

Lights, camera, fashion!



By [Ruth Cooper](#)

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The Mercedes-Benz Bokeh South African International Fashion Film Festival and conference is back after a successful debut last year. Now hosted at the prestigious 15 On Orange in Cape Town from the 26 to 28 March, it promises to be a weekend of fashionable film fabulosity. I chatted to founder Adrian Lazarus about what attendees can expect this year.



Why the decision to bring the International Film Festival to SA?

We are a world-class destination for the fashion and film industries - I was a winner in Los Angeles in 2013 and experienced my first fashion film festival and thought that the overall experience would be of great benefit to fellow South Africans. Having had event experience as well, I mustered a team of experts together who have helped me realise that dream and now I believe that, together with Mercedes-Benz, we offer the most entertaining Fashion Film Festival in the world!

How will this year's event differ from last year's?

The quality of submissions is much higher than in 2014 and we know that, together with the exciting designers from the Cape Town Fashion Council, and an array of entertainment, as well as world-class speakers and international directors and guests - 2015 will eclipse last year's event.

What can attendees expect at this year's conference?

The festival is being held at the stylish African Pride 15 on Orange Hotel and the speakers include experts from Adobe in the UK, who will give master classes on editing software and multicam shoots. Amazing Spaces will present the most beautiful locations in the Cape to shoot. The Cape Town Fashion Council will host top local and international designer pop-up retail stores, Fashion Show Installations and a round-table discussion with industry leaders. Mercedes-Benz will showcase the most beautiful cars. Mac and Ghd will offer free hair and makeovers all day. We have an 18-piece Swing Orchestra and the world's best fashion films, all on large UHD Hisense screens.

Can you share some of the films that will be screened?

We have The Legend of Shalimar by internationally acclaimed filmmaker and photographer Bruno Aveillan, as well as Kiss of a Siren by Viktorija Pashuto and Miguel Gauthier from Los Angeles, to name but two. We will feature well over 50 officially selected films from the almost 450 entries this year.

[GUERLAIN - THE LEGEND OF SHALIMAR](#) from [Digital District™ VFX Post-Pro](#) on [Vimeo](#).

■ ***How are the films judged?***

We have a panel of international and local judges that includes directors, fashion editors, photographers, and industry experts.

■ ***What is your hope that events like this will achieve in the fashion and film industries?***

I get such a thrill from seeing the joy and inspiration that guests derive from seeing these short films and being exposed to the guest speakers and fashion shows. I hope that our platform creates opportunity for the artists and creatives, and that in some small way that transforms into growth.

■ ***What's your background? How did you get into fashion and film?***

I was a fashion shoot producer for about 10 years before I started shooting video. I have been shooting fashion video for at least 12 years and have been fortunate to shoot all around the world.

■ ***What was it like winning awards at both the La Jolla and Miami Fashion Film Festivals?***

Well, winning in La Jolla was the most exciting thing ever to happen to me (almost as exciting as seeing my daughter Sienna being born!) and in so doing when I returned to Cape Town I was amazed at how many doors seem to open for me and how that award gave my filming career a most welcome boost. It's really satisfying and rewarding being recognised by your peers, and connecting to industry experts at these festivals.

[Steam 1886 Fashion Film](#) from [Adrian Lazarus](#) on [Vimeo](#).

■ ***How would you describe your personal style?***

I am not sure I have a personal style yet. The Gemini in me is always wanting the new and exciting, yet I am really sensitive and romantic as well, and I appreciate quality and bespoke pieces. I love flashy bright socks!

■ ***What's next for the Film Festival? How do you see this developing over the years?***

Through our partnership with Mercedes-Benz and the Cape Town Fashion Council, it is our aim to develop the festival to be a major tourist attraction for South Africa, and to elevate our filmmakers and designers to an international standard, attracting the world's best to our shores. The festival will expand in the coming years to many more days, with more entertainment and lifestyle events planned. Stay tuned.

The 2015 edition of the Mercedes-Benz Bokeh South African International Fashion Film Festival is to be held from 26 to 28 March at the African Pride - 15 on Orange Hotel, Cape Town. Go to www.bokehfestival.co.za to register to attend the day conferences presented by industry experts that will provide inspiration and insight into the fashion film industry.

ABOUT RUTH COOPER

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