SA film wins Genesis Award

SA film, *Stroop - journey into the rhino horn war*, has won the prestigious Genesis Award in the 'Outstanding Brigitte Bardot International Documentary Feature Film' category. The Genesis Awards recognise excellent work in media with a special focus on outstanding reporting of animal protection issues.

The winners, in only 15 categories, included Stephen Spielberg's *Jurassic World* , for tack-ling wildlife trafficking, Natalie Portman's vegan film *Eating Animals, Ellen DeGeneres*, for her talk show that continually highlights gorilla protection issues, as well as iconic American institu-tions like the *New York Times*, *60 Minutes* and *Sesame Street*.

Says filmmaker and *Stroop* presenter, Bonné de Bod: "We are so thrilled! It's wonderful that this independent, crowd-funded film on the heroes trying to tackle our rhino poaching crisis is being honoured in such a huge way, and just shows me once again, that the world views this as vitally important. This massive recognition of *Stroop* just keeps shining a global light on South Africa's effort to save our rhinos and that it can't be ignored."

Susan Scott and Bonn de Bod. Image supplied.

The acclaimed wildlife crime film garnered further kudos from Genesis Awards Senior Director, Beverly Kaskey, who said: "Please know that we are so grateful that *Stroop* chose to address the important issue of rhino horn poaching in such an exemplary way, with its sweeping examination of the complex web of rhino slaughter.

Driving real change for animals

Never shying away from the grim realities, the film reminds us of the beauty of these beleaguered animals who share close mother and baby bonds, and why we must stand up to the corruptive forces that allow this rhino genocide to continue. This richly informative work will be listed among the stellar works from the past year that brought critical animal protection issues to the public."

Kitty Block, president and CEO of The Humane Society who presented the Genesis Awards, added: "We applaud their contributions to raising awareness, for celebrating the human-animal bond and for driving real change for animals."

This US recognition follows the film's first South African recognition - the 'Audience Award for Best South African Film' at the Encounters South African International Documentary Festival which was held in Cape Town recently. This award is the top nod at Africa's most prestigious documentary film festival.

Honoured to have been selected

Stroop director Susan Scott was visibly moved by this, the film's 20th award to date. "I've been coming to Encounters since the early 2000s and I've seen jaw-dropping and deeply inspiring films, so it's a real honour to just be selected, never mind win the audience award."

This is really special," adds de Bod, "because it's the audience who vote for the best film of the festival and you can't get a better critique of your film than that."

Due to the popularity of the film and the recent Encounters win, *Stroop* will be returning to the big screen for a limited re-release at Johannesburg's independent theatre, The Bioscope.

Special screenings

This will be the first time the film will screen at this iconic venue as it has already been shown at Nu Metro cinemas around the country, Ster-Kinekor's Cinema Nouveau and at Cape Town's Labia Theatre. The Bioscope will run *Stroop* for a full week, as a Special Screening of the Encounters Audience Award Winner, with a filmmaker Q&A on the opening night, Friday, July 26.

SA's *Stroop* triumphs at International Wildlife Film Festival
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Since its world premiere at the San Francisco Green Film Festival in September last year, *Stroop* has been officially selected for 28 film festivals and has won 20 awards. The film has been picked up by the London-based Journeyman Pictures for international distribution and Scott and de Bod are in talks with local broadcasters and hope to announce soon a South African television transmission date.

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