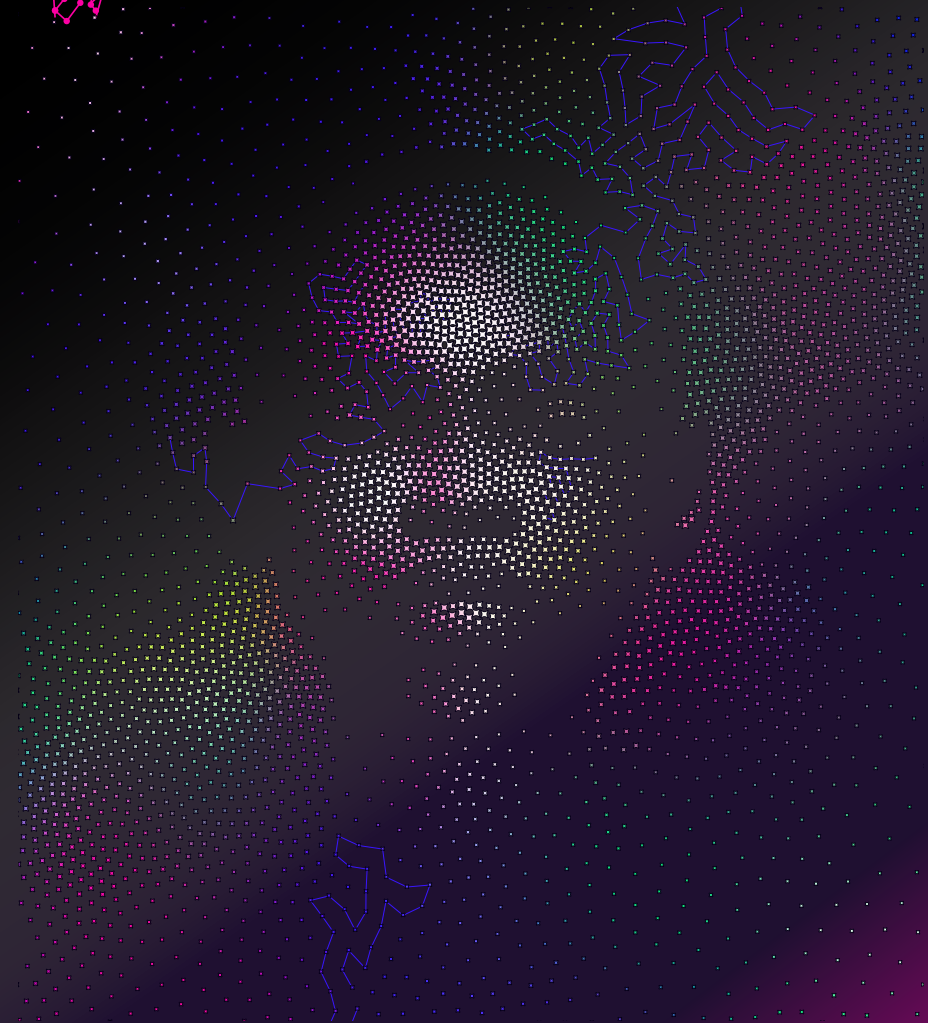


**AFRICAN** THE FOURTEENTH  
DURBAN FILMMART



**CONSTELLATION**



**E-DOSSIER**

14<sup>th</sup>

**Durban FilmMart**



**21-24 JULY 2023**

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# WELCOME BY THE DFMI CO-CHAIRS



Storytellers are the heartbeat of a vibrant society, reaching back into our collective consciousness and re-interpreting and re-imagining fables, myths and tales to make sense of our common futures. Creative Talent is the stardust that uses force of will, to coax those stories out of the ether, onto the page and beam them into the digital lifeblood of a billion glittering screens. Supporting that talent is at the core of what the Durban FilmMart stands for.

This year we are bringing together all that creative energy under the theme of “African Constellations,” symbolising the eternal brightness that shines in our universal desire to be heard, to have a voice, to take you and your communities’ stories out into the world. We want you to shine brightly in the dark night, and be seen no matter where you are on the African continent, no matter your history.

The global film industry is going through unprecedented change and reorganisation, and it can be a daunting time for writers, directors, producers and all the associated craft, as they try to navigate access points for their stories, their careers and often their companies, making it even more critical for initiatives such as the DFM to facilitate platforms that help open up talent corridors and build sustainable and viable content ecosystems, or dare we say, African Story Constellations.

One thing will never change: the market will always be drawn to powerful ideas. We feel that intellectual property must always remain at the heart of a healthy storytelling universe, and that instead of creators worrying about what platform they are going to get access to, they should become platform agnostic, and story-centric, giving due value to original thought. Every narrative has a home, a curious and hungry audience, and creators need to believe that if they are true to their

story, the market will find them, not only across Africa, but across the globe.

The DFMI has been working extremely hard to make sure this is an unforgettable year, so on behalf of both our board and international advisory committee, we welcome back all our local and international guests to the first full-on in-person event since 2020.

We congratulate the organising team and programme participants for delivering the 2023 programme, once again proving that the Durban FilmMart is a dynamic pan-African platform that connects our industry to the world. We also extend deep gratitude to our partners and supporters, old and new, for their continued love and support in promoting the African story. On behalf of the DFMI Board, we wish you all, but most of all the storytelling talent, a successful and rewarding Durban FilmMart 2023.

**Neil & Maganthrie**  
CO-CHAIRS DFMI BOARD



MAGANTHRIE PILLAY  
CO-CHAIR



NEIL BRANDT  
CO-CHAIR

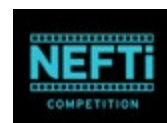


# PARTNERS & SPONSORS

## PRINCIPAL FUNDERS



## FUNDERS, SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS



Department: Trade, Industry and Competition  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



## PROGRAMME PARTNERS



## AWARDS







# OFFICIAL DFM 2023 PROJECTS

The Durban FilmMart proudly presents the selected projects for the 14<sup>th</sup> annual event. Chosen from a competitive call for live-action and animation projects in development, these projects showcase the vibrant creativity and diversity of African cinema. As a premier Pan-African finance and co-production market, the Durban FilmMart serves as a platform to nurture and elevate African talent. The 2023 selection includes 8 animations, 11 fiction projects and 10 documentaries featuring African talents in key creative roles.

In preparation for the Durban FilmMart, these projects undergo an intensive 6-8 week packaging and mentorship program, equipping them for a pitching session to a distinguished panel of decision makers. This opportunity opens doors for co-production, financing, and global distribution.

The Durban FilmMart Institute is committed to providing filmmakers with access and growth opportunities. Congratulations to the talented teams behind these exceptional projects, whose stories will captivate audiences on the international stage.

## DFM 2023 FICTION PROJECTS

ABANY'OMAMA (SOME MOTHERS)   MA	10
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BLACKASS	14
COCONUT	16
EVERY STITCH A LONELY THREAD	18
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# ABANY'OMAMA (SOME MOTHERS) | MA

In the sugarcane farming community in rural Kwa-Zulu Natal, Ntombi, Balungile, and MaKhanyile are facing challenges in raising their daughters. Due to Ntombi's negligence and alcoholism, she accidentally pours boiling oil over her 6-year-old daughter. Overwhelmed with shock and fear, Ntombi decides to keep her daughter at home and attempts to treat her injuries, avoiding the scrutiny of outsiders, especially Miss Mlaba. Balungile takes pride in her daughter Zethe, who has always made her look good. However, Zethe's unexpected pregnancy at the age of 17 threatens her plans to study

medicine next year. In an effort to maintain the facade of a perfect daughter within the local community, Balungile secretly adds an abortion pill to Zethe's food against her will. Meanwhile, MaKhanyile's granddaughter, Phumla, is facing difficulties obtaining an ID due to bureaucratic challenges. The frustration and humiliation Phumla experiences become overwhelming. MaKhanyile, preoccupied with her own life filled with mourning and grieving with other families, ignores Phumla's frustrations. This project appeared as 'Ma' in the DFM Access 2023 programme.



REEL PREVIEWS

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Being raised by a single mother, I witnessed the challenges she faced raising her children alone. But what became more fascinating to me as I grew up was realising that all the other single mothers in my street were silently going through the same thing. It made our situation at home not unique but a collective problem that our parents never openly spoke about.



MINENHLE LUTHULI  
DIRECTOR

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Minenhle Luthuli is a filmmaker from KZN, South Africa. She holds an honours degree in Motion Picture Medium and her graduation film, *Umsolwa (The Accused)* won the Best Student Film at the 2018 Simon Sabela Awards. Through her production company she has been able to write, direct and produce a number of short films such as *Heart Attack* currently streaming on Showmax and *Get Ready With Me* (2022 NEFTI Short Film Competition). She is currently developing her first short film, *Abany'Omama (Some Mothers)*.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Minenhle Luthuli Narratives was formed in 2019 after founder, Minenhle Luthuli graduated school and was looking at opportunities to expand her expertise. The sole purpose was to develop scripts and produce films with the aim of working with other recent graduates so that they can further their careers. In 2022 we expanded by taking work from other clients and shooting documentaries and music videos.

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Fiction Feature Length
Country:	South Africa
Production Company:	Minenhle Luthuli Narratives
Running Time:	100 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	375 789.03 USD
Finances Committed:	10 156.46 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Seek co-production partners.
- Financing.
- Distribution partners (national and internationally).



BIG TREE

Ten years into the future, a young woman named Anena invents a technology called Yat Madit that fosters direct democracy. It runs on an open-source algorithm modelled on decentralised social media and uses cheap, 3D-printed devices. The technology enables thousands of people to be joint presidents, hundreds to form committees to replace ministers, and every citizen to be a parliamentarian. Citizens are eager to adopt Yat Madit, but Anena can't celebrate this success because her mother goes missing under mysterious circumstances. She suspects her father killed her and hid the body.

Meanwhile, a biotechnologist named Tabaro seeks government patronage for his startup and convinces a dictator to replace riot police with genetically modified butterflies. The butterflies infect people with a neurotic disease similar to The Nodding Syndrome, causing suicide by self-mutilation. Now the government has an excuse to ban Yat Madit, claiming that Anena's invention is a public health hazard that causes this strange sickness. Tabaro demonstrates that this is

more effective than brute force and can be reused in the future against any opposition without staining the government's image with blood.

While searching for her mother's body, Anena finds a strange insect. It turns out to be Tabaro's creation, which, defying his safeguards, mated with a natural butterfly and is now uncontrollable. Anena discovers the true cause of the disease, and it pushes people to get rid of centralised governance. A revolution brews.

In desperation, the government sends trigger-happy soldiers to confiscate Yat Madit gadgets. It's bloody, and people resist. Then butterflies infect the soldiers, and they flee, leaving the village to deal with the killer insects and the pandemic.

Anena eventually finds her mother alive, but she can't have a happy ending because she blames herself for the tragedy that has befallen the village.



REEL PREVIEWS

DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

With science fiction, I can find solutions to bad leadership and dictatorships in our cultures. Before colonialism, forms of democracy with no central governance thrived in Acholi, where this story is set, and it's not far-fetched to imagine a near future where today's digital technologies and algorithms inspire a revolution that gives birth to direct democracy.

DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Dilman Dila, the director, is a writer and filmmaker who has been listed for many prestigious prizes, including Best Short Fiction at the British Science Fiction Association Awards (2021). His films have won multiple awards, including *The Felistas Fable* (2013).



PROFILE

Flavia Bukojja, the producer, has a passion for accounting and brings her skills to running film sets. Her credits include Production Manager on two TV series and producer of four short films and the mini-series, *Kabi and Kalo* (2023).

COMPANY DETAILS

Founded in 2011, Dilstories has produced four TV series, two feature films and numerous shorts that have won awards. It is building Uganda's first film studio.



COMPANY PROFILE



FLAVIA BUKOJJA  
PRODUCER



DILMAN DILA  
DIRECTOR

PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Fiction Feature Length
Country:	Uganda
Production Company:	Dilstories
Running Time:	100 minutes

FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	500 000 USD
Finances Committed:	18 500 USD

GOALS AT DFM

- Find co-producers.
- Acquire funding.
- Get into labs and markets that will help get the project off the ground.



JUMPSTART  
2022



# BLACKASS

Furo Wariboko, a young Lagosian man with no job or prospects, turns to fast money-making schemes in a desperate bid to improve his situation. His sister Tekena, an ambitious entrepreneur, contrasts his struggles. They reside in Lagos slums with their father, whom Furo despises for his failed business ventures.

A chance encounter with a mysterious stranger in a bar leads to Furo waking up one morning to discover that, overnight, he has turned into a white man! As he makes his way through Lagos, the largest black city in the world, with his new identity, he begins to realise that this change could actually be a blessing. When he secures his dream job, meets a beautiful young woman, and gets invited to stay with her at her place - all in the same day - he slowly begins to look at his situation in a new light. There is just one small

problem - his ass, in stark contrast to the rest of him, remains as black as ever!

He soon confides in Tekena, who is horrified by his change. She wants her brother back and tries to convince him to look for ways to change back. Furo, however, has different ideas - his new identity has opened up a whole new side of Lagos to him, one that he never dreamed he could be a part of. He has begun to enjoy his elevated status and has even picked a new name for himself - Frank Whyte. Not everyone is fooled by his attempts to pass as a member of the upper class, though. It will take more than a new name to distance himself from his unapologetically black ass, from his penniless past, and from his sister who seems determined to drag him back into it.



## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

What I have always loved about *Blackass* is that it's a humorous visual tale. There's nothing as Nigerian as the use of biting comedy to discuss bleak social issues. Elevating whiteness in a black country is bizarre, a mystical catfish. I want the audience to come on this journey through labyrinthine Lagos - a maze of freakish mirrors and colourful characters.

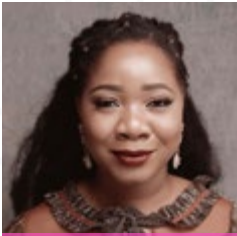
## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Tolulope Ajayi** is an award-winning filmmaker who has created several socially impactful short films that have won awards in over 5 festivals, including the AFRIFF Jury award. He is currently in post-production with his debut feature film, *Over The Bridge*.

Film Programmer and Creative Indaba Fellow **Chioma Onyenwe** is the founder of Raconteur Productions. Her debut feature, *8 Bars and a Clef*, was nominated for the AMAAs, and she received recognition from One World Media for her true-crime podcast, 23419. *Blackass* marks her third narrative feature.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Raconteur Productions is a film production company based in Lagos that tells stories through various mediums such as films, web series, television, theatre, and podcasts. Their narratives explore the intersection of history, culture, and identity.



CHIOMA ONYENWE  
PRODUCER



TOLULOPE AJAYI  
DIRECTOR

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Fiction Feature Length
Country:	Nigeria
Production Company:	Raconteur Productions
Running Time:	120 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	750 000 USD
Finances Committed:	20 000 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Financing.
- Co-producers.



COCONUT

In 2005, as a distraught Ofilwe Tlou (15) listens to a sombre funeral sermon, her mind wanders back to 1997. A confident, outspoken Ofilwe (8), her quiet, funny brother Tshepo (10), and their parents Gemina, a passionate nurse, and ambitious John, who has just landed a top tech job, are the first black family to move into the elite yet hostile Little Valley, a high-walled Johannesburg estate.

After her first overt experience of racism at her new, mostly white school, Ofilwe decides to change who she is to fit in while Tshepo's macho, cold, all-boys private school makes him yearn to go back to their township community in Mabopane. An overworked and secretly undermined John, an outsider in corporate South Africa, forces his children to assimilate despite how destructive it is, believing they will never have to suffer like him.

Over the years, an anxious Gemina, who struggles to grasp the peculiar ways of suburbia, watches Ofilwe transform into someone that resents her and the values she instilled in her, Tshepo become angrier at the world and his father, and John drift away from their marriage and family. In Tshepo's rebellion and search for community, he befriends Fikile (17), a waiter at their local restaurant desperate to escape poverty and much darker circumstances. Through Fikile, a gutted Tshepo realises that he neither fits into his old nor new world.

Fikile learns that the Tlou family is not living the South African "freedom fairy tale" she had imagined and coveted. And seven years after the Tlou family moves to Little Valley Estate when all of them are changed forever and one of them is no longer alive, Ofilwe finally contemplates loving and accepting who she is and where she comes from.



DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

I want to tell a nuanced, complex, and sometimes humorous tragedy of how South Africa's democracy and freedom is a dream deferred for the majority who remain poor as well as the black middle class who had to assimilate into a white world that rejects them while constantly being on the verge of losing themselves and their precarious status.

DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Karabo Lediga's short film, *What Did You Dream?* premiered in competition at Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival and won Best African Short at the Durban International Film Festival. Her writing and directorial work includes the two-time I-Emmy nominated satirical show *Late Nite News with Loyiso Gola*. She's also in development on her feature film titled *Sabbatical*. She's a Berlinale Talents, Less Is More and TIFF Writers' Studio alumnus.

COMPANY DETAILS

Blingola, headed by Bongiwe Selane, has produced 26 short films by female filmmakers, as well as three feature films: *Happiness is a Four-Letter Word*, *Happiness Ever After*, and *Do Your Worst*.



BONGIWE SELANE  
PRODUCER



KARABO LEDIGA  
DIRECTOR



DINEO LUSENGA  
PRODUCER

PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Fiction Feature Length
Country:	South Africa
Production Company:	Blingola Media and Kiwi Films
Producer:	Dineo Lusenga
Running Time:	120 minutes

FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	800 000 USD
Finances Committed:	13 000 USD

GOALS AT DFM

- Finance Partner.
- Distribution.
- Co-Producers.



## EVERY STITCH A LONELY THREAD

After a tragic roadside accident that sends him into a coma, a young municipal worker, Lemohang Mpanza, is possessed by ancestral visions who prophesied that he will begin a new religious faith. Awoken by these visions, he abandons his previous life and draws toward him a congregation of those marginalised by his city.

Alongside this journey, we explore short episodes from his life as a young boy in early 90s South Africa. We meet his mother Ramatla, who works as a domestic worker in a wealthy suburb; his father, Mthetheleli, a sower of garments for the local churches and Bina, his younger sister. We come to learn about the deep-seated loss that has afflicted this family and the ways in which this loss has led to its collapse and Lemohang's formation.

This straddling of past and present is the cinematic language that immerses us in our

central character's narrative: the rise and fall of a radical homeless preacher. Together with his congregation, and accompanied by his ancestral visions, Lemohang grows a church, occupying land to build a makeshift commune embedded in new radical spiritual rituals. They dress themselves in elegant white cloth, creating their own music that expresses the content of their lives and aspirations for the church; it is gospel protest.

But this movement begins to clash with a hostile city determined to wash away and invisibilize its homeless. Through this clash, we witness the slow demise of the church and Lemohang himself. Unable to cope with his family's past traumas and the violence of his city, Lemohang is driven to a reckless rage that no longer nourishes his church. Blinded by paranoia, Lemohang loses his grip on reality, pushing himself and the church to their utmost limits.



### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

With a magical-realist approach grounded in arthouse cinema, this film tackles questions of historical trauma, spirituality and our connection to this land. It is a telling of us, in our chaotic nuance, scored by the voices of prophecy. I believe cinema can meet the madness of our time with a spell whose name is awe.

### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Jannous Nkululeko Aukema is an award winning inter-disciplinary filmmaker and composer based in South Africa. His past projects as writer-director include the short narrative film, *Until The Silence Comes* (2018) which featured at SHNIT, ZIFF and ASFF. His short documentary *Deliver Me* (2021) won Best South African Documentary Short at AHRFF. His work pivots around the themes of ancestral memory, social-justice, migration and post-coloniality.



**Tiny Mungwe** is a filmmaker and arts manager. She works at STEPS, where she has produced *Generation Africa*, a collection of 25 documentary films from 16 African countries. She produced and directed the documentary *Akekho uGogo*, wrote *Evelyn* and directed, *Daddy's Boy*. She was a writer on the TV series *Muvhango* and *Matatiele* and director on *Uzalo*.

### COMPANY DETAILS

Ctrl Alt Shift is a production company whose films include *Deliver Me* (2021 - Short Doc), *Womxn: Working* (2023 - Doc), and *Rainbow: Jazz for the Struggle and the Struggle for Jazz* (Development).



TINY MUNGWE  
PRODUCER



JANNOUS NKULULEKO  
AUKEMA  
DIRECTOR

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Fiction Feature Length

**Country:** South Africa

**Production Company:** Ctrl Alt Shift

**Running Time:** 80 minutes

### FINANCING PLAN

**Total Budget:** 165 000 USD

**Finances Committed:** 0 USD

### GOALS AT DFM

- To find international co-producers able to assist in the development of the film and achieve more visibility for the project.



DFM  
ACCESS  
2023

# GASLIGHT

A House On Fire

## GASLIGHT | BURBZ

In the depths of inner turmoil, Alisha (23) conceals the scars of self-harm beneath baggy street fashion. Determined to confront the death of her little sister and find closure, she grapples with the persistent blame of her grieving parents. Driven to run away, she embarks on a journey along the N2 highway, with her destination set on Durban, the city where it all transpired one fateful year before – a place her parents dare not tread.

Crossing the threshold of her abandoned family home, Alisha gathers the friends she had once alienated – united by the same harrowing night that tore them apart. Together, they strive to reclaim their lives and build a brighter future, yet the weight of their shared trauma continues to obstruct their path. Seeking solace in music, reckless sex, intoxication, and mind-altering experiences,

they lose themselves in the pulsating rhythm of late nights and neon-lit escapades – a world of wild benders.

As their friendships and relationships hang in the balance, the group must confront their shared trauma before the destructive forces within them push someone to the brink of tragedy. In a tempest of secrets, lies, and shattered lives, they face a daunting choice: either find the strength to make amends, expose their truths, and seek redemption, or succumb to the merciless force of the truth that not everyone can survive. Will they navigate the storm and emerge stronger, or will they be consumed by the wreckage left in its wake?

This project appeared as 'Burbz' in the DFM Access 2023 programme.



### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

My best friend died. There is a rite of passage for survival into adulthood growing up in South Africa. A way that trauma interacts with substance abuse, clubs, and love. Not every young person survives.

I realised an urgent need to explore our desperate search for healing. 'Gaslight' is this unflinching portrayal, bringing a fresh city to this world-favourite genre.

### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Fiction, a balm for healing the broken modern heart. **Emma Tollman**, founder of Tollman Film Company, prioritises women's voices on both sides of the camera. Her work includes short films like 'Thorns' (Amazon Prime Video) and 'Songbird.' Emma has participated in prestigious labs such as HUB@Goethe Institute and Durban FilmMart Business Lab in 2022, and she is currently mentored by Durban Access and the Independent Producer's Organisation's Get On Set Mentorship. She developed an oddball romcom short in collaboration with the KZN Film Commission in 2022 and co-produced *Gaslight* with Rous House Productions.

### COMPANY DETAILS

Tollman Film Company is a dynamic women-led business responding to modern life's mental health crises. As a young company they work with independent contractors and prioritise inclusion.



EMMA TOLLMAN  
DIRECTOR/PRODUCER

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Fiction Series
Country:	South Africa
Production Company:	Tollman Film Company
Running Time:	10 episodes, 30 minutes each

### FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	658 500 USD
Finances Committed:	7 598 USD

### GOALS AT DFM

- Local co-prod partner.
- Gauge international co-production interest.
- Attract distributor buzz for streamers.
- Start relationships and conversations.

263 REELS | PRODUCTIONS

GRAFT

Nina, a young, up-and-coming singer, mysteriously loses her voice after undergoing surgery for her vocal cords. Desperate for answers, and unable to obtain any reasonable explanation scientifically, her budding career collapses, and her life begins to spiral out of control.

A now mute Nina finds comfort in Herbert, a now infamous soccer star who seems to have lost his talent for the game overnight. The duo cross paths with an ageing writer who, despite his arthritis, is adamant that his gift for writing was stolen from him.

Piecing together that they all had surgical procedures done at the same clinic, the

trio's trail leads them on a daring manhunt for the man they believe to have stolen their talents and sold them off to high-end, untalented clientele. Hellbent on reclaiming what was taken from them, the trio forces the man who robbed them to reveal the secret underground world of the talent market as they trace each person whose gifts were sold to.

The writer's gift was sold to a failing university student from a wealthy family. Herbert's talent was sold to the striker of a rival team. And Nina discovers that her estranged mother, a has-been singer of the past, purchased Nina's voice for herself.



DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

This film is about obsession. Mirroring contemporary society through the lens of mystery and thriller, it is a harrowing portrayal of our collective obsession to be great, the dangerous measures we are willing to take chasing greatness, and those who profit from providing those measures at our expense.

DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Sue-Ellen Chitunya is a Zimbabwean-American filmmaker. A Georgia State University 40 under 40 honoree and a graduate of the UCLA Professional Producing program, she is a member of the Academy. She is an Ebert Fellow, has participated in the Film Independent Producing Lab, Industry Academy at Lincoln Center NY, and Rotterdam Lab. She has presented projects at Durban FilmMart, SFFILM, and The Gotham. She has produced shorts that have screened at festivals around the world, including Tribeca, Rotterdam, and BFI London.

COMPANY DETAILS

263 Reels is based in Harare, Zimbabwe and the USA. The company takes a cultural approach to storytelling, by targeting narratives that are culturally specific to varied lived human experiences.



PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Fiction Feature Length
Country:	Zimbabwe
Production Company:	263 Reels
Running Time:	100 minutes

FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	1 243 987 USD
Finances Committed:	0 USD

GOALS AT DFM

- To introduce the project to the market and meet potential collaborators for packaging, production, and distribution.



# GRANNY LEE

In the late '80s in Apartheid South Africa, a disco-dancing, white-passing trans granny named Granny Lee, known for her outrageous antics, sharp tongue, constant boozing, and handmade outfits, spends her pensioning days as the "Grandmother" to the lost queer babes of Johannesburg. When one such queer babe, Billy, dies from AIDS, Granny Lee finds herself a witness at his closed-casket funeral service arranged by his wealthy white right-wing family.

Granny Lee and her misfit children steal Billy's body and carry out the burial he requested in Soweto. After a chance meeting with the boy's stoic grieving mother, Irene, Granny Lee sets out to befriend and bedazzle her, and the two women develop an unlikely friendship, each with a set of ulterior motives for their forays outside of their own comfort zones:

As the boy's chosen guardian, Granny Lee seeks to enlighten Irene to the wonders of the queer community with the hopes of winning his wasted college fund for the Soweto AIDS clinic and her own house of spurned children. Irene, on the other hand, hatches a secret revenge plot against her estranged son's mysterious lover, whom she views as his 'murderer'.

The unlikely friendship of these two women, excavating their shared son's life, becomes the bedrock towards the truth and reconciliation of their lives. Sheer desperation and the fraught circumstances of the time bring the tension of their respective secret motives to a head, and the pair are ultimately forced into a high-stakes stalemate in which one of them – or both – must concede.

 REEL PREVIEWS (PASSWORD: River2023)

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Based on the true persona of trans icon Granny Lee, we have crafted a fictional buddy drama set against a vibrant and volatile backdrop. It takes place during the Apartheid regime, where politics, language, art, and identity are strained under the powder keg of the era. The film explores themes of survival against fascism and family, both chosen and not.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Co-director **Ian Gabriel** is known for directing *Four Corners*, South Africa's Oscars submission, as well as *Forgiveness*, which won the Human Rights Award at Locarno. His transmasculine son, **Gabe Gabriel**, has written the screenplay and will co-direct. Gabe Gabriel previously wrote and directed *No Hiding Here*, South Africa's first-ever gay romantic comedy for Showmax. The film is a Canada, South Africa, and Ireland co-production. The producers' works have received awards and premiered at prestigious film festivals such as Sundance, Berlinale, Toronto, Cannes Directors' Fortnight, SXSW, and Canneseries.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Based in LA, NYC, and Toronto, Fae Pictures is on a mission to decolonise Hollywood by creating cinematic content for, by, and about queer, trans, and BIPOC people.

 COMPANY PROFILE

## GOALS AT DFM

- Financing - of our \$3 million USD, we're seeking to close a gap of \$500,000 USD.



SHANT JOSHI  
PRODUCER



ROELOF STORM  
PRODUCER



GABE GABRIEL  
DIRECTOR



TSHEPISO CHIKAPA PHIRI  
PRODUCER



IAN GABRIEL  
DIRECTOR

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Fiction Feature

**Country:** South Africa

**Production Company:** Fae Pictures, Known Associates Entertainment (Kae)

**Running Time:** 100 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

**Total Budget:** 3 200 000 USD

**Finances Committed:** 812 500 USD





# KAHAWA BLACK (BLACK COFFEE)

Kana Wamba (20s), is the owner of a home-based boutique catering business selling edibles and recreational drugs that has clients from all over Nairobi. She has a huge following on social media. She has a difficult relationship with her father, George Wamba and when he dies, she misses his funeral. Later, she goes back to her hometown in Central Kenya with the idea to sell off his farm to expand her business and be rid of her father's memory. She discovers that the title deed to the farm is missing.

Sebi, her father's long-serving farm manager, attempts to remind her of the importance of their farm. Her father George was the custodian of this secret breed of coffee that possesses psychedelic properties. Through a shamanic ritual that was conducted by him while he was alive, the partakers of this concoction would be mentally transported to the spiritual realm of the dead and commune

with their ancestors – to find closure, comfort or even advice.

Kana's uncle and surrogate father, Steven Wamba, who is a power broker, hatches a plan to sell the farm's coffee produce which has always been maintained as a secret by the community. What Kana doesn't know is that Steven wants to sell the Wamba coffee as a recreational drug to a pharmaceutical company in Nairobi.

Kana is torn between going back to her successful business in Nairobi and taking on the shamanic role as expected by the community. Deep down she really wants to reconnect with George and knows that the coffee has the power to grant her access to her father in the other world. Kana must overcome her bias against her father, fight to retain her rightful ownership of the farm, and reconnect with the one thing that she shuns the most: home.

 REEL PREVIEWS (PASSWORD: LBD1234)

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

I was orphaned at two. I have no memories of my father. My mother, unable to take care of me and my siblings, gave us up to be raised by relatives. I find myself an emotional nomad, not knowing how to explain or understand insecurities and struggle to love and accept love, because then it was never concrete and very unfamiliar. Kana Wamba experiences this in the film.



JULIANA KABUA  
PRODUCER



ESTERI TEBANDEKE  
DIRECTOR

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Esteri Tebandeke is an actress, filmmaker, and visual artist. She has been an actress since 2008, performing in a variety of theatre and film productions in Uganda and around the world. Her most notable film work was on the Walt Disney Studios production, *Queen of Katwe*. Esteri has had her films as an actress and director shown at numerous festivals, like the Toronto International Film Festival, BFI London Film Festival, Raindance Film Festival, Uganda Film Festival, and Durban International Film Festival.

## COMPANY DETAILS

LBx Africa (Lightbox Limited) is a Nairobi-based production company. Our work includes the Oscar-nominated film *Watu Wote* (2017) and *Softie* (2020), which screened at Sundance (2020).

 COMPANY PROFILE

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Fiction Feature Length
Country:	Uganda
Production Company:	LBX Africa, Kiasi Productions
Running Time:	90 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	500 000 USD
Finances Committed:	30 000 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Financing.
- Sales and distribution which would include minimum guarantees.
- Co-production.



# NOMVELO AND THE WOLF

*Nomvelo and the Wolf* is a coming-of-age creature feature about a 17-year-old Zama Zama named Nomvelo. He digs abandoned mines by night in search of specks of precious minerals and alloys to sell to survive. One night, while deep in the mine with his older brother, they are caught in a rockslide. In the absolute darkness of the mine, Nomvelo witnesses his brother get mauled by a vicious and mysterious creature. At the behest of his bloody brother, Nomvelo escapes the mine and runs into the night, the sole survivor.

As Nomvelo grieves his murdered brother, he starts to investigate the mystery of the creature down the mines. What was that beast? Where did it come from? Will it return? As more people in the small town turn up dead, Nomvelo meets Nandi, a young girl whose father was also killed by the creature,

and together they delve into the rabbit hole of the werewolf that shakes the small town of Hitchcock to its very core.

Driven by vengeance for his brother, fighting cowardice and fear, our heroes embark on a quest to solve the mystery of the beast and ultimately hunt the werewolf. They team up with a ragtag group of young misfits to save their town and avenge their loved ones.

This film is a love letter to the classic Hollywood monster films of the 1940s and ultimately a South Africanisation of the golden age of cinema. This is a film about the family you choose and overcoming your fears. With the werewolf representing the very worst parts of humanity, will Nomvelo and Nandi survive their quest? Or will they give in to their fear and become the werewolf's prey?



## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

I grew up on a healthy diet of Hollywood films as a child, from Star Wars to The Godfather. These movies shaped me. The problem? There were no people in these films that looked like me, no one to truly identify with. This film is an opportunity to right that wrong and insert our people into cinema's golden age.



LEANNE KUMALO  
PRODUCER



LINDOKUHLE LANGA  
DIRECTOR

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Lindokuhle Langa is an enthusiastic (albeit socially awkward) director with a deep love of cinema, hailing from Durban. After graduating *Cum Laude* at AFDA, he straight away worked as a second unit director on Africa's first Netflix original, *Queen Sono*, at age 22. Lindo went on to direct commercials for Johnnie Walker, Samsung, Lay's, African Bank, Ford, and many more with Seriti Films. Lindo's work has garnered him numerous local and international awards, including a 2022 Loerie Young Creatives Award nomination for his commercials.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Seriti Films is a commercials, film, and television production company that represents some of the industry's finest creatives.



COMPANY PROFILE

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Fiction Feature Length

**Country:** South Africa

**Production Company:** Seriti Films

**Running Time:** 85 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

**Total Budget:** 800 000 USD

**Finances Committed:** 0 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Development financing.
- Pre-Production financing and
- Production financing.



PHARMING

*Pharming* is a high-impact hour-long crime drama that takes a new look at the global drug trade through an African lens. Unlike *Narcos* and *White Stripes* that are about the illegal trade of illicit drugs, *Pharming* deals with the illegal trade of licit pharmaceuticals – a multi-billion dollar industry that most of the world knows nothing about. It is estimated that in Central Africa, up to 50% of all pharmaceuticals are either counterfeit or substandard – a staggering fact that lays the foundation for a new playground of cops and robbers where the biggest drug dealers in the world sit behind boardroom tables and do their business in plain sight.

*Pharming* takes us from the C-suites of first-world countries to the safe suburbs of the self-medicating middle classes, all the way into the depths of 3rd world Africa. A pharmaceutical company owner in Canada

tries to cover up not only the tests and results of a ‘miracle’ malaria vaccine but also the ghosts of his father’s legacy, desperate to keep his daughter and new heir to the throne in the dark. A middle-class Zulu woman in Johannesburg takes control of her husband’s flailing bottling factory, without knowing the much bigger part she is to play in a world that gives us both hope and bloodshed. A retired security consultant in the middle of Ghana unearths a plot to kill millions and shake the very foundation of an industry that we have all come to blindly trust out of desperation.

*Pharming* takes the empire drama of *Succession*, the high-octane action of *Lord of War*, and the suburban politics of *Weeds*, creating an interlinked tapestry of order and chaos where we never really know who is in the driving seat.



DIRECTOR’S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Growing up, some of my favourite TV shows were about cops and robbers, with clear-cut good guys and bad guys. As the director of *Pharming*, my aim is to take a more nuanced approach to the global drug trade, particularly within the pharmaceutical industry. The show delves into the complex shades of grey that exist in this world, particularly in Africa and within the sphere of big pharma.



DIRECTOR’S/PRODUCER PROFILE

The writing, producing, and directing trio of best friends and brothers, **Meren Reddy, Luke Rous, and Josh Rous**, have been running RHP International since 2008. They have received over 20 SAFTAs for the dozens of award-winning films and shows they have produced over the past 17 years. Highlights include a Rose D’Or nomination for Best Comedy Series, Best SA Short Film at DIFF, a screening at the Cannes Short Film Corner, and the Best Telenovela SAFTA for *High Rollers*, which has sold to multiple territories around the world.

COMPANY DETAILS

Since 2008, RHP International has produced over 300 hours of prime-time television and four features, including a recent Hallmark SA/ CAD co-production and three seasons of a Paramount Africa comedy.

PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Fiction Series
Country:	South Africa, Canada
Production Company:	RHP International, Leif Films Media Inc
Producer:	Luke Rous
Running Time:	8 episodes, 50 minutes each

FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	4 700 000 USD
Finances Committed:	47 685 USD

GOALS AT DFM

- Introduce the project to the market.
- Find suitable African broadcaster/ streaming partners.
- Secure second round of development funding.





# OFFICIAL DFM 2023 PROJECTS

## DFM 2023 DOCUMENTARY PROJECTS

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# BEYOND FELA (FORMERLY TITLED THE DARKER SIDE OF AFROBEATS)

Nigeria has a complicated relationship with women, and this is reflected in the music industry. This story documents the journey from shortly after Nigeria's independence, to celebrate female musicians such as Onyeka Onwenu whose voice and music was a source of comfort and solidarity during the Biafran war. The heart-warming and breaking story of the Lijadu twins, little known cousins of Fela Kuti who were signed to the same label as Fela but were not given the same support.

Afrobeats emerged in the nineties – a genre that was created and dominated by men, but we discover there were successful female musicians. Female artists such as

Mo'Cheddah, Sasha P, Tiwa Savage, Waje, and Seyi Shay made their mark on the music scene. They were popular with chart topping hits and sold-out performances. For the first time, they share their stories of how bullying, sexual harassment, rivalries, and sexism became obstacles.

The new generation of musicians such as Tems, Ayra Starr, and Amaraee are charting their path. They are the future, who benefited from local and international feminist movements. However, though the future is considerably better for women, there are still some obstacles that are ever present.



## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

We hope to present a narrative that allows women to speak freely about their challenges in the music industry but also celebrate their contributions. Nigerian music is a global force. However, there is a gender imbalance in the industry. Women do not enjoy the same level of success. We can celebrate this genre but also question institutions that prioritise one gender over the other.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Bolaji Kekere-Ekun is the founder of 37thSTATE production company and a graduate of the USC School of Cinematic Arts. He is an award-winning filmmaker and has created several documentaries for brands such as Hennessy, Etisalat, Pepsi, and CNN, as well as short films such as *Nkiru*, *Call Me By My Name*, and *Eko For Show: A History of Lagos Fashion*. His latest feature film *Tainted Canvas*, which he executive produced, edited and sound designed, launched on Amazon Prime Video in 2022.

Aderonke Adeola is an award-winning director and producer. Her debut film *Awani* won a UNESCO prize and was supported by the Ford Foundation and the Africa Women Development Fund. Her films have a unique focus on the marginalised; specifically, women. In 2022 she was selected to participate in Berlinale Talents Durban and won best project.

## COMPANY DETAILS

1421 is an impact focused production company that believes in creating content with a conscience. We speak to the socio-cultural and economic issues in Nigeria and Africa.



## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Nigeria
Production Company:	1421 Media
Running Time:	90 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	745 000 USD
Finances Committed:	27 250 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- We are looking to secure funding and co-production partners.
- Looking for feedback to help us further develop the project.
- Expand our network.



## CIRTA

Set in the city of Kef, *CIRTA* is a hybrid film project that combines a short-fictionalised film and a feature-length documentary whose conception and making echo and complement each other.

Although there are no more cinemas in this region today, for many years a magical place has illuminated the lives of the inhabitants of Le Kef: the cinema CIRTA.

CIRTA may have closed its doors over thirty years ago, yet its name remains shrouded in nostalgia, associated with many anecdotes that have forged the local mythology.

The CIRTA theatre was then the great dream provider for a particular group of kids whose ultimate goal was to sit in front of this screen of wonders. Unable to afford tickets for the whole group, they scramble each week to raise the money needed for a single ticket.

One of them is randomly chosen to attend the screening and then has to re-enact scenes from the movie for the rest of the gang, transforming real life into fiction during their acting sessions.

This movie theatre will influence the destiny of two of these kids, Lamine Nahdi and Bahri Rahali who became renowned professional actors in Tunisian cinema.

In preparation of a fictionalised short film that will recapture the golden age of his hometown's movie theatre, a filmmaker begins to chronicle the daily lives of teenage misfits he has chosen to play the leading parts.

This movie seeks to pay tribute to this iconic cinema while simultaneously portraying the birth of a cinephilia in an unconventional and subversive way.



### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Growing up a few steps away from the cinema CIRTA, I was nurtured with tales surrounding this theatre that has remained unforgettable for our elders. I want to pay tribute to this mythical place through the cinematographic journey of a group of teenagers who live near its remains, witnessing their passage from childhood to adolescence over the course of four years.

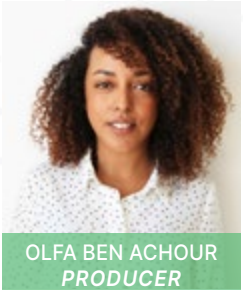
### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Saif Chida** is a Tunisian director from Le Kef. He is also the Artistic Director of ACT Kef, an organisation he helped create. In 2015, he directed his debut film *Macchabé*. After graduating in writing and directing at ESAC, he directed *Nagra* (2018) which was selected in the Carthage Film Festival.

Interested in international collaborations, **Olfa Ben Achour** produced *Eagles of Carthage* (2019) by Adriano Valerio, *The Bath* (2020) by Anissa Daoud and *Blind Spot* (2021) by Lotfi Achour, all awarded in major international film festivals.

### COMPANY DETAILS

APA is a multi-awarded Tunisian production company. Their productions received high acclaim and circulated in the most prestigious international film festivals including Cannes and Venice.



### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

<b>Project Type:</b>	Documentary Feature Length
<b>Country:</b>	Tunisia
<b>Production Company:</b>	APA: Artistes Producteurs Associés
<b>Running Time:</b>	90 minutes

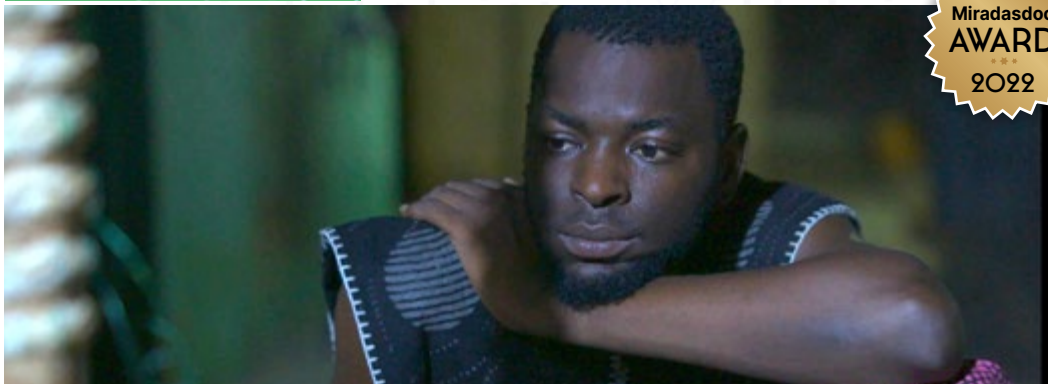
### FINANCING PLAN

<b>Total Budget:</b>	119 135 USD
<b>Finances Committed:</b>	40 649 USD

### GOALS AT DFM

- Receiving creative feedback and mentoring on the project and its treatment. Securing financial support and partnerships.





## DJELIYA, MEMORY OF MANDING

Sékou Timité has one ambition: to follow in his late father's footsteps and become a "Djeli", a griot, guardian of the oral memory in West Africa. Being the only one of his siblings to take an interest in the obsolete art of the griot, newly married Sékou leaves his family behind and sets off to confront the modern world on the roads of the legendary Manding Empire. For Sékou, it is more than a quest for memory, it is a personal quest in search of the father he never knew and the teachings he never received from him.

Despite his doubts and the many obstacles of a chaotic present, he crosses paths with the greatest griots of the region and with simple individuals in contact with daily life. His quest through the countries will take him as far as Guinea, to listen to the sounds of the sacred Balafon, the "Sosso Bala", the mythical instrument of the first of the griots, Balla Fasséké, preserved from generation to generation for seven centuries. His journey of initiation becomes a poetic portrait of a West Africa in turmoil, in search of its common memory.



REEL PREVIEWS (PASSWORD: SEKOU2022)

### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Sékou is from the caste of griots, these historians safeguard the memories and traditions of African societies. Following his initiatory journey, the film opens up the possibility of a subtle and poetic portrait of shared memory and life in West Africa from the perspective of its storytellers, the griots.

### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Boubacar Sangaré** is a filmmaker and lawyer specialising in film and audiovisual law. He is the author of 4 short films. Boubacar Sangaré's first feature documentary, *A Golden Life*, premiered at the Berlinale Forum section this year.

**Mamounata Nikiéma** specialises in creative documentary filmmaking and communication. As a producer, she has made several short films (fiction and documentary) and feature-length documentaries that have been selected for international festivals and have won awards.

### COMPANY DETAILS

Pilumpiku Production, since January 2011, covers the fields of documentary and fiction film, executive production of audiovisual projects, and coaching in writing and production.



### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ivory Coast
Production Company:	Pilumpiku Production
Running Time:	90 minutes

### FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	690 071 USD
Finances Committed:	443 771 USD

### GOALS AT DFM

- We aim to receive feedback and meet decision-makers who are interested in co-producing and distributing our film.
- Additional funding.



## EAGLETTE - A SUPERSTAR ERASED

74-year-old Eaglette was the most sought-after singer and performer during the most politically and culturally repressed time in South Africa's apartheid history. Her voice and stage presence were described as mesmerising and transcendental by fans and peers alike. However, despite her incredible talent, she has been completely erased from the country's entertainment history, while her former bandmates became celebrated artists in South Africa. Why is that? What happened?

After years of industry exploitation and abuse, Eaglette gave up on her musical dreams and led a life of emotional turmoil, substance abuse, and self-destruction. However, now, after 40 years, Eaglette is finally ready to face her past, confront her producers/bandmates, and demand the answers she deserves. Where is her recorded music? Where are her royalties?

We follow Eaglette and her filmmaker daughter on their search for answers and to hear her voice in a recording she's never heard before.

This incredible documentary will take you on a journey through the late '60s and early '70s South African music scene, where musicians had to navigate apartheid repression to make their voices heard. We'll also revive the music of her generation, discovering the unheard, American-influenced pop/rock music of the '70s, as well as the fashion, the lifestyle, bringing back the memories, emotions, and the stories that have been lost.

Through interviews, newspaper and television archives, dramatisations, and animations, Eaglette's personal story unfolds, revealing how she fought to stay alive in an industry that nearly destroyed her.

As the story unfolds, viewers are left to wonder: Why was Eaglette erased? Will she find the justice she seeks? Will it be through the healing power of music or the recognition she deserves for her contributions to South Africa's musical history?



REEL PREVIEWS (PASSWORD:E@gl3tt3)

### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Using film, I have often turned my eyes to issues that affect me deeply, and this film about my superstar mom is no exception.

As a child, I would watch her walk onto stages and mesmerise audiences, yet she's been forgotten. I have vowed to tell her story so she can hopefully reclaim her rightful place in SA music history.



THANDI DAVIDS  
PRODUCER



BEVERLEY DITSIE  
DIRECTOR

### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Director **Dr. Bev Ditsie** (Hon, CGU, CAL, USA) is a gender nonconforming lesbian activist, keynote speaker, and filmmaker with over 25 years of experience in reality television directing and documentary filmmaking. She is the first African lesbian to address the UN 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995, which is the subject of their latest documentary, *Lesbians Free Everyone* (2020). Her debut film *Simon & I* (2003) won Best Documentary at Oxfam/Vues d'Afrique in Montreal, Canada.

### COMPANY DETAILS

Storyscope seeks to unlock the freshest energy of creative Africa to develop original ideas for the local and global content and film markets.



COMPANY PROFILE

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Documentary Feature Length

**Country:** South Africa

**Production Company:** Storyscope Media

**Running Time:** 70 minutes

### FINANCING PLAN

**Total Budget:** 916 712 USD

**Finances Committed:** 0 USD

### GOALS AT DFM

- We are primarily seeking development funding and sales agents.
- We are open to co-productions and interested broadcasters.



# FLYING LIKE A BIRD

The Colokolo were all born in Salé, a city which was famous in the 17th century as the harbour of pirates and which is today the dormitory suburb of Rabat, the Moroccan capital. In 2009, behind the walls of the Kasbah, a circus school opened and quickly became an escape for parents who feared their children would become delinquents. This is where young Badr, Ismail, Ammar, Ali, Hassan, Snoopy and Hamza met and began to practise the teeterboard, an apparatus that propels them up to 10 metres in height.

In 2013, they left the school because of the authoritarian pedagogy, unpaid work and a ban on practising teeterboard, and founded an autonomous circus collective: The Colokolo. Born in Salé, Mehdi El Lyoubi has been following the creation of their new

show since 2019 and the many obstacles they are facing: the absence of rehearsal spaces, the lack of financial means, the difficulty of getting visas to perform abroad.

The Colokolo often express their desire to leave Morocco, but after a few weeks of touring, they feel homesick and are happy to return to port. Mehdi's camera captures the tension between Hamza, the youngest and most talented flyer, and the others, the difficult task of reconciling the ideals that have forged their collective, the family constraints for some, the individual ambitions for others, and the social pressure for all. Today, Mehdi lives in Europe, and making *Flying Like A Bird* may be his way to pay a debt he feels to his city and his friends.

 REEL PREVIEWS (PASSWORD: qflz)

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

With the Colokolo, we share this feeling of "being both so close and so far away" from Morocco. They represent for me a powerful model of integrity, non-conformism. So, I will take with my camera as many risks as they take with their bodies. A gesture that will seal our artistic and political complicity to affirm that we are true heirs of the pirates of Salé.



FALAH HICHAM  
PRODUCER



LYOUBI EL MAHDI  
DIRECTOR

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Lyoubi El Mahdi started his artistic career writing rap lyrics, but soon his rhymes needed to be coupled with images to make them resonate. His interest in politics and social movements in Morocco drew him to documentary filmmaking.

Falah Hicham is a Moroccan DOP, director and producer. Since 2012, he has run the Agadir International Documentary Film Festival (FIDADOC), as well as its training and industry programs dedicated to emerging African filmmakers.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Cinema Salama was founded in 2018 in Tangier to support and promote Moroccan emergent documentary filmmakers holding local stories with international potential.

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Morocco, France
Production Company:	Cinema Salama
Running Time:	75 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	250 000 USD
Finances Committed:	40 000 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Looking for partners and funding.





## FOREIGN (LONAN TCHE)

Six years have passed since Bourgeois crossed the Mediterranean. He is now stuck in Paris, feeling homesick. His fellow traveller, Kader Keïta, who stayed in Italy, learns of his father's death far away, even though he just obtained a residence permit. While Bourgeois is bogged down in a timeless daily life and struggles with his demons, Kader begins to plan a trip to the Côte d'Ivoire to perform a

ritual sacrifice and honour his father's grave. Suddenly, Bourgeois receives unexpected news that will change his path and turn a page in his history. For his part, Kader will put his dreams to the test by experiencing the reality of a first return to his native land. Where do they belong today and who have they become? Will it be possible for them to return to their homeland one day?



REEL PREVIEWS (PASSWORD: BOURGEOIS\_VA)

### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Through Bourgeois and his companions, I want to tell the story of an Ivorian youth in the midst of an identity crisis. A youth that does not manage to exist in its country and turns to the mirage of the European dream. I want to deconstruct the myth of success of those who emigrate. It is the story of an impossible return, of the end of a world for the displaced.

### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Akafou Joel's first professional film, *Vivre Riche*, completed in 2017, was selected for about 40 festivals around the world and received several awards, including the Georges Golden Sesterce for best medium-length film in the international competition at Visions du Réel 2017. *Traverser* is his second documentary film, which premiered at the Berlinale in the 2020 Forum section and received the grand prize at the 2020 Belfort festival. In 2021, it won the grand prize of the perspective section at Pat Fespaco.

### COMPANY DETAILS

Films of the Continent is a company whose mission is to tell the stories of our communities, highlighting the facts of our societies.



BITTY LAURENT  
PRODUCER



AKAFOU JOEL  
DIRECTOR

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Côte d'Ivoire
Production Company:	Les Films Du Continent
Running Time:	75 - 90 minutes

### FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	532 546 USD
Finances Committed:	61 872 USD

### GOALS AT DFM

- We are looking for international funding.
- Platforms and broadcasters
- Cinema distributors
- Professional meetings



# IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE

Thirty years ago, when I was 16, my father forced me to choose between two marriage proposals. At eighteen, I got married, and it turned into a very violent and abusive marriage. My father looked the other way and ignored my problems. Today, I'm searching for answers before time runs out because my father has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. The damage between us runs deep, and the memories seem distant.

*In My Father's House*, also explores inner exiles: deviations from oneself, deviations from the norms that a father, a mother, and their children have internalised before daring to confront them, each at their own pace. In addressing these questions, my documentary goes beyond being merely a historiographical account of Moroccan immigration. It delves into the heart of the "women" issues, which underpin the life journeys of both myself, the filmmaker, and my father.

Over the years, my father has amassed a vast family archive, and I invited him to work together on a film – a film within a film – to discuss our past, both the good and the bad. He initially said YES, and I purchased two director's chairs, and we began shooting. However, he later said 'NO' out of fear of discussing these sensitive subjects. On my motorcycle, I travel to Morocco in search of answers from the past and to reconnect with my father. The act of filming itself disrupts and thwarts all the norms and plans of my family to make this film impossible. It's a deeply personal creative documentary that explores my striking freedom, which has overcome cultural, religious, and social prohibitions. In doing so, the cinematic gesture that underlies the film is resolutely liberating.



## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

This is a heartfelt story where sincerity, honesty and humour are the main tones. Our behaviour is shaped by our upbringing. We learn it from our parents, whether consciously or unconsciously. They set an example for us: we see them having fun, loving each other and us. We see them screaming, fighting, drinking and never actually talk about it.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Rachida El Garani** studied Audiovisual Arts at the RITCS in Brussels. In June 2015, she obtained her master's degree with great distinction for her documentary: *Into Darkness*. The film was selected for its world premiere at the IDFA Film Festival in two categories: Best Student Documentary and Kids & Docs. In 2016, the film received impressive accolades, including the audience award at the LA Film Festival in Hollywood. It was also chosen as the opening film of the FIDADOC Festival in Agadir, Morocco, and was selected for numerous other festivals.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Iris Prod is an acclaimed audiovisual production company with diverse expertise in film, TV, events, and more.



From long feature fiction films to drama series', Las Belgas creates, develops, produces and distributes audiovisual content for all available platforms.



## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Belgium, Qatar, Morocco
Production Company:	Las Belgas, Iris Prod
Running Time:	80 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	280 000 USD
Finances Committed:	173 600 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- We currently have 62% of the budget secured and are actively seeking additional film funding, sales support, TV (pre)sales, and/or co-productions to further support our project.

DFM  
ACCESS  
2023



# NAMAKWALAND: THE GREEN FRONTIER

In the 2023 State of the Nation Address, President Cyril Ramaphosa described South Africa's newly implemented Just Energy Transition Investment Plan (JET-IP) as a step towards transforming the desert into an energy oasis. *Namakwaland – The Green Frontier* is a feature-length documentary film that explores the first site of green extractivism in the country and the fight of its people for local benefit against exploitation by multinationals and the Global North.

This character-driven documentary, produced by Haroon Gunn-Salie Studio in partnership with WoMin African Alliance, is currently in development in collaboration with the STEPS Generation Africa program. It reveals how women activists affected by extractives in South Africa's Northern Cape province engage in resistance and actively struggle to reclaim control over their bodies, land, and rights.

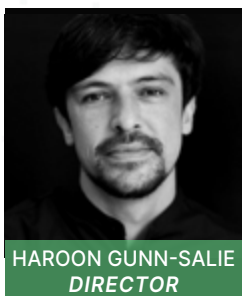
 REEL PREVIEWS

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

This is a deeply personal documentary rooted in my activism and connection to the communities of Namakwaland. Collaborating closely with local activists, I aim to co-tell their stories and shed light on the impacts of land dispossession and exploitation. Through storytelling, I seek to raise awareness about the consequences of extractivism, challenge neoliberalism, and inspire audiences to join in creating a just and equitable future.



ALEXANDRIA HOTZ  
PRODUCER



HAROON GUNN-SALIE  
DIRECTOR

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Haroon Gunn-Salie is an artist and activist who believes that art has the real potential to effect changes in society. Gunn-Salie's multidisciplinary practice focuses on collaboration through socially engaged dialogue and exchange. Gunn-Salie completed a BA Hons in Sculpture at the University of Cape Town and has been awarded the SP-Arte/Videobrasil and FNB Art Prize.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Haroon Gunn-Salie Studio explores socially engaged dialogue and collaboration through art.

 COMPANY PROFILE

WoMin African Alliance empowers African women with secure access to resources and full control over their bodies, livelihoods, and development choices.

 COMPANY PROFILE

STEPS is a non-profit organisation passionate about using documentaries to disrupt, shift, and inspire change. Through diverse projects we empower marginalised communities and spark global conversations on human rights and the environment.

 COMPANY PROFILE

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	South Africa
Production Company:	WoMin African Alliance, STEPS
Running Time:	25-40 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	10 403 USD
Finances Committed:	7 686 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Secure funding.
- Looking for feedback.
- Expand our network.





## THE CIRCUIT

Bana is a former motorcycle trafficker who used to buy motorcycles in Nigeria and transport them to Cameroon and the Central African Republic for sale. Seven years ago, Bana got married and left this dangerous and illegal job to pursue a career in making traditional music for weddings and baptisms. However, after his father's passing, he became the head of the family, and the weight of his responsibilities increased.

Despite his stage performances and earning small amounts of money from local phone companies that use his music as on-hold ringtones, Bana constantly finds himself in debt and unable to lead the life he sees other artists living. Determined to gain popularity and find new sources of income, he decides

to seek out popular singers for collaboration and change his repertoire. To accomplish this, he requires funds to record a new album.

Despite his efforts to borrow money from his family and banks, Bana's attempts are in vain. His friend Séka Séka, the leader of the traffickers, agrees to help him on the condition that Bana undertakes one last trip with the gang. This journey involves a perilous motorcycle journey between Nigeria and Cameroon, navigating uncharted tracks, evading police and customs, and putting his own life at risk while carrying a heavy load of two-wheelers. Bana sets out once again on the roads with his band, embarking on this journey between Nigeria and Cameroon.



REEL PREVIEWS (PASSWORD: Mubi)

### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

**Arice Siapi:** I want to talk about a Cameroonian youth trapped by a system that has marginalised them. I want to show that this deprived youth, who has a code of honour, is courageous and determined to fight until the end.

**Martinel Nemalieu:** Having grown up in Ngaoundéré, Arice, with whom I share a long collaboration since *Riskou* at IDFA 2008, shares a similar background to mine.

### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Trained as a lawyer, I chose cinema as my medium of expression. I directed *Riskou*, which premiered at IDFA in 2008. After directing several short films, I worked on the film series *Atchaaba* for Cameroonian channels. Currently, I am undertaking my first feature-length documentary project titled *The Circuit*. Furthermore, I am involved in coordinating training programs focused on cinema initiation and image education in Niger, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso. Since March 2022, I have taken on the responsibility of gathering Central African festivals within the Association of African Film Festivals (AFFA).

### COMPANY DETAILS

Timeline was founded by M. Nemalieu in Yaoundé, Cameroon. The company's productions encompass institutional projects, creative documentaries, and works specifically created for Cameroonian TV.

Dryades Films is a French-based documentary production company with a focus on creative projects and impactful storytelling.

 COMPANY PROFILE



MARTINEL NEMALIEU  
PRODUCER



ARICE SIAPI  
DIRECTOR



ELÉONORE BOISSINOT  
PRODUCER



CLAIRE BABANY  
PRODUCER

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

<b>Project Type:</b>	Documentary Feature Length
<b>Country:</b>	Cameroon, France
<b>Production Company:</b>	Timeline, Dryades Films
<b>Running Time:</b>	52/70 minutes

### FINANCING PLAN

<b>Total Budget:</b>	362 000 USD
<b>Finances Committed:</b>	4 000 USD

### GOALS AT DFM

- We are looking for African co-producers, both African and international broadcasters, sales agents, as well as international funds to support our project.



# WILDFIRE

In the lush forests of the Congo Basin, a battle is taking place between a world-famous conservation organisation and a community of indigenous hunter-gatherers. Leading the fight against this organisation are two passionate activists. They are gathering evidence of fifteen years of human rights abuses by rangers funded by the international charity, including rape, torture, and killings, and working tirelessly to get the government to recognise the rights of indigenous people to return to their land and to hold the organisation responsible for years of abuses.

Through the stories of these two activists, Wildfire explores the dark side of nature conservation. Most people think of conservation as a noble enterprise to protect wild animals: Wildfire turns this story on its

head, revealing how renowned conservation organisations have displaced hundreds of thousands of indigenous people and formed alliances with the very same companies that are destroying the planet.

This film will ask: what is conservation really all about? How deep is the relationship between the conservation industry and multinational companies? Are there better ways to conserve the last remaining forests on Earth? As logging companies and conservation groups work together to take over more land in the Congo Basin, will these two men and the indigenous hunter-gatherers manage to stay in the forests? We follow them as they try to forge a new path toward conserving the Congo Basin, one where indigenous people take the lead in saving the forests.

 REEL PREVIEWS (PASSWORD: Wild)

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

With *Wildfire*, I want audiences to journey into the lives of the people we rarely see on screen and who are engaged in a hidden struggle against seemingly noble conservation organisations. It is a universal story about how it feels to lose one's home, land, and culture, and what it means to stand up to power despite the odds.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Zahra Moloo** is a Kenyan journalist and filmmaker. She has directed films and written articles for Al Jazeera, BBC, Africa is a Country, and CCTV's Faces of Africa series. She was a researcher and director with CBC's Emmy-nominated documentary series, *Interrupt this Program*. She also directed *Home No More*, a documentary about Islamophobia in Quebec following the 2017 shooting in a mosque, and *A Question of Consent*, an investigation into genetically modified mosquitoes in Burkina Faso.

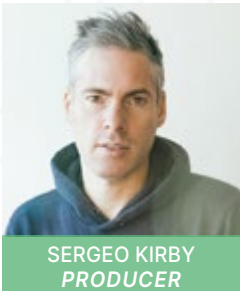
## COMPANY DETAILS

Storyscope backs the freshest talent of creative Africa to develop and produce original stories for the local and global content markets. We are drawn to narratives that celebrate personal and political revolutions.

 COMPANY PROFILE

Loaded Pictures is an award-winning film production company established in Montreal, Canada that focuses on social action and original groundbreaking content.

 COMPANY PROFILE



SERGEO KIRBY  
PRODUCER



ZAHRA MOLOO  
DIRECTOR



LAURA COLUCCI  
PRODUCER

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	South Africa, Canada
Production Company:	Storyscope and Loaded Pictures
Running Time:	90 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	700 000 USD
Finances Committed:	28 000 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- To secure production finance, pre-sales and broadcast partners.



# OFFICIAL DFM 2023 PROJECTS

## DFM 2023 ANIMATION PROJECTS

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# AZANIA RISES

In 2100, the fate of Azania's peace rests in the hands of a 5-member Special Forces unit called the Murwi. They are sent to investigate how and why an Azanian diplomatic plane was shot down, but this unprovoked attack is just a spark in the descent to a full-scale war. The youngest team member, Nomala

Kamwendo (21), has a brush with death that breaks her naïve notions of war and heroism. In her attempts to gain the adulation of her older and more decorated comrades, she will try to suppress the trauma. However, war and the death of a teammate will bring unwanted emotions to the surface.



## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

I'm inspired by a united and prosperous Africa, and my passion for animation has led me to create *Azania Rises* as an authentic representation of my vision for the World of Azania. Set in 2100, this animation explores a futuristic Africa, presenting the audience with new possibilities. My goal is to immerse the audience in Azania's culture, ideals, and fight for its realisation.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Dr Farayi Chinyanga left medicine to pursue his passion for animation production. He is the founder of Formation Animation Pty Ltd, a company that produces world-class animation in collaboration with African creatives. He has been working on *Azania Rises* for six years, producing and directing the Ubuntu featurette. This featurette won two awards for best animation at the Accra Indie Film Festival (AIFF) and the Out of Africa International Film Festival (OOAIFF).

## COMPANY DETAILS

Formation Animation Pty Ltd produces world-class animation in collaboration with African creatives. The company is based in Johannesburg, South Africa. More information about their work can be found on their website and on *Instagram* and *YouTube*.



FARAYI CHINYANGA



FATUMA ABDULLAH



FARISAI KAVAYI

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Animated Series

**Country:** South Africa

**Production Company:** Formation Animation Pty Ltd

**Running Time:** 13 episodes, 30 minutes each

## FINANCING PLAN

**Total Budget:** 2 639 899.39 USD

**Finances Committed:** 187 995.17 USD  
(Pilot Episode)

## GOALS AT DFM

- Production funding for Season 1 (13 episodes at 30 minutes).
- Networking for merchandise partnerships.
- Partnerships for comics and novels.



# BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH

In 2013, a mob of extremists in southern Aleppo beheaded the statue of the 11th-century Syrian poet Al-Ma'arri. Al-Ma'arri was a free thinker who spoke out against political and religious powers of his time, and he was visually impaired from the age of 4. He is also considered to be the first known vegetarian and an inspiration to Dante Alighieri.

Amal, a young contemporary artist, has an encounter with Al-Ma'arri who returns from the past and finds himself trapped in his body again. In an act of resistance, Amal creates an animated film adaptation of Al-Ma'arri's significant work, *The Epistle of Forgiveness*, a

social satire in which he denounces hypocrisy by transporting his contemporaries to the afterlife. Amal sketches a caricature of her war-ravaged city using the same process as Al-Ma'arri, transporting her colleagues and entourage to the afterlife.

Through her work and connection with Al-Ma'arri, Amal questions herself and faces the fate of many artists who must choose between expressing themselves and protecting themselves. As her friends and boyfriend face censorship and risk their lives, Amal realises that an artist lives only through their art.



## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Based on a bold cultural heritage that escaped censorship, this work is a cry for freedom in the face of a crumbling system crushed by the weight of dogmas and prohibitions. We try to stage what Al-Ma'arri provokes in us of intimacy and spirituality to remind our contemporaries that resistance through Art is the way to reach 'Freedom'.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Nadia Rais**, a Tunisian director, holds a Master's degree in Arts, Science, and Technology. She has participated as a visual artist in several exhibitions and has directed five short animated films that have been broadcasted, selected, and awarded at international festivals.

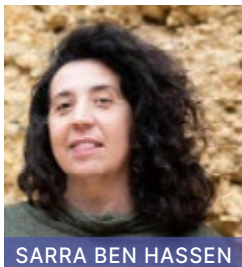
**Sarra Ben Hassen**, a Tunisian producer, has worked in the Tunisian film industry for over 20 years. In 2018, she produced the Oscar-nominated short film *Brotherhood*. *Between Heaven and Earth* will be her second feature film and her first experience in animation.

## COMPANY DETAILS

INSTINCT BLEU is a Tunisian film company that produces live-action, animated, and documentary films. It was founded in 2019 by Sarra Ben Hassen, a producer with over 20 years of experience in the Tunisian film industry, and Meryam Joobeur, a Canadian-Tunisian director who was nominated for an Oscar.



NADIA RAIS



SARRA BEN HASSEN

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Animated Feature Length
Country:	Tunisia
Production Company:	Instinct Bleu
Running Time:	70 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	1 600 000 USD
Finances Committed:	20 000 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- To connect with the international and particularly with the African animation film industry.





# BOY BOI

Playful, imaginative, goofy, and naughty – that’s Boi, the six-year-old boy at the heart of *BOY BOI*, a 2D slice-of-life comedy series about the domestic adventures of Boi, along with his family, friends, and a few unexpected guests. Set in modern-day Nairobi, Kenya, each episode takes an everyday family experience and filters it through the imagination of Boi, who turns them into

fun action-packed adventures. In the pilot episode, Boi is forced by his father to tie his own shoelaces, but this simple activity takes a twisty turn when the laces come to life and attack Boi. Much like the pilot, the series episodes are fun and playful, but they also communicate important life lessons such as the value of patience, kindness, and honesty.



## DIRECTOR’S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Stories about African children tend to focus on suffering and victimisation, but this show represents the often-ignored pleasures of life in a modern, complex country such as Kenya. Our protagonist is loveable and goofy, but he is also flawed. Throughout the series, we see him learn and grow, embodying the full experience of being a child.

## DIRECTOR’S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Njogu Macharia** is the director and creator of the show, with over 5 years of experience in writing and directing. He has directed multiple animated short films, including *Awake*, which was screened at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival in France. He was a co-writer on the animated short film, *The Legend of Lwanda Magere*, which won the ‘Best International Short’ at the 2020 Los Angeles Animation Festival. He has worked as a writer and script consultant on both domestic and international shows.

## COMPANY DETAILS

JR Animation Studio LTD is a Kenyan-based animation Studio founded by Shadrack Munene. The studio aims to become a household name synonymous with quality and authentic animated content.



## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Animated Series
Country:	Kenya
Production Company:	JR Animation Studio
Running Time:	39 episodes, 7 minutes each

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	2 730 000 USD
Finances Committed:	35 463 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Looking for financing
- Co-Producer(s)/Co-Production Companies
- Distributor(s)/International Sales Agents.





# MY BIG WORLD

On the very first day of her entrance into the world of ‘big’ school, Isenguye and 4 other kids, find themselves subjected to the unfortunate experience of having their names mispronounced and ridiculed. This defining incident serves as a transformative moment for Isenguye, helping her to unlock the inherent power and significance that lies within her name, as well as the names of her unlikely allies. Together, these five remarkable children, each blessed with ‘big’ names and ‘big’ gifts come together as a tightly-knit squad of misfits, who use their unique abilities, which they refer to as

their ‘mojo,’ to solve the daily challenges that await them on the playground whilst having fun. Meanwhile, the Lollipops, the girl group who actively promote uniformity and sameness, stand as the main antagonists in their world. Amidst the backdrop of their thrilling adventures, Isenguye and her crew gradually form deep and lasting friendships, while having different interests and opinions. Through their collective journey, Isenguye herself undergoes a profound transformation and learns how valuable it is to be different and respect one another equally.

## DIRECTOR’S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

As a mother of five, I know that the first day of school is a big occasion for all kids around the world. *My BIG World* is a 2D animated series based on the Pendoring award-winning book, *My BIG Name*. *My BIG World* is about showing respect through simple actions and coming into your identity.

## DIRECTOR’S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Busisiwe Ntintili** is an award-winning film and TV writer, director, and producer. She founded Ntintili Factory, and her company recently produced an original Netflix series called *JIVA!* It was nominated for a SAFTA Award in 2022. She has a BA Honours Degree in English Literature and French from Rutgers University. Some of her work includes the Peabody Award recipient *Intersexions*, *4Play*, *Sex Tips for Girls*, which won her a SAFTA for Best Writing for a Drama Series.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Ntintili Factory is a dynamic production house dedicated to telling authentic African stories. Led by founder Busisiwe Ntintili, an award-winning writer, director, and producer, the company brings a fresh perspective to the entertainment industry.



COMPANY PROFILE



BUSISIWE NTINTILI



MPUMI NTINTILI-SINXOTO



AMONGE SINXOTO



AMANDA ZUNGU

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Animated Series
Country:	South Africa
Production Company:	Ntintili Factory
Running Time:	11 minutes each

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	7 000 000 USD
Finances Committed:	TBD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Meet broadcasters, international fund representatives.
- Secure development funding.
- Distribution and Sales.
- Animation studio partner.



# NALEDI

Star athlete Naledi is struggling with fear and anxiety before the African Athletics Championships hurdles final. She imagines her coach Khosi to be there with her when he really isn't as he helps her with her confidence and runs the race with her. During the race he disappears and Naledi trips and falls. As a result, she suffers a massive panic attack, and the world around her starts to collapse. With her coach disappearing in this world, she runs after him.

During the panic attack, Naledi is also hit with memories of her falling in different time periods in her childhood where an unknown person is there. These memories hold her

back and slow her down every time she gets near to Khosi in a panic attack. When she finally gets to Khosi, he completely disappears.

Back in reality, Naledi has to face the grief of losing him. After accepting the painful memories of her falling in her childhood, she remembers that she did always get up after each fall. It is then revealed that the person in the memories who was always there watching her was Khosi, who was not only her coach but her father as well. After these memories, she finds the confidence to get up and finish the race, knowing that he will always be watching her and is with her in her heart.



## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

*Naledi* is a film about grief inspired by my own losses. I want to show the emotional and psychological effects of grief. The central idea is that grief can hold you back if you don't let go. The film is centred on the belief that our loved ones would want us to know that they will always be with us in our hearts.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Lesego Vorster** was born and raised in Diepkloof, Soweto. He holds a Master's degree in animation from the prestigious Gobelins l'ecole de l'image in Paris, France. He founded the animation internship programme at Tshimologong Digital Precinct and co-founded his own studio, The Hidden Hand Studios, which focuses on high-end animation with a strong emphasis on African 2D aesthetics. His clients include Triggerfish, Studio La Cachete, SpecialTouch Studios, Zerpoint Studios, and MOZAIC Pictures.

## COMPANY DETAILS

The Hidden Hand Studios is an animation company based in Johannesburg. Our mission is to develop animation in South Africa, focusing on content which is relevant locally.



COMPANY PROFILE



LESEGO VORSTER



LOLA AIKINS

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Animated Short
Country:	South Africa, France
Production Company:	The Hidden Hand Studios, Avec Ou Sans Vous
Running Time:	10 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	240 000 USD
Finances Committed:	30 800 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- To find finance for production, a broadcaster and a merchandising expert.



## SOLA

Set in a dystopian future, Sola, a fiery and impulsive teen athlete, discovers that she has inherited her lost family's magic. Pursued by a secret defence unit that seeks out magicians, Sola flees her hometown and embarks on a dangerous journey to learn who she truly is.

Sola was born in a sleepy beach town and wants to participate in a running meet to earn money for her sick sister, Honey. Her sister is against her competing, but she doesn't know why. The truth is that Honey knows that Sola is on the precipice of her magical awakening, but she wants to find a way to stop it because she knows that the world they live in is dangerous for magicians.

Despite her sister's warnings, Sola is stubborn and decides to compete anyway. She activates her awakening at the track meet

where she is caught by robot sensors that notify the secret defence unit. They mobilise two agents to pick Sola up, but Sola is able to escape their grasp and flees to Aurora Mystery School – a magical boarding school.

At this school, she meets what will become lifelong friends, learns how to connect to her magic and use it, while facing seen and unseen enemies who want her powers for themselves.

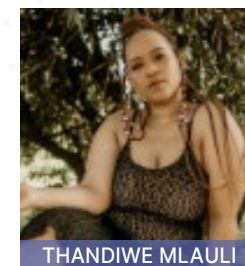
The adventures of Sola and the gang encompass a coming-of-age rollercoaster ride filled with action, fantasy, and heartfelt moments. Join them in this world of magic and wonder where they embrace their unique magic while fighting against those that want to steal their magic.

### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

SOLA is my love letter to black people around the world & animation is a medium of the future. It depicts worlds we have yet to see. As a Black woman, I wanted to write a story that shows dynamic black characters in said future. Because we will be there. Storge, joy, struggle, resilience, power: we deserve to be seen and that is my goal in bringing this story to life.

### DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Thandiwe Mlauli is a young, black and independent animation producer, writer, director and illustrator based in Johannesburg, South Africa actively carving out a unique space in the country's fast-growing animation industry.



THANDIWE MLAULI

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Animated Series

**Country:** South Africa, South Korea

**Production Company:** Studio Yezi

**Running Time:** 13 episodes, 22 minutes each

### FINANCING PLAN

**Total Budget:** 11 700 000 USD

**Finances Committed:** 100 000 USD

### COMPANY DETAILS

Studio Yezi is an award-winning animation studio based in South Africa, recognised with the Black Women Animate International Award, 2021 for its development and contributions to the animation industry.



COMPANY PROFILE

### GOALS AT DFM

- Co-productions
- Partnerships
- Brand alliances
- Financing





# SPIKY TO THE CORE

Zein is an orphan hedgehog who lives in a prison-like facility for the physically challenged. The goal is to “fix” them and send them back into the world.

Zein has a bag with magical powers that can pull away his negative emotions, like fear, depression, and hunger. However, he’s unaware of how aggressive he has become because of this. His spikes are always on edge, and they shoot out uncontrollably, injuring those around him.

Inside the bag, the emotions become fascinating creatures and monsters in a magical world. Knowing the value of the emotions inside, an evil rhino is after the bag.

He wants to use them to create emotional pieces of art.

Clumsy and deformed but funny and resourceful, Zein and his friends fight the rhino before he takes all the emotions of the town. During the battle, they discover the creatures inside the bag and learn to re-evaluate themselves and their deformities. They see the miracle hiding within each of them.

*Spiky to the Core* is a story that invites children to look at negative things differently. It’s a message that no one should dictate how we view ourselves, and we should never allow anyone to define us.

## DIRECTOR’S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

The idea is personal as I struggled with others defining me. I don’t want my son or any child to feel weird for having different views. *Spiky to the Core* is a call to children to never take things for granted – not even when others call them ‘deformities’.



NERMEEN SALEM

## DIRECTOR’S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Nermeen Salem** is a filmmaker and co-founder of Rufy’s Films Company in Alexandria, Egypt. She studied Filmmaking at the Jesuit Cultural Centre and later pursued Theology and Psychology at the University of St. Thomas, MN, USA, as a Fulbright scholar. She co-directed her first feature film, *The Mice Room*, which was screened at several international festivals. Nermeen has years of experience working with children and has led various filmmaking workshops for kids of different ages.

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Animated Feature Length

**Country:** Egypt, Qatar, Saudi Arabia

**Production Company:** Rufy’s Films Company

**Running Time:** 75 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

**Total Budget:** TBD

**Finances Committed:** 45 000 USD

## COMPANY DETAILS

Rufy’s Films is a production house based in Alexandria, Egypt. It was founded in 2010 and has played a significant role in the filmmaking scene in Egypt, particularly in Alexandria. For more information, you can visit their website..



## GOALS AT DFM

- Financing
- Co-producers
- Pre-sales
- Networking



# THE PASSPORT OF MALLAM ILIA

*The Passport of Mallam Ilia* tells the story of love, vengeance, and conquest set in ancient Northern Nigeria in the 19th century.

This romantic epic adventure explores 19th-century Northern Africa, where wars are fought, kingdoms are conquered, and bravery comes at a cost.

In this classic thriller set in the ancient Nigerian state of Kano, Ilia embarks on a quest for vengeance after Zara, his wife, was

murdered by an impostor. The search for the villain unravels Ilia’s intimate shadows yet unresolved and unconquered.

Sublime and rich, referencing a time before tribalism and insurgency that has since come to be associated with the North, the story unveils the beauty of pre and colonial northern Nigeria, its people, history, culture, tradition, and heritage presented in the simplest form of storytelling.



## DIRECTOR’S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

*The Passport of Mallam Ilia* is Africa’s first 2D animated feature film. Our team has faced challenges, but our vision, drive for excellence, and passion keep us going. We’ve put in sleepless nights to make this project happen.

## DIRECTOR’S/PRODUCER PROFILE

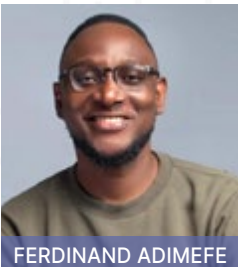
Ferdinand Adimefe is a creative entrepreneur, animation enthusiast, and founder of Magic Carpet, an award-winning animation studio focused on authentic African storytelling through animation tools. He holds a master’s degree from the Lagos Business School and serves on the board of Slum to School Africa and the Information Communications Committee of the Nigeria Economic Forum. He is also a recipient of The Future Award and is dedicated to improving access to education and economic growth for young Nigerians.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Magic Carpet creates authentic African stories for the world. Our tales stem from imagination, shaped by human experiences, and crafted by passionate artists for universal audiences.



COMPANY PROFILE



FERDINAND ADIMEFE



CHEKWUBE OKONKWO

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Animated Feature Length
Country:	Nigeria
Production Company:	Magic Carpet Studios
Running Time:	90 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	1 639 806.68 USD
Finances Committed:	60 000 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Co-productions
- Investment opportunities
- Distribution ease for our animations

# PARTNER PROJECTS

## HOT DOCS FELLOWS

The Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund has invested \$2.35 million to support African documentary filmmakers in sharing their stories. Over 80 projects from 24 countries have received grants, contributing to the growth of African documentary talent. With development and production grants of up to \$115,000 CAD, the fund annually selects four to ten projects.

In collaboration with Durban FilmMart, the fund offers a year-long mentorship programme to up to five funded projects. This includes private filmmaker labs at Hot Docs and Durban FilmMart, as well as participation in African festivals and markets. Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund Fellows also join DFM Finance Forum meetings.

- Sally Abobasha, director of **A Butterfly's Hug** (Egypt), produced by Talal Afifi. 74
- Kady Traoré, director of **Born A Girl** (Burkina Faso), produced by Ousmane Samassekou. 76
- Asmaa Gamal, director and producer of **My Dream To Fly** (Egypt). 78
- Christina Ifubaraboye, director of **Pülö** (Nigeria), produced by Elisa Mereghetti. 80
- Ager Oueslati, director of **You Don't Die Two Times** (Algeria), produced by Ager Oueslati. 82
- Zahra Moloo, director of **Wildfire** (South Africa), produced by Sergio Kirby and Neil Brandt 52  
(see DFM Documentary Projects)

## DOCA

Documentary Africa (DocA) inaugural mentorship program, ACP DOConnect, marks a significant milestone in the African film industry. Talented producers from Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries embark on a transformative journey, engaging in a comprehensive three-year long mentoring initiative. This program aims to initiate effective co-production matches and to ultimately increase South-South co-productions within ACP countries. With DocA's unwavering support and the guidance of best-on-their-field professional mentors, the beneficiaries will go through the process of refining their projects, developing polished documentary co-production proposals, impact production strategies and navigating the intricate landscape of international fundraising for their respective projects.

- Abdou Lahat Fall, director of **La Maison Du Peuple En Colère** (Senegal), produced by Aminata Ndao. 84
- Intagrist El Ansari, director and producer of **Nomadic Echo** (Mauritania). 86

## JUMPSTART

The Durban FilmMart Institute, in collaboration with Produire au Sud of the Festival des 3 Continents Nantes and Institut Francais-South Africa, is delighted to present Jumpstart 2023. Building on its successful inception by the DFM over a decade ago, Jumpstart is an incubator programme which serves as a platform to introduce emerging filmmakers to the art of writing and packaging their projects. With a particular focus on project packaging for the international market, Jumpstart equips filmmakers with essential techniques and tools for scriptwriting and storytelling processes.

We are proud to introduce the filmmakers participating in Jumpstart 2023:

- Anas Salaheldin, director of **A Lady called Sayeda** (Egypt), produced by Essam Hayder. 88
- Malusi S Bengu, director of **Hotel Hillbrow** (South Africa), produced by Khosie Dali. 90
- Jake Sirma, director of **Jambo Lolita** (Kenya), produced by Joan Njeri. 92
- Minenhle Luthuli, director of **Maternal** (South Africa), produced by Omolemo Nthathe. 94
- Moreetsi Gabang, director of **Thupo [Initiation]** (Botswana), produced by Frank Oteng. 96





# A BUTTERFLY HUG

Shahd dreams of becoming a famous actress and social media influencer, and Abdelrahman wants to be a cinematographer and film director. Together, they have decided to make a short movie. Despite the difficult circumstances that surround our characters, such as complications of the dreaded disease that prevent them from filming their movie and publishing new videos, and confine them to bed all the time, as well as the frustration that no one cares about their pictures and movies.

Their parents, however, worry they may not live long enough to achieve their goals. It is difficult for them to do simple tasks like showering or getting dressed. A small cut or blister that does not heal can lead to an infection needing hospitalisation. Yet, their creative desire is strong, and they still make the most out of every day.

Shahd lives in bustling Giza and hates school.

She left her school in the 9th grade due to bullying. Not dropping out, EB has delayed her puberty, and she is small for her age, suffering from low self-esteem. She hopes that the film she is making with Abdelrahman will grow her social media following, boosting her self-confidence so that one day she may return to school. In contrast, Abdelrahman is studying to finish high school and pursue his college studies in Cairo, away from his village where everyone knows him and pities him because of his condition.

The film follows their journey by using cinema verité style, portraying the challenges and small daily victories of these young people while exploring what it means to be a teenager—to live and express oneself authentically when others say you cannot.



REEL PREVIEWS

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Shahd and Abdelrahman reflect my teenage self, defying societal norms. Despite opposition, I pursued filmmaking, like Shahd's journey as a YouTuber. Their struggles remind me of my own battle for acceptance. Through *A Butterfly Hug*, I explore their unique voices, marginalised by society and their rare skin disorder. The film aims to shed light on their challenges, inspire social change, and highlight the Yasmine Al-Samra Foundation's vital work.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

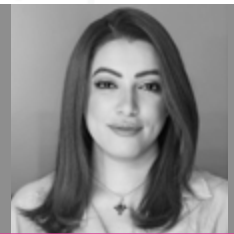
**Sally Abobasha** a Cairo-based filmmaker, crafts intimate stories about everyday people. Inspired by research and editing, she tells human stories with heart. With a degree in TV production from Cairo University and filmmaking courses at Hunter College, her work has been supported by the National Cinema Center of Egypt and recognized at international film festivals.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Founded in 2010 by Talal Afifi, Sudan Film Factory produces feature films, documentaries, and art house films. It fosters collaboration, hosts Sudan Independent Film Festival, and promotes Sudanese cinema globally. Their works, like *Al-Sit* and *Art of Sin*, have won multiple awards. Sudan Film Factory aims to build partnerships, bridge cultures, and amplify underrepresented voices through impactful projects like *A Butterfly Hug*.



TALAL AFIFI  
PRODUCER



SALLY ABOBASHA  
DIRECTOR/ PRODUCER

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Egypt
Production Company:	Sudan Film Factory
Running Time:	80 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	166 200 USD
Finances Committed:	27 500 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Secure funding and distribution.



# BORN A GIRL

Seven days after my birth, as an infant, like my four other sisters, I was subjected to female genital mutilation.

Growing up, I always had this feeling of being different, of not being fully myself. No one had explained to me how or why I was deprived of this organ. The subject was never discussed in the family. Despite fierce opposition from my family, I had my first repair at the age of 21, but I still live with the physical and psychological after-effects of this practice. Today, I have decided to undertake a restoration to get my body back. Clitoral restoration, which is a surgical procedure,

aims to restore part or all of the clitoris in women who have had it removed.

But this restoration is not just physical. For my psychological recovery, I need to have the support of my mother and my sisters, to know that there is at least one person who understands me and regrets not having done anything to save me. They were all over 25 at the time. Their decision could have changed the course of my life. As the youngest of 13 children, I have to face my mother, through whom decisions are made, my sisters who are also victims, the eldest of whom is the one who fights for this macabre tradition to continue.



REEL PREVIEWS (PASSWORD: nfva2023)

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

The communities involved in our project come from Burkina Faso's inner areas, with the exception of the doctors based in towns. In Côte d'Ivoire, we collaborate with an association dedicated to repairing and restoring victims of genital mutilation. As someone who has undergone mutilation, along with my sisters, I passionately share our story through the perspectives of my mother, Djè, and sister, Mamou. Our team, led by the experienced cameraman Samasekou Ousmane, has a personal connection to the subject and has forged strong relationships during our scouting process.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Kady Traoré is a Burkinabè producer and director, born in Bobo Dioulasso in Western Burkina Faso. She entered the film industry in 1998 as an actress and has acted in several feature films and TV series. In 2013, she graduated from the Institut Supérieur de l'Image et du Son, and in 2014, she created Athena Films. She has directed two feature films, one short film, a 26-episode TV series, and one medium-length documentary. This project is her first feature documentary.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Athena Films is a limited company with two partners. Since 2014, it has produced and co-produced several films. Currently Ousmane Samassekou is producing *Born A Girl*.



OUSMANE SAMASSEKOU  
PRODUCER



KADY TRAORÉ  
DIRECTOR

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Burkina Faso
Production Company:	Athena Films
Running Time:	7 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	329 482 USD
Finances Committed:	44 986 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- To meet world professionals.
- Create co-production links,
- Work with mentors, and benefit from their experience.





# MY DREAM TO FLY

After the passing of Osama's brother, who died in a street motorcycle race, he wishes to fulfil his dream of competing in international championships. Osama earns a living on his cheap Chinese motorcycle every morning in the slums of Cairo. However, at night, this motorcycle becomes legendary. Osama uses it to speed through the streets of Cairo at 100km/hr. If his feet touch the ground, he loses - or dies. The film takes us into Osama's struggle.

Osama is now a father to a beautiful young girl named Waad and this sport is dangerous. It is a sport and art for young men who are agile and fit, and have little to lose. Osama needs to make many choices, he has to fight many fights and decide whether to follow his heart or be more responsible for his family and community. From an outsider's look in, it seems as though Osama's juggling act in his own life is more of the game at hand.



REEL PREVIEWS (PASSWORD: MYDREAM22)

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

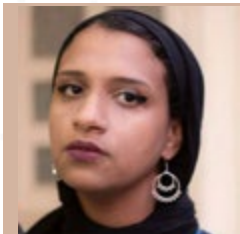
Born and raised in rural slums, I resonate deeply with the characters in the film. Their struggles reflect my own dreams and fears in the region I call home. Riding motorcycles provided moments of escape, reminding me of the courage to express myself despite societal restrictions. Joining these young men on their daring adventures, I explore their ultimate goals amidst exploitation and fleeting moments of happiness.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Asmaa Gamal, an independent photographer and director, holds a master's degree in Drama and Television. Her short films, like *The Letter You Sent* and *Masrya*, won awards, including a Platinum Award in Los Angeles. She published *The Seven Seeds* and worked on *Unforgettable Land* in Thailand. Her photography received accolades, including the Nile Media Award. She exhibited internationally, including at Photo Istanbul and CONTACT Photography Festival. She also gained Instagram support for her Everyday Project work.

## COMPANY DETAILS

REC and Roll Films was founded in 2020 , Here at Rec and Roll we believe cinema to be the artistic storytelling of real people. We aim to produce films with an authentic and uninhibited cinematic expression. We focus on producing films that bring suppressed narratives to light, highlighting unconventional stories dug deep within original and unique visionaries. The team at Rec and Roll works closely together, designing the production process in cooperative and community-based modules, on capturing the human experience in-between cinematic frames. So, it's time to roll on.



ASMAA GAMAL  
DIRECTOR/PRODUCER

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Egypt
Production Company:	REC and Roll
Running Time:	75 minutes

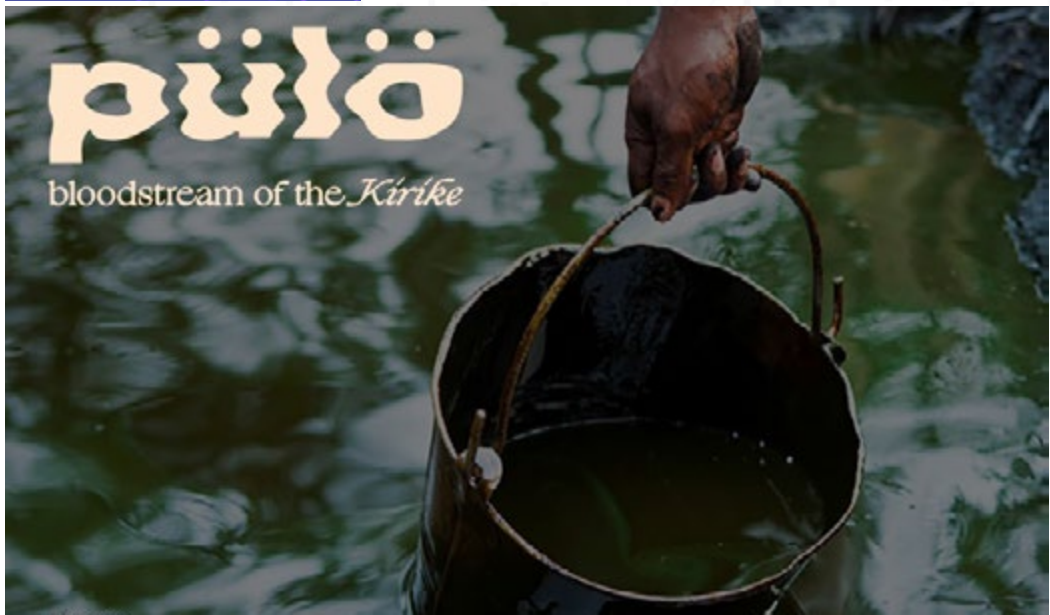
## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	146 440 USD
Finances Committed:	14 270 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Secure funding and distribution.





# PULO

Through a recollection of clips filmed in 1974 and 1990, combined with present-day footage, *PULO* investigates the various forms of pollution in Okrika, a Niger Delta community located in the southern part of Nigeria. It is a story about the Ijaw tribe by the Atlantic Ocean and their inclination to water, and the risk of losing such a cherished and fundamental resource to 'big oil'. The Niger Delta, which used to be on par with the Amazon rainforest due to its biodiversity, is now considered to be one of the most polluted regions on planet Earth.

The documentary portrays the environmental socio-economic effects through various voices. Christina's voice is one of them – as the film's producer and director who is also an indigene directly affected by the island's

environmental degradation. She narrates personal experiences in her hometown and links the grief associated with losing her grandmother with the gradual decay and degradation of her people's land, water, and culture. Who are we when we lose the traditional knowledge and practice of ancestors, whose only link to us is the environment they once dwelled in?

*PULO* hinges on the passing of time through archives, the role of the people as cultural custodians, the sacredness of water, and the risk of losing one's identity with the spreading of neo-colonial models. The most heartbreaking detail is the constant question the film probes: will this be the last time we ever hear of this island?

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

*PULO* poses the question: will a solution ever arise? Water holds sacred significance in indigenous communities worldwide, including Okrika in the Niger Delta. As 'nomads of the seas,' these water people emphasise their deep connection to this vital resource, transcending civilization and defining their existence. However, the discovery of *PULO* (oil) poses a sudden threat to their lives.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Christina Ifubaraboye** is the founder and creative director of IMBUU, with a professional background in media and public affairs. Ifubaraboye holds a Bachelor's degree in Mass Communications from the University of Hertfordshire and is well-versed in various fields including art, media financing, and communication. Christina's interests lie in film, popular culture, and the influence of media in the digital age, while her focus is on challenging commonly misconstrued narratives in society.

## COMPANY DETAILS

IMBUU is a Lagos and Port-Harcourt-based multimedia production company challenging mainstream narratives through film, podcasts, and writing. It amplifies marginalised voices and indigenous identities.

[COMPANY PROFILE](#)

Ethnos, a Bologna-based production company since 1995, focuses on documentaries and social campaigns. Led by Elisa Mereghetti and Marco Mensa, their internationally recognized work covers cultural, social, environmental, and historical themes.

[COMPANY PROFILE](#)



ELISA MEREGHETTI  
CO-PRODUCER



CHRISTINA IFUBARABOYE  
DIRECTOR/ PRODUCER

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Nigeria
Production Company:	IMBUU, Ethnos
Running Time:	80 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	260 366.60 USD
Finances Committed:	176 407.16 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Secure funding and distribution.



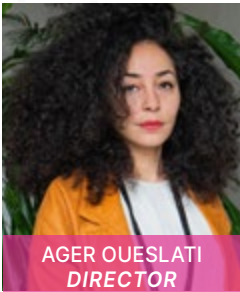
# YOU DON'T DIE TWO TIMES

A ray of light streams into the dark room where Gift is barely visible. She doesn't earn enough to send money to her son, Michel, in Nigeria. The accidental birth of Blossom, whose existence nobody knows about, is holding her back in her quest for Europe. As usual, she talks to herself and recalls everything she has experienced since 2017 - her departure from Lagos and the abandonment of her son. She remembers Slimity, Youcef, Favor, and Biggie in Agadez - their laughter and their angry days.

From Agadez to her attempt to cross the Moroccan border, and through her family memories, Gift immerses us in the fragility of her past, revealing the true reasons behind a woman's search for well-being. The waiting, the journey, the doubts, the death, the life, the confession, the truth, the sea, and the mother - they all unveil the ultimate quest of Gift's soul.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Gift tried to cross the Mediterranean sea and lost her life with her divine son Blossom, last March. She wasn't just the character in my film, she was also my friend. It's important that this film is dedicated to Gift and to all those people who, in the name of a fundamental need, lost their lives.



## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Ager Oueslati is a journalist, director, and photographer. She graduated from the Ecole Supérieure de Journalisme Pro Lille-Montpellier (ESJ-PRO) and worked as a reporter at France 3 National. She left France in 2016 to follow the routes of women's migration. Her first short documentary film was *Exilées*, released in September 2019. In 2021, she founded Taswir Production in Algeria, where she co-directs the company with her brother, Raouf Oueslati.



PRODUCER'S PROFILE

## COMPANY DETAILS

Taswir Eurl Productions-Editions was founded in 2021 in Algiers. It serves as a training and residency space for young filmmakers and focuses on film production.

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Algeria
Production Company:	Taswir Eurl Productions-Editions
Running Time:	70 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	262 882.07 USD
Finances Committed:	170 000 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Meet with potential post-production and festival funders to prepare for the film's release.



# LA MAISON DU PEUPLE EN COLÈRE

Abdoulaye, 20 years old, Guy-Marius, 50 years old, and Félix, 70 years old, are three activists committed to social justice in Senegal. They travel throughout the country to identify injustices and lead a fierce struggle against the highly controversial president Macky Sall, who has been in power for 12

years. As the country's economic situation deteriorates, they realise that a revolution is necessary. In a bustling Dakar, with the upcoming presidential elections in February 2024, they must make difficult choices: how far are they willing to go to change the country?



## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Franz Fanon said: "Each generation must discover its mission, fulfil it or betray it." Guided by these words, I aspire to follow in the footsteps of Abdoulaye, Guy-Marius, and Félix. They embody all the motivations and contradictions of a people facing their history. Making this film is also a way to portray a necessary revolution.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Aminata Ndao** is the director of the production company Sine Films based in Dakar.

She has worked as an executive producer on several films by Moussa Sene Absa. In 2018, she produced a fiction short film called *Ordur*, and the same year, *Migrants, Migrer: Le Retour Impossible* with the support of FOPICA and CCM.

With *La Maison du Peuple en colère*, she participated in the residency Produire au Sud Agadir under the mentorship of Marianne Dumoulin (JBA Productions) and was a laureate of Jeune Création Francophone.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Sine Films produces projects by young authors whose work questions the mutations of contemporary Africa, its socio-economic issues, and its political challenges.



AMINATA NDAO  
PRODUCER



ABDOU LAHAT FALL  
DIRECTOR

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Senegal
Language:	
Production Company:	Sine Films
Running Time:	90 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	412 071.76 USD
Finances Committed:	135 041.74 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- DFM provides a valuable opportunity to build a network of relationships and leverage them to promote and successfully execute my projects.



PROSODIE FILMS



NOMADIC ECHO

In the Malian capital, 20-something year olds Bamako, Moha and Mohamed Ali, Baken, children of Tuareg musicians and cultural promoters originally from the desert of Timbuktu, decide to form a music group with contemporary pop-rap sounds. Their lyrics constantly reference the spirit of a nomadic-desert world, which they claim to identify with despite not having lived it.

Throughout their daily lives, research, and rehearsals, these young people will confront their elders and seek the knowledge and experience of iconic figures such as Manny Ansar, founder of the Festival in the Desert, and Ag-Na, producer and promoter of Tuareg music; Amano, the last legendary griot from the region of Timbuktu; Disco, singer of the female ensemble Tartit; and Abdallah, poet-leader of the group Tinariwen. Starting from the desert, the latter have been fighting for 40 years to preserve Tuareg culture, and now aspire to "pass the baton" to their offspring.

The story will be enriched by the obstacles that the young people will have to face and overcome. Beginning with their mother tongue, which they do not always master, Tamasheq. Another factor will be the perception of their approach, which is bound to raise suspicions and reservations among the elders. Their exchanges will provide an opportunity to shed light on this paradoxical relationship between two generations.

Despite the conflicts and apparent contradictions, there is an obvious mirror game between these two generations. The daily lives of these young people, their dreams for the future, and their connection to the world through technological tools perfectly echo the desires of their parents when they left the desert camp in the early 1970s to discover the big city and, for some, to explore the world.

 REEL PREVIEWS (PASSWORD: echoshort)

DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

My project is to question the process of cultural transmutation of a declining nomadic world. How to perpetuate the spirit of that world? I wanted to reflect on two generations, that of my elders, who have been fighting for forty years to preserve our culture through music, and the generation of our budding musician children.



INTAGRIST EL ANSARI  
DIRECTOR/PRODUCER

DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

The passage describes Intagrist el Ansari, who is originally from the Tuareg camps in the region of Timbuktu, Mali, but now resides in Mauritania. He is a documentary filmmaker, writer, and independent author. Intagrist spent his childhood in the desert until the age of ten, but due to the conflict in northern Mali during the 1990s, he spent over ten years living in France. His literary texts and documentary work focus on the Saharan nomadic cultures and their transformations.

In summary, Intagrist is a filmmaker, writer, and author from the Tuareg camps in Mali who now lives in Mauritania. His work explores the cultural transformations of Saharan nomadic cultures, and he spent over a decade living in France due to the conflict in northern Mali.

COMPANY DETAILS

Prosodie Films is dedicated to supporting the cinematic creation of filmmakers from the African continent and its diaspora. The aim is to strengthen and encourage new talents.

PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

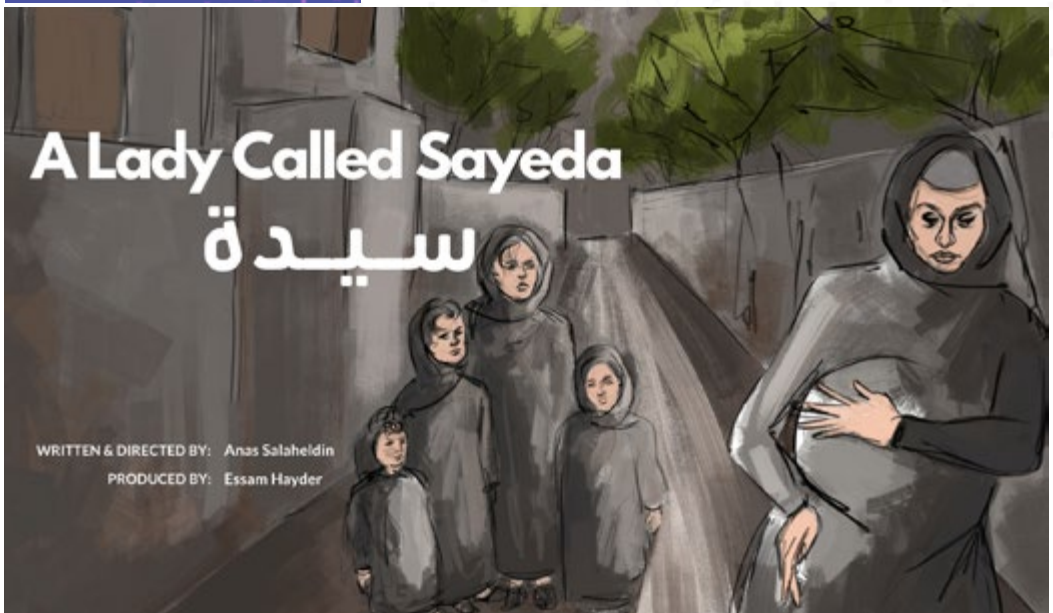
Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Mauritanie
Production Company:	Prosodie Films (Mauritanie), Big Sister (France)
Producer/s:	Intagrist el Ansari, Jihan El-Tahri, Jennifer Sabbah
Running Time:	120 minutes

FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	300 000 USD
Finances Committed:	28 000 USD

GOALS AT DFM

- We are looking to meet financial partners, co-producers, sales agents, and distributors.



# A LADY CALLED SAYEDA

Sayedra is a mother of four girls and pregnant for the fifth time, finally, with a boy - precisely what her husband, Musaad, was waiting for since the day they got married. While in lockdown during the Covid night curfew, amniotic fluids suddenly break out of her uterus, signalling a premature delivery. Alone, she attempts to reach someone willing to help her get to her village's health centre. However, fear of the virus leads people

to believe she will transmit the virus and ultimately infect them. A friend recommends a trusted midwife without telling her that Sayedra is infected. The midwife examines Sayedra and tells her that she must give birth at the central hospital in the city, considering the baby is in danger. Sayedra tries to reach the hospital as fast as possible to save her baby but is faced with many unprecedented circumstances.



REEL PREVIEWS (PASSWORD: SanftesBlech2022)

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

I always like to work on true stories that take place in my community or about the people whom I really grow fond of their stories and struggles. *A Lady Called Sayeda* is a statement on how illiteracy, poor education, and poor healthcare can affect people's lives in a negative way.



ESSAM HAYDER  
PRODUCER



ANAS SALAHELDIN  
DIRECTOR

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

Anas Salaheldin is a writer, director and producer, he holds a degree in screenwriting, he moved to Germany, and worked on documentaries at the Open TV Channel in Magdeburg. His documentary *Sanftes Blech / The Trombone That Saved Me* won many awards.

Essam Hayder is a producer, screenwriter, and director, who holds degrees in screenwriting and English literature. He worked for years as a filmmaker, creative director, and producer. Essam founded Honey Bees Films, which produced films and content.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Honey Bees Films is a Cairo-based independent production house established in 2020. With a growing portfolio of films and content, Honey Bees aims at industry-leading and making a change.



COMPANY PROFILE

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type: Fiction Feature Length

Country: Egypt

Production Company: Honey Bees Films

Running Time: 90 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget: 621 500 USD

Finances Committed: 25 000 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Script advisory.
- Labs and markets opportunities.
- Co-producers, financial partners and development funding.



# HOTEL HILLBROW

The lows that come with the highs of her sex, drug, and Gqom lifestyle were always inevitable, but Zee could never have foreseen her fall at the South African Music Awards being a public humiliation and trauma on national TV. The brutal fallout is fuelled by toxic social media comments rebuking her. She is cut off from her music source of joy and ostracised by the industry PR machine.

A year later, Zee is picking up the pieces, and the comeback is seemingly on, but Hillbrow

is calling, as it did with her late father and jazz icon Cosmo. The city blesses Zee with Cosmo's protest music, and this treasure gives her the inspiration to put pen to paper again.

Zee merges her digital music with Cosmo's analogue protest jazz to birth a new song. She returns to the national stage to deliver an artistic performance that silences the stunned crowd.



## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

To find the sublime beauty of your inner light, one must believe it is there. I'm driven by this search for meaning through art. *Hotel Hillbrow* is a personal quest for this uplifting beauty through cinema. I hope to enhance this search by blending together cinematic elements, taking the viewer on a cathartic journey that resonates with the truth of their own lives.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Khosie Dali** is a Cape Town-based producer specialising in narrative film. She is an alumna of Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Durban Film Mart, Rotterdam Lab, EAVE Producers Lab, and Realness Development Lab. Khosie has produced a dozen commercials, short films, and music videos. Her first feature film, *Sons of the Sea*, directed by John Gutierrez, was released in 2021. It won the Best Feature Film award at the Durban International Film Festival and has been screened at numerous international film festivals.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Miss K Productions is a Cape Town-based film production company. Their first feature film, *Sons of the Sea*, was released in 2021. The films *Pieces* and *Vlees* are scheduled to film in 2024, while *Hotel Hillbrow* is planned for release in 2025.



KHOSIE DALI  
PRODUCER



MALUSI S BENGU  
DIRECTOR

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Fiction Feature Length
Country:	South Africa
Production Company:	Miss K Productions
Running Time:	90 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	632 575 USD
Finances Committed:	0 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- We would like to strengthen our script and meet other filmmakers.





# JAMBO LOLITA

The story follows Lola, a young Kenyan girl who dreams of starting her own food stand business to escape the pressure of joining the prostitution trade like her family. At a local food festival, she meets Paolo, a successful chef from Italy who is re-evaluating his life after being diagnosed with ALS. They become friends, and Paolo helps Lola set up her stand, which becomes a success. However, her family and boyfriend continue to pressure her, and her stand is destroyed by fire. Meanwhile, Paolo's condition worsens,

and he confesses to Lola. She decides to help him and puts her energies into his recovery instead of her stand. However, Chane, Lola's boyfriend, convinces Paolo and Silvio to secretly rebuild her stand. Lola is surprised and delighted by the new, bigger, and better stand, which is revealed to her with the entire community present. Her mother also supports her, and they all celebrate with her. The story explores themes of friendship, ambition, family pressure, and the power of community support.



REEL PREVIEWS

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

This story is a beacon of hope for all those who dare to dream, for those who are battling serious obstacles, pain, and adversity, for those who are not afraid to go against the grain and speak up for themselves, and also for those who can't.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

My name is **Jake Sirma**, and I have been working as a writer and director for 7 years. During my career, I have written for various mediums including TV, film, and documentary shorts and features. I am deeply passionate about crafting engaging fiction stories that encompass drama, fantasy, comedy, as well as historical and period pieces.

As a director and writer, I strive to create and represent authentic African stories and our realities. I draw inspiration from our rich oral literature history and bring to life the magical tales of our forefathers on screen, showcasing today's ordinary heroes and change-makers.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Neolight Productions has 8 years of experience in content production, providing innovative media products that bridge the gap between service and product providers and their target market.



COMPANY PROFILE



JOAN NJERI  
PRODUCER



JAKE SIRMA  
DIRECTOR

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Fiction Feature Length
Country:	Kenya
Production Company:	Neolight Productions LTD
Running Time:	90 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	408 719 USD
Finances Committed:	500 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- To get feedback on script and story elements.



# MATERNAL

Viola Whitaker, a beautiful and artistic woman who is self-assured and a little neurotic at the same time, is a woman who has never taken the easy road in life. She is goal-driven, career-focused, and has built a successful business alongside her husband. She has survived her adult years with the help of her husband, but she often fantasises about being a mother. Viola has watched friends and relatives build families around her while she puts on a brave smile. However, tragedy strikes, and Viola faces a devastating loss no mother would wish upon anyone.

After a second cycle of IVF treatment, Viola becomes pregnant. During her seventh month, the unthinkable happens. A long and gut-wrenching sequence follows as Viola battles through painful contractions, leading to a premature birth and the heartbreaking

loss of her child. Viola is thrust into an odyssey where she must navigate her grief while also dealing with her strained relationship with her neglectful husband.

As Viola struggles to navigate a world burdened by profound sorrow and a broken heart, she faces societal pressures and familial expectations at every turn. The emotional damage weighs heavily on Viola, casting a permanent dark cloud over her. However, amidst the darkness, she begins to realise the extent of her husband's own grief, as he has silently dealt with his own pain throughout their isolated journey. Together, they come to a mutual agreement to pursue adoption, finally embracing the opportunity to become the parents they have always longed to be.



REEL PREVIEWS PASSWORD: HAFinalCutForFestivals

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

Viola's profound challenges prompt reflection on one's own behaviour in desperate situations. Regrettable choices made during such times serve as reminders for improvement. I resonate with Viola, who is willing to risk her marriage in pursuit of her longing for a child. Desperation is an unfortunate state, and I hope viewers will reflect on their own experiences.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Minenhle Luthuli**, an AFDA graduate in Motion Picture Medium with an Honours Degree, has gained global acclaim for her short films *Umsolwa* and *Bars*. Her internship at Isidingo launched her career as a television writer, and she has contributed to shows such as *Durban Gen* and *The Estate*. Minenhle is the founder of Minenhle Luthuli Narratives, and her debut short film *Heart Attack* premiered at the Zanzibar International Festival and DIFF. The film has also been screened globally at the Africa Pavilion at Cannes. Additionally, she is the winner of the 2022 NEFT Vodka short film competition.

## COMPANY DETAILS

Founded in 2018 by Omolemo Nthathle and Seluleko Mpisane, Blackhut Films is a film company that specialises in thought-provoking and daring documentaries, films, as well as animation.



COMPANY PROFILE



OMOLEMO NTHATHE  
PRODUCER



MINENHLE LUTHULI  
DIRECTOR

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Fiction Feature Length

**Country:** South Africa

**Production Company:** Blackhut Films (Executive Company), Parable Films (Co-production Company)

**Running Time:** 90 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

**Total Budget:** 184 444 USD

**Finances Committed:** TBD

## GOALS AT DFM

- To acquire valuable feedback on our story and project packaging for funding purposes.
- Networking and connecting with sales agents.



# THUPO (INITIATION)

A look at a defining moment in the lives of three Batswana who learn the values of compassion, respect, and responsibility. Over the course of a single day in a village in Botswana, a little boy's relationship with his domestic helper is threatened, a dog's

life is endangered, and the barren wife of a pastor discovers her albino niece is missing. A cautionary triptych about love, identity, and the struggle to reconcile one's morality and personal ambition in the face of injustice.



REEL PREVIEWS

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER STATEMENT

*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (a person is a person through other people). We stand on the shoulders of giants who fought for their communities. We must therefore choose to do what is right over what is easy because even the smallest choice made by a single person can change the course of a society's future. It only takes one; then it takes a village.

## DIRECTOR'S/PRODUCER PROFILE

**Moreetsi Gabang** graduated valedictorian from AFDA, is a Talents Durban (2017), Talents Berlinale (2018 and 2021-2022) and DFM Institute Business alumni. He completed his MA (First Class) after receiving the Vice-Chancellor Post Grad Intl. Scholarship to study at London College of Communication. His short film *Motswakwa (Foreigner)* was nominated for Best Short Film at the 2019 Africa Movie Academy Awards. He is a two-time recipient of the Bessie Head Literature Award and works at Gaborone-based production company NIO Visuals.

## COMPANY DETAILS

NIO Visuals is a Gaborone-based production company focused on quality storytelling, striking visuals, and innovative designs. We specialise in documentaries, commercials, films, TV, and new media.



COMPANY PROFILE



FRANK OTENG  
PRODUCER



MOREETSI GABANG  
DIRECTOR

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Fiction Feature Length

**Country:** Botswana

**Production Company:** NIO Visuals, CattlePost Films

**Running Time:** 62 minutes

## FINANCING PLAN

**Total Budget:** 71 958.47 USD

**Finances Committed:** 9 645 USD

## GOALS AT DFM

- Script Consultancy.
- Secure co-production deal.
- Secure funding for production.
- Secure distributor.
- Network with collaborators.



# 2023 TALENTS DURBAN

Durban FilmMart Institute proudly partners with Berlinale Talents to present the 16th edition of Talents Durban. Bringing together rising African film professionals, it is an integral initiative of Berlinale Talents and has been a successful partnership since 2019. This training and development platform offers selected Talents participants six weeks of mentorship and the opportunity to present their film projects to selected decision makers.

After a rigorous adjudication process, 19 film projects and 4 film critics from 15 countries across the continent have made the final cut. The 2023 selection includes 4 fiction features, 5 documentaries, 3 episodics (TV/Web series), 3 animations, 4 fiction shorts, and 4 film critics.

Talents Durban is categorised into these four sections:

- **Storytelling Lab** focuses on advanced consultation and mentoring for features, shorts, and episodic projects, offering scriptwriting workshops.
- **Doc Lab** provides hands-on training and mentorship for submitted documentaries.
- **Animation Lab** offers one-on-one mentorship for animation directors and screenwriters, focusing on character and visual development specific to Africa.
- **Talent Press** provides mentorship for emerging African film journalists and critics.



**GAËL HOUNKPATIN**

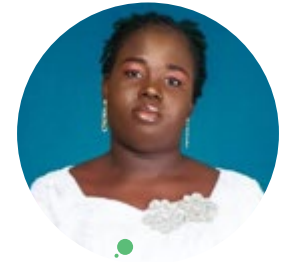
**Country:** Benin

Gaël T. Hounkpatin, born in Cotonou in 1989, underwent film criticism training under the mentorship of Dja Mambou and Charles Tesson. Equipped with extensive knowledge, he is now a proficient critic prepared to make valuable contributions to the world of cinema.

**GBENATO CAROLLE TONOUKOUEN**

**Country:** Benin

Gbenato Carolle Tonoukouen is a passionate individual from Benin with a deep interest in theatre, cinema, literature, visual arts, and politics. They serve as a cultural animator, undergoing film criticism training, and actively engage in political activism. Gbenato is responsible for leading an association called 'Dynamics of the Book,' dedicated to promoting reading among adolescents. Since 2017, they have organised 'The Literary Debate' to support reading initiatives and showcase Beninese authors.



**SEYI LASISI**

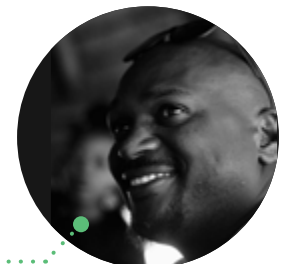
**Country:** Nigeria

Seyi Lasisi is a film critic with a passion for exploring the Nigerian film industry and African cinema at large. His works encompass diverse topics, including his published essay titled *From Amaka Igwe to Jade Osiberu, Nollywood Female Filmmakers Are the New Kings of Boys* featured in Afrocritik.

**TONDERAI CHIYINDIKO**

**Country:** Zimbabwe

Tonderai is a multifaceted professional, excelling as an actor, arts writer, and creative industries researcher. He earned a B.A in Theatre Arts from UZ (University of Zimbabwe) and an M.A in Applied Drama from Wits (University of the Witwatersrand).



## A NOLLYWOOD STORY

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Feature Fiction

**Country:** Nigeria

**Language:** English, Pidgin English, Igbo

**Running Time:** 120 minutes

**Socials:** [Instagram](#)

*A Nollywood Story* follows Rebecca, a girl who shares a love for Nigerian films with her mother, Urenma. Tragedy strikes when Urenma dies, taking Rebecca's love for Nollywood with her. Years later, on the anniversary of Urenma's death, Rebecca's now mundane life is disrupted when she inadvertently enters the world of a Nollywood movie. To return home, Rebecca must navigate Nollywood tropes and confront the film's antagonist and ultimate mean girl.

### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Growing up, 'Old Nollywood' was the only way I could see people who resembled me, facing challenges similar to mine, on the screen. It allowed me to believe that my stories were worth sharing. *A Nollywood Story* is a homage to the fiercely independent and genuine roots of Nollywood, blending chaos and heartfelt emotions through the central mother-child relationship that serves as the film's core.

### DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Kaelo Iyizoba** is a filmmaker and ex-pharmacist who holds an MFA from Columbia University. He considers himself a trader, but instead of goods, his merchandise is empathy.



KAELO IYIZOBA

## AU PAYS DE L'AUTRE (HOME TO THE OTHER)

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Feature Fiction

**Country:** Mauritius

**Language:** Mauritian Creole

**Running Time:** 90 minutes

Ravin, a young lawyer, takes on the challenge to fight the cause of the marginalised group who is being forced out of their homes that are illegally built on state land. During this social and political struggle which opposes the haves with the have nots, he will confront a series of obstacles and embark on a personal journey of self-quest.

### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I am a fierce supporter of the 'cinema du réel.' *Home to the Other*, contemplates local issues in a modern society that's transforming and confronting its contradictions. Furthermore, while delving into a specific and unique history, we are exploring a theme of universal significance.

### DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Gopalen Parthiben Chellapermal** is a professional Mauritian screenwriter, director, and producer specialising in both fiction and documentary films.



PARTHIBEN CHELLAPERMAL

## AYA

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Feature Fiction

**Country:** South Africa

**Language:** English, Xhosa

**Running Time:** 90 minutes

**Socials:** [Instagram](#)

John and Aya endure the loss of his wife while escaping a city descending into chaos. Their goal: a secure farm, the birthplace of John's wife. Aya's journey tests her survival instincts, blurring trust and moral boundaries. Alone, she finds solace with a young French boy. Safety arrives unexpectedly, allowing Aya to exhale.

### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Aya was born from a collision of three central themes: the relationship between a father and daughter; children being forced to grow up because of their physical and emotional environments and lastly reflections on modern society through the lens of survival. These themes are brought together within a unique physical and cultural decaying landscape.

### DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Rafeeqah Galant** is a writer, producer, director from Cape Town, with more than 12 years experience in the film industry.



RAFEQAH GALANT

## COUVRE-FEU (CURFEW)

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Short Film

**Country:** Burkina Faso, Morocco

**Language:** French

**Running Time:** 15 minutes

**Socials:** [Instagram](#)

In 2002, war erupted in Côte d'Ivoire. Blandine, nine months pregnant, goes into labour. There is a curfew and her neighbors are all trying to find a way for her to give birth at home until they realise Blandine needs hospital care. So they have to face the outside world in order to save Blandine's life and her son's.

### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In war-torn Côte d'Ivoire, I aim to raise awareness about the profound impact of conflict on individuals. My film highlights the importance of a peaceful climate for our well-being and urges viewers to appreciate its value.

### DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Isabelle Christiane**, a graduate in film directing from ESAV Marrakech, has an impressive portfolio of 5 short films. Currently, she is working on her new short and feature projects.



\*

# HALF A TRIBE

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

<b>Project Type:</b> Documentary
<b>Country:</b> Zimbabwe
<b>Language:</b> English, Shona, Ndebele
<b>Running Time:</b> 50 minutes
<b>Socials:</b> <a href="#">Instagram</a>

A group of individuals explore their lives and how being half Ndebele and half Shona has shaped them into who they are. They navigate their day-to-day lives finding out how much or little they know about each of their cultures. This story delves into the realities of growing up in a blended Zimbabwean household and how it affects one's past, present and future, in a society that faces tribalism.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

People of mixed heritage are caught in the middle of their tribes, from not being fluent in a native language to being unaware of cultural practices. This documentary highlights their unspoken truths and struggles and aims to foster better tribal relations.

## DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

Zimbabwean film director and screenwriter, **Ntombi Masuku** has a BA in Motion Picture Medium. She puts an emphasis on psychological dramas to destigmatize mental health challenges. Ntombi tells African stories through her production company, gaining recognition at numerous film festivals worldwide.



NTOMBI MASUKU

# IZINTOMBI ZOMKHONTO: FLOWERS OF THE REVOLUTION

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

<b>Project Type:</b> Documentary
<b>Country:</b> South Africa
<b>Language:</b> IsiZulu, English
<b>Running Time:</b> 90-100 minutes

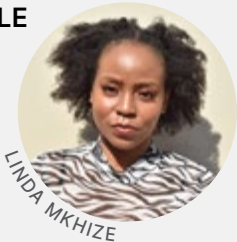
This documentary unveils the untold story of female veterans of Umkhonto weSizwe (MK), the invisible soldiers. Through their voices, it explores the unique struggles faced by women in the male-dominated realm of armed struggle. Reflecting on their contributions, sacrifices, and post-MK journeys, we gain insight into the history of militancy in South Africa.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

We follow an emotive narrative through the voices of the women soldiers, sharing their lived experiences through current, archive, and radio-recorded audio interviews made in a style similar to found-footage.

## DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Linda Mkhize** is a Durban based director, photographer and scriptwriter. A DUT Video Technology graduate (*cum-laude*), she has since produced and written numerous SuperSport magazine shows and sport documentaries. She worked as an associate producer and production manager for *Dreams of Gomorrah* and currently works as a brand photographer/videographer.



LINDA MKHIZE

# JUA KALI

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

<b>Project Type:</b> Feature Fiction
<b>Country:</b> Kenya
<b>Language:</b> Swahili, English, Dholuo and Kikuyu
<b>Running Time:</b> 95 minutes
<b>Socials:</b> <a href="#">Instagram</a>

*Jua Kali* follows Diana, a hardworking housekeeper in Kenya, as she balances her job and personal struggles. She struggles to care for her child, cleans various homes, and encounters stories of tragedy and resilience from other housekeepers. The narrative also touches on class disparities as well as the challenges faced by Nairobi's informal working class.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I'm Joash Omondi, a Kenyan filmmaker using film to address social issues. My latest project *Jua Kali* honours Kenya's informal workers, revealing society's true essence from the bottom up.

## DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Joash Omondi** is a filmmaker from Kenya. His award-winning short film, *Jua Kali*, marks his debut in narrative filmmaking, and he aspires to develop it into a feature film.



JOASH OMONDI

# KAZI: TO BE BORN AND TO DIE A WOMAN

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

<b>Project Type:</b> Documentary
<b>Country:</b> South Africa
<b>Language:</b> IsiZulu, English
<b>Running Time:</b> 30 minutes
<b>Socials:</b> <a href="#">Instagram</a>

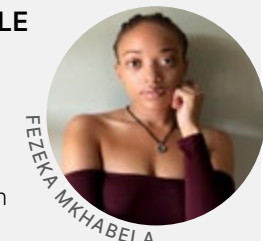
*Kazi* is an intimate documentary film that aims to explore the Zulu tradition of 'ubuntombi'. The film uses the lens of African Knowledge Systems and Zulu cosmology to uncover the epistemological origins of the practice while interrogating its relevance in the modern world. We unearth the complex communal values and matriarchal foundations of Zulu people that are rooted in the Mother Earth deity Nomkhubulwane.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

African cultures and beliefs have been erased, demonised, and misinterpreted. The film will highlight the feminine principles and how ancestral practices like 'ubuntombi' were Africa's connection and preservation of the natural environment and how Zulu women still choose to embody these principles today.

## DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Fezeka Mkhabela** is a writer, producer and documentary filmmaker with an honour's degree in Film and TV Production from Wits University.



FEZEKA MKHABELA



# MYSTERIES AT THE MAJESTIC

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Animation
Country:	South Africa
Language:	English
Running Time:	23 minutes
Socials:	<a href="#">Instagram</a>

Joaquim and his tech-savvy best friend, Zondo, discover a secret room in their eerie old hotel, housing an ornate antique desk, containing a series of cryptic clues. The clues reveal heirlooms that are the keys to unlocking an infinite power source desperately sought after by the villainous Gabriel. Joaqim and Zondo must race against time to find the heirlooms and stop Gabriel before it's too late.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Are material possessions or ideals more meaningful to preserve the legacy left by our grandparents? The heroes and villains represent different sides of this debate, and the setting of an old hotel surrounded by a modern CBD, reflects the tension between the past and the future.

## DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

Garth Sanders is an experienced director/producer from Toony Animation that creates wholesome family entertainment and encourages children to think.



GARTH SANDERS

# NA AN FÊ (JOIN US)

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Short Film
Country:	Burkina Faso
Language:	French
Running Time:	13 minutes
Socials:	<a href="#">Instagram</a>

Fousseni is a 25-year-old man who lives in the eastern part of Burkina Faso, where he is originally from. In the morning, he leaves his village to go to the capital, Ouagadougou, to start his military training, for which he enlisted. Unfortunately for him, he crosses paths with Hassan and Ouss, two heavily armed men who take him with them.

## SCREENWRITER'S STATEMENT

*Na an fê* is a project that addresses a very sensitive issue in the world and in West Africa in recent years: very violent individuals who sow terror in countries like Burkina Faso, and whose cause nobody really knows. This short film is an imaginary reflection on the issue of terrorism.

## DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

Fayçal Léonce Souaré is a young director and scriptwriter from Burkina Faso who graduated from ESAV Marrakech in film directing. He is the author of five short films, including *Elisa*, which competed at FESPACO 2023.



SOURA FAYCAL LEONCE

# OUT OF OPTIONS

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Episodic
Country:	South Africa
Language:	English
Running Time:	TBD
Socials:	<a href="#">Instagram</a>

Once a successful actor, middle-aged Z now resides in a downsized apartment with dusty awards. A documentary team, organised by his well-meaning agent, follows him as he tries one last time to make it back to the top (or realistically middle), struggling to navigate the fine line between staying true to his craft and becoming a sell-out in a celebrity-obsessed South African film industry.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

*Out of Options* is a comedic drama reflecting the South African film industry's unique themes and issues. It offers a satirical, brutally honest critique of social media, fame, and wealth obsession, presenting a visually raw and tonally understated mockumentary that adds a fresh dimension to South African television.

## DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

South African-German Thandi Sebe is an actress and writer based between Berlin and Cape Town. She has written and performed in staged productions as well as film and series. Currently she is a participant of the Netflix Writing Academy: POC Writers Incubator, where she is developing a series.



THANDI SEBE

# ROTTEN BLOOD

## PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

Project Type:	Short Film
Country:	Egypt
Language:	Arabic
Running Time:	20 minutes
Socials:	<a href="#">Instagram</a>

In an attempt to escape her conservative neighbourhood, Sally meets her secret lover, Yahiya. With a superficial relationship with her mother and brother Hazem, she splits her time between sitting in her deceased father's shop and secretly hooking up with men from the internet. When the family gathers to distribute the inheritance, Hazem is shocked that Sally is the sole owner of the shop. Backed by his villainous uncle, they confront Sally to regain control of the shop.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

They say 'blood is thicker than water.' I think what defines a family is the ability to keep this strong bond between one another; no matter what life throws at you. Today, even political or social differences can shatter relationships once considered unbreakable.

## DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

Tarek El Sherbeny is an award-winning filmmaker. He wrote and directed his debut short film, *He's Dead Now*, which has been screened at over 20 film festivals.



TAREK EL SHERBENY

## SLOW FRUIT

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

<b>Project Type:</b> Short Film
<b>Country:</b> South Africa
<b>Language:</b> IsiZulu
<b>Running Time:</b> 25 minutes
<b>Socials:</b> <a href="#">Instagram</a>

Phikeh (19) studies Botany at the University of Zululand. She befriends Londiwe (18), and their shared village upbringing and commitment to education bond them. Both value their virginity and stick together for safety. Phikeh, known for her purity, faces inner conflicts when separated from Londiwe. Her desires and a crush on a classmate challenge her beliefs. Phikeh must navigate societal pressures and find her own path, despite warnings and influences from family, friends, and professors.

### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

*Slow Fruit* explores themes close to my heart, drawn from my personal life and growth. Sharing Phikeh and Londi's journeys is an honour, reflecting my rural background and involvement in virginity camps.

### DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Kwazikwenkosi Ntombela-Langa** is the Executive Director, Screenwriter, Producer and Poet at Divine Voice Media. With 7 years of experience, she has written, directed and produced films like *Umphefumulo, uQalazile*, while developing *Traumas of Teachers*. Currently, she's in preproduction for *Slow Fruit* and *Surviving Parkinson's Disease*.



KWAZIKWENKOSI NTOMBELA-LANGA

## STANDING UP

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

<b>Project Type:</b> Documentary
<b>Country:</b> Gambia
<b>Language:</b> Wolof, English
<b>Running Time:</b> 70 minutes
<b>Socials:</b> <a href="#">Facebook</a>

Determined to stop begging, a physically challenged lady joins fellow women to find a living by selling recycled waste to save the planet and provide a living for her family.

### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I am a Gambian filmmaker that is passionate about telling intimate stories about people rising from traumas and challenges. In *Standing Up*, I document physically challenged women defying odds for their families and the environment. These strong women unite, championing recycling and creating business opportunities in Gambia.

### DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Babucarr Manka** is the Creative Director of Gambian's leading audio-visual company (State Of Mic). His fiction film *Gifts From Baylon* won over 28 international awards, but he's more passionate about observational documentaries. His last film *Home Again*, premiered at DOK.Fest Munich.



BABUCARR MANKA

## THE CHRONICLES OF Z AND Z

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

<b>Project Type:</b> Animation
<b>Country:</b> South Africa
<b>Language:</b> IsiZulu, English
<b>Running Time:</b> 12 minutes
<b>Socials:</b> <a href="#">Instagram</a>

We embark on a journey with 7-year-old twins Zinzi and Zemvelo, in Soweto's vibrant township. In their magical world, reality intertwines with enchantment as they navigate school life, facing challenges and discovering wisdom. They forge new friendships, confront fears, and explore their emotions. Zinzi's curiosity and wisdom guide her sister, who brings humour and spontaneity, pushing them beyond comfort zones. United, they embrace the unknown, unravelling the wonders of their surroundings in an unforgettable exploration.

### PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

South Africa lacks relatable local content for children, reflecting their lifestyles and challenges. These short stories educate kids about embracing diversity and acceptance in a post-apartheid society.

### PRODUCER'S PROFILE

**Moreti Seepi**, commonly known as Moe, is deeply passionate about her craft and the projects she creates. She holds an honours degree in Film and Television.



MORETI S EEPI

## THE MASTERS OF ELEGANCE

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

<b>Project Type:</b> Episodic
<b>Country:</b> Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>Language:</b> Lingala, French, English
<b>Running Time:</b> 10 episodes, 26 minutes each
<b>Socials:</b> <a href="#">Facebook</a>

After his aunt's death, Weni, a second-hand clothing salesman, meets Mbiaka, Yoyo and Chico, founders of Sect: an initiatory school of the SAPE. Mbiaka, defies his community to force Weni's SAPE initiation. Chosen against all odds as a model for an advertising project by a foreign director, Weni thinks big and aims to participate in the fashion show called The Masters of Elegance in Kinshasa.

### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

*The Masters of Elegance's* visual universe, inspired by Wes Anderson's films, showcases characters with colourful clothing in a vibrant neighbourhood.

### DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Okoko Nyumbaiza**, filmmaker, author of film and TV content and producer from the DRC. He is the founder of Alao Company, whose aim is to create content of international standards.



OKOKO NYUMBAIZA

## THE RAINFOREST WITCH

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Episodic

**Country:** Sao Tome and Príncipe

**Language:** Portuguese, Creole

**Running Time:** 22 minutes

**Socials:** [Instagram](#)

*The Rainforest Witch* centres around Samira, a kind-hearted and strong-willed witch living in São Tomé and Príncipe's protected forests. People seek her guidance for various issues, and she uses her magic to help. However, when greedy twin brothers and Mé-Chinhô threaten her way of life by discovering mercury in the forest, life as she knows it is threatened.

### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

*The Rainforest Witch* is inspired by my culture's spiritual connection to forests, with a goal to rescue our natural connection while exploring community power and self-discovery. The story follows Samira, a healer fighting to protect her home from environmental destruction, reflecting the real-world calamities we face. I want to inspire positive change to drive social and environmental impact

### DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Katya Aragão** is a screenwriter and film director from São Tomé and Príncipe. After 10 years as a TV journalist, she made her directorial debut in 2017.



KATYA ARAGÃO

## THE SONG MAIDEN

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Short Film, Animation

**Country:** Nigeria

**Language:** English

**Running Time:** 5 minutes and 56 seconds

**Socials:** [Instagram](#)

*The Song Maiden* unravels the tale of a Nigerian girl trapped in a child marriage. Since birth, she bears a red ribbon marking her betrothal to a notable figure. Despite societal pressures, she embraces independence, finding solace in the mountain. Her fate takes a dark twist when forced into marriage, leading her to seek refuge in her father's hut. Ultimately, she finds freedom by leaping into the unknown from the mountain's edge.

### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Working with DisruptDNA Studios we crafted a story that resonates deeply with us and others. *The Song Maiden* is a universal cry for freedom. It speaks to everyone's quest to break free from oppression. It symbolises the fight against constraints in patriarchal cultures.

### DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Nkem Nwaturuocha** is a creative director and co-founder of Disrupt DNA, a digital content agency. He helps brands tell and direct their stories.



NKEM NWATURUOCHA

## ZERRI3A MORRA (BITTER SEED)

### PROJECT INFORMATION/FACTS

**Project Type:** Documentary

**Country:** Algerian, French

**Language:** French, Darja (algerian dialect)

**Running Time:** 70 minutes

**Socials:** [Instagram](#)

During yet another argument with his daughter, Lamine, a Parisian cab driver, declares his intention to 'Frenchify' their family name. This prompts Camélia, a filmmaker, to delve into the deep condescension he has towards their country of origin. Amidst feelings of love and anger, they embark on a journey to uncover Algeria's true significance within their relationship.

### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I invite viewers to explore Algeria's history through an intimate and unrestrained encounter with a significant segment of France's population. By addressing the psychosocial implications of raising children as immigrants, I aim to shed light on timely issues that resonate in immigrant households around the world.

### DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

**Camélia Gadhgadhi** is a French-Algerian filmmaker currently in the process of developing her debut feature documentary film, *Bitter Seed*, which is being produced by AMOK Films.



CAMELIA GADHGADHI



# 2023 MENTORS

These projects will receive invaluable mentorship from esteemed script consultants, providing individual insights and guidance for their works. We are honoured to welcome back the experienced and new mentors alike. Through these mentorships and collaborative environments, we aim to foster the growth and development of the selected projects, empowering filmmakers to bring their visions to life.

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## DFM MENTORS



### AMEL BOUZID

From Associate Producer for *Lágy eső* to executive producing *And Romeo Married Juliette* (Best Muhr Short - Dubai International Film Festival), Amel Bouzid has over 14 years in film and production. Between 2014 to 2015 she distributed the feature film *The Taste of Blueberries* and produced the docu-series *The Man With The Harpoon*. Further to that she is a member of Greenhouse; Rotterdam Film Lab; Cannes Producers Workshop; Eurodoc; FidaDoc/Ruche documentaire and Commission de Sélection des films.

### THEMBA BHEBHE

Themba Bhebhe is the head of Berlinale's Diversity & Inclusion initiative for the European Film Market. This involves co-managing the DocSalon Toolbox Programme and working as the Indigenous Cinema Coordinator in collaboration with imagineNATIVE. Alongside Mitchell Harper and Tiny Mungwe, Themba is the co-founder of *Engage*, a series of curated think tank conversations on the pertinent, challenging and multi-faceted questions facing the African (diaspora) screen sector. Themba is also one of the founding members of the Programmers of Colour Collective.



### ISAAC MOGAJANE

Isaac Mogajane started as a Key Account Manager at Procter & Gamble. In 2009, he co-founded Diprente, merging his entrepreneurial drive with his passion for cinema. Through Diprente, he produced acclaimed films and series like *The Late Nite News with Loyiso Gola* and *The Bantu Hour with Hugh Masekela*. Noteworthy Netflix originals include *Catching Feelings* and *Queen Sono*. Isaac expanded Diprente with Diprente Junior, an animation studio, developing various animated projects. His award-winning pilot episode, *Junk Pilots*, is in development with Cake Entertainment and La Station Animation. Other creations include *Emkha*, *Anansi*, and *Spirit Child*.

### KETHIWE NGCOBO

Kethiwe Ngcobo is a versatile professional working in broadcasting, film, TV production, and story development. She founded Fuzebox, her own company from 1997 to 2004, producing children's and youth drama series, as well as directing documentaries. As the inaugural Head of Drama at SABC's Content Hub, her outstanding contribution changed the landscape of South African TV Drama, earning numerous awards (120 SAFTAs) locally and internationally. After resigning from SABC, she became the Producer and CEO of Fuzebox, producing acclaimed TV drama series, a docu-reality series, and feature films. Currently, she is developing feature films and series while directing her first feature hybrid documentary.



**FEMI ODUGBEMI**

Filmmaker and producer Femi Odugbemi is the Academy Director for Multichoice Talent Factory (West Africa). In addition to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (USA), Femi has served as President of The Independent Television Producers Association of Nigeria; co-founded the International Documentary Film Festival Lagos, and is a 4-time Head Judge of the prestigious AMVCA. He has also served as a 3-time Head Judge of the Uganda Film Festival, juror of the British Council 'Shakespeare lives' project, juror of the Emmy Awards in New York and many others.

**BRIDGET PICKERING**

A veteran producer who has produced over five hundred hours of scripted television and 30 hours of documentary. She graduated from Syracuse University and worked for Universal Pictures before returning to Namibia. Amongst her credits is as executive producer for the multi-award winning and nominated *Hotel Rwanda* which won the Best Motion Picture, Drama (Satellite Awards). In addition her feature film credits include *Taste of Rain* and *The Chemo Club*, producer for *Sophia's Hometown* and *Flame*. Not only that, she's also directed *Africa is a Woman's Name* and *Uno's World*. Currently, her most recent film *I, Mary* will be screened at Encounters Documentary Festival.

**VANESSA SINDEN**

Vanessa is an award-winning producer with over 20 years of filmmaking experience. She is currently based at Triggerfish Animation Studios in Cape Town, where she is producing a number of TV and film projects with Disney Junior, Disney+, Warner Brothers, and Netflix. Together with this studio Vanessa has Co-produced Africa's most successful animated feature films to date *Adventures in Zambezia*, *Khumba* and *Seal Team*. Upon noting the massive disparity between the percentage of women studying animation versus women working in the industry, she started 'African Women in Animation'.

**JÉRÉMIE DUBOIS**

Jérémie Dubois has written countless short stories as a seasoned screenwriter; two of which were selected at the Cannes Film Festival; four feature-length films, with Carlo Francisco Manatad as well as Zhang Tao (Cinéfondation Prize at Cannes, 2020). He is currently writing features with Akihiro Hata and Vimukthi Jayasundara. In addition, he also works as a script consultant with Måns Månsson and Jean-Gabriel Périot, as well as in writing workshops in Asia, in Africa and the Middle East (via Fidadoc & Produire au Sud).

**TRACEY-LEE RAINERS**

Tracey-Lee Rainers is an experienced story developer, story mentor, and screenwriter. Her filmography spans over a decade, including 40 short films and her most recent work *Seriously Single* currently showing on Netflix and SAFTA award winning film *Address Unknown*. Tracey-Lee is a story consultant for a variety of organisations including the KZN Film Commission; the NFVF; and Netflix. A founding member of the Writers Guild of South Africa, creating stories and collaborating with fellow creatives gives Tracey-Lee life.

**LUCAS TAILLEFER**

Lucas Taillefer has a Master's Degree in Cultural Management from Sciences Po Strasbourg and in Film Studies from the University Sorbonne Nouvelle (Paris). He has worked in both France and Ecuador at various international film festivals and movie theaters. In 2015, he co-founded the Ecuadorian distribution company, Trópico Cine, which brings independent movies from all around the world to the Ecuadorian screens. Since 2020, he has been working for the Festival des 3 Continents (Nantes), and since 2022, he has been running the international training program Produire au Sud.

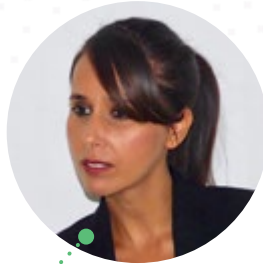


**MOUNIA ARAM**

**Country:** France



Mounia Aram, an engaged entrepreneur with over 20 years of experience in the animation industry, launched Mounia Aram Company in 2019. She is a board member of Diversify TV Awards at MIPCOM and serves as the Africa Council Chair for the Geena Davis Institute for Gender in Media. In 2021, she won the Black in Animation Award in the Cultural Innovator category. She was featured on CNN's 'African Voice' as a Changemaker.



**AZZA CHAABOUNI**

**Country:** Tunisia

Azza Chaabouni is a Tunisian teacher-researcher of cinema at ISAMM. She is a former editor, independent programmer, and collaborates on film projects with national and international cultural organisations such as CNCI, DW Akademie, DFMI, DOX BOX, and Between Women Filmmakers Caravan. Since 2014, she has been involved in supporting talents through programs such as Takmil (2014-2019), **خطوات** Ciné Par'Court (2018-2020), and MedWIPS (since 2020).



**IMAN DJIONNE**

**Country:** Senegal

Iman Djionne is a Senegalese director who has written and directed short films and audiovisual content. She is also a casting director on various productions like Matteo Garrone's new feature *Io Capitano* and *Banel & Adama*, Ramata-Toulaye Sy's feature selected in Cannes' main competition (2023). Iman is currently developing her first feature. She is a Berlinale Talents alumna (2020).



**SEAN DRUMMOND**

**Country:** South Africa



Writer, producer, and story executive, Sean's feature debut *Five Fingers for Marseilles* premiered at TIFF, garnering considerable festival attention and awards. He spent 10 years as a global manager for the shnit Shortfilmfestival, facilitating artistic exchange among filmmakers worldwide. Sean has multiple film and television projects in development, is in demand as an independent festival curator and has served on the WGSa executive council. His recent series, *Unseen*, launched to global acclaim, amassing 24 million viewing hours in its first week.

**MANDLA DUBE**

**Country:** South Africa

Mandlakayise Walter Dube, a director, producer, and co-screenwriter, is an award-winning South African cinematographer and writer. His diverse body of work encompasses documentaries, shorts, theatre, and feature films. Mandla's contributions to film and television include *Silverton Siege*, *JIVA*, *Heart of the Hunter* (due for release), and *Kalushi - The Story of Solomon Mahlangu*, which garnered global acclaim.



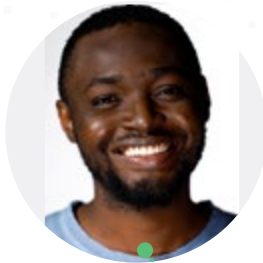
**YANIS GAYE**

**Country:** Senegal



Yanis Gaye is a French-Senegalese producer. He is the managing producer of Goree Island Cinema and the editorial director of the Goree Cinema Festival. In 2023, he launched Strange Fruit Production House, a French-based company dedicated to focusing on African and African Diasporas' narratives. He is a participant in the EAVE Producers' Workshop 2023.





### WILFRED OKICHE

**Country:** Nigeria [TWITTER PROFILE](#)

Wilfred Okiche is an influential critic in the African culture space. He has attended critic programs and reported from esteemed festivals like Locarno, Rotterdam, Stockholm, and Sundance. Wilfred has contributed to the selection teams for the Encounters International Documentary Festival and the Africa International Film Festival (AFRIFF). He has mentored emerging film critics at Talents Durban and worked on the Berlinale Talents selection committee. His writing has appeared in Variety, IndieWire, MUBI Notebook, and more. A member of FIPRESCI, he has served on juries at the Berlinale and the Carthage film festival.

### DOMOINA RATSARA

**Country:** Madagascar

Based in Antananarivo (Madagascar), Domoina Ratsara is the head of the Malagasy Film Critic Association (ACCM) and co-founded Sorakanto, the Malagasy cultural and art journalists' association aimed at promoting national cultural journalism. She's been the content coordinator and contributor for the Pan-African film critic review, Awotélé, and a project reader for Realness Institute. She's recently joined the Executive secretariat of the African Critics Network to be in charge of the film sector. She is an alumna of Talents Durban Talents (2017) and Berlinale Talents (2018) as a talent press. She regularly runs film critic workshops within the Malagasy Short Film Festival, Rencontres du Film Court (RFC).



### MIKI REDELINGHUYS

**Country:** South Africa

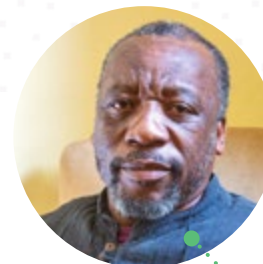
Miki is a documentary filmmaker passionate about the power of film. In 2020, she completed an MA at UCT with a focus on social impact through film, using her own film, *This Land*, as a case study. She consults as an impact producer, serves as the programme director for the UCT Sunshine Cinema Impact course, co-director of the Climate Story Lab Southern Africa, serves on the DFA board, and is a DFM Access mentor.



### RAMADAN SULEMAN

**Country:** South Africa [COMPANY PROFILE](#)

Ramadan Suleman studied filmmaking in Paris and at the London International Film School. He has written, directed, and produced several feature films and documentaries, winning awards at prestigious festivals. Suleman has also produced short films by first-time directors and feature films for local and international producers. He is currently a co-producer on *Spinners*, a Canal+ and MNet series.



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**Funders:** Durban Film Office and the eThekweni Municipality, DW Akademie, BMZ (The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development), The Ford Foundation, International Emerging Film Talent Association, French Institute in South Africa and Trans-Saharan Artistic Mobility Fund.

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# AFRICAN THE FOURTEENTH DURBAN FILMMART CONSTELLATION

21-24 JULY 2023



14<sup>th</sup>

**Durban FilmMart**

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