

# In conversation with Solomon Cupido, co-star of *Frankie en Felipé*

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*Frankie en Felipé* follows the story of two brothers whose lives took completely different paths when they were separated as children. When they are reunited just before Frankie's wedding, their pasts catch up with them both as they negotiate the tangled mess that their current lives have become.



This local film is directed by Marvin-Lee Beukes with cinematography by Nick Burton Moore, and this romantic comedy was produced by and stars the late Bradley Olivier as Frankie and Solomon Cupido as Felipé, with Kim Syster as Frankie's fiancée and includes Kim Fortuin, and Bianca Flanders, Ilse Klink, Zane Meas, Shimmy Isaacs, Danny Ross, Bouwer Bosch, Lee-Ann van Rooi, Brendon Daniels and Terence Bridgett.

It has been a bittersweet celebration as lead actor Bradley Olivier, who shares the producer and screenwriter credits with co-star Solomon Cupido, passed away before the film eventually hit screens.

Solomon Cupido, who takes on the role of Felipé, takes us behind the scenes of this locally produced film and the challenges in the local industry...



Solomon Cupido, who takes on the role of Felipé in *Frankie en Felipé*. Images supplied

🍷 ***Tell us how the idea of Frankie en Felipé came about?***

Myself and Bradley Olivier were sitting in the kitchen one day, down and out with no work and also no milk for our coffee, and we decided to create work - we did not want to be in that position again. We felt that we were fathers, we had families to take care of, and the situation we were in was not the best of situations when you have a family to provide for.

We decided that we wanted to create a film and write our own movie - we said to each other that tomorrow this time, both of us must have three movie concepts, and out of those six ideas, came *Frankie en Felipé*...

🍷 ***It's been four years in the making, how was the journey?***

Amazing! I have been so blessed for the last four years. Bradley and I have known each other for 24 years, and the last four years were the best four years of our relationship.

We learned so much about writing, about producing, and how the whole process of creating a film works. To produce a film is not easy, and to write a film is also not easy - me and Bradley had to connect on different levels and it led us on a beautiful journey.

I am super grateful that we had all the years together - but specifically the last four years while working on this project together as best friends and business partners.

### ▣ ***What were some of the challenges involved in putting this project together?***

Firstly, this was our first movie as producers and we had so much to learn. It's not as easy as you see on TV - it was a challenge for both of us.

The second challenge was script-writing; both of us are theatre-trained and to write a movie script is a different ballgame. We were fortunate enough to get Brett Michael Innes involved, and he helped and guided us with the writing process.

Danie Bester and Dries Scholtz from The Film Factory mentored us in producing, and we could not have done it without their help.

So the process was a challenge for both of us, but a beautiful challenge which made us and our friendship stronger.



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### ▣ ***Are there specific challenges in the film industry?***

Quite a lot. In the film industry, it is a challenge to write a good script, and also a challenge to get proper funding. It is also a challenge to book a great cast and crew because of people not always being available for the time period you require them.

*Frankie en Felipé* was shot in Cape Town, which is more expensive because you have to get your whole team to a location, etc. So local filmmakers do face a lot of challenges when creating a film.



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■ ***How do you perceive current trends in the film industry, especially with the rise of streaming platforms and changing viewer habits?***

Streaming platforms are not making it easy for films specifically created for cinema, but it does have positive and negative elements.

On the positive side, streaming platforms create more work for actors and crew. If you are making movies for the big screen it has a negative effect because people don't want to go out to the cinema anymore - they are so used to the comfort of their own home, watching a movie on a streaming platform with various options to choose from. So it makes it very difficult for local filmmakers to create a film specifically for the big screen.

■ ***What impact do you think these trends will have on future filmmaking?***

I think pretty soon cinemas will unfortunately die out, like Mr Video and DVD stores in the past, because people now have access to so many platforms and the latest movies at home.

■ ***Frankie en Felipé was written and produced by you and Bradley Olivier, but sadly he passed away. What impact did this have?***

Death always has a profound effect on anyone and everyone involved. We were in post-production when Bradley passed away and it was extremely sad for all of us, but we had to finish the film and finish what we started in honour of his legacy and as a tribute to him. And I think we made him proud.

■ ***What can viewers expect from Frankie en Felipé?***

An hour and a half of fun. It is a romantic comedy, it is a buddy comedy, it is a fun movie. Viewers can expect to experience a rollercoaster of emotions from laughter to sadness with beautiful moments in between. They will be moved by what they see on the screen.

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