

Durban International Film Festival announces opening and closing films

The 2020 Durban International Film Festival (DIFF), hosted by University of KwaZulu-Natal's Centre for Creative Arts (CCA), will be held from 10 to 20 September 2020. This year, the festival will screen selected films, host seminars and workshops virtually and include screenings drive-in cinema screenings in Durban, Port Shepstone, Newcastle and Zululand.

This is not a Burial, but a Resurrection

DIFF 2020 will open with Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese's *This is not a Burial, but a Resurrection* - which features the late Mary Twala as the leading actress. The film is co-production between South Africa, Lesotho and Italy that features predominantly South African actors.

"This film was specifically selected to open the festival because it sheds some light onto the land issues in Lesotho by telling a very personal story through the journey of one woman. Its sophisticated imagery, the stunning, haunting landscapes that appreciate the depth of the magnificence that is the African landscape and how this was intertwined so effortlessly into the narrative is a true homage to African folklore," says head of programming Chipso Zhou.

Dust

The thriller *Dust*, directed by Pieter du Plessis and with actress Shana Mans in the lead role, is the closing film for the festival. A story of female oppression and emancipation, a contemporary look at the current global discourse on women's rights. This film is apt on the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic whose effects will be seen and felt globally for years to come.

This year's opening and closing film selections are narratives that push boundaries and open up dialogue to contemporary challenges being faced in society today. Both films celebrate unparalleled performances by two South African leading ladies.

"Both narratives are about finding strength and resilience in the face of seemingly insurmountable injustice and speak very much on the human emotional need to connect, belong and be a part of something much greater than themselves. Set in

two very different worlds, and centred on seemingly unconnected issues, both films tackle loss and trauma delicately and uniquely,” says Zhou.

Community film screenings, school programmes and engagements with various community organisations around the city of Durban and the province of KwaZulu-Natal will be the pulse of this year’s isiPhethu industry-focused programme at DIFF.

The isiPhethu programme remains a backbone of DIFF and acts as a centre stage for the industry role players to showcase their work, talents and network in the film industry. The vibrant programme aims to entertain, educate, train and up-skill, instil confidence to young aspirant film-makers and share information that is relevant to the film industry to empower young people.



Durban International Film Fest to go virtual in September

9 Jun 2020



A range of top facilitators, guest speakers and participants will be featured. They will headline several of these programmes as the DIFF continues to position itself as one of the biggest and most significant festivals on the continent.

As a festival, the DIFF prides itself on inclusivity and a celebration of diversity as is shown by the riveting selection of films, which has been curated by a small group of talented and diverse individuals, headed by DIFF head of programming Chipso Zhou. The group includes Nataleah Hunter-Young, a Canadian writer, film curator and PhD candidate in communication and culture; Lisa Ogdie, an American short film programmer who works with Sundance Film Festival; and Mitchel Harper, a South African freelance curator and cultural programmer specialising in the arts in areas of film, music, literature visual and performing arts.

The full programme, alongside all the films that will be screening, will be announced by DIFF on Monday, 31 August 2020. Closer to the opening, the festival will also open for ticket sales. Tickets for the virtual screenings are free and available through a booking system. Tickets for the drive-in screenings will be for sale, however at limited capacity.

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