

New manager announced for Durban International Film Festival

Plans are well underway for the 34th Durban International Film Festival (DIFF), South Africa's largest and longest running film festival hosted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Centre for Creative Arts (CCA), reports Kishore Gobardan director of professional services in the College of Humanities at UKZN in which the CCA is housed.



The CCA is currently a special project of the newly appointed deputy vice-chancellor, Professor Cheryl Potgieter, in the College of Humanities.

"We are pleased to announce the appointment of well-known film critic and arts journalist, Peter Machen, as the DIFF manager," said Gobardan.

"Peter has been working with the Durban International Film Festival for the last seven years as a programme advisor. He comes to the festival with a wealth of institutional knowledge, which provides much-needed continuity. Along with a solid knowledge of the programming requirements, Peter has also been responsible for writing synopses in the festival publications and editing and designing the festivals' Reel Times daily newsletters. He has appeared on various DIFF panels, as well as introduced directors and facilitated Q&A sessions during festivals. So we are pleased to welcome him on board the team and look forward to the significant value he will add to the mix."

Machen, who has a BA Honours degree in economics from UKZN, is one of South Africa's leading arts writers and communication consultants. A talented publication designer, he has produced a range of publications and is author and designer of two coffee-table books Durban - A Paradise and its People and Durban - A Return to Paradise. He is currently the Sunday Tribune's resident film columnist.

Off to the Cannes Film Festival

Earlier this year Machen attend the Rotterdam and Berlin Film Festivals as part of his research as a programme advisor for DIFF, and is excited about the challenges that lie ahead. "It is quite a daunting task to step into someone else's programming shoes," he said, "but because I have been so intimately involved in the festival for some time now, I know my way around and look forward to creating a programme that will be interesting and varied for our audiences." To that end, he will be heading off to the Cannes Film Festival next month to seek out additional cinematic treasures for the DIFF 2013 programme.

"The assistant film festival manager position will be announced within the next few weeks, and the CCA director's post has been advertised and should be filled soon."

It's business as usual for the Durban FilmMart, the co-production project of the Durban Film Office and DIFF, according to Toni Monty of the Durban Film Office. "We have had a great response to the call out for projects for this year's Durban FilmMart. Submissions are now with adjudicators and we await their selection. We are proceeding with the plans to present a strong fourth market and we are pleased to receive continued support from our partners and supporters, Rotterdam Film Festival's CineMart, IDFA, Arte France, Hot Docs and EAVE, as well as the inclusion of other awards from new strategic partners, Paris Project, the co-production and development platform of the Paris Cinema International Film Festival, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and No Borders, a co-productionmarket of the Independent Filmmakers Project In the USA."

The 34th Durban International Film Festival will take place from 18 to 28 July 2013. The full programme will be on www.durbanfilmfestival.co.za five weeks before the festival begins.

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