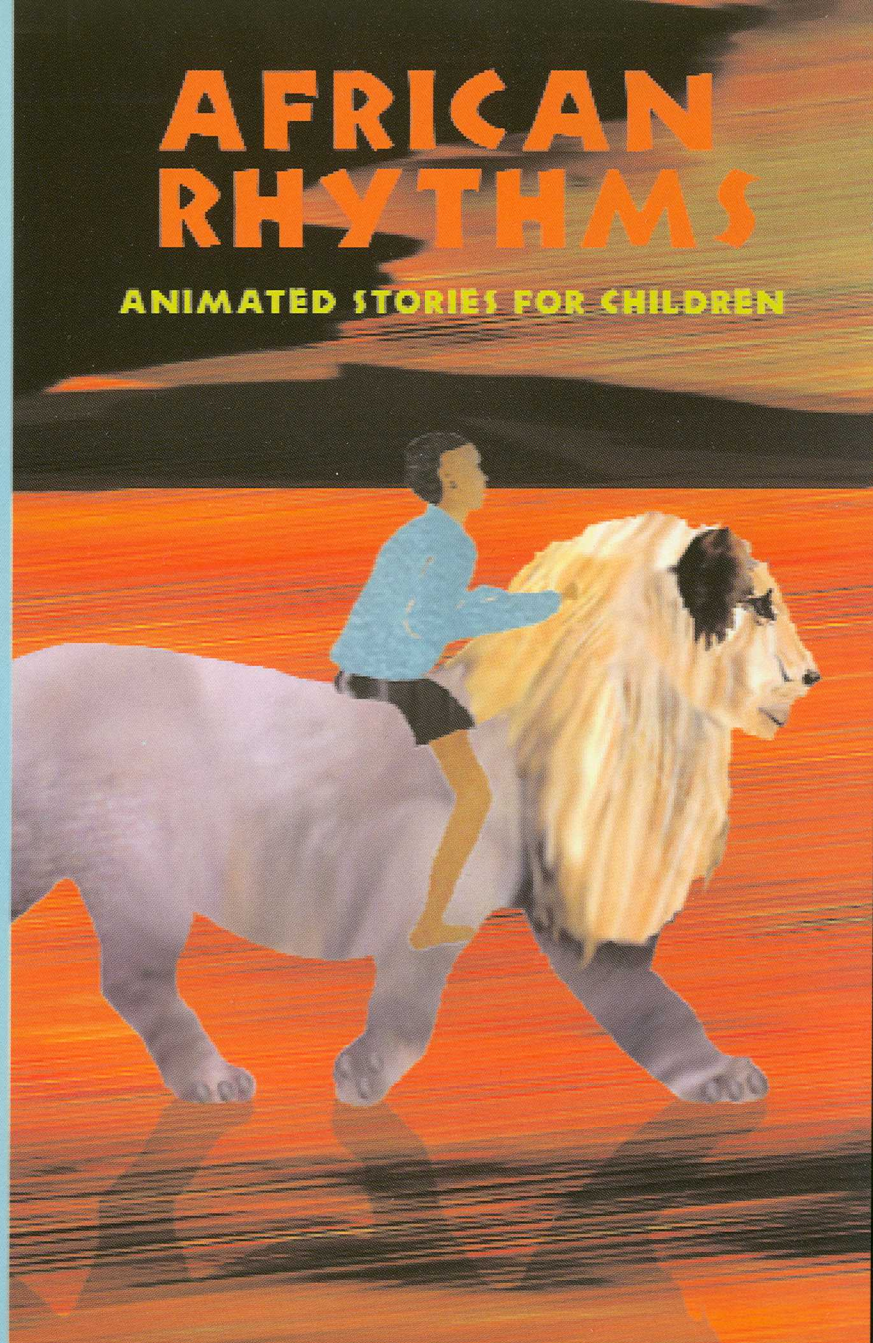


In **The Cora Player (1997)**, a young couple from Burkina Faso fall in love, but because they are from different social classes, they must defy tradition to be together. This film is based on Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which upholds the right to love freely, blind to convention and social class.
Director **Cilia Sawadogo**



Jump-Up: Caribbean Carnival in Canada (1995) centres on the friendship of Lisa, a newly arrived girl from the West Indies, and Sophie, her Canadian neighbour. Together they help make a costume for the Jump-Up parade, an annual festivity celebrated in many communities with roots in the Caribbean.
Director **Claire Helman**

Total Screening Time: 25 minutes 4 seconds



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VHS

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Canada 1800 267-7710
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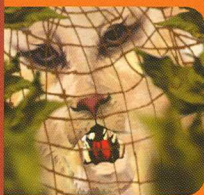


Closed captioned.
A decoder is required.

A NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA PRODUCTION



THE MAGIC LION (6 min 52 s)



POST-SCREENING DISCUSSION

Ask students if they remember where this story took place. (In the city of Mombasa.) With the students, locate Mombasa on a globe or map. (It's a coastal city in Kenya, East Africa.)

Ask the class:

Do you think this is a true story? Why or why not?

What if the boy did not free the lion? How do you think the story would have ended?

Would you have freed the lion? Explain.

Writing

- 1) List some words that describe the boy's character. Explain your choices.
- 2) Summarize the story: give the setting, main characters, plot, problem and solution.
- 3) Ask, "Why do you suppose the lion was trapped?" Have a brief discussion about humans capturing wild animals for zoos and circuses. Then assign this topic: In a short essay, say whether you agree or disagree with wild animals in captivity.

Geography

How did the magic lion help the boy in the story? How do you find your doctor when you're sick? If you can, draw a map from your home to your doctor's office. Include any major places (gas stations, corner stores, parks, etc.) that are on the way. Make sure you include a legend/key and use colour to make your map attractive.

THE CORA PLAYER (7 min 55s)



PRE-SCREENING ACTIVITIES

Write the title of the film on the board, and ask students if they know what a cora is. A cora is an African harp-like instrument made from a gourd, covered by cowhide, and with a long wooden neck. It is commonly played in West Africa. The Gambia has more cora players than neighbouring Mali, Guinea or Senegal.

We recommend that you show *The Cora Player* twice due to the complex nature of the story and the fact that there is no dialogue.

POST-SCREENING ACTIVITIES

After First Viewing

Discuss the fact there is no dialogue in the video. Did the lack of dialogue influence student response to the film? Ask students to tell the story in their own words. Listen to several versions. Then talk about the problem and solution of the story. Show the video again.

After Second Viewing

Explain the term "social class." For example, "Class refers to your social or economic family background, as in *the class of people that are rich or the class of people that are poor.*"

Ask students to compare the social class of the cora player with that of the girl that he loves. How do their different backgrounds affect their relationship? What do you think the father was trying to say to the cora player when he threw the coins at him? (Example: "You are a mere cora player who is not fit to marry my daughter.")

Different economic backgrounds are not the only thing that can keep people from being together. Name some others. (Religion, race, skin colour, etc.)

How does the film show the power of the community to change the rules? What about the role of the elders? How much influence do elders have in your community?

Describe the role of music in the film.

NOTE: The sound of the cora seems to reach everyone in the village – especially the heart of the young woman in love. When confronted by the father, the cora player seems to use his music to defend himself. The young woman's singing seems to unite the community against the tyrant father and to show acceptance of the relationship.

Do you know any musician or other artist who uses art to bring people together? Write a short story about this person.

JUMP-UP: CARIBBEAN CARNIVAL IN CANADA (10 min 45 s)



POST-SCREENING ACTIVITIES

Ask, "Who is a Canadian?" or "What makes someone a Canadian?" Discuss the concept of citizenship: People become citizens either by being born in the country or by applying for citizenship.

Who are African Canadians? (Canadians of African descent.) Have African Canadians been in Canada a long time?

NOTE: Some are recent immigrants while others have been part of Canada since the 1700s, when Black Loyalists emigrated from the USA to Canada.

(They were loyal to the British and moved here after the American war of independence.) In the 1800s a larger wave of Black refugees fled slavery in the USA, through a complex human network called the Underground Railroad. In the 1900s a more recent wave of immigrants arrived from the Caribbean, Africa and other parts of the world.

Discuss the story of *Jump-Up* with the class: the characters, plot, setting, problem and solution. Point out that there is a story within a story and that the story connected to the costume is a legend or myth. Make sure that the notion of legend/myth is clear.

Interview someone in class about their favourite celebration. Talk about how you might organize a celebration at school.