

# Encounters film festival to feature Oscar winners and Disney blockbusters

The 13th Encounters South African International Documentary Festival will be held in Cape Town and Johannesburg from 9 to 26 June, 2011, and will feature Disney blockbuster African Cats and Inside Job, the Oscar-winning dissection of the global economic crisis.

This year's Encounters selection features 35 films from 14 countries and five continents, including 12 world premieres, 18 South African films and 17 international films.

Films range from Disney blockbusters (African Cats) to an expose about an outrageous global fraud involving famous film director David Lynch and transcendental meditation (David Wants to Fly) and a moving "rockumentary" with the likes of Iggy Pop and The Animals (Wild Thing).

World-expanding films investigate everything from Egypt just days before its corrupt government collapsed (Forbidden) to the experiences of guards, whistleblowers and tortured terrorist suspects at Guantanamo (The Guantanamo Trap) to the terrifying amounts of chemicals in our food (Our Daily Poison) to a once-very-rich and now-very-poor mother and daughter in Denmark (The Good Life).

## Top international awards

"We are very proud of the international films line-up, many of which have won top international awards," said festival director Mandisa Zitha, referring to films like Inside Job, an Oscar and Cannes winner; If a Tree Falls: A Story of the Earth Liberation Front, which came second at Miami Film Festival; and Sundance winners Joan Rivers: A Piece of Work and Black Power Mixtape. "We strive to select films that are socially relevant to the South African experience and will interest our diverse audiences."

Just over half the programme deals with Africa.

The opening night film, Simon Bright's Robert Mugabe - What Happened? is the definitive account of the Zimbabwean president. Exploring Rhodesia's transition to Zimbabwe, the Matabeleland genocide, the effects of global business on Africa's economy, and the behind-the-scenes jostling for power, the documentary includes fascinating archival film interviews that show just how much the intellectual Young Turk was admired and respected as he rose to power. Mugabe emerges as unquestionably one of history's most canny leaders.

The line-up includes some of our brightest local filmmaking talent. Khalid Shamis Imam and I is a full length adaptation of

his South African Film and Television Award-winning short, *The Killing of The Imam*, while former MIPDOC African Trailblazer Karin Slater will premiere *An Intersection*, an intimate portrait of an HIV-positive couple in Botswana who decide to have a child.

## **More than 50 SA entries**

South African creativity features strongly. Jacques de Villiers and Laura Gamse's *The Creators* features the likes of graffiti artist Faith 47, hip hop pioneer Emile Jansen, and glam rappers Sweat.X. *Mama Goema: The Cape Town Beat in Five Movements*, co-directed by Columbian Angela Ramirez, Portugal's Sara Gouveia, and Cape Town's Calum MacNaughton, stars Goema legend Mac MacKenzie and local musos Neo Muyanga and Ernie Deane. And Matthew Kalil's *Porselynnkas Dokimentêr* profiles an avant garde, wildly controversial Stellenbosch performance poetry group.

"There were over 50 South African entries this year, more than ever," said Mandisa. "These have improved in quality. We are excited by the rise in the auteur-driven films and that some filmmakers have secured international funding and are creating their own exhibition platforms."

Encounters runs from 9 to 26 June, 2011, at Nu Metro V&A Waterfront and at Nu Metro Hyde Park and The Bioscope in Johannesburg.

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