

Afda nabs 9 nominations @ the 8th Annual Simon 'Mabhunu' Sabela Awards 2020

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Afda student films have an extraordinary record at the Simon Sabela Awards.



Afda staff and students are brimming with pride after receiving nine nominations at the eighth annual Simon 'Mabhunu' Sabela KZN Film and Television Awards, which are set to take place virtually this year on 12 September 2020. The prestigious awards are aimed at recognising outstanding achievement and talent in the film and television industry, with a particular focus within the KwaZulu-Natal province.

Three Afda Durban 2019 honours graduation films, *Mzansi in Orania*, directed by Sibongiseni Pearl Peter; *Thulile*, directed by Andre Cronje; and *Little Bump in the Road*, directed by Thabani Dhlomo have been nominated in six categories of these awards.

"It's such a joy to see these films recognised as I know how much hard work went into the creation of these films, as I was the head of postgraduate studies in 2019," says Afda Durban Dean Dr Janet van Eeden. "It's strange to wear two hats on this occasion. Not only am I the overall chairperson of the Simon Sabela Awards this year, but I'm also the Afda Durban Dean. I must stress, however, that as the overall chairperson I don't vote at all but merely curate the votes of the three judging panels. I cannot wait for the announcement of the winners, and yes, of course, they are all winners in my eyes."

Afda student films have an extraordinary record at the Simon Sabela Awards, having won the Best Student Film award for the last six years in a row. What is also remarkable is to see our students and their films nominated in the same categories as professional seasoned filmmakers.

Our Live Performance School graduates are reaping the benefits from the screen acting methodology course introduced at Afda four years ago, with three nominations in the acting categories this year. The goal of the methodology is creating star performers who deliver an unforgettable, appealing performance. Stars who hold an audience by modulating complex emotional behaviour of a character when put under extreme pressure and who discover novel emotional behaviour through what the character needs. Last year saw Sibongiseni Shezi of *Uzalo* fame win the Best Actress in a Feature Film for her stand out performance in the Afda Durban 2018 experimental film *Run*

The Simon Sabela Awards, named in honour of the late South African Film legend and icon Mr Simon 'Mabhunu' Sabela,

are an initiative of the KZN Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs and are implemented by the KZN Film Commission.



2020 Simon 'Mabhunu' Sabela KZN Film and Television nominees announced

24 Aug 2020



The chief executive officer of the KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission, Carol Coetzee, said: "KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission remains committed to creating an enabling environment that will ensure growth and transformation in the local film industry. We take this opportunity to congratulate all those who have been nominated in the various categories and wish them the best of luck."

Congratulations to all the Afda nominees and good luck!

Best Newcomer Actress

Nomakhwezi Becker - *Mzansi in Orania*

Best Newcomer Actor

Tristan Robertsons - *Mzansi in Orania*

Best Supporting Actor

Tevin Kunene - *Thulile*

Brendan Cooper - *Mzansi in Orania*

Best Short Screenplay

Thulile - Megan Van Der Merwe

Best Use of KZN in a Film

Thulile - Andre Cronje

Best Student Film

Mzansi in Orania - Sibongiseni Pearl Peter

Little Bump in the Road - Thabani Dhlomo

Thulile - Andre Cronje

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