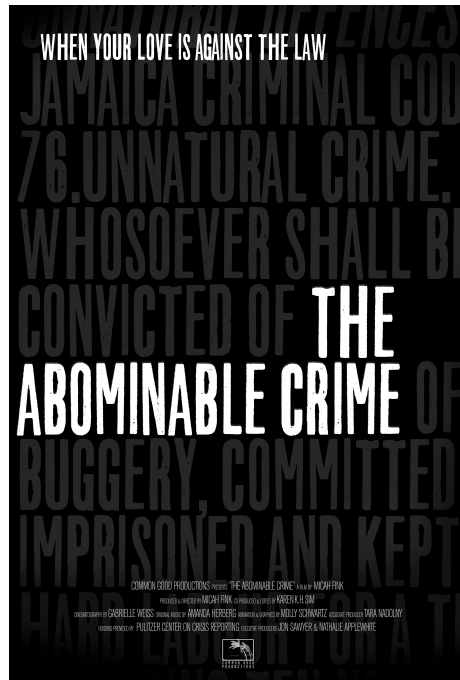




Presents

# THE ABOMINABLE CRIME

WHEN YOUR LOVE IS AGAINST THE LAW



## **For Media Inquiries Contact**

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## **Genre**

Documentary feature film, 68 minutes, color

## **Keywords**

Homophobia, Jamaica, Caribbean, Activism, Discrimination, Gay, Lesbian, Marriage Equality, Religion, Violence, Immigration, Asylum, HIV/AIDS, Human Rights, Politics.

## **Stills**

To download high-resolution stills, please visit:

<http://abominablecrimefilm.com/press/index.html>

## **Synopsis**

The Abominable Crime is a documentary that gives voice to gay Jamaicans who, in the face of endemic anti-gay violence, are forced to flee their homeland.

The film follows Simone Edwards, a mother, and Maurice Tomlinson, a human rights activist, as they navigate the conflict of loving their homeland and staying alive.

Simone is seeking asylum after getting gunned down because she knows her life – and the life of her daughter -- hang in the balance.

Maurice, shortly after filing a case to overturn his country's anti-sodomy law, finds his life threatened when he is outed by a Jamaican newspaper and decides to flee to Canada. Once there, he must decide if he will risk everything to return to Jamaica and continue his activism.

Told first hand as they unfold, these personal accounts take the audience on an emotionally gripping journey traversing four years and five countries. Their stories expose the roots of homophobia in Jamaican society, reveal the deep psychological and social impacts of discrimination on the lives of gays and lesbians, and offer an intimate first-person perspective on the risks and challenges of seeking asylum abroad.

## **Praise for The Abominable Crime**

*"This film will no doubt make an important contribution to raising awareness of the abuses LGBT Jamaicans face, and hopefully, help to create the change which is needed to make Jamaica a better place for all Jamaicans to live."*

– Ian McKnight, Executive Director, Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition (CVC)

*"The most important LGBTQI documentary film ever to be produced in the English speaking Caribbean."*

– Jason Jones, Executive Director, "I Am One," the leading LGBT group in Trinidad & Tobago.

*"A riveting, urgent, compelling account of what pressures and hatred LGBT Jamaicans face. But for the names and faces, it could easily have been made about Belize."*

– Lisa Shoman, Senator, National Assembly, Belize.

*"A very moving documentary, and very sensitively handled. Carry tissue or a Hanky (seriously ...you will be moved to tears in parts)! Worth seeing again!!*

– Noelle Ingledew, former Chair of Jamaica AIDS Support for Life.

"As they say in JA, 'Dis film a go hit dem fe six! ' Jamaicans will be forced to stop and listen."

– Carolyn Carr Ragland

## **Screenings:**

Frameline37 International LGBT Film Festival, San Francisco, CA. 6/25/13  
World Premiere

8<sup>th</sup> Annual Belize International Film Festival, Belize City, Belize. 7/14/13  
Winner: Best Documentary Film

Community screening held by I Am One Trinidad and Tobago, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. 7/18/13

Community screening held by Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church, Rochester, NY. 7/18/13

## **Awards**

Winner Best Documentary, 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Belize International Film Festival.

**Excerpts from interviews with director / producer Micah Fink**

Transcript of interview of Michel Martin's interview of Micah Fink and Maurice Tomlinson for Tell Me More on NPR:

MARTIN: The film is called "The Abominable Crime" and it follows the personal stories of several gay and lesbian people in Jamaica. It also chronicles the stories of activists who are challenging anti-gay laws and attitudes there. The filmmaker is Micah Fink. He's with us now. Also with us is Maurice Tomlinson. He is a gay rights activist and lawyer who was also featured in the documentary. Welcome to you both, and thank you both so much for speaking with us.

MICAH FINK: Hi, Michel, glad to be here.

MAURICE TOMLINSON: Thank you. Same here. I'm Maurice.

MARTIN: Micah, how did you get interested in this issue?

FINK: I originally was commissioned to do a series of short films by PBS in Jamaica about HIV and AIDS. Jamaica has one of the highest AIDS rates in the gay community in the world. And the question was, why was that happening? And as we dug into it, it became apparent that there were very intense social factors that were driving the epidemic. And one of the social factors is the rampant homophobia that has come, to some degree, to define current, contemporary Jamaican society.

MARTIN: Maurice, I just want to mention here, by trade, you're an intellectual property rights lawyer. How did you become a gay-rights activist?

TOMLINSON: I was, as you said, intellectual property lawyer, commercial lawyer in chambers, and I was pretty comfortable, but I had a desire to do some kind of social work.

MARTIN: Were you out at that point yourself?

TOMLINSON: No, no.

MARTIN: It's my understanding that you really had no intention of being out.

TOMLINSON: No, no, no, absolutely not. It was, I mean, commercially that would have been professional suicide for me to be out. So once I started doing that, I started being confronted with these abuses, which I had no idea were happening, because I lived in a bubble. I am from a privileged class and background. I am a lawyer, a university lecturer. I, you know, drive wherever I need to go. I live in a upscale community. So I wasn't really exposed to the virulent homophobia. I mean, as Micah said, you read reports, but it really didn't touch on, concern my life. But once I started talking to people about their

rights as LGBT, it started forcing me to confront some issues that I wasn't very willing to do before.

And then I started, in response, writing to the newspapers, just interrogating, why are we so homophobic? Why are we doing these acts of violence to our LGBT brothers, sisters? And the backlash was, to me, astounding. I mean, people started calling for my death, saying that if we decriminalize private consensual acts of intimacy between men, it's going to lead to Sodom and Gomorrah or earthquakes on the magnitude of what happened in Haiti. What was most, I mean, unnerving for me, that these statements were coming from people who I thought were intelligent and educated and, you know, exposed.

MARTIN: Micah, you interviewed Ernest Smith. He's a former Jamaican parliamentarian who you ask for perspective about the laws which remain on the book. I mean, homosexuality remains a criminal act. You ask him about his perspective on this. Let me just play a short clip from what he said to say. And he's talking about a group, Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-Sexuals and Gays, or J-FLAG. Here it is.

(SOUNDBITE FROM FILM, "THE ABOMINABLE CRIME")

ERNEST SMITH: J-FLAG seeks to tell the world that homosexuals in this country are being violently abused. My answer to that, straight, is no, N-O, no. Most homosexuals got killed by other homosexuals because of jealousy.

MARTIN: Is that a common point of view?

FINK: It is. I mean, the reason we kept that in the film is because I heard that from countless people, countless educated, mostly upper-class Jamaicans. They absolutely denied anything was going on. And then I would meet with members of the gay community, and literally, the room was overflowing with people who said they'd been attacked, stabbed, murdered, had friends who were chopped to pieces, had friends who were burned out of their houses. There's a profound disconnect in how people are thinking about this issue in Jamaica. And I found that, as a journalist, just fascinating.

MARTIN: One of the people you highlight in the documentary is a woman named Simone. And at the time of the documentary, she had been shot by some neighborhood men. She and her brother both were attacked. They're both gay. And she tried to get a visa to the U.S. to leave. And she said in the film that she feels like the walking dead. Maurice, maybe I should go to you on this, 'cause I'm fascinated by this.

On the one hand, here's a woman who was shot down the street from her own house by people who actually - she knew who they were. One person was arrested at one point, but the other person was let go. So how is it possible that people can have that level of violence and it still be under the radar, to even somebody like yourself who wasn't really aware of it until it was directed at you?

TOMLINSON: Well, you have to put it in context. In Jamaica, the level of violence is so high that, as one ministry official told me, why are we making such a big deal about attacks against gays? In Jamaica, we kill straight people, too. The reality is our murder rate is equivalent to some countries with civil wars. So the few quote, unquote gays that are killed really are easily ignored.

MARTIN: Simone made some really tough choices that you, in the course of the film - do you want to talk little bit about that?

FINK: Sure. Well, Simone, when I met her, was recovering from having been shot. As she says, the gunmen, as they stood over her, you know, said that the lesbian fi dead, which means the lesbian must die, as they shot her. When I first met her, she had a beautiful 7-year-old daughter, Kayla, who she was a single parent taking care of.

And as she recovered from her gunshot wounds, came out of the hospital, she realized that the men who had shot her had heard that she had survived and were actually out hunting for her. So her and Kayla went into hiding over the next few months. When I would return, I'd meet with them in their safe house. And she would just express the anxiety she had that if anybody recognized her, they would simply kill her.

MARTIN: If you're just joining us, we're talking about a new documentary that takes a look at homophobia and violence directed at the LGBT community in Jamaica. We're talking about this with filmmaker Micah Fink and gay rights activist Maurice Tomlinson, who's also featured in the film. Micah, you have to assume that part of her concern was that her daughter could be harmed, as well. If somebody would shoot her in the street that way, that maybe the concern for her daughter's safety wouldn't be paramount. So, you know, to that end, Maurice, you made a difficult decision to leave at some point. You are married to a man in the states, but you've gone back and forth to Jamaica. But at points, you have been concerned about the safety of your family members, correct? So tell me how you navigate that?

TOMLINSON: Well, I have had to make a tough decision not to return to my home in Montego Bay, where my parents still live, because I'm too well-known, and it's such a small community. And it's just not safe. On one occasion, when I returned after my marriage was made public, I was at a stoplight, and some guy saw me in the car and started calling a crowd. And there is the batty man, and that's the Jamaican term, the derogatory term for homosexual. And he started calling a crowd, and, thankfully, the light changed and we drove off.

The challenge in Jamaica is that you never know what's going to be the trigger to an attack. You know, you'd think it's because of how you dress or your notoriety. One never really knows. So as a result, when I do return, it's generally just to do the work I'm required to do. And I'm holed up in one particular location. And that has sucked the life and the joy out of returning to Jamaica.

MARTIN: Well, why is it worth it to you?

TOMLINSON: If every single LGBT left Jamaica, then the situation would not change. And so I have to be there to show the face of a professional LGBT willing to fight for his liberation. Otherwise, nothing will change.

MARTIN: Can I just ask you, Maurice, how do you feel the media, the local media, covers these issues? 'Cause clearly people know about these things, because the stories are covered. But how is it covered?

TOMLINSON: That is a show in and of itself, as Micah will tell you. We have two major newspapers and two major television stations. And it's Fox News versus MSNBC, you know, one very tolerant, trying to be very balanced, and the other just way out there, wacko, gays are an abomination and we are, you know, going to lead to Sodom and Gomorrah, the whole nine yards.

FINK: Michel, it may help you, just to set your barometer here, when I first went to Jamaica, I interviewed the Reverend Harold Blair. And Harold Blair is the ombudsman for Jamaica. He's the peacemaker. He's the one who brings together fighting political parties. And, you know, this is the most liberal voice. And what he said is he had recently taken a courageous stand and came out and said that gay people should not be killed by violent mobs. That was the radical progressive voice in Jamaica.

TOMLINSON: But he then also said that he dislikes homosexuality and, you know, he would prefer his son to be a thief rather than be a homosexual...

FINK: ...Yes, and he said that gays may ultimately lead to the destruction of life on earth, but still, publicly speaking, he is one of the most liberal voices in Jamaica and the national peacemaker.

MARTIN: Maurice, you make the point in the film, I believe, that you attribute these attitude to...

TOMLINSON: ...The church.

MARTIN: ...The evangelical - no, no, that's, specifically the evangelical, because there's a strong Anglican tradition in Jamaica, right?

TOMLINSON: Right.

MARTIN: But you attribute this to the influence of white American evangelicals.

TOMLINSON: Oh, yes.

MARTIN: But the white, you know, American evangelicals in this country don't advocate people going around shooting people and killing people and harming people. That is not a part of our, you know what I mean, that's not a part of our - so what I don't

understand is why do you think it's taken on - 'cause you do make the point that there was not this level of, kind of, vitriol and public harassment even 20 years ago.

TOMLINSON: Right.

MARTIN: So the question I would have is why now?

TOMLINSON: Right, and the reality is that we are now seeing the fruits of both your culture war being exported to us and also the fruits of 20 years or 30 years of indoctrination, homophobic indoctrination, by evangelical pastors from America. And there's evidence of that. The Jimmy Swaggarts, etc., their description of gays as abominations, as disease vectors, etc., it was incessant. The result was that the Jamaican pastors saw the success of people like Jimmy Swaggart and they started parroting that sort of rhetoric.

The majority of our musicians grew up in church. I mean, in Jamaica, you didn't have a choice, you had to go to church. And you sit there every Sunday and hearing this kind of stuff, and these guys then produced music. I mean, we have 200 songs which are calling for murder and, you know, abuse of gays. They produce these songs.

And when we interrogated why are you saying these things, why are you singing these songs? You're not in the vein of Bob Marley who was all about one love. And they'll you, no, the Bible says that homosexuality's an abomination, and, you know, that's the end of the discussion. And we now have a situation where that anti-gay animus, which was exported to us by the evangelicals, is now taking root in Jamaica. We now are producing our own version, which is much more virulent. And we are re-exporting it to the rest of the Caribbean.

MARTIN: How is Simone doing, by the way? How is she doing?

FINK: Simone and Kayla are doing great. They've really firmly rooted themselves in Holland, where they've sought asylum. And Kayla's excelling in school and Simone is training herself to be a nurse.

MARTIN: Wow, that was an amazing story.

TOMLINSON: Yes, it touched a lot of people at the screening. People were very moved by it, by Kayla's story.

MARTIN: Maurice, how old is your son?

TOMLINSON: My son is 12.

MARTIN: Twelve, and is he with you?

TOMLINSON: No, he lives with his mother in Belize, a country I cannot...



MARTIN: ...In Belize, oh.

TOMLINSON: Yes.

MARTIN: Well, how does your former wife feel about your coming out? Is she OK with it, or is she mad at you?

TOMLINSON: Well, the thing is, she knew about my homosexuality for 10 years before we got married. I mean, she was my quote, unquote fag hag for 10 years. I mean, she knew all my boyfriends, etc. But then my - when my last gay relationship failed and her straight relationship failed, we thought, well, you know, let's try the marriage thing.

It might cure me and will help her. And of course, when that didn't work, it was an acrimonious divorce. But we maintain our civility because of our son. And as I saying, that she now lives with him in Belize, and because of the law in Belize, which bans the entry of homosexuals, I am trying to sue that country to get access to see him.

MARTIN: Maurice Tomlinson is a lawyer and human rights activist who divides his time between Jamaica and the U.S. He joined us from member station WXXI in Rochester, New York. Micah Fink is a filmmaker and producer of the documentary "The Abominable Crime," in which Maurice Tomlinson is featured. The film is currently on the film festival circuit now. He joined us from member station WBGO in Newark, New Jersey. Thank you both so much for speaking with us.

FINK: Thank you, Michel.

TOMLINSON: Thanks, Michel.

## **Director Micah Fink on How The Abominable Crime came about:**

This film was born when Jon Sawyer and Nathalie Applewhite of the [Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting](#) originally commissioned me to report on HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean.

After a while, we decided to focus on Jamaica – where Pulitzer had done the award winning project [“Live, Hope, Love.”](#) Once we had a country focus and some story ideas, they did the hard work of pitching the ideas to PBS World Focus, which agree to support and run the series. As part of this project, they also pitched a feature story I wrote to the Atlantic, called [“How AIDS Became A Caribbean Crisis.”](#)

During the reporting for this series, which we called [“The Glass Closet,”](#) I met Simone Edwards and began filming with her and her daughter Khayla.

I remember sitting on Jon’s porch after returning from Jamaica on one of my reporting trips and telling him about Simone’s story – and he agreed to support me as I continued following Simone’s story. It was a amazing story of survival and courage that had never been told before – and I think he was excited as I was!

Over the years that followed (I had promised Simone that we wouldn’t air anything until her daughter was safely reunited with her), Jon’s patience was extraordinary. Of course, he did ask every once and a while when I thought the film would be done, but he also understood that there were unique aspects to telling this difficult story – and telling it fully – and he was willing to wait.

And two years later, when we began filming Maurice’s story, he got it. He understood how Maurice’s story framed and explained the background to Simone’s story, and his support continued. Stories like these don’t always work out – but he continued to believe in this project. It took more than four years.

The Pulitzer Center’s willingness to support a long-term journalistic enterprise with no clear ending point is just one part of their remarkable contribution to the contemporary journalistic landscape. As mainstream broadcasters cut back on foreign reporting, and as reporting bureaus and budgets around the world shrink, the Pulitzer Center is forging ahead with a new vision of how serious international reporting can be funded and disseminated across a variety of media. The goal is not stylistic, but journalistic – getting the word out about critical international stories that shape our world.

Without the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting’s support and patience, lasting more than four years, this film – and Simone and Maurice’s story -- would never have been told! I am deeply grateful for their support, encouragement, and investment in this project.

To see more of the reporting the Pulitzer Center has done on HIV in the Caribbean, please visit: <http://pulitzercenter.org/hiv-aids-caribbean>.

**The Equalitopia Blog had the pleasure of interviewing Micah Fink about the project:**

**Equalitopia: Could you briefly tell us about yourself?**

**Micah Fink:** I'm a film maker with more than 15 years of experience producing films about critical social issues. I've made films for CNN, National Geographic, HBO, and PBS. I've made a number of films about HIV/AIDS, particularly one called AIDS Warriors for PBS Wide Angle — which was filmed with the Angolan military just after the end of their civil war — and was the first look at the impact of HIV/AIDS on a national military. That work led me eventually to produce a series of short films on Jamaica.

**How do you feel about the media coverage of homophobia in Jamaica?**

MF: Apart from the coverage of the “murder music” — popular Jamaican dance hall music that calls for the murder of gays and lesbians — there has really been very little coverage of this issue. Human Right Watch did a report nearly a decade ago — but for the most part this remains little reported and little understood. I'm hoping that this film will allow a global audience to connect with Simone as a mother — and with Maurice as a husband — to understand the devastating impact that homophobia has had on their lives... Gay rights are human rights — and this film makes that reality clear on a powerfully intimate and personal level. Also, even though “gay flight” is now a reality for many LGBT people — I don't think a film has ever been made depicting the journeys and experiences of those being forced to seek asylum abroad because of discrimination based on their sexual orientation.

**What impact are you hoping this film will have?**

I'm hoping that this film will help encourage Jamaica to rethink its embrace of anti-gay laws and anti-gay violence — and also help to humanize the lives and experiences of its victims so they become impossible to ignore.

**What has been the toughest part of making this film?**

MF: Making a film about lesbians and gays in Jamaica (we've filmed there six different times) is fraught with the most obvious dangers and risks, not just for the film crew, but also for our main characters whose lives were constantly at stake. The courage and dedication of both Simone and Maurice can't be underestimated — and I am in awe of both of them.

**With your time in Jamaica, what's one thing you've learned that might surprise most people?**

MF: I think most people think of Jamaica as a vacation paradise — but they seldom venture beyond the beaches and resorts into the real Jamaica. If they did, I think they would discover the reality that was lived by Maurice and Simone is quite a brutal one — and I think their feelings about the country (lovely as it is) might change.

**Some sources mention differences (both legally and public opinion) between gay men and gay women in Jamaica. Does the film deal with both male and female homosexuality in Jamaica?**

MF: We have two main characters. Simone is a lesbian mother. Maurice is a gay man. While their experiences are similar — class, education and gender all shaped their lives in very different ways.

Maurice is a well educated Lawyer. Simone was a hair dresser. Class definitely softens the impacts of homophobia in Jamaica — because those who have privileged lives travel in private cars and can avoid public transport and can afford more privacy in every aspect of their lives. But that said, I heard over and over again, how Jamaica is a very small Island nation — and once your privacy is breached, regardless of your gender, the consequences can be quite abrupt and quite deadly.

(original interview: <http://blog.equalitopia.com/post/42870980052/kickstarter-an-abominable-crime-homophobia-jamaica?9e8f07a0> )

## **Filmmakers**

### **Director/ Producer – Micah Fink**

Micah Fink, the founder of Common Good Productions, is an award-winning producer, director and writer specializing in international affairs, public health, and environmental issues. He is also on the faculty at the Graduate Program in Social Documentary at the School For Visual Arts in NYC.

Recent projects include producing of CNN's "Memo to the President with Fareed Zakaria" (2013), producing discussion segments and short films for Al Gore's "Climate Reality Project," (2011 and 2012), and directing and producing "Mann V. Ford" a feature documentary for HBO (2011).

Micah's work has been recognized with several Emmy nominations, two Cine Golden Eagle Awards, a Silver Screen award, and an International Film and Video Award. He was a Japan Society Fellow in 2008 and a Kaiser Media Health Fellow in 2005. Micah has a MS in Journalism from Columbia University and a BA in Comparative Literature from Cornell University. Over the last fifteen years, he has worked on more than three dozen films for PBS Wide Angle, National Geographic Explorer, National Geographic Wild, Frontline, WNET, The Teaching Channel, and ABC News.

You can learn more about Micah's company, Common Good Productions, and see examples of his work at [www.commongoodprod.com](http://www.commongoodprod.com).

### **Editor / Co-Producer – Karen K. H. Sim**

Karen Sim began her documentary filmmaking career as an editor on Maro Chermayeff's Juilliard, a 2-hour special for the PBS series American Masters. She then further honed her skills in storytelling by working with Frontline producer/director Ofra Bikel, editing a number of her films, including the Emmy award winning An Ordinary Crime and The Burden of Innocence. Since then, she edited Saint Misbehavin': The Wavy Gravy Movie and worked with Liz Garbus as her producer and editor on a number of projects, including COMA, Shouting Fire: Stories from the Edge of Free Speech which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and most recently ROBOT for Focus Forward Films which premiered at the Los Angeles Film Festival.

### **Cinematographer – Gabrielle Weiss**

Gabrielle's film making career in documentary has brought her to many places including Thailand, Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Mexico and throughout the United States. She has worked as a DP, producer and editor for clients such as ABC, PBS, HBO, Discovery/Times, TLC, NHK, The WashingtonPost.com, and A&E.

### **Composer – Amanda Harberg**

Acclaimed as the composer of "truly beautiful music" that is "hauntingly moving" as well as "audience-engaging", Philadelphia native Amanda Harberg composes music that continually engages audiences and performers alike on emotional as well as intellectual levels, and is performed regularly all over the world. The 2012/13 season includes performances of Ms. Harberg's music by the Albany Symphony's "Dogs of Desire", the Grand Rapids Symphony, the Olympia Philharmonic Society, the National Symphony of Ecuador, the Thuringer Symphoniker, the University of Nevada Symphony Orchestra, the Harmonium Choral Society and many more.

Harberg has recordings out on Koch International, Albany Records, Centaur Records, Walking Frog Records, and several upcoming recordings. Harberg has received many commissions, including those from the Juilliard School, the New York Youth Symphony Chamber Music Program, the American Music Center, the New York State Council for the Arts, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, and many more.

Awards include a Fulbright/Hays Fellowship, two Creative Connections grants, Juilliard's Peter Mennin Prize, a MacDowell Colony summer residency and regular ASCAP Plus awards. Harberg is the co-director of the Music and More series in Glen Ridge NJ, where she lives with her family.

### **Graphic Design and Animation – Molly Schwartz**

Molly Schwartz was born in New York City, raised in Oklahoma. She earned her BFA in painting from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, followed by a semester studying art, language, history and mountains in Nepal. After school she studied art conservation & restoration of works of art on paper, learning about qualities of paper and the cumulative effects of time. In Los Angeles she learned digital effects and time in fractions of seconds.

She has lived in Chicago, Katmandu, Los Angeles, and since 1999, Brooklyn. Schwartz shows her animated videos and drawings in public art installations, festivals, and exhibitions worldwide. She freelances for independent film and television. In May 2011 she completed her MPS graduate degree in visual programming and physical computing at NYU's Interactive Telecommunications Program. She was awarded a Research Resident position for the 2011-2012 year at ITP.

### **Associate Producer – Tara Nadolny**

Tara Nadolny is an associate producer and researcher at Common Good Productions. Tara received a BAH in Film and Media and German language from Queen's University in 2010 and she is currently pursuing her master's degree in Media Studies at The New School in New York City.

### **Executive Producer – Jon Sawyer**

Jon Sawyer is founding director of the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, a non-profit organization that funds independent reporting with the intent of raising the standard of media coverage and engaging the broadest possible public in global affairs. The Center partners with major newspapers, magazines and broadcast outlets as well as universities and high schools across the country and in Europe. In 2012 the Center provided \$850,000 in direct support to journalists working on 85 projects.

Jon, previously Washington bureau chief for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, was selected three years in a row for the National Press Club's award for best foreign reporting. The Pulitzer Center has won an Emmy for new approaches to news and documentary, the National Press Foundation's prize for best online journalism, the National Press Club's prize for best online journalism, and the Asia Society's Goldman Sachs Foundation Prize for best use of technology in international education.

### **Executive Producer – Nathalie Applewhite**

Nathalie Applewhite is managing director of the Pulitzer Center. She joined the organization in 2006, shortly after its founding, and has played a key role in the development of the Center's model and approach towards international journalism initiatives and educational outreach. She won an Emmy with the Center as the managing producer for LiveHopeLove.com, an interactive documentary website that explores living with HIV/AIDS in Jamaica. Prior to joining the Center, Nathalie worked as an independent documentary producer, director and editor, as a consultant for the Executive Office of the Secretary General at the UN, and as a project manager and media specialist for the University of Pennsylvania.

Funding generously provided by Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting



**Pulitzer Center**

*The Pulitzer Center promotes in-depth engagement with global affairs through its sponsorship of quality international journalism across all media platforms and an innovative program of outreach and education. The Center's reporting on HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean is supported by the MAC AIDS Fund.*

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

## **Key Characters**

### **Simone Edwards**

Simone Edwards was born and raised in Spanish Town, Jamaica. She lived there with her daughter until 2008, when she and her brother were shot in a brutal anti-gay attack outside of her home. A year later she fled Jamaica and applied for and received asylum in The Netherlands, where she and her daughter currently reside.

### **Maurice Tomlinson**

Maurice has been involved in HIV/AIDS and LGBTI activism in Jamaica for over 12 years. He is an Attorney-at-Law and law lecturer with current research interests in sexual rights and HIV/AIDS advocacy. He regularly writes on gay rights in Jamaican newspapers and is leading an initiative of the major Jamaican NGOs (J-FLAG, JASL and CVC) working in the area of HIV/AIDS and LGBTI rights to have the country's anti-buggery law repealed. He is also seeking to have the legal prohibition against sex-work modified to allow for consensual adult sex work. Maurice regularly attends local and international conferences where he presents on the state of Jamaica's law and homophobia. He also conducts human rights and advocacy training sessions for Jamaican LGBTI and conceptualized Jamaica's first 'Walk for Tolerance' for April 7, 2010.

In 2012, Maurice was the first recipient of the David Kato Vision and Voice Award, an award which commemorates the life of Ugandan activist David Kato. The award honors an individual who demonstrates courage and outstanding leadership in advocating for the sexual rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people, particularly in environments where these individuals face continued rejection, marginalization, isolation and persecution.

Maurice was married to MCC Pastor Tom Decker in Canada in 2011. In 2012, after the Jamaica Observer newspaper published an unauthorized photo and article about his marriage, Maurice received a multitude of death threats and was forced to flee Jamaica. Maurice currently lives in Rochester, New York with his husband.

### **Karlene Williams-Clarke**

Originally from Kingston, Jamaica, Karlene served as Co-Chair and chair respectively of Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-Sexuals & Gays (J-FLAG) and Women for Women (WfW) for over seven years. A visible LGBT advocate/activist, Karlene was forced to flee Jamaica in 2009 after receiving threats against her life. Karlene currently lives in Toronto, where she continues her activism by coordinating the LGBT Refugee Support Program at the 519 Church Street Community Centre.



### Credits

Produced and directed	Micah Fink
Co-produced and edited	Karen K. H. Sim
Cinematography	Gabrielle Weiss
Original music	Amanda Harberg
Opening animation and graphics design	Molly Schwartz
Associate producer	Tara Nadolny
Sound	Jose Araujo
Additional cinematography	Michael Grippo Caleb Heller Jenni Morello Jerry Risius Maartje Wegdam Babette Wielenga Laura van Schendel
Technical advisor	Dino Sanacory
Editor for trailer	Leah Goudsmit
Assistant editors	Vincent Welch Tara Nadolny David Osit Christa Artherholt
Sound edit and mix	Margaret Crimmins Greg Smith Dog Bark Sound Inc.
Colorist	Evan Anthony
Online facility	Frame:Runner, NYC
Legal Counsel	F. Robert Stein W. Wilder Knight II of Pryor Cashman LLP
Local transportation	Noel Dale
Production assistants	Elizabeth Padden Yuki Kokubo Miriam Van Oort
Executive Producers	Jon Sawyer Nathalie Applewhite

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