

ARTS & BOOKS

[News briefs on Hollywood message films, South Africa's black Jesus and Michael Jackson's abaya.](#)

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[Messages from Hollywood](#)

Syriana, *Good night and Good Luck*, *The Constant Gardener*, *Brokeback Mountain*, *Capote*, *Munich*, *Jarhead*... this year's list of nominees for Golden Globe awards mostly contained 'Big Idea' films, giving an indirect insight into US current cultural and political debates. *King Kong* was pretty much the only 2006 representative of the feel-good escapist factor in the American film business.

Sources: "In Movies, Big Issues, for Now," *The New York Times* 18 January 2006.

[South Africa's black Jesus](#)

Son of Man, directed by Mark Dornford-May, premiered on January 22 at the Sundance film festival. It offers a new interpretation of the Bible switching the story from first-century Palestine to 21st-century Africa. Shot in rural Eastern Cape and Khayelitsha, the film depicts Jesus Christ as a political activist fighting oppression under a regime not unlike Zimbabwe's.

Sources: « SA 'black Jesus' film to premiere at Sundance, » *The Mail & Guardian* 21 January 2006 ; « Christ as a black revolutionary, » *The Mail & Guardian* 27 January 2006.

[Michael Jackson's abaya](#)

Michael Jackson was recently spotted in an abaya, or full-length robe, in a shopping mall in Bahrain's capital, Manama. The pop star was wearing a traditional women's dress with a veil covering his face and black gloves - but he was still wearing men's shoes. Michael Jackson is a guest of the royal family and rumours are that he will settle in the Gulf state for good.

Sources: "Jackson goes shopping dressed as a woman," *The Times* 25 January 2006; « Michael Jackson shops as woman, » *The Australian* 26 January 2006.