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TAKING ROOT: The Vision of Wangari Maathai
WINS AWARDS AT PREMIERE FILM FESTIVALS

TAKING ROOT: The Vision of Wangari Maathai, a recent film by Lisa Merton and Alan Dater, has won fifteen awards since premiering at Full Frame Documentary Film Festival in Durham, North Carolina in April 2008.

The awards include the "Audience Award Winner" at Hot Docs, the largest documentary film festival in North America. Film festival audience members selected ***Taking Root*** from over 170 films shown at the April 2008 festival.

In August 2008, ***Taking Root*** was awarded the "Amnesty International Durban Human Rights Award" at the Durban International Film Festival in South Africa. [See full list below.]

Coral Vinsen, Amnesty International Durban executive member said in presenting the award, "**Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai**" stood out, for among other things, its demonstration of the transformative impact that the weakest members of even poor societies can sometimes have, using the limited means at their disposal in creative and committed ways."

Taking Root won the "Full Frame Women in Leadership Award" at the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival. Lisa Merton was awarded the "Nashville Women in Film & Television Award for Best Feature Length Film Directed or Co-Directed by a Woman" at the 39th Nashville Film Festival in Nashville, Tennessee. The film also received "Honorable Mention, Best Documentary Feature" at that festival.

Taking Root tells the inspiring story of the Green Belt Movement of Kenya and its unstoppable founder, Wangari Maathai, the first environmentalist and first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize (2004). The 80-minute film weaves a compelling and dramatic narrative of one woman's personal journey in the context of the turbulent political and environmental history of her country.

The film has been screened at over 40 festivals world wide and also aired on the PBS series *Independent Lens* in April 2009. It is now available for educational institutions, community organizations and home viewing. For more information on the film, visit takingrootfilm.com.

Taking Root Awards:

Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, April 2008, Durham, North Carolina
Full Frame Women in Leadership Award

39th Nashville Film Festival, April 2008, Nashville, Tennessee
***Nashville Women in Film & Television Award for Best Feature Length Film
Directed or Co-Directed by a Woman***

Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, April 2008, Toronto, Canada
Audience Award Winner

Projecting Change Film Festival, May 2008, Vancouver, BC
Audience Award Winner

Maui Film Festival, June 2008, Maui, Hawaii
Green Cinema Award

Durban International Film Festival, July-August 2008, Durban, South Africa
Amnesty International Durban Human Rights Award

Vermont International Film Festival, October 2008, Burlington, Vermont
The Harold & Margaret Blank Award for Storytelling

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Asheville Film Festival, November 2008

Best Documentary

Rencontres Internationales du Documentaire de Montréal, November 2008, Montréal, Canada

Prix ÉcoCaméra 2008

Prix du Public 2008

International Images Film Festival for Women, February 2009, Zimbabwe

Best Documentary

Council on Foundations, May 2009

Henry Hampton Award for Film and Digital Media 2009

Green International Film Festival, May 21 – 27, 2009, Seoul, Korea

Audience Award

Mendocino Film Festival, May 29 – 31, 2009

Best Documentary

Audience Award