

# 11 African highlights to stream on Showmax - from *Chasing the Sun* to *Die Verhaal Van Racheltjie de Beer*, *Unmarried* to *Legacy*

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*Chasing the Sun. Die Verhaal Van Racheltjie de Beer. Unmarried. Legacy. A New Country. Famalam. Enslaved.*

## CHASING THE SUN | Docuseries

Two years before captain Siya Kolisi raised the Webb Ellis Cup at the 2019 Rugby World Cup final in Tokyo, South Africa lost 57-0 to New Zealand – the heaviest defeat in their history.

*Chasing the Sun* is the five-part docu-series of how Kolisi, coach Rassie Erasmus, and the rest of the Bokke recovered from that humiliation, transforming a team and inspiring a nation as they pulled off one of the greatest sporting comebacks of all time.

SuperSport was granted unprecedented access to the Springboks both in the build-up to and during the tournament, which helped produce incredible behind-the-scenes footage that goes to the heart of what it took to defy the odds and reclaim World Cup glory.

*The Citizen* hailed *Chasing the Sun* as a “ground-breaking doccie series” with “the sweetest of endings,” while *Channel24* called it “raw, human and incredibly emotional.”

## DIE VERHAAL VAN RACHETLJIE DE BEER | Movie

South Africa's wilderness in the 1800s: Five years after their mother died, Racheltjie and five-year-old Jamie find themselves on their way to the gold fields with their father, Herman, to start a new life. But winter is closing in fast, and when Jamie goes missing in a freak snowstorm, Rachel must brave the deadly cold to search for her little brother...

The beloved heroine of this Afrikaans folktale is brought to life by Zonika de Vries (*Dis Koue Kos, Skat*), who won the Young Actress award for the role at the 2019 Silwerskerm Festival. The film also took Best Actor (Stian Bam from *Modder en Bloed*), Production Design and Visual Effects at Silwerskermfees, the Kidseye award at this year's Rhode Island Film Festival, and three Golden Horns – for Cinematography, Sound Design, and Original Score – at the 2020 SAFTAs.

The stellar cast includes SAFTA Lifetime Achievement Award winner Marius Weyers, Naledi Lifetime Achievement Award winner Sandra Prinsloo, and SAFTA winners Antoinette Louw (*An Act of Defiance*, *Goodbye Bafana*) and Seputla Sebogodi (*Generations*, *The Republic*), with newcomer Johannes Jordaan as Jamie. The movie is directed by Matthys Boshoff (*Vlees van My Vlees*, Huggies' award-winning *Baby Marathon* campaign), who co-wrote the script with Brett Michael Innes (*Fiela se Kind, Sink*).

*Die Verhaal van Racheltjie de Beer* was the ninth biggest local movie at the SA box office last year. As *Channel24*'s Leandra Engelbracht says, "*The Story of Racheltjie De Beer* breathes life into the fabled tale; it is a definite must-watch. Be sure to take some tissues with you."

## UNMARRIED | Drama series

Following the success of its first season and last year's subsequent spinoff in Nigeria, this hugely popular drama series is back with a brand-new 16-episode season. *Unmarried* follows the lives of three young female friends living in Jozi, as they deal with the pressures of juggling marriage, motherhood, relationships, and their careers from the township to the suburbs,

to the high-end apartment lifestyle of the “super blessed”.

The series stars SAFTA winner Renate Stuurman (*The River, Happiness Is a Four-Letter Word*) as corporate high-flyer, Brenda; Lunathi Mampofu (*The Queen, The River*) as newcomer Claudia; and SAFTA and DSTV Mzansi Viewers' Choice Award winner Thembi Mkhomo (*Baby Mamas, Our Perfect Wedding*) as the shining star of the trio, Thembi.

New episodes land on Showmax every Monday at 8pm, at the same time as the Mzansi Magic broadcast.

## LEGACY | Telenovela

Set in the cut-throat world of investment billionaires, *Legacy* follows Sebastian Price, the patriarch of a super-wealthy family, who's fast approaching retirement... leaving the keys to the kingdom up for grabs.

The M-Net telenovela boasts a formidable cast including SAFTA winners Kgomotso Christopher (*Isidingo, Scandal*), Deon Lotz (*Skoonheid, Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom*), Siyabonga Thwala (*Isibaya, The Republic*), Mary-anne Barlow (*The River*), and Leeanda Reddy (*Isidingo*), as well as the iconic Michelle Botes (*Isidingo, Binnelanders*), SAFTA nominees Don Mlangeni Nawa (*Isidingo*) and Dawid Minnaar (*Poppie Nongena, Die Wonderwerker*), and rising stars Reandi Grey (*7de Laan*), Jay Anstey (*Isidingo*), Trix Vivier (*Trackers*), Anton David Jetha (*Strike Back, Homeland, Suidooster*), and Sean-Marco Vorster (*Alles Malan*).

*Legacy* is the brainchild of SAFTA winners Phathu Makwarela and Gwydion Beynon, who created the International Emmy-nominated telenovela *The River*; *The Republic*, named Best Drama at the 2020 SAFTAs; and *Gomora*, recently named Most Popular Soapie at the 2020 Royalty Soapie Awards. SAFTA winners Johnny Barbuzano (*The River, The Republic, Still Breathing*), Catharine Cooke (*The River, The Girl from St. Agnes*) and Krijay Govender (*The Wild, Ga Re Dumele*) are directing.

“ First look teaser for ‘A NewCountry’ documentary. Produced and directed by Sifiso Khanyile. A Newcountry will have its SA premiere at [@EncountersDoc](#) 2020. Ticket are free but limited. Check their website for details. [pic.twitter.com/4x6Tje8ljf](https://pic.twitter.com/4x6Tje8ljf)— Sifiso Khanyile (@sifisok1) [August 24, 2020](#) ”

## A NEW COUNTRY | Documentary

How did we get from the euphoria of 1994 to the fractured South Africa of today?

Through forthright interviews with informal workers, politicians, academics, and artists, director Sifiso Khanyile (*Uprize*) traces our journey as a country over the past three decades, and looks at the state of the Rainbow Nation today.

*A New Country* earned a Special Mention at this year's Jozi Film Festival, where Khanyile won Best Director.

Encounters called the documentary "heartbreakingly insightful," adding that it shows "a contemporary society that is increasingly fractured and in which the culture of resistance and protest is as strong and vital as it was during the height of legislated apartheid."

## **GOMORA** | Telenovela

*Gomora* recently won the public vote as Most Popular Soapie of the Year at the 2020 Royalty Soapie Awards, also taking home jury prizes for Outstanding Directing Team, Supporting Actress (Sannah Mchunu as Zodwa) and Newcomer (Sicelo Buthelezi as Teddy).

The twisty Mzansi Magic telenovela stars SAFTA winner Katlego Danke (*Isidingo, Generations*) as Thathi, a spoiled trophy wife whose posh Sandton life is stripped away in an instant. With no money and no job, Thathi is forced to pull her teenage kids out of their private schools and enrol them in a public school in Alexandra. They also have to move back in with her mother, Mam'Sonto (SAFTA winner Connie Chiume from *Black Panther*), a woman whose strict standards and grandmotherly care for her family mask her true nature as the queen of crime in Alexandra.

The all-star cast also includes SAFTA winners Themba Ndaba (*The Queen, Hopeville*) and Zolisa Xaluva (*Blood Psalms, Sew The Winter To My Skin*), as well as *Blood & Water* star Ama Qamata and Thembi Seete of *Boom Shaka* and *Zone 14* fame, alongside fresh faces like Buthelezi, Ntobeko Sishi and Siphesihle Ndaba. *Gomora* was created by executive producer Kutlwano Ditsele (*The Herd*) with Gwydion Beynon and Phathutshedzo Makwarela of Tshedza Pictures, who brought us the two most-awarded shows at the 2020 SAFTAs: Best Drama winner *The Republic* and Best Telenovela winner *The River*, which was also up for an International Emmy last year. Amanda Lane (*Is'thunzi*) is co-creator.

Other Royalty Soapie Award winners on Showmax include:

- *Binnelanders* (Outstanding Soapie)
- *The River* (Outstanding Couple for Sindi Dlathu & Hlomla Dandala as Lindiwe & Zweli; Outstanding Actor for Presley Chweneyagae as Cobra; and Outstanding Villain for Sindi Dlathu as Lindiwe, as well as Make-up and Hair)
- *The Queen* (Lighting, Wardrobe, and Supporting Actor for Sthembiso Khoza as Shaka Khoza)
- *Getroud Met Rugby* (Art Direction, Social Cohesion)

## BACK OF THE MOON | Movie

*Back of the Moon* recently won Best International Narrative Feature at the Montreal International Black Film Festival, after being named Best South African Feature Film at Durban International Film Festival and Best Costume Design at the 2020 South African Film and Television Award (SAFTAs).

Sophiatown 1958: On the eve of the forced removals, gang leader Badman (SAFTA nominee Richard Lukunku from *Happiness Is a Four-Letter Word*) meets the gorgeous Eve Msomi (Moneoa Moshesh from *Rhythm City*), a torch-singer on the brink of an international career, and finds that fighting to the death becomes a whole lot harder when you have something to live for.

*Back of the Moon* is directed and co-written by Oscar nominee Angus Gibson (*Mandela, 28UP South Africa*), who also recently took home a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Royalty Soapie Awards. The film is produced by The Bomb Shelter (*Yizo Yizo*), and exec produced by William Kentridge and Anant Singh.

“I am really happy that this subtitled film about an obscure moment in South African history found a responsive audience on this North American platform,” says Angus.

SAFTA winners S’dumo Mtshali (*Is’thunzi, IsiBaya, iNumber Number*), Thomas Gumede (*Single Guys, Bay of Plenty*), and Siyabonga Thwala (*Legacy, The Republic*) co-star.

## PARABLE | Movie

*Parable* recently won Best Film at NOLA Horror Film Festival in New Orleans, named one of the world's top 50 genre film festivals by MovieMaker Magazine.

Showmax favourite Jane De Wet (*The Girl From St Agnes*, *Rage*) plays Esther, a teenage girl forced into gay conversion therapy. When a famous lay preacher, Reverend Randal Day, accidentally conjures a demonic spirit while trying to 'cure' her, he tries to hide his mistake in a church house deep within a security complex. The gated community is home to Kasper, a slacker with a recently tarnished reputation, who starts getting dream visits from the missing girl in the news - and she wants his help to escape...

Fleur du Cap winner Michael Richard (*Still Breathing*, *Disgrace*) was nominated as Best Actor at NOLA as Reverend Day, with SAFTA nominee Beer Adriaanse (*Ekstra Medium*, *Buurtwag*) competing for Best Director.

"We shot this baby in 12 days, with a limited budget and stuck it all together with 22 litres of blood and about five tons of love and respect for the craft," says Beer. "*Dik trots.*"

## VULA VALA | Drama series

From multi-SAFTA winners Black Brain Pictures (*Lockdown*), *Vula Vala* is Mzansi Magic's hit new Sunday night drama, which follows Mzi (Khanyisani Kheswa), an aspiring soccer player, who leaves Ladysmith to go work for his uncle and find a better life in Johannesburg. He finds himself playing for The Scorpions, a team owned by retired soccer star Bra Rex (Sello Maake Ka-Ncube from *The River*, *The Herd*, and *Blood & Water*), a ruthless businessman whose past life is about to catch up with him.

SAFTA winner Tina Jaxa (*Gold Diggers*, *While You Weren't Looking*) co-stars as Bra Rex's wife, while Darlington Michaels (Papa G in *Isidingo*) plays Gab, a small-time hustler who is the first to recognise Mzi's talent.

New episodes come to Showmax on Sunday nights after *Vula Vala* airs on Mzansi Magic.

### FAMALAM S3 | Sketch comedy

Nigerian Gbemisola Ikumelo picked up a 2020 BAFTA nomination for her performance in *Famalam*, which has also earned writer-producer Akemnji Ndifornyen a BAFTA TV Craft Award and Samson Kayo nominations for Best Comedy Performance at both the BAFTAs and the Royal Television Society Awards.

Now the BBC's hilarious sketch comedy is back for its third season. Learn how to make White People Chicken, see our favourite aunties handle their nephew coming out, and discover Nollywood's 'finest'. We'll also get to check out Idris Elba's skill set (Idris Elba can do anything!), and watch the rudest *Midsomer Murders* ever.

*The Independent* (UK) calls it "a sublime achievement of satire," saying, "Like all the best sketch shows, *Famalam* is a mix of comforting recurring characters and scenes, but tweaked with a delightful and clever wit on every outing."

### ENSLAVED | Documentary series

*Enslaved* is a six-episode docuseries that explores 400 years of human trafficking from Africa to the New World by following the efforts of Diving with a Purpose, as they search for and locate six slave ships that went down with their human cargo.

Executive produced and featuring Oscar nominee Samuel L. Jackson (*Pulp Fiction*, *Avengers*), *Enslaved* tracks the efforts of divers as they utilise new methods of underwater archaeology to identify and locate these sunken slave ships for the first time in history. These modern-day adventures serve as a springboard to tell the stories of the ideology, economics and

politics of slavery, while also celebrating stories of resistance, the cultures left behind and the culture that we live in.

The series also traces Jackson's DNA back to Gabon, where he visits in the first episode to locate his own ancestors in the Benga tribe.

New episodes of *Enslaved* come to Showmax every Wednesday, same day as M-Net. Binge from 25 November.

## BUT WAIT, THERE'S STILL MORE

To see everything coming to Showmax in November, including eSwatini-born Noma Dumezweni (*Black Earth Rising*, *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*) starring opposite Oscar winner Nicole Kidman and Golden Globe winner Hugh Grant in *The Undoing*, click [here](#). Please note this release schedule is subject to change.

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