

Toorbos selected as South Africa's 2021 Oscar entry

The adaptation of Dalene Matthee's best-selling novel *Toorbos* has been selected as South Africa's entry for the Best International Feature Film Award at the 2021 Academy Awards. Directed by René van Rooyen, the film is currently on circuit in South African cinemas.

The competition was tough and the South African Academy Awards selection committee, comprising of professionals from various fields of the filmmaking value chain evaluated several diverse, rich, and unique submissions from the 2–5 November 2020 at Nu Metro cinemas across the country.



Van Rooyen's film has seen great success at the Cape Town International Market and Film Festival, having won the award for Work in Progress (WIP) programme. The film has also been selected for the Torino Film Festival in Italy, November 2020. It is only the third South African entry by a female director for the Academy Awards, since 1989.



The magic of 'Toorbos' - Q&A with writer-director René van Rooyen

Daniel Derksen 12 Nov 2020



“ It is an honour for our entire team that our film has been selected to represent South Africa. Covid-19 has severely impacted our arts in South Africa, Africa and the rest of the world. This is an amazing tribute and opportunity for our local film industry,” says the film’s producer, Dries Scholtz. ”

Starring Elani Dekker in the lead, *Toorbos* investigates the uprooting of a young forest woman during the time of the final forest dwellers of South Africa's Knysna forest of the 1930s. It tells a story between the intimate relationship of an initiated 'forest woman' and the heart of the forest and how it becomes an obstacle in her experience of the man she loves.

Van Rooyen explains: "*Toorbos* not only highlights the importance of finding the balance in the tug of war between the masculine and feminine but also in the urgent need to heal our broken world, by reconnecting to nature. The submission gives the film spotlight in the global arena, an absolute dream come true for the project. We are truly humbled."

The NFVF, as an agency of the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, is officially recognised by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, to make submissions on behalf of the South African film industry.



"*Toorbos*'s success serves as a great testament of this classic novel and our history as a country. Our filmmakers play a significant role in preserving our history and René has managed to capture Dalene Mathee's novel immaculately. The story of *Toorbos* is about a historical event in South Africa, which affected the last forest inhabitants of South Africa's Knysna forest in the 1930s. We wish René and her team all the best as their film will be competing on global stages. South Africa is rooting for you," said NFVF CEO Makhosazana Khanyile.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>