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PRESS RELEASE

Big Up's 'Beyond Labels' Premieres at London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival

London, 24 February 2010 – Presented in association with GMFA, the gay men's health charity, 'Beyond Labels', will premier at this year's London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival on 30 March at 6.30pm. The film explores Black gay male experience in London, from Gay Lib pioneer Ted Walker Brown to more recent arrivals on the scene. Tales of friendship and support underlie an investigation into the creation of a sense of community.

'Beyond Labels' is directed by Jaime Sylla, project manager for GMFA's Big Up project, which receives Big Lottery funding to create sexual health interventions for Black gay men in London. Big Up works with volunteers, most of whom are Black gay men, to help develop its projects. These volunteers helped conceive and develop many of the themes explored in 'Beyond Labels'.

Jaime's last film, 'No Magic Bullet' premiered at the LLGFF in 2007. This latest film aims to explore how racism, homophobia, HIV and issues around immigration all have an impact on the construction of a healthy identity for Black gay men.

The film offers inspiringly diverse voices who share their alternatives to the invisibility of stigmatisation which many have experienced within their own communities and families. This world premiere screening at the LLGFF will be followed by a discussion with the director and some of the film's participants, as well as representatives from Big Up.

Matthew Hodson, Head of Programmes at GMFA, comments: "Black gay men are a minority group within a minority group, and are likely in their lifetimes to experience both racism and homophobia. The wisdom and resilience of the men in this film is testament to the strength and courage within this community, and to the men who are able to proudly say, 'this is who I am', not just Black or gay, but an individual who is beyond labels."

For ticket information, visit www.bfi.org.uk/llgff or call 020 7928 3232.

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About GMFA

Founded in 1992, GMFA is the UK's leading charity dedicated to gay men's health. Its mission is to improve gay men's health by increasing the control they have over their own lives. The organisation is based on the belief that the best health promotion for gay men comes from gay men themselves. For this reason, it uses the knowledge and ideas of its 170 volunteers, most of them gay men, to design and plan its thought-provoking sexual health interventions. These include a range of advertising campaigns, leaflets, postcards and booklets; FS, its health magazine, distributed nationally in gay venues and GU clinics; and national and London-based courses covering sex education, life skills and smoking cessation. In addition, GMFA creates targeted sexual health interventions for black gay men and HIV positive gay men. Independent surveys have concluded that GMFA's campaigns reach up to 60% of the London gay population and that the organisation is the most reliable agency at reaching gay men. The charity runs a range of information websites:

- Sex & Sexual Health, www.gmfa.org.uk/sex - visited by a third of London's gay men in 2006;
- London Services, www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices - detailed listing of sexual health services for gay men in London;
- Positive Gay Guide, www.gmfa.org.uk/positive - information for HIV positive gay men;
- The Guide, www.gmfa.org.uk/theguide - a guide to gay sports and social groups in London;
- Quit smoking, www.gmfa.org.uk/quitsmoking - information and advice on quitting smoking for gay men;
- About GMFA, www.gmfa.org.uk/aboutgmfa - for more information on GMFA.

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