



K.C. SIMMS

To some, Detroit looks like a city that lost its energy long ago. But underneath the stillness is a different story. And to hear it, all you gotta do is listen. It's out there, and a Detroit-based film company wants to make sure you get the whole story and even take part in creating it.

Independent in Detroit

Meet *indigo filmworks*, an independent film company - and the emphasis is on independent. Nicole Sylvester and Maaza Mengiste are the two enterprising women behind indigo. Together, they are a writing/producing/directing team determined to develop a thriving film industry based in Detroit.

"Detroit is ripe for the move to film," states Maaza, "and now is the perfect time to tap into the city's resources." Together, these two award-winning filmmakers have over five years of production experience. Their debut film, a short entitled *The Stop*, was accepted into competition at the 1998

Detroit and Windsor International Festival of Film. It's continued to receive high praise from viewers and other filmmakers.

Their next project is a feature-length film entitled *Minor Blues*, as well as a trailer to the feature shot in association with Ahptic Productions on April 24, 1999. Ahptic Productions, a Lansing-based production company, already has two films under their belt.

Nicole says, "indigo's mission is to make films that tell powerful stories - stories that dig in and don't let go quite so easily. *Minor Blues* does that." *Minor Blues* is a drama about young musicians on their way to putting Motown back on the map and in the charts. At its core, it's a story about what happens when five young people love something so much it destroys them.

"*Minor Blues* will be a Detroit project from start to finish. We will utilize Detroit talent, crew, locations and resources," Maaza adds. According to Nicole, "There is plenty of opportunity for people and businesses to help us. We want the Detroit area to come together and share this project with us."



AHPTIC PRODUCTIONS

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Clockwise from top: *The Stop* at the Detroit Ren Cen people mover station; Maaza Mengiste and Nicole Sylvester at work on their debut film; getting the lighting just right on the set of *Minor Blues*; checking the replay during filming of *Minor Blues*.

