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# Introduction

## WELCOME TO THE DURBAN FILMMART 2010

The Durban Film Office (DFO) and the Durban International Film Festival (DIFF) are proud to launch the inaugural edition of the Durban FilmMart 2010.

The Durban FilmMart has been designed to create partnerships and further the development and production of African content. This initiative is a joint venture between the DFO, the film-industry development arm of the City of Durban, mandated to position Durban as a world-class film production destination and facilitator for the development of the local film industry, and the DIFF, a flagship project of UKZN's Centre for Creative Arts (CCA), which facilitates creative platforms and economic opportunities for artists and related industries, intercultural exchange and network development, training, audience development and strategic Pan-African and international cooperation in the cultural sectors. The DIFF will present over 200 screenings of films from around the world, with special focus on films from Africa.

This collaboration brings to Africa, growth, recognition and the opportunity to develop strategic relationships between film financiers and African filmmakers. Research has identified that the most significant challenges facing African content are the insufficient number of investor-ready projects, and the lack of theatrical distribution and exhibition opportunities. Therefore we expect the Durban FilmMart to be a foundation from which the financing of promising projects is accelerated. The Durban FilmMart will also raise the visibility of African cinema, stimulate production, and facilitate project collaboration between African filmmakers.

We are also proud to announce an official partnership with International Film Festival Rotterdam's CineMart, which has played an important advisory role in establishing the Durban FilmMart. CineMart was the first co-production market of its kind in the world and had its 27th successful edition earlier this year. Further collaboration is being set up with the International Documentary festival of Amsterdam (IDFA).

It is anticipated that the Durban FilmMart will act as a valuable feeder-stage in bringing African projects to CineMart, IDFA and other established co-production markets across the globe.

International support from the Hubert Bals Fund Netherlands (HBF) will reward the most promising Durban FilmMart project with the Hubert Bals Fund Award of €5.000. The HBF is also part of the International Film Festival Rotterdam and provides grants to innovative and talented filmmakers from developing countries to help them realize remarkable or urgent feature films and feature-length creative documentaries.

We would like to thank the City of Durban, the Durban Film Office, CineMart, the International Film Festival Rotterdam, The National Film and Video Foundation, The African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and The Centre of Creative Arts, without whom, this initiative would not be made possible, as well as the Hubert Bals Fund for granting their prestigious award.

We are humbled by the amount of support we have received and the over-whelming response for project submissions from African filmmakers. The over-all

quality of the entries has indeed been pleasing. From the 75 applicants, a selected 12 projects have been chosen to participate in the Finance Forum programme, providing African filmmakers with the opportunity to meet and pitch their projects to film financiers, sales agents and distributors on a one-to-one basis.

For those who have not qualified for the Finance Forum, the Durban FilmMart programme has been structured in such a way, as to accommodate those delegates by allowing them to register into a Producers' Forum programme, which entails film finance workshops and master classes facilitated by local and international experts. Alongside the Finance and Producers' Forum programmes, the Africa in Focus series of open panels, seminars and workshops within the DIFF, places a spotlight on challenges facing African filmmaking.

The projects selected come from as far a field as Egypt, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Zambia and Burkina Faso, with contributions in both Feature Film and Documentary genres.

A big thank you goes out to all of the African filmmakers who have submitted their projects to the Durban FilmMart. Your response has been fantastic and has given this initiative a promising future. We look forward to the positive impact the Durban FilmMart will have on the country, with its contribution to the African independent film industry in the years to come and the many doors it will open for African filmmakers.

In closing, we extend a warm welcome to all the industry professionals, producers, funders and financiers to the very first edition of our Durban FilmMart 2010 and thank you for being a part of what is to be a new and exciting addition to the international film industry calendar.

**The Durban FilmMart Team**  
2010



## South Africa



James Tayler



Julia Raynham

**Producer:** James Tayler  
**Director:** James Tayler – Technical  
 Julia Raynham – Art  
**Country:** South Africa  
**Present at Durban FilmMart:**  
 Julia Raynham, James Tayler,  
 Bertram Fredericks  
**Feature / documentary:**  
 Cinedance, Dance on Film  
**Running time:** 90 min  
**Language:** Dance and Architecture  
**Location:**  
 Casablanca (Morocco), Nairobi  
 (Kenya), Lagos (Nigeria), Dakar  
 (Senegal), Durban (South Africa)  
**Total budget:**  
 \$ 990506 (R 7,715,724.34)  
**Finances committed:** \$ 18076.97  
 (R133860)  
**Partners attached:**  
 NFVF, Art Moves Africa, African Centre  
 for the City (UCT)  
**Production Company:**  
 Pitch Black Films, Resonance Bazar  
 & Switch Media

# City Body Continent: In Flux

James Tayler

As artists, Julia Raynham and James Tayler have worked collaboratively over the last two years on cinedance installations presented at the Spier Contemporary, the FNB dance Umbrella, the Out the Box Festival and elsewhere. In 2008, we were selected for the Danse L’Afrique Danse Biennial in Tunisia. Here we met with Africa’s top choreographers and dancers. We were struck by the quality and integrity of the work presented here. In our discussions with other African artists we realised there is a shared experience of postcolonial urbanization and the challenges that face the modern African city. We also realised that the medium of dance presents the ideal opportunity to transcend language barriers and communicate ideas on a universal human level.

### Synopsis

‘City Body Continent IN FLUX’ is a Pan-African project, which captures on film, a series of site specific urban interventions, created by collaborative teams, comprising a choreographer and architect-artist-designer, in five Africa cities: Casablanca (Morocco), Nairobi (Kenya), Dakar (Senegal), Lagos (Nigeria) and Durban (South Africa).

This curatorial project takes dance and the human body as its point of orientation, and commissions creative teams to create a 10-minute site-specific exploration & transformation of a public space within their city, with the assistance of digital design technology. The participating choreographers in this project are all established professionals working at the cutting edge of their art form, who contribute dramatically to the development of dance across the African continent.

Our intention is to create a cinematic, high production-value artwork for projection throughout Africa and internationally. The film will help us better understand the urban future African faces and stimulate discourse on the arts, dance and architecture in general.

Responding to the agency of ordinary people, African aesthetics, the power of dance, the semiotics of public space, and the innovation and invention of the human body in this post-everything, 21st century urban modernity, this film blurs the boundary between documentary and fictional narratives, enabling all collaborators to engage with cross-disciplinary work so as to reveal new urban imaginaries.

The film is influenced crosses the boundaries between ‘high art’ and popular culture and as such represents the meeting of contemporary art, dance theatre and MTV music video culture. As such it will have youth appeal but will also find a broader audience with anyone of any age with an interest in an contemporary and uniquely African analysis of modern urban life.

**Producer and Director's Profile:**

James Tayler (Switch) and Julia Raynham (Resonance Bazar)

James Tayler works in Africa as a filmmaker and producer. His recent films include the features 'Divizionz' 2008 and 'Yogera' (in post production) both produced in Uganda with Deddac Films and the short documentaries "Mr Eddy" (Nigeria) and "My Silent City" (Uganda) which will be screened the 2010 DIFF as part of Rainbow Circle Films' Ikon Series. Since 1997, James has produced, edited and directed several award winning documentaries and served as studio director, insert director, series editor and postproduction supervisor for television series for both local and international channels. As video artist his recent work was selected for inclusion for the City One Minutes project at the World Expo in Shanghai and he has exhibited collaboratively at the 2009 Cape Africa Platform and The City Breath Project to be screened at Grahamstown this year.

Julia Raynham and James Tayler first collaborated on "A new body will be assembled more brilliant than memory" for the inaugural Spier Contemporary Exhibition, 2007. This led to further video/performance collaborations including: "21st Century Animal" 2008; "To be deprived of one's nature is a terrible loss" 2009; "Turn to the Traveller" 2009.

Julia Raynham works as a performance artist, composer and diviner. At the centre of her artistic practice is 'the body' with its mutable capacity to exist in cityscapes and territories in flux, and engage with more than ordinary states of reality. Her sound-art-images confront cultural stereotypes and she embraces experimental audio culture, high fashion aesthetics and indigenous medicine, as subversive catalysts in the creative process.

Through the Resonance Bazaar (a free-trade network of inter-disciplinary collaboration), she researches and coordinates cultural projects, which examine the aesthetic and social experience of post-colonial/post-apartheid South Africa. These projects engage the disciplines of music, cinema, dance, art, architecture and metaphysics.

In 2009, she created new performance art works in South Africa: for Spier's "Infecting the City Collaborations" she collaborated with Fabrice Guillot - poetic choreographer of French company, Retouramont. In Johannesburg as part of the main program at the FNB Dance Umbrella, she collaborated with Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre ("To be deprived of one's nature is a terrible loss") and at the Grahamstown National Arts Festival Fringe she directed the musical performances with Victor Gama (Angola) and Chiwoniso Maraire (Zimbabwe) on the unique exchange project "Turn to the Traveler." Trained and initiated as a Sangoma, she runs a small consultation practice, using ritual and plant medicines as the framework for self-exploration and soul medicine, for individuals and community.

**Company Profile:**

**SWITCH MEDIA**

Switch Media is an independent production company, which produces film and television content. The company also provides facilities for post production, specialized in quality finishes, title animation sequences, colour grading and VFX.

To date the company has produced several documentaries and facilitated the post-production of television series for local and international release.

Switch Media has produced one full-length feature film, 'Divizionz' which has reaped awards internationally and sold to MNET Africa Channel and others.

Principal photography has been completed on the follow up feature film 'Yogera' which is presently in post- production.

Established in 2003, Switch Media is registered in South Africa as a closed corporation.

**RESONANCE BAZAR ©2010**

Resonance Bazar is a Section 21 Company, that initiates & creates inter-disciplinary performative artworks. The organization is developing an international music exchange residency program based in Cape Town.

**Goal(s) at the Durban FilmMart:**

- Co-Producers
- Finance



## Nigeria



Tom Rowlands-Rees



Kenneth Gyang

**Producer:** Tom Rowlands-Rees  
**Director:** Kenneth Gyang  
**Country:** Nigeria  
**Present at Durban FilmMart:**  
 Tom Rowlands-Rees  
**Feature/ documentary:**  
 Feature  
**Running time:** 120 min  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** Jos/Lagos, Nigeria  
**Total budget:**  
 \$ 97405 € 81327 (R 759732.5)  
**Finances committed:**  
 \$ 43786, € 36558, (R 341518.5)  
**Partners attached:**  
 Watershed Entertainment, Hubert  
 Bals Fund  
**Production Company:**  
 Cinema Kpatakpata

# Confusion Na Wa

Kenneth Gyang

The name *Confusion Na Wa*, which translates roughly as “Confusion is wow!” comes from a line in Fela Kuti’s classic track *Confusion*. As Fela lists Nigeria’s broken civil institutions line by line the chorus girls sing back the recurrent refrain “Confusion Na Wa”. For every problem he can list, they have the same response – confusion is everywhere. Whether this is meant to be an explanation for or a reaction to Fela’s complaints is unclear. Either way it doesn’t matter - confusion is confusion; it’s not supposed to make sense.

It is this environment that provides the backdrop for our story. Confusion, in all of its forms, is the theme of *Confusion Na Wa*. Whether it’s Babajide’s confused morality, dying Chichi’s confused musings or the confused anger of Adekunle as he takes the law into his own hands, all of the characters suffer and make mistakes because they are unable to make sense of their experiences in terms of a bigger picture that they can’t see. By using a non-linear narrative we enable the audience to both empathise with the characters confused points of view (as they see their stories unfold individually), but also to see the tragedy in their misfortune (knowing so much more than the characters know themselves).

The four inter-related stories of *Confusion Na Wa* all take place within the same 24-hour period following on from the riders death. As we move from each story to the next the Islamic call to evening prayers is used to re-set the audiences mental clock and give a sense of rhythm and progress as the story unfolds. Similarly the power-cut helps give the audience a reference point through which to relate the storylines. As well as being useful storytelling devices, the call to prayer and power cut are both common features of daily life in a Nigerian city, adding to the authentic feel of the film. *Confusion Na Wa* is a very ambitious project. It uses a complex storyline to address a wide range of themes such as crime, corruption, tolerance, and societal and family breakdown all within a Nigerian context. For this ambition alone, it stands to make an impact both domestically and abroad.

### Synopsis

*Confusion Na Wa* is a social comedy-drama that takes place over the course of 24-hours in the culturally diverse Nigerian city of Jos (recently the scene of widespread ethnic violence). The film, set against the background of escalating community tension, tracks the series of events that link the accidental killing of an “Okada” (motorcycle taxi) rider to the murder of an innocent youth. Four interlinked stories, each told individually, increasingly reveal the random, confusing and unfair nature of life and justice.

The first story sees Emeka Nwosu, an arrogant young lawyer in the midst of a seedy affair, losing his phone in the rough-and-tumble following a road accident. Unfortunately for him it is picked up by some opportunistic youths who, realising the nature of some of the messages, decide to hold his marriage to ransom.

We then switch to Bello, a low-ranking civil servant who sincerely believes that his honesty and hard-work will soon pay dividends. This worldview is pushed to breaking point as he is bullied at work, berated by his wife, and imprisoned unfairly.

This leads to the story of pious Christian entrepreneur, Babajide, and his independently minded son, Kola. An unfortunate series of events convinces Babajide that his son is of an ‘immoral persuasion’ a situation he attempts to rectify by force.

Finally the threads of the story are tied together by the tale of amoral, Charles Duka, and his faithful friend, Chichi. Leaving a trail of chaos in their wake their short-sighted lifestyle causes havoc to everyone they touch.

As these stories are told the motivations of a mysterious and forceful stranger that appears in each becomes apparent. The final result is a tragic miscarriage of justice.



**Producer Profile:**

Tom Rowlands-Rees is a writer and director from the United Kingdom with a strong interest in the continuing emergence of Nigerian film. As well as contributing to Confusion Na Wa as a writer, he is co-producing the project with Kenneth Gyang, with each handling matters from the UK and Nigeria respectively.

Tom's first visit to Nigeria came in the early 1990s, during which time his expatriate family were living in Kaduna state. However, the start of his creative relationship with the country can be traced to 2005 when Him - his first short film - won Hotdog's Stella Artois After Dark Short Film competition. As winner Tom attended the 2006 Berlinale Talent Campus, where he met his future friend and collaborator, Kenneth Gyang. Excited by Kenneth's talk of a new wave in African film, Tom has been visiting Nigeria regularly since 2006 to play his role in bringing about that vision. The formation of Cinema Kpatakpata and collaboration on Confusion Na Wa, their first collaboration, represent the first steps in working towards that vision.

Tom is also active in film and comedy in the UK. He was selected to write and perform in BBC radio's national showcase for up and coming comic talent, Play and Record. His short comedy film B.E.S.T. had the dubious honour of being featured by YouTube - appearing on the front page of the world's most visited website - and he is currently developing a pilot for an animated comedy series called Terry the Tadpole.

Outside of his work in film, Tom recently completed a PhD in physics - his publications are widely cited. He currently writes analysis for Bloomberg New Energy Finance on the subject of energy efficiency, highlighting future trends and strategies that will reduce carbon emissions for future generations. Director's Biography

**Director Profile:**

Kenneth Gyang was born on the 23rd of March 1986 in Barkin Ladi of Plateau State, Nigeria.

He studied Film Production at the National Film Institute in and screenwriting at Gaston Kabore's IMAGINE in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Two of his short films as well as a script titled Game of Life were selected for the Berlinale Talent Campus 2006, and Mummy Lagos was screened to the festival audience. Mummy Lagos was also selected for the Sithengi Talent Campus as part of the Cape Town World Cinema Festival in South Africa.

His film Omule won Best Documentary Film at the 1st Nigerian Students International Film Festival in 2006 and Mummy Lagos also won Best Film at the Nigerian Field Society Awards organised by the German Cultural Centre, Goë'91the Institut'9ft, Lagos. In 2006 he was profiled by the influential UK-based BFM magazine

as the youngest film director in Nigeria.

Following this early success Kenneth worked with the BBC World Service Trust for over a year and directed eleven episodes of their TV drama Wetin Dey which is widely recognized to have set new standards in Nigerian media, and was recently presented at the International Emmy World Television Festival in New York City. He has also worked with NGO Communicating for Change as an Associate Producer on Bayelsian Silhouettes, a series of seven short films on HIV/AIDS.

In 2010 Kenneth's work as writer and director of TV series Finding Aisha was recognized when he won Screen Producer of the Year at the Future Awards. World Bank managing director Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala presented him with the prize.

**Company Profile:**

Cinema Kpatakpata is a production company based primarily in Nigeria, with the principal aim of making African films at a previously unseen level of ambition and quality.

African stories, whether traditional, contemporary, fantastical or futuristic, deserve wider appreciation from a global audience. Moreover African audiences deserve to see their continent portrayed with a vision that goes beyond what the low budget domestic industries and occasional high budget Western blockbuster are willing to imagine. Cinema Kpatakpata was formed to address this need.

Cinema Kpatakpata comprises a nucleus of like-minded individuals connected through the National Film Institute in Jos, Nigeria, and the Berlinale Talent Campus in Germany. Members have gained official recognition and won awards for activity in feature films, television and radio in Nigeria, across Africa and in the UK, working for a variety of organizations, most notably the BBC.

**Goal(s) at the Durban FilmMart:**

- Financing
- Co-Producers



## South Africa



Neil Brandt



Francois Verster

**Producer:** Neil Brandt  
**Director:** Francois Verster  
**Present at Durban FilmMart:**  
 Neil Brandt  
**Feature/ documentary:**  
 Documentary  
**Running time:** 90 min  
**Language:**  
 Arabic, Turkish, Farsi, English  
**Location:** Iran, South Africa  
**Total budget:**  
 \$ 729, 631.73 (R 5,520,758.50)  
**Finances committed:** No  
**Partners attached:** No  
**Production company:**  
 Fireworx Media and Undercurrent  
 Film & Television

# The Dream of Shahrazad

Francois Verster

I strongly believe that the touted divide between the Islamic and non-Islamic world is like all forms of nationalist boundaries, in most ways highly artificial and religion is made use to create barriers where they need not exist. South Africa's history has taught that one has a responsibility to actively counter the self-interested creation of racial, religious or other group-related boundaries.

Denying difference (or its relegation to liberal multiculturalists posit ion of "tolerance") can at the same time also be dangerous. The quest should be for balance between celebration of what is unique (and therefore allows new possibility) on the one hand what is connected politically and humanly, on the other; it is the level at which difference is identified and the political uses of difference that are at stake here.

Finally, it goes without saying that the ideas presented here are not complete or final - even a document such as this one for example finds it hard to avoid falling into established binary oppositions of "west" and "east". Documentary filmmaking is for me a question of active exploration rather than information giving, and it is in the nature of films made with openness and honesty to end up being much wiser than the filmmaker is when starting out.

### Synopsis

The Dream Of Shahrazad combines four stories, mixing music, fable, politics and filmic vision. Taking ancient folklore instead of religion as a point of connection between Arab, Turkish and Persian culture, it presents a radical alternative vision of contemporary "Middle Eastern" and Muslim identity and its many related conflicts – all as explored through three different engagements with the literature of The Thousand And One Nights.

### The Four Stories

1. The Tale of the Conductor and the Young Musicians - In the first "frame" story Turkish conductor Çem Mansur leads the Turkish National Youth Orchestra through the rehearsal of the Scheherazade suite and a series of "musical democracy workshops" in Kurdistan, leading up to a summer evening performance at Istanbul's famous Topkapi Palace. Mansur aims to educate young Turkish musicians about how different identities can co-exist within music.

2. The Tale of Shahrazad and the Different Sultans - we follow Chirine El Ansary, a beautiful Egyptian storyteller who "reinvents" stories from The 1001 Nights by giving them contemporary political and social relevance, particularly around the role of Islam, inequality and the position of women. Over the month of Ramadan, we see her performing both in Cairo and in oases and villages in the Western desert.

3. The Tale of King Muhammad Bin Sabaik / A Tale of Stories – As she prepares to attend the Kanoon Children's Literary Festival in Shiraz, a young Iranian girl is told the Tale of King Muhammad Bin Sabaik and the Merchant (in which the king orders his Mamluke slaves to search for the most marvellous story ever written) by her grandmother. As the story progresses in voiceover, we see a young mind confronted by a world of marvel and new possibility at the festival, experiencing different "stories" in her normal world, and finally being exposed to the conflict of media stories around a revolution brewing in her country...

4. The Dream of Shahrazad – Back at the Gate of Felicity in the Topkapi Palace, Mansur launches into the manic final movement of Rimsky-Korsakov's suite. This chapter intercuts between performance, the conclusion of previous storylines, disturbing impressionistic scenes, news and other archive material. It is a chapter about destruction, political repression, and the perversion of the "Dream", but also one which holds the promise of change and of global political and Cultural Revolution. The film ends in applause... but also with a profound sense of the kind of world our main characters are struggling to oppose, and the power of story, image, and fantasy in challenging such a world.

### Producer Profile

Neil Brandt, a UCT graduate in psychology and law, is one of South Africa's leading creative producers. Over and above numerous television projects, Neil has taken to market a number of award-winning documentary films, including *Angola Saudades*, *The Mother's House*, *Solly's Story*, *History of South African Politics*, *Tsietsi My Hero*, *Courting Justice* and *Affectionately Known as Alex*, which have won dozens of awards locally and internationally, including amongst them, Best Documentary Award at the SAFTA's, Durban International Film Festival, Three Continents Human Rights Festival, Cape Town World Cinema Festival, Munich International Documentary Festival, Docusur Spain and more. He was the associate producer on the Emmy Award winning documentary, *A Lion's Trail*, and competed for the Silver Wolf at IDFA. His most recent film with director Francois Verster, *Sea Point Days*, held its world Premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival this September, and travelled on to IDFA, Dubai IFF and the Warsaw IFF in the coming months. He is a founding member of Filmmakers Against Racism (FAR) and has served on a number of industry initiatives and is a member of the SASFED Intellectual Property sub-committee

### Director Profile:

Emmy award-winning documentary filmmaker François Verster has a wide background in writing, music, academia and film, and is one of South Africa's foremost film practitioners. His acclaimed debut as documentary director/producer, *Pavement Aristocrats: The Bergies of Cape Town* was broadcast on SABC3, Canal Plus and YLE-TV2 (Finland); it was winner of the 1999 Avanti Award for Best Documentary and was called "astonishingly brave and intimate". Verster has since won major awards at a number of International Festivals.

Verster has published poems, short stories and reviews, as well as articles in magazines and various international academic journals. He is a contributor to DOX, the magazine published by the European Documentary Network.

In 2003 he introduced and designed the documentary directing course at City Varsity College in Cape Town. He has also conducted seminars or guest lectures at the Hot Docs and various other festivals, the Sithengi Talent Campus, the University of Cape Town, the University of the Western Cape, Bowdoin College, the University of Maryland, the Tisch School of the Arts at NYU, AFDA and the Stellenbosch Academy of Photography and Design; in 2004 he was moderator at the Mini-INPUT conference in Accra, Ghana. He was the first recipient of the UCT Film and Media Studies Department's prestigious Percy Fox Creative Fellowship in Film (2007). In 2008 he was appointed Queen Wilhelmina Visiting Associate Professor of the Language, History and Literature of the Dutch-Speaking Peoples at Columbia University in New York. In 2009 he co-taught a class on African cinema at the University of the Western Cape.

### Company Profile

Fireworx Media was formed in 2008, bringing together experienced Southern African producers, Bridget Pickering, Dan Jawitz and Neil Brandt.

The company produces original content for multiple platforms and genres. Our award-winning producers have a reputation for high quality, entertaining productions, bringing an imaginative and vital perspective of the African continent to the world. We look for the complexity, imagination and humour in ordinary lives.

The common thread in all our content is that it is distinctive, uncompromising, and driven by a value system that believes positive and critical social commentary can also be entertaining. Passion is an essential ingredient of what we do and how we work. We back talent, invest in the future, and are involved in projects from the seed of an idea right through to delivery. We have filmed across the continent, from South Africa to Sierra Leone, from Angola to Kenya. We thrive on well organized productions that give our creative teams enough flexibility to be spontaneous. The company has extensive experience in distribution, sales and marketing. We stand apart from others as being truly independent and constantly exploring new business models with broadcasters, funders and investors.

Our projects have been commissioned or co-produced with a range of international broadcasters including ZDF, ARTE, BBC, PBS and SABC. Funders include the Sundance Fund, Hubert Bals Fund, Jan Vrijman Fund, ITVS, Africalia, Fonds Sud, the National Film and Video Foundation and the Open Society Foundation.

### Goal(s) at the Durban FilmMart:

- Co-producers
- Sales agents
- Presales
- Fund
- Other



## Egypt



Hossam Elouan



Ibrahim El Batout

**Producer:** Hossam Elouan  
**Director:** Ibrahim El Batout  
**Country:** Egypt  
**Present at Durban FilmMart:**  
 Hossam Elouan  
**Feature / documentary:** Feature  
**Running time:** 112 min  
**Language:** Arabic – English Subtitles  
**Location:** Alexandria, Egypt  
**Total budget:**  
 \$ 250 000 (R 1,939,322.90)  
**Finances committed:**  
 \$ 160,000 (R 1,241,516.67)  
**Partners attached:**  
 Hubert Bals Fund- The Netherlands  
**Production Company:**  
 Ein Shams Films

## Hawi

### Ibrahim El Batout

Since making films is an organic process, and also a collaborative effort where no one can foresee the outcome with accuracy, I went in making “Hawi” with a clear idea of what I want to do, but allowing a lot of room for changes to happen. I wanted to organically integrate the city and the characters in my film, till the story reaches its final form. Distinctive features of “Hawi” include shooting without a script; the use of non-professional actors and the avoidance of ornamental mise-en-scene and a preference for natural light. I use a free-moving style of photography that relies on my confidence in holding a shot as much as needed because I don't like to cut or move the camera unless it is motivated. I also have a non-interventionist approach to film directing and avoid any complex editing. All of these features satisfy my desire to get closer to everyday reality; subject matter, the lives of the so called ordinary people; and ideology; the hope of political renewal in Egypt, which goes along with the loss of hope coinciding with the failure of the renewal. Each of these features built on the preceding one, culminating my goal of conveying the hope of renewal both in filmmaking and also in life.

### Synopsis

“To all the fathers & kids who could not look into each other's eyes” - Ibrahim El Batout

Hawi takes place in Alexandria: a city that hides more than reveals, a city composed of many layers of civilizations and traditions since the time of Alexander The Great.

Youssef (40 years old ) gets out of 5 years imprisonment. It seems that they let him out just to hand in the documents that he had been hiding. Ibrahim (46 years old) comes back to Alexandria after being away for 20 years. He wants to see his daughter, Aya, that he hasn't seen since he ran away. Ibrahim knows that he can't reveal his identity to Aya before spending sometime with her especially that she has no idea how he looks like.

Fady (60 years old musician) mentors the underground band called Massar Egbary and Aya (Ibrahim's daughter). The band composes a song called Hawi. The song summarizes the status quo we Egyptians have been entrenched in for almost 60 years.

During the film we discover that there is a certain bond between our three characters; Fady, Youssef and Ibrahim though they meet only once. Later we understand that they shared the same prison 20 years ago.

Gaafar is a simple man who discovers that his horse is dying. He does all he can to comfort his long time companion who shared his life. He takes his horse to the sea hoping that the sea water will heal him. He walks him in Alexandria's streets day and night wishing that may be this could alleviate his medical conditions.

What unites all our characters is their despair that resembles the eternal sea of Alexandria in its vastness.



### Producer Profile

Hossam Elouans is a film scholar, a screenwriter, documentary researcher, independent film producer, and adjunct faculty at the American University in Cairo (Egypt). He earned an M.A. in Cinema Studies from San Francisco State University with a focus on Arab, World Cinema, and Documentary Film Theory. In 2006, he was selected by The Fulbright Commission as a Fulbright specialist on Middle Eastern cinema, and taught Middle Eastern Cinema at Mount St. Mary's University in Maryland. Hossam's writings appeared on daily newspapers such as Al-Hayat, an Arab newspaper based in London, and academic periodicals such as Alif- Journal of Comparative Poetics, published by the American University in Cairo, and he was also a researcher on a dozen of documentaries produced exclusively for Al-Jazeera – An Arab Broadcasting Network based in Qatar. Hossam's other honors include a Fulbright Award in 2002 and an Egyptian state Award of Creativity in 1998. His background of education includes studying with the most prestigious screenwriters and filmmakers from Egypt, including Youssef Chahine, Daoud Abdel Saeed, Mohsen Zaid, and Yousry Nasralla. As a Fulbright Scholar, he also worked intensively with Professor Richard Walter, the Screenplay Chairman at UCLA. As a grad student at SFSU, Hossam studied under the supervision of world renowned film theorist Bill Nichols, and influential scholars like Jenny Lau and Randy Rutsky, and attended classes with internationally acclaimed scholars like Rui Wang. Hossam lectured and presented his work related to film in Egypt, Italy, Greece, Ireland, and the U.S., and served as a trainer at the Arhvai International Movie Camp in Turkey (2010). Hossam's experience includes co-organizing the program of Arab Independent Cinema at the Ismailia International Film Festival in Egypt (2002), and he was also a jury member at Rome Med Film Festival (1998), and Roshd International Film Festival (Tehran 2009).

### Director Profile

Ibrahim El-Batout was born in 1963 in Portsaid, Egypt. He graduated from the American University in Cairo in 1985, majoring in physics. El Batout's infatuation for the camera started in the Video Cairo Production House - an agency that provides facilities for foreign TV stations. There he worked as a sound engineer. Shortly after he began to experiment with filmmaking and learned about the skills required of cameramen, editors and directors. Later, he worked for a year in a British television station, TV-Am, located in Cyprus. Since then he has worked as a director, producer and cameraman, capturing stories mainly about human loss, suffering, and displacement since 1987 and has also directed numerous documentaries for international TV such as ZDF (Germany), TBS (Japan) and ARTE (France). His documentary work has received many international awards: the Axel Springer Award (1994 and 2000) and the Direct Marketing Association's ECHO award (1996). In the beginning of 2004, El Batout stepped into the world of fiction to make the long feature film 'Ithaki' (2005). His second film entitled 'Ein Shams' (Eye of the Sun) (2008) has won the Golden Bull, the top prize at the 54th Taormina Film Festival, 2008.

### Company Profile

Ein Shams Films is the film production house of Egyptian filmmaker, Ibrahim El Batout. Ein Shams Films has produced 3 feature films: Ithaki, Ein Shams (as executive producer) and Hawi, usually using its own financial resources. The company owns its own HD camera used to shoot Hawi, which is in post production, and also own an editing suite.

The feature films produced by Ein Shams Films are usually low budget films that are shot on location in Egypt with non-professional actors, and the 3 films produced by Ein Shams so far were shot without a written script, which makes it difficult to get preproduction funding. Beside Hawi, Ein Shams Films has 2 current projects in pre production: September 20 & Ali Meaaza (Ali the Goat).

### Goal(s) for the Durban FilmMart:

- Sales
- Distribution



## Burkina Faso



Nicolas Cand



Idrissa Ouedrago

**Producer:** Nicolas Cand  
**Director:** Idrissa Ouedrago  
**Present at Durban FilmMart:**  
 Nicolas Cand and Idrissa Ouedrago  
**Feature / documentary:**  
 Long Feature Film  
**Time:** 105 min  
**Language:** French  
**Location:** Burkina Faso  
**Total budget:**  
 \$2,414,593.25 (€ 1,960,069)  
**Finances committed:** No  
**Partners attached:** No  
**Production Company:** ARP (Burkina Faso) and CK Productions (France)

# La Mangue (The Stone of the Mango)

Idrissa Ouedrago

After my earlier films YAABA (International Critics Prize at the Cannes Film Festival in 1989; Special Jury Prize at FESPACO, and the Sakura Gold Prize at the Tokyo International Film Festival), TILAI (a 1990 award-winning Burkina-Faso drama film; winner of the Jury Grand Prize at the 1990 Cannes Film Festival and the Grand Prize at the 1991 Pan African Film and Television Festival, Ouagadougou), KINI et ADAMS (nominated for the Palme d'Or at the 1997 Cannes Film Festival), I started dreaming of a cinema with a modern idea, an idea of development: an Africa caught up in its contradictions, but where hope is possible, an Africa protecting its environment and rediscovering its traditions, an Africa where sport can engender human development and social cohesion.

In this film, planned as a road movie, movement is a necessity to escape one's homeland, but also in order to rediscover it and return there. The leading character moves at a run, a tradition – from the Masaï lion hunt to the first medal Abebe Bikila won – on which Africa has built its history. Walking, foot and horseracing and human relations are all solidly rooted in the African identity.

### Synopsis

The film begins in a small Peul village in the north of Burkina Faso. Karim, a twelve-year-old boy, is more poorly clad than the other children and steals a glance at a very pretty girl who seems lost in her thoughts. She is not taking part in the laughter and glances are exchanged. Her name is Kady - she is the prettiest girl, the little village queen.

The film begins with a budding interest between Karim and Kady during a game. The next day Karim finds a mango and gives it to Kady as a sign of his affection. Her father is devastated that Karim, the poorest boy in the village and the only child of an unmarried woman, could be fraternizing with his daughter.

Later on the same night, we see Karim hidden close to the river where the young girls fill the basins that they are to carry back to the village. When Kady passes by, he manages to discreetly attract her attention. He presents her with the precious mango stone and explains that it is a treasure he wants to give her. If she agrees, they will plant the stone together and water it regularly. He promises her

that she will soon have the most beautiful tree in the village. Astonishingly, Kady is moved by this gesture. However, ends up fleeing from the village after her father beats him close to death for speaking to Kady.

Kady steals money from her parents and sets out to find Karim with his estranged father who returned to the village just after his disappearance.

Starting with this rather tragic preamble, a pathetic quest will then take us to the extreme ends of Burkina-Faso, through the deserts of Mali, and to the Atlantic shores of Senegal. A moving melodrama will see the loving passion develop between two proud children who are willing to face all obstacles for their love.

**Producer Profile:**

Nicolas Cand worked in cinematographic exploitation, distribution and production over the past twenty years in France. Since ten years, he collaborated with director Idrissa Ouedraogo to produce and develop TV and film projects in Burkina Faso for local filmmakers and also international projects directed by Idrissa. He also worked in theatrical productions and multimedia development.

**Director Profile:**

Idrissa Ouedraogo is a graduate of the African Institute for Cinema Studies (Institut Africain d'Etudes Cinématographiques) in . In he began to work for the Burkina Faso Directorate of Cinema Production (Direction de la Production Cinématographique du Burkina Faso), where he directed several short films. The short film Poko won the short film prize at the (FESPACO) in . After studying in in the he moved to Paris, where he graduated from the Institut des Hautes Etudes Cinématographiques in Ouédraogo won the for his film (The Law) at the , and the for his 1986 film (The Choice).

**Company Profile**

CK PRODUCTIONS is a French cinematographic production managed by Nicolas Cand. It takes parts in production of different kind of productions, documentaries, long feathers. Project collaborations usually start by a special encounter with an artist.

**Goal(s) for the Durban FilmMart:**

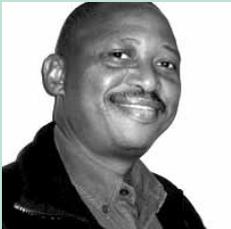
- Co-Producers
- Finance
- Sales agents
- Presales



## South Africa



Julie Frederikse



Madoda Ncayiyana

**Producer:** Julie Frederikse  
**Director:** Madoda Ncayiyana  
**Country:** South Africa  
**Present at Durban FilmMart:**  
 Julie Frederikse and Madoda Ncayiyana  
**Feature / documentary:**  
 Feature Film  
**Running time:** 95 min  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** South Africa  
**Total budget:**  
 US\$ 591,864 (R4, 315,465)  
**Finances committed:** No  
**Partners attached:** No  
**Production Company:**  
 Vuleka Productions  
**Mobile Muti:** Julie Frederikse

## Mobile Muti

Madoda Ncayiyana

My strength in directing is in getting powerful performances, even from untrained actors, and my enthusiasm for directing *Mobile Muti* stems from my confidence in the two award-winning child actors who I discovered in casting my first film, *Izulu Lami*. I am pleased to say that the versatile young actor who will play the very demanding central role of Wonder Boy also has great musical talent, and will be able to perform the vocal routines (a kind of “African beatboxing”) that will strongly enhance the film’s vibe and texture. The girl who will play Gugu is a strong, focused performer who never fails to hit her marks, whether on set or in ADR. I have already begun workshopping the new script, which I co-wrote, and I am really impressed with the commitment of these child actors and their quest to find their characters with a truly authentic approach. Their research into their roles has focused on finding a child’s perspective on the township-like inner city and they have even accompanied me to church services like those run by “Professor” Dlodlu. To play this flamboyant character I have my eye on one of South Africa’s biggest box office draws, Rapulana Seiphemo, who I believe, with his ability and my direction, can really inhabit this role and give a mesmerizing performance.

### Synopsis

Twelve-year-old Wonder Boy performs with his friends for people at the taxi rank, but dreams of being on SA’s Got Talent. He’s always mimicking the sounds around him, incorporating them into vocal routines for his blind father, who welcomes this audio take on the world. A bold stranger, “Professor” Dlodlu, sees Wonder Boy perform, then offers to train him for a show he’s producing. When his family refuses to let him go, Wonder Boy sneaks off with Dlodlu, leaving his shack on the outskirts of Durban for a 30-story building in the gritty inner city.

Wonder Boy soon finds out that he isn’t being trained for a TV talent show – but to speak in tongues like the man in the cellphone video clip that Dlodlu shows him. Dlodlu has seen that when times are tough, people seek spiritual guidance, so he has quit doing con tricks on the streets to open his own self-styled church in a city centre office block, calling himself a Professor of African Healing rather than a Reverend.

Wonder Boy loses his innocence as he is taught tricks which rely on mobile technology. Dlodlu offers a special discount for churchgoers at the phone kiosk in the lobby, then goes through their SMS and voice messages. He instructs Wonder Boy during church services via a tiny Bluetooth headset in his

ear, telling him who to approach and what their problems are. He prescribes traditional African herbs and potions in private muti consultations, appealing to the “cross-over market”: believers in both Western and African healing. Tradition meets technology in his new SMS subscription service, *Mobile Muti Motivational Messages*.

Meanwhile Wonder Boy seizes every opportunity to hone his voice talent, learning to use a microphone on the choir leader’s One Man Band machine and watching music videos at the nearby internet café. He finds a friend in Kumi, a boy his age from the nearby Indian quarter, and puppy love with Gugu, a girl his age who believes he has a miracle cure for her mother, a wannabe singer with crippling stage fright.

The film climaxes with Wonder Boy’s showdown with Dlodlu, which clears the way to showcase the new genre of music Wonder Boy has pioneered: a kind of African-style beatboxing, peppered with jazz scatting and Zulu clicks. With his father in the audience, and Zizi, Gugu and Terence on stage with him Wonder Boy dedicates his percussive vocal routine to the wonders of the world we hear, as well as see. And his friends watch it all too – on cellphones in the shack settlement.



### Producer Profile

Julie Frederikse co-founded Vuleka Productions in Durban with Madoda Ncayiyana in 1994 and has produced feature film, short film, television, video and audio, including documentaries and children's programming. Frederikse co-produced and co-wrote *Izulu Lami (My Secret Sky)*, which won awards for Best Feature Film at the Cannes Pan-African Film Festival, Spain's Tarifa International African Film Festival, India's Kerala International Film Festival, Italy's Verona African Film Festival and the Zanzibar International Film Festival.

Frederikse has helped build South Africa's regional film industry, as *Izulu Lami* was shot in Durban with a cast and crew largely from KwaZulu-Natal province, supported by NFVF, SABC, Ster-Kinekor and the Department of Trade and Industry. Frederikse raised additional funds from the French Foreign Ministry's Fonds Images Afrique, Norwegian Aid and Durban's municipality. Released in 2009, *Izulu Lami* received excellent critical reviews, staying on circuit for three months. Described as an "extraordinary work of great power" by top South African film critic Barry Ronge. Award-winning author Don Mattera wrote that it, "gives one confidence and a sense of tangible hope for the future of film production in South Africa," and the UK's *Guardian* dubbed it, "South Africa's *Slumdog Millionaire*". The film features young children who had never acted professionally before they were discovered through a casting initiative developed by Frederikse in KwaZulu-Natal's townships and rural areas.

Frederikse's international co-productions include the first South African Sesame series and a Channel Four (UK) children's series. The SABC children's environmental series she produced won a Creative Excellence Award at the US International Film and Television Awards. Frederikse was selected for NFVF's 2009 Sediba Advanced International Financing Programme for Producers, with her new project, *Mobile Muti*. While developing *Izulu Lami (My Secret Sky)* she was selected to attend *Produire au Sud* of the 3 Continents Film Festival (Nantes and Paris) and the Cannes Film Festival's Producer's Network. Frederikse has produced programming for the European Union, the United Nations, Planned Parenthood, Ford Foundation, Firelight Foundation and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

### Director Profile:

Madoda Ncayiyana has extensive experience in directing fiction film, including a feature film and a short film, several seasons of a television drama series for children, as well as many theatre plays. The feature film he directed in 2008, *Izulu Lami/My Secret Sky*, was awarded the Dikalo Best Feature Film prize at the International Pan African Film Festival, held in Cannes, and the Audience Award for Best Feature Film plus a Best Actress Award for the child star, Sobahle Mkhabase, at the Cinema Africano de Tarifa Film Festival in Spain, as well as awards for Best Film at the

Kerala International Film Festival in India and the Verona International Festival of African Film in Italy, and the SIGNIS Prize for Best Film at the Zanzibar International Film Festival.

Ncayiyana's strong background in directing drama began with his work as a theatre director, and he has also worked as a playwright and theatre actor. He has great ability in directing emerging talent, and helped shape the early careers of top South African actors.

### Company Profile

Founded in Durban in 1994, Vuleka Productions co-produced its first feature film with Johannesburg's Dv8 Films, *Izulu Lami (My Secret Sky)*. Shot in Durban with Ncayiyana as director, Frederikse as co-producer and both as co-writers, it was released in 2009 and has won six international awards: the Cannes Pan-African Film Festival's Dikalo Award for Best Feature Film; Audience Award for Best Film and Best Actress at the Tarifa International African Film in Spain; Best Debut Film at India's Kerala International Film Festival, Audience Award for Best Film at Italy's Verona International African Film Festival; and the SIGNIS Prize for Best Film at the Zanzibar International Film Festival. Vuleka's short film, *The Sky in Her Eyes*, won Best African Short Film at Cannes 2003 (Critics Choice Week) and awards at Festival Cinema Africano Milano and Vues D'Afriques, Montreal. *Land of Thirst*, a feature film and mini-series produced by Vuleka for SABC, was sold internationally to High Point Films, UK, and was broadcast in North America. Vuleka's international co-productions include the debut series of *Takalani Sesame* and a Channel Four (UK) children's series. Vuleka has produced drama, documentary and children's programming for SABC, eTV and international NGOs and foundations.

### Goal(s) for the Durban FilmMart:

- Co-Producers
- Finance



## South Africa



Sulette van Jaarsveld



Marisa van Jaarsveld



Robyn Rorke

**Producer:** Sulette Van Jaarsveld  
Marisa van Jaarsveld

**Director:** Robyn Rorke

**Present at Durban FilmMart:**

Sulette van Jaarsveld (Producer)

Marisa van Jaarsveld (Producer)

Robyn Rorke (Director)

**Feature/ documentary:**

Documentary

**Running time:** 70 min

**Language:** English with some subtitled Afrikaans

**Location:** South Africa

**Total budget:**

US\$ 256,074.72 (R 1,881,482.22)

**Finances committed:**

US\$ 8 911.00 (3.47%)

**Partners:** No

**Production Company:** Night

Swimming Films and Mesa Films

## New Mountains In the Desert

Robyn Rorke

I grew up in a mining family and have felt the heavy guilt of what mining has done to the people of South Africa, trapped in the colonial and apartheid nightmare of the resource curse. Wars have been fought; blood spilt, families broken and communities decimated in the cause of mining. Even so, it remains one of the driving forces of our economy today.

When I heard about the decade long battle fought by the Nama of the Richtersveld, which ended in a pyrrhic victory in the Constitutional court, I realized I had finally found a perfect vehicle to communicate all that I have sensed, seen and learnt growing up on mines across South Africa.

New Mountains in the Desert comments on pre-colonial life, colonialism, apartheid and the post-apartheid era in South Africa, all set amidst awe-inspiring desert landscapes, scenes of massive industrial activity, fascinating cultural life and abject poverty. As I explore more and more of the story in my research, I realize that this documentary has the potential to capture our history and talk to our present state in a magical and deeply moving way. While being an investigative and political story of a court case and land lost and won, it is also an allegorical, imaginative and expansive story of living on our continent.

### Synopsis

In 2007, the Nama people of the Richtersveld won a nine-year long, multi-million Rand court case in the Constitutional Court. Ironically, the institution that they were fighting against for the rights to their ancestral land was not the colonial or apartheid state, but the democratic Republic of South Africa - the post-apartheid state. The state spent around R50 million fighting the Richtersvelders' claim to the land, as well as their demand for restitution for diamonds mined from it since the 1920's. This is a story of an ancient and marginalized people who lived and continue to live off the land and their ten years of struggle to secure their land rights back from the new democratic SA government.

A precedent-setting settlement was reached in the constitutional court returning 84,000 hectares of land, mineral rights via a joint mining venture with the state-owned Alexkor Diamond mining company, R190 million for the diamonds already mined, as well as several development initiatives. However, despite winning this massive precedent-setting land and reparations settlement in the Constitutional Court, Nama communities in the Richtersveld remain in conflict and as poor as they were before. Lack of post-settlement assistance, as well as divisions amongst Richtersveld Nama residents as a result of the decimation of the community over centuries, are implicated in this amazing opportunity not being fully realized.

This nuanced multi-layered story looks at the history of the infamous court case and at what is happening now. If Constitutional Court judgments are not carried

out effectively, what does that say about the state of democracy in post-1994 South Africa?

As we tell the story of this court case in an investigative, hard-hitting style, we constantly move back into the Richtersveld to listen to the keepers of history about life and land before and during the resource wars that have been a constant thread from colonialism through apartheid and into democratic South Africa.

The aim is not merely to make a documentary of the people involved in this famous court case, but to speak to those to whom this court case and the history of mining has meant life or socio-cultural death and who have been doomed to a life of senseless, needless poverty. An imperative to telling the story effectively is that it is shot to highlight the awesomeness of the natural landscape from whence the blessings and curses of resources come that have shaped the lives of the Nama of the Richtersveld.

### Producer Profile

Sulette van Jaarsveld started her career in the film industry in Johannesburg in 1995. With her passion for storytelling and filmmaking as well as her gift for logistical management, minute attention to detail and excellent people skills, film production was the obvious route to follow. After a year of learning the ropes she left the country for two years to travel extensively throughout Europe and the East and to work in London. At her return towards the end of 1997 she re-located to Cape Town where she has been building her career as a producer ever since. She started out as a freelancer and has extensive experience in the producing of long-form drama series, sitcoms, feature films, documentaries, comedy sketch shows, educational programmes and commercials. At the beginning of 2000 she was offered a permanent post at Penguin Films as their Head of Production, a position which she held for four and a half years. In October of 2004, Sulette and her business partner Marisa van Jaarsveld combined their love and passion for filmmaking and everything South African, to form Mesa Films, and was joined in 2007 by Lesedi Mogoatlhe. Sulette has produced several films for Mesa Films independently and under commission from the SABC and has recently completed her directorial debut film, *God in the Water*, which was filmed in Indonesia for SABC 2. [www.mesafilms.co.za](http://www.mesafilms.co.za)

### Director Profile:

"If you lie on the ground in somebody's arms, you'll probably swallow some of their history". *Suzanne Vega, In Liverpool*

Robyn believes in film as a universal conversation. She tells stories that do not flinch at paradox or uncertainty. She seeks to understand rather than judge. Robyn works intimately with her characters, with the aim of humanizing people that are usually mass consciousness 'strawmen' – especially important in a society like South Africa's where easy stereotypes are ubiquitous and dangerous.

Robyn's background is in anthropology and political geography, focusing on local democracy and activism. Her main research method is 'deep hanging out.'

Her first short documentary, *Pam and Ashraf* is part of the first South African IKON series. *Shamiela's House* a 50-minute won the Audience Award for Best Documentary at Encounters Festival 2008 – South Africa's most prominent documentary festival. It has also been shown in our National Parliament, where it was well received.

She was a finalist candidate for the National Film and Video Foundation's Women Helmer's competition for her fictional script *JUMP!* She has just finished *Between the Sky and me* a 24-minute programme for the SABC strand 'The Healing Power of Nature'. She is currently working in Cape Town on a number of projects in different phases.

### Company Profile

In 2004, Sulette van Jaarsveld and Marisa van Jaarsveld pooled their collective resources and started Mesa Films. Sulette's twelve years of production experience and Marisa's experience as a social anthropologist and documentary filmmaker was brought together with their love and passion for everything South African to form a production company dedicated to the beauty of this country and its people. During 2007, the wonderfully talented Lesedi Mogoatlhe joined Mesa Films and brought with her her marvellous directing and producing skills.

Mesa Films has produced several documentary films shot in South Africa as well as abroad. They include *MamaAfrika* (South Africa), *Edge of the Forest* (Borneo, Malaysia 3), *Force of Nature* (Indonesia), *Earth Child* (South Africa), *God in the Water* (Indonesia) and *Paul the Lion Heart* (South Africa).

Mesa Films is passionate about creating television and film productions that are entertaining, of superior quality, and that convey a positive message. Our productions offer solutions to the problems we face as a society, and aims to uplift viewers and empower them. As filmmakers, we believe in honest and responsible filmmaking. We have made a commitment to our audiences to present them with images that are immaculate, stories that offer solutions to problems and films that are imbued with a sense of hope.

### Goal(s) at the Durban FilmMart:

- Co-producers
- Sales agents
- Presales
- Fund
- Other



## Egypt



Guillaume de Seille



Abraham Haile Biru

**Producer:** Guillaume de Seille

**Director:** Abraham Haile Biru

**Country:** Egypt

**Present at Durban FilmMart:**

Guillaume de Seille

**Feature / documentary:**

Fiction Feature Film

**Running time:** 90 min

**Language:** Somali

**Location:** Somaliland

**Total budget:** € 1,000,000.00

**Finances committed:**

€ 663,500.00 (66.35%)

**Partners attached:** ACP, Fonds Sud,

SODEC, Nederlands Fonds Voor de

Film, Global Film Initiative, Angoa

**Production Company:** Arizona Films

## Queleh

### Abraham Haile Biru

For more than ten years now, I have yearned to tell the world why so many Somali have fled from their native country. In doing so, I also want to share the story of my childhood spent in Somalia – a country riddled with violence and hostility contradicted only by its intrinsic natural beauty.

The film is a coming of age tale based on my experiences as a boy. As a child, I worked in the cornfield, helping to cultivate crops for my family's livelihood. I learned to master the art of the slingshot by hunting birds with my father. We would travel to the city to sell what we had harvested, where I sweated as profusely as I had done in the field, but this time out of fear, as machinegun armed soldiers would threaten me and steal our produce. Queleh is not just a film about a boy growing up in harsh circumstances but of the other refugees and a country's political past.

I returned to Somalia for the first time in sixteen years, in 2004. The violent past of the country is omnipresent. Houses are painted in bright blues and yellows, as if the Somalis have tried to brush away all memories of the horrible war with layers of fresh paint. On the other hand, there are ruins and abandoned tanks that tell the story of a dreadful civil war that cost the lives of thousands of Somali and tore families apart.

#### Synopsis

Queleh resides in the countryside of Northern Somalia with his father, mother and two younger sisters. The family grows corn and vegetables that they later sell at the market in town. Queleh's father teaches him to farm and his responsibilities as a man: working the fields, planting corn and hunting.

Queleh falls for a beautiful woman named Nourah - the youngest daughter of the village Chief. In order

to become a true shepherd, Queleh must partake in the Hangool rite. During the preparation for this rite, his father is arrested by government troops for writing letters in protest against the execution of 70 of his clan members by the military regime. Queleh's initiation rite is put off to a later date while he now has to bear complete responsibility for his family, their harvest and selling produce.

**Producer Profile:**

Guillaume de Seille, born in France in 1968, studied civil engineering. After two awarded short-films as writer/director, he worked ten years for Canal and in the cinema department (pre sales of French and European films), was Commissioning Editor for a couple of years within the short film department of Canal and Artistic Producer for French public broadcaster France 2.

Independent producer since 2000, he produced *Waiting For Happiness* by Abderrahmane Sissako, *Abouna* by Mahamat Saleh Haroun and coproduced *The Forest* by Bassek ba Kobhio and Didier Ouenangaré amongst other titles.

**Director Profile**

Biru was born in Addis Abbaba (Ethiopia). He graduated from Nederland Film and Television Academie (Amsterdam), Image department.

He's Director of Photography in Africa on many productions:

*Abouna* by Mahamat Saleh Haroun (Directors Fortnight 2002) for which he's awarded Best Image in Fespaco 2003 ; *La colère des dieux* by Idrissa Ouedraogo (Opening Film in Fespaco 2003) ; *Daratt* by Mahamat Saleh Haroun (Jury Special Grand Prize in Venizia 2006) for which he's awarded Best Image in Fespaco 2007.

He's DOP and/or coproducer for many African documentaries since 1993. Since 2007, he was appointed Head of Blue Nile Academy, sole East African Film School, created with financial support from Hubert Bals Fund (Rotterdam) and Rotterdam Film Fund.

**Company Profile**

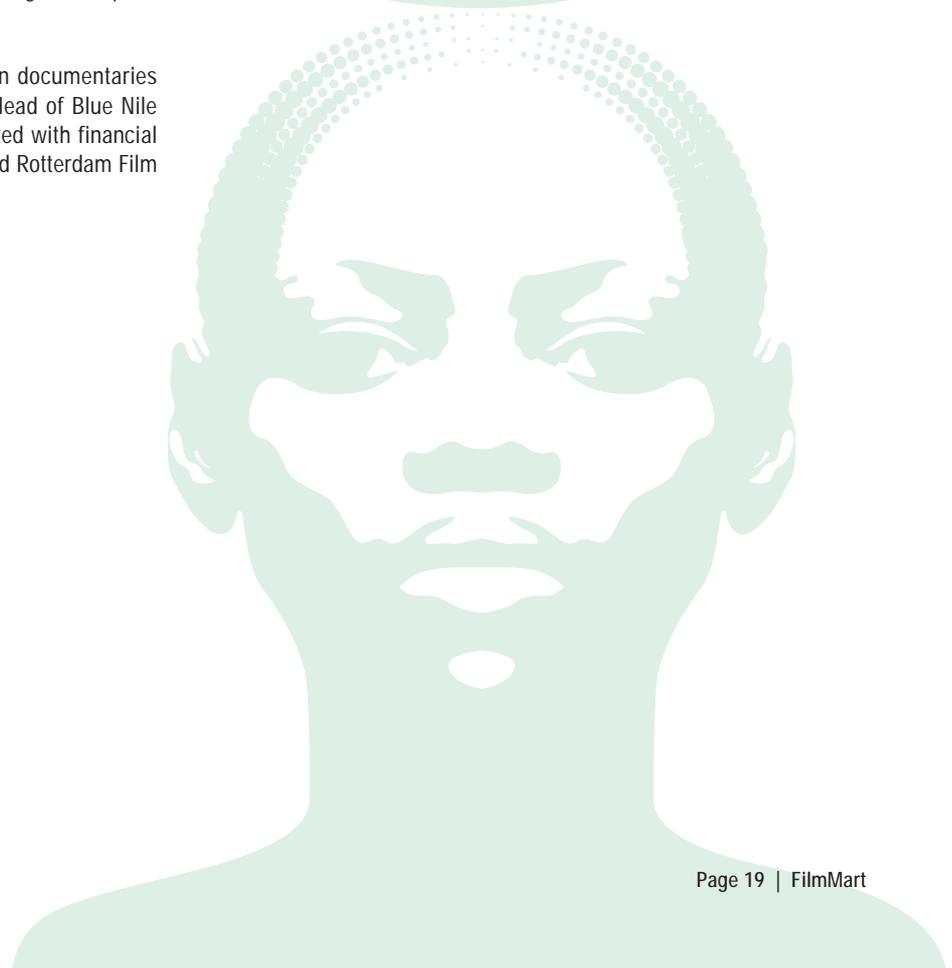
Arizona Films, based in Paris, is lead by Guillaume de Seille and Rémi Roy who mainly produce art-house feature films directed by non-French emerging talents. Bénédicte Thomas is producing creative documentaries and handling in-house French distribution.

**Filmography:**

- Dooman River* by Zhang Lu
- Crab Trap* by Oscar Ruiz Navia
- The Other Bank* by Giorgi Ovashvili
- Süt* by Semih Kaplanoglu
- Song from the Southern Seas* by Marat Sarulu
- The Forest* by Didier Ouenangare and Bassek Ba Kobhio
- Abouna* by Mahamat Saleh Haroun
- Waiting for Happiness* by Abderrahmane Sissako

**Goal(s) at the Durban FilmMart:**

- Co-producers
- Sales agents
- Presales
- Fund
- Other





## South Africa / Sweden



Junaid Ahmed



Jan Blomgren

**Producer:** Junaid Ahmed  
**Co-Producer:** Jan Blomgren  
**Director:** Junaid Ahmed  
**Country:** South Africa/ Sweden  
**Present at Durban FilmMart:**  
 Junaid Ahmed  
**Feature / documentary:**  
 Fiction Feature Film  
**Running time:** 90 min  
**Language:**  
 English, Zulu, Afrikaans and Swedish  
**Location:** South Africa  
**Total budget:**  
 \$ 1,016,396.76 (R 8000 000.00)  
**Finances committed:** No  
**Partners attached:**  
 NFVF, Bob Films Sweden  
**Production Company:**  
 Finline Productions (Pty) Ltd

# Stockholm, Zululand

## Junaid Ahmed

The idea for the story of Stockholm, Zululand stemmed from my involvement in the NGO sector over a number of years. I was the General Secretary of the Congress of South African Writers (COSAW) and also worked with a number of other South African NGO's during the apartheid era. One of my primary tasks was to seek international funding for COSAW and other fraternal organizations. In this regard, I got to know the terrain of international funding very well and my experiences with donors was very mixed- there were those who sincerely believed in the work of the organizations they were funding (and often did not vigorously pursue financial accountability of the funds provided) and there were many others who provided financial assistance based on their own hidden agendas.

The issue of international funding has always intrigued me- and especially how Africa is perceived as the begging bowl of the world. With this comes the attendant stereotypes that continue to be misrepresented to and imagined in the minds of many people outside the continent- the fragmented and inaccurate representations of the 'dark continent' include that of being primitive, poor, underdeveloped, violent and covered with jungles.

The film Stockholm, Zululand will play on an inversion of the traditional patronizing ideas of Africa, funding/aid, and morality. Although the genre is romantic comedy, the serious undertone in the film is that we in Africa will not continue to subscribe to our 'assigned' roles as victims. Therefore in this film the residents of Stockholm, Zululand empower themselves in a modern, global way. We don't condone their misuse of funds, but we do represent Africans as modern, sophisticated people who are active agents in their own lives. And one of the cheeky questions we ask is: after 600 years of exploitation of Africa by Europe, is it so wrong for Africa to exploit Europe for a little while? This story speaks directly to the current spirit of African independence, and creeping doubts about the entire concept of handouts.

In the end, the overriding premise of the film is simple: material happiness is meaningless without integrity. However, despite this ultimately affirming realization, the film will continue to ask iconoclastic and comic questions about modern assumptions of Africa.

### Synopsis

Named after its benefactors, the village of Stockholm, Zululand has been the recipient of Swedish funding for ten years. As far as the Swedes are concerned Stockholm is a rural poverty-stricken community of 400 people trying to empower themselves. The truth is quite the opposite: the Swedes came not only with money but also with very low expectations, and an empowerment programme they thought would take a decade took only a few years. Since then the residents of Stockholm have been living large, with excellent schooling (led by protagonist, teacher Moses), investment schemes and many of the luxuries of the modern world.

But two events shatter this idyll. The first comes courtesy of Mannetjies the farmer on whose land they live: the bank is about to foreclose. Suddenly it becomes essential that Stockholm, Zululand gets its next cheque from Sweden so that the townsfolk can buy the farm and keep it out of the clutches of golf estate developers.

Then another bombshell - the Swedes are coming to inspect Stockholm to make sure their funds are being well spent.

The town embarks on a desperate bid to give the Swedes what they are expecting from an African

rural village: abject poverty, clichéd misery, and highly picturesque suffering. A shantytown is duly built, vultures are trained to circle the village, the elders are taught to do beadwork and children are coached in illiteracy.

The Swedes are impressed, except Klara, the beautiful accountant, who smells a rat. Worse, she is also attracted to Moses, and the feeling is mutual. Their flirtation and her suspicion could bring the whole deception tumbling down. Moses is forced to betray Klara and she is recalled to Sweden. When Klara returns to confront Moses, he steps up and accepts full responsibility for the ruse. She is won over again by his integrity, and the romance is restored.

The threat of the golf estate developers remains, until an Environmental Impact Assessor finds hideous pots, made by Mannetjies' great grandmother and thrown away by his wife Magma in a cave on the farm. The Assessor mistakes them for ancient artifacts. He explains that the whole farm will have to be checked as a heritage site, which could take years. The developers are furious and abandon Stockholm at once, refusing to wait that long.

The town has been given the time it needs to buy its future – legitimately.



**Producer Profile: Junaid Ahmed (South Africa)**

BA (Hons) drama graduate Junaid Ahmed has been writing, producing and directing documentaries, feature projects and short films for the past sixteen years. He has produced and directed for Channel 4, the Discovery Channel and the South African broadcasters SABC and e-tv. Award winning projects include Iqakamba- Hard Ball, which he wrote, produced and directed. It won the best sports documentary at the FICTS festival in Milan in 1996. Lucky, a short film he produced was screened at over 80 international festivals in 2006. It was nominated for the 2006 BAFTA Best Short film award and this film has subsequently won Best Short Film at over 38 international film festivals, including the Oscar eligible festivals of Clermont Ferrand, Cinequest San Jose and Aspen Shortsfest.

Ahmed directed the feature length docudrama More Than Just A Game. Produced by Anant Singh, FIFA hosted the World Premier in November 2007 as part of the first qualifying draw program for soccer World Cup 2010. More Than Just A Game was released theatrically in South Africa during April 2008. Sony Pictures International has acquired the international world-wide distribution rights. In August 2008 the Centre for Fine Art, Animation and Design (CFAD) awarded Ahmed the Edge Award in recognition of his work in media and entertainment.

**Producer Profile: Jan Blomgren (Sweden)**

Jan Blomgren is an international award winning producer and CEO of BOB Film. He is one of Scandinavia's most respected film producers. Some of the features that Jan has produced include: The King Of Ping Pong: winner of The World Cinema Jury Prize: Dramatic and The World Cinema Cinematography Award at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival

The Wedding Photographer: released theatrically early 2010 in Europe and at the time achieved No 2 at the box office  
Kitchen Stories / Salmer Fra Kjøkkenet (2003): Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences: Swedish Entry 2003. Cannes international Film Festival, Quinzaine: Regard Jeune Prize Sao Paulo International Film Festival Brazil: Jury Award, Best Director.

**Laban The Ghost Animation**

Jan Blomgren has also an award winning producer of some of the finest television series in Europe which includes: His Wife / Kungamordet , Höök – Season 1-2, The Brokers / Mäklarna God Morning Children / God morgon alla barn

**South African Company Profile: Finline Productions (Pty) Ltd.**

Established in 1994 Finline Productions is an independent film and video production company that produces feature projects, documentaries and commercials. Critically acclaimed and award winning documentaries include The Zulu Messengers (Discovery Channel) Women On The Beat (ETV), The Zanzibari's and Ikhaya (SABC) -which featured at the Sundance Film Festival.

Finline's short films include The Vow (Channel 4/Miramax/SABC), which was sub-titled into 13 European languages. In 2006 Junaid Ahmed produced Lucky which won over 38 international awards including Best Short Film at three Oscar qualifying festivals and a BAFTA nomination for best short film. The feature More Than Just A Game was directed by Junaid Ahmed and produced by Anant Singh. FIFA hosted the World Premier of this film in November 2007 as part of the first qualifying draw program for the soccer World Cup 2010. The film was released theatrically in South Africa during April 2008. Sony Pictures International has acquired the international worldwide distribution rights.

**Swedish Company Profile: Bob Film**

Bob Film was established in 2000, and is an independent production company based in Stockholm, Sweden, with offices in Trollhättan (west) and Luleå (north). It is owned and run by producers Jan Blomgren (CEO) and Anna Croneman, and focuses primarily on feature films and TV drama. Bob Film Sweden has gained a reputation for quality artistic edge. Its objective is to provide scriptwriters and directors with the best possible conditions to realize their vision in a manner that strives to combine commercial interests with artistic integrity.

**Goal(s) at the Durban FilmMart:**

- Sales agents
- Presales
- Fund
- Other



## South Africa



Jeremy Nathan



Oliver Hermanus

**Producer:** Jeremy Nathan  
**Director:** Oliver Hermanus  
**Present at Durban FilmMart:**  
Oliver Hermanus  
**Feature/ documentary:**  
Fiction Feature Film  
**Running time:** + 90 min  
**Language:** ???  
**Location:** Cape Town, South Africa  
**Total budget:**  
\$1,021,112.95 (R 8,000,000.00)  
**Finances committed:** No  
**Partners attached:** No  
**Production Company:** DV8 Films

# The Struggle

Oliver Hermanus

As a young Cape Townian, the over arching intention of this film is to explore the limits and expectations the different areas of Cape Town place upon its inhabitants and how this dichotomy informs the current social structures that embody South Africa today. Amina is a strong willed, westernised woman who is seeks to fully explore the workings of her heart and her body, although there are pressures placed on her to conform to a rather patriarchal community. Raf is a middle aged white man who, at Amina's age, was equally pressured in the same ways she is now, together they transgressive the social order of the city. They seeks more from this world than is being offered to them - This is the struggle that I wish to expose.

## Synopsis

The Struggle tells the story of Amina, a 24 year old Muslim woman and her relationship with Raf, a 43 year old white man. Amina is from a staunch family and has embarked on a secret sexual coming of age that has led her to fall pregnant. The father, Raf, is a man who she met randomly online. Circumstances lead Amina to seek refuge in Raf's

apartment allowing a conflicted romance to take shape. However Raf's personal history and the the difficulties Amina endues in negotiating the two opposing worlds she finds herself juggling, eventually lead them both to self destruct. Set in Cape Town, a city with many, opposing, personalities The Struggle is the story of two people who find one another and battle to secure a time and place for their increasingly consuming bond to exist in peace.

**Producer Profile:**

**Filmography:**

*THE STRUGGLE* - in development (2011): Written by Oliver Hermanus  
*HOW TO STEAL TWO MILLION* - in post-production (2010): Directed by Charlie Vundla  
*STATE OF VIOLENCE* – in post production (2010): Directed by Khalo Matabane  
*SHIRLEY ADAMS* (2009): Directed by Oliver Hermanus  
*IZULU LAMI (MY SECRET SKY)* (2009): Directed by Madoda Ncayiyana  
*ZIMBABWE* (2008): Directed by Darrell Roodt  
*BUNNY CHOW* (2006): Directed by John Barker  
*THE FLYER* (2005): Director: Revel Fox  
*MAX AND MONA*: Directed by Teddy Mattera  
*FORGIVENESS* (2004): Directed by Ian Gabriel  
*WAH-WAH* (2005): Directed by Richard E Grant  
*BOESMAN AND LENA* (2000): Directed by American John Berry  
*JUMP THE GUN* (1996) for Channel Four (UK): Directed by Les Blair  
*THE QUARRY* (1997): Directed by Marion Hansel  
*SHOT DOWN* (1986): Directed by Andrew Worsdale  
*THE SHADOWED MIND* (1988): Directed by Cedric Sundstrom, for Cannon Films

**Director Profile:**

From July to September in 2007, Hermanus acted as a post-production assistant on the Warner Bros Pictures film 10000 BC produced by Mark Gordon and Micheal Wimer.

Hermanus wrote and directed Shirley Adams in 2007, a co-production between DV8 Films and Centropolis Entertainment. Produced by Jeremy Nathan and Michelle Wheatley. The film premiered at the Locarno International Film Festival, in competition. It has won numerous prizes including the Grand Prix at the Amiens International Film Festival and several South African film awards.

In October 2009, Hermanus was selected as a residence at the Cannes Film Festival's Cinefondation in Paris, where he has been preparing the script for my second feature film, titled The Struggle.

**Company Profile:**

Dv8's focus is on commercial, challenging stories that are innovative, unique and suitable to be financed and produced in South Africa.

Dv8 Films produces filmed content across the entire spectrum, including feature films, and documentaries, commercials and corporates. It produces for the cinema and television, mobile and Internet distribution platforms. Some of the recent work produced by Dv8 Films includes:

**Filmography:**

*Shirley Adams* by Oliver Hermanus  
*Izulu Lami/My Secret Sky* by Madoda Ncayiyana  
*Zimbabwe* by Darrell James Roodt  
*Bunny Chow* by John Barker  
*The Flyer* by Revel Fox  
*Max and Mona* by Teddy Mattera  
*Forgiveness* by Ian Gabriel  
*Portrait of a Young Man Drowning* by Teboho Mahlatsi  
*Husk* by Jeremy Handler  
*So Be It* by Joseph Gai Ramaka  
*The Foreigner* by Zola Maseko  
*New Voices* by New Visions

**Goal(s) at the Durban FilmMart:**

- Co-producers
- Sales agents
- Presales
- Fund
- Other



## South Africa



Jenna Cato Bass

**Producer:** Jenna Cato Bass  
**Director:** Jenna Cato Bass  
**Country:** South Africa  
**Present at Durban FilmMart:**  
 Jenna Cato Bass  
**Feature / documentary:**  
 Fiction Feature Film  
**Running time:** + 90 min  
**Language:**  
 English (Main) w. Afrikaans & Xhosa  
**Location:** Cape Town, South Africa  
**Total budget:** \$136,549.94  
 (R903,652.00)  
**Finances committed:** No  
**Partners attached:** No  
**Production company:** Fox Fire Films

# Tok Tokkie

Jenna Cato Bass

**“Tok Tokkie”:** The term inspires associations; a children’s game, something to grow out of and look down on. For me, it’s that unique mixture of fear and curiosity. It is the Cape Townian, if not the South African, experience. We run away from what we fear. But we still peak around the corner to see just what strange demons or angels may open the door.

For some time now I have been searching to do two things in film: The first is to capture the reality and eccentricity of Cape Town, my home town, and constant muse. I have been desperate to do this place justice, show it to the world in all its morphic glory. Ecompass its scope within the embrace of a story. Do this strange piece of land , with all its history, and its people, proud. Tok Tokkie provides this opportunity: in a single night we drive across the checkerboard of suburbs and locations, sampling the sights and sounds of its varied worlds. And of course the night is important, not only because of what it conceals, but because of what it reveals. This is a story about night time people, those on the margins, and those who slip through the cracks.

Secondly, I have been longing to experiment with ways of taking audience engagement, or involvement, to a new level. Whilst I cherish a deep respect for story, and the telling thereof, I’ve been convinced that there could be a way of putting the audience right inside the narrative, giving us a stake, a share, a torch to bare to light the way for the other characters. With Tok Tokkie, I believe I’ve found one way of doing this, what I believe to be a unique and vitally exciting way. Not only are we involved visually, though our point of view, but we’re literally a part of the story. Can we solve the mystery in time? Let the adventure begin...

### Synopsis

Set in Cape Town in the near future...Chi and Fridge are ghost welfare inspectors for the Black Cross: The only NGO looking out for the well being of ghost and spirits, refugees and criminals from the Spirit Dimension – a job made all the more difficult by the government’s refusal to accept that ghosts exist. Caring more about their next fix of ghost narcotics than the Dimensional Immigrants (DIs) in their care, Chi and Fridge drive around the city late into the night, answering distress calls from the city’s paranormal inhabitants. Traveling from shacklands to the Sheraton, they knock on all kinds of doors - earning themselves the mocking nickname “Tok Tokkie”. They are guardian angels of flesh and blood. They don’t have wings, they’re just doing their job. Together with Louis, a 100-year-old spirit doctor in the body of a 15-year-old boy, they fight a losing battle against the religious fanatic “Freak Police”, who are intent on capturing any wayward DIs and selling them into the ghost trade.

Careening around the Cape’s streets in a battered taxi, the best the under-funded Black Cross can afford, the team seems like a recipe for disaster: Chi is a half human with hang ups about her absent spirit father. Fridge, a recovering but constantly relapsing addict with a phobia of death. Louis, a chain smoking, foul-mouthed alcoholic with a deep disdain for humanity. But they will be in the wrong

place at the wrong time. That is all it will take to throw them in deeper than they have ever been before.

Because tonight is different, and it all begins with “us”. The story unfolds entirely from the point of view of a ghost, lost on our way to “The Other Side”. Weak and helpless, we watch as Fridge, Chi and Louis stumble across a conspiracy stretching across the city: Someone has discovered a way to kill ghosts, and with each murder is ripping into the Spirit Dimension, creating black holes that are fatal to humans. As the holes expand, devouring everything in their path, the Black Cross team have to unravel who, what, where and why, travel into an along the city’s underbelly to an underworld of ghost trafficking and human frailties, dodge the Freak police, and stop the murderer before the city, and then the world, disappears forever.

#### Producer and Director Profile:

Though first and foremost a director, Jenna Bass has accumulated experience in production, from facilitating organic, low-budget short films and music videos, to structured, high-concept larger shoots, proving herself able in squeezing high production value out of small budgets.

She is a graduate (2007) of AFDA film school, Cape Town and at 23 years old she has worked as a music video director, cinematographer, writer, band photographer and magician.

Her work has run the spectrum of documentary, sci-fi (So Long to the City), experimental (Jellyfish), teenage coming of age (Already Gone) and historical drama (The Tunnel).

Jenna's script 5.6 Seconds of White Noise, co-written by acclaimed artist Nikhil Singh, is currently in development with Daniel Siegler of Now and Partners to produce. Concurrently, she is developing her own script, Tok Tokkie, to be produced on a low budget with a micro crew, which pays homage to Jenna's home-town of Cape Town and follows a team of ghost welfare inspectors.

Jenna's singular ambition is to create African feature films that can explode with an impact that not only shakes her own country, but the world at large.

#### Company Profile:

Fox Fire Films is a new film production company based in Cape Town, focusing on the creation of African content for cinema and other media platforms. Founded in 2009 by Director/Producer Jenna Bass to facilitate production on her Focus Features Africa First Program selected short, The Tunnel, Fox Fire Films has grown into a content generator in its own right, going on to produce local music videos and documentaries and facilitate South African productions with other filmmakers.

FFF specializes in creating original, truly African stories and seeing them through to an exceptional delivery. Though our experience covers many fields in media, our focus is on cinema and contributing to the continuing growth of the South African, and continental industry, while breaking artistic ground on an international level. To this end we pride ourselves in building networks with talented local and international filmmakers who share this vision.

FFF also prides itself on involving young filmmakers in various aspects of production at junior levels, providing a platform to gain practical experience both on and off set.

The Tunnel had its World Premiere as part of the official selection at Sundance 2010, and subsequently screened in competition at the Berlinale 2010. It will continue to screen at prestigious festivals around the world throughout this year, covering territories as diverse as India to Russia.

#### Goal(s) at the Durban FilmMart:

- Sales agents
- Presales
- Fund
- Other



## Zambia



Tahir Aliyev



Jessie Chisi

**Producer:** Tahir Aliyev  
**Director:** Jessie Chisi  
 Salla Sorri  
**Country:** Zambia  
**Present at Durban FilmMart:**  
 Jessie Chisi  
**Feature / documentary:**  
 Documentary  
**Running time:** 72 min  
**Language:**  
 Nyanja, Bemba and English  
**Location:** Lusaka and London  
**Total budget:** \$ 419,100.00  
**Finances committed:** No  
**Partners attached:** No  
**Production company:** Helmi Films  
 Ltd (Finland)

# Woman on Hold

Jessie Chisi

### Synopsis

Woman on Hold is a film following a young woman who has reached a crossroad in her life - She is faced with the dilemma of combining her love, her career amidst the pressures of Zambian society, caught between ancient traditions and modernity.

Ester is an attractive single mother who escaped poverty to become a World Champion boxer, thus bringing fame and fortune to her life. Sandie, her childhood sweetheart, has proposed marriage but her coach Mwamba thinks that this will harm her career. Ester has been thrust with a dream of life time that can bring unparalleled success and rewards. Armed with medical research, Mwamba argues that men and sex can drain a woman's strength and take the fight out of her. Can Ester serve two masters?

Faced with these pressures, Ester has to make a decision. To further complicate her life, Ester has been selected for the 2012 Olympic Games. She will be the first African female boxer to be included in this prestigious event. Being a famous athlete and a symbol of female empowerment, in Zambia, Ester's issue raises heated debate amongst boxing fans. Most of them agree that Ester should marry whomever she wants at whatever time she wants. Just two weeks away from her wedding Ester decides to put her marriage plans on hold with Sandie, who promises to wait for her. But while on a European tour, Sandie cheats on her, leaving Ester deeply hurt and betrayed. Sandie, together with his family, begs Ester for forgiveness but she is too angry to grant it. Instead she gives back his dowry and cancels the wedding and concentrates on her career. (This scene begins the film.)

Ester is left reeling by Sandie's betrayal but still finds comfort from her boxing. Though a successful woman with everything she materially wants, she can't find emotional satisfaction. But Ester has a secret: she is seriously considering quitting boxing. Could this be from the emotional stress and pressure around her, considering that she loves her career so much that she won't trade it for anything. No one knows this, neither her manager nor her close family. What Ester desires most of all now, is to have both a career and white wedding but with whom? Do the men love her or her wealth? Will she ever give Sandie a second chance to prove himself? Will she be a boxer in white wedding dress?

As the story twists and turns, we follow Ester as she struggles to resolve her dilemma. How can she focus on her career but still fulfill her original place in society as a woman? We will follow several people all of whom are closely linked to Ester's story. This includes her mother, who fears for Ester's life and believes a woman's rightful place is to be a housewife and her coach who believes boxing has a short life span and Ester needs to do it while she can. Perhaps at this stage the answers to many of our questions will be answered through the following up of different characters. We'll know if Ester will find true love and have the marriage she desires. This will probably also mean a lot for many other people and Ester's family. This will be a fight for honor, respect and freedom.

As I am Ester's cousin, she confides in me. As a human rights activist, her dilemma strikes a strong chord in me about the trials and tribulations of growing up in an African society where a woman is not accorded a chance to speak on any matters outside the kitchen. Through the eyes of Ester Phiri and with my voice, the film will study the strength of a woman and her limitations in society. By telling this story, I can address issues that affect human rights and can change society. I believe Women should tell their own stories in order to break their own barriers and boundaries.

The film will be cinematic and will employ dynamic cinematography and naturalistic camera movement mostly centralizing on Ester's journey. The approximated length of this film is 62 minutes and it is located in Zambia and UK.



**Producer Profile:**

The executive producer and founder of Helmi Films is Tahir Aliyev, a young film maker who graduated from Baku State University in 2004 (Master's degree in History of International Relations) and Taffakur University (Bachelor's degree in Law). After moving to Finland in 2004, Aliyev later studied in the University of Applied Sciences Metropolia in Helsinki and graduated with the diploma of TV- and Film-producing in 2008.

Already during his studies in Azerbaijan Aliyev started to work as a producer of festivals organized by the Finnish-Azeri NGO "The cultural bridge of Finland and Azerbaijan". In 2002 Aliyev produced the film and dance festival "The land of dancing fire" in Helsinki and in 2003 the Frozen Film Festival. During 2002 Aliyev also got in connection with the documentary film field by working as the local production manager in the documentary film "Three rooms of Melancholia" directed by Pirjo Honkasalo. The film later gained wide international attention and received several documentary film awards.

The fascinating experiences in working in the film "Three rooms of Melancholia" opened up a new world for Aliyev, and he was convinced that film producing was going to be his future professional field. After moving to Finland in 2004 Aliyev worked in the Finnish national broadcasting company (YLE) as director and producer of short documentaries focusing especially on multicultural issues and the Finnish society. Aliyev also worked as the director's assistant in the 12 episode drama series "Poikkeustila (YLE, 2006) and as a journalist in the 11 episode current affairs program "Pykälää ja purtavaa" (YLE, 2006).

In 2007 Aliyev opened his own TV- and film production company "Helmi Films". In the beginning Helmi Films operated broadly in the new media field by making advertisements and providing creative solutions in Internet for private companies. During last two years Helmi Films produced 15 films, mostly creative documentaries, from which a major part was broadcasted by YLE.

Aliyev is currently producing 2 TV-documentaries for YLE TV1 and future length fiction film. Besides producing documentary and fiction films Aliyev is currently also teaching audiovisual media courses for young media students.

**Director Profile:**

Jessie Chisi is a dynamic Zambian up coming film-maker who started out by studying Purchasing and Supply, Research Methodology at the university of Zambia's Ridge way campus from 2003 to 2005.

Having had the background of story telling, she has always been fascinated by the world of motion pictures and how the character

on screen seemed so real. She then decided to switch careers in 2006 she started by reading on films and working on film sets as a volunteer continuity girl, screen writer and production. In addition, as a festival co-ordinator and administration at Zambia's first film festival. To enhance her skill, she started attending film workshops organised by American, South African and Paris film makers on producing, writing and directing films. She decided to study Video and TV Production and journalism at Zambia institute of mass Communication (Zamcom ) where she studied directing and screen writing professionally.

Jessie directed her first feature, documentary drama *Chisoni* and her short film *Broken Apart*, the best screen play at the 2006 Zambia film festival short film Competition. She has directed and script written documentary and fiction film for various organizations and individuals. Jessie is working on a soap as part time director and does her freelance directing with her own production Company Outline Pictures producing documentaries and musical videos.

**Company Profile:**

Helmi Films Ltd. is an independent television and film production company founded in 2007 by Tahir Aliyev. We also specialize in new media field by making advertisements and providing creative solutions in Internet for private companies.

**At a glance:**

Headquarters: Helsinki, Finland  
Founded: 2007  
Employees: 10  
Major TV and Film Productions: Maria Friman Show, Family Angel, Memories from Baku

**Overview:**

TV- and film production company "Helmi Films Ltd." was established by producer Tahir Aliyev in year 2007. During last 3 years Helmi Films produced 15 films, mostly creative documentaries, from which a major part was broadcasted by Finnish National TV YLE TV 1.

**More than TV and Movies:**

Helmi Films does more than make TV shows and films. Our IT division is creating web page and new media solutions. Our Casting Division is in constant search of talented actors. Our producers are working in wide range of social projects.

**Goal(s) at the Durban FilmMart:**

- Presales
- Fund
- Other

## Credits and Acknowledgements

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## Partners

