



Kenya's Camerapix Lands Major Prize at World News Summit

(Banff, Canada, October 29, 2003) Africa's leading news agency, Nairobi-based Camerapix, has won the coveted Documentary Award at this year's News World conference in Dublin.

Camerapix MD Salim Amin was honoured for the "professional and financial courage" he demonstrated by covering the civil war in Liberia more than a year before the rest of the world woke up to the unfolding tragedy there.

Amin, with no firm commissions to back his judgment and very little interest from major international news organizations, paid for filmmaker James Brabazon to spend several weeks in the Liberian jungle with troops of the LURP opposition forces as they advanced on the capital Monrovia.

A short version of his film, *In Pursuit of Liberty: Liberia's Secret War*, was first shown at last year's News World, and it was only as the conflict came to the world's attention that the importance and exclusivity of Amin's film was finally recognized. Since then it has been screened by CNN and the Discovery Times channel, and excerpts from the program have been used by most major news sources.

News World's editorial director, Patrick Stoddart, says: "In a year dominated by documentaries about the war in Iraq, Salim's film shone through as a very brave act of faith. There may have been more polished films and certainly there have been many that had bigger budgets, but nothing we saw demonstrated the basic principle of good TV journalism better – the principle of knowing an important story when you have one and then sticking with it against all the odds, both physical and financial."

The award came as a complete surprise to Salim Amin, who thought his only task during the awards was to present the News World/Reuters Mohamed Amin Award for outstanding journalism – given every year in memory of Salim's father, the legendary photo journalist who died in a bungled hijack in 1996.

But Tony Donovan, MD of Reuters Television, told delegates that in a year that had seen the death of so many journalists the Mo Amin jury felt it would be "invidious to single out one person or one act." Instead, as a tribute to those who died, it was decided to withhold the 2003 award and donate the £1000 bursary to the Mohamed Amin Foundation, set up to train young African journalists.

The News World Lifetime Achievement Award had earlier been accepted by Walter Cronkite.

News World International is the world's premier annual independent news forum of the international broadcast community. It is managed by Banff Media Enterprises, a division of the Banff Television Foundation, the internationally recognized organizer and presenter of high quality electronic media events. Next year's conference is scheduled for October. Stay tuned to the News World web site at www.banffmedia.com/newsworld for more details and exciting news on the 2004 conference.

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For Information:

Heidi Bobiak
Communications Manager
Ph: 1-403-678-9289
E-mail: hbobiak@btvf.com

Sarah Pearson
Communications Assistant
Ph: 1-403-609-6028
E-mail: spearson@btvf.com

News World International
c/o Banff Television Foundation
1350 Railway Avenue, Canmore, Alberta, Canada, T1W 3E3
Ph: 1-403-678-9260 Fax: 1-403-678-9269 Email: info@btvf.com