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From the Desk of the CEO

Durban 2010

Durban Line-Up

12th Encounters South African International Documentary Festival 2010



Encounters is the premier Documentary Festival on the African continent and a major event on the film circuit calendar. Documentaries have the power to take audiences into other worlds, hold a mirror up to humanity and lift the veil on our perceptions of ourselves and others.

Cape Town: 12 - 29 August 2010 at Nu Metro, V&A Waterfront and Labia on Orange
Johannesburg: 18 - 29 August 2010 at The Bioscope, Ground Floor of Main Street Life, 286 Fox Street, Maboneng Precinct.

Doc features are now a global phenomenon and this year filmgoers are offered an exceptional and varied selection of 50+films – many award winning titles, fresh from international festivals, and 8 that will receive their World Premières at Encounters.

Highlights include:

The Spotlight on South Africa.

Once again the organisers of Encounters have selected the best films that portray the South African landscape and its peoples. Young international directors present an outsider's view of South African political history, and a look at life in the underbelly of the urban sprawl and age-old traditional rituals.

RFK In The Land of Apartheid – A Ripple of Hope USA 2009

This is a film that was begging to be made – a remarkable gem, with never-before-seen footage and contemporary interviews, filmmakers Larry Shore and Tami Gold tell the story of Robert Kennedy's historic 1966 trip to South Africa. The film highlights a dark part of South Africa's history while demonstrating courage that was truly a ripple of hope. In six days RFK covered enormous ground, delivering four recorded public speeches (UND, Stellenbosch, the Johannesburg Bar and WITS), visited Soweto – shaking the hands of ordinary people – and visited the banned Nobel Laureate Chief Albert Luthuli. It is his "Ripple of Hope" speech which he made in South Africa and which is acknowledged as the greatest of his career that was unfortunately, almost two years to the day later, to be his epitaph.

Comrade Goldberg Germany. World Première

As the only white among those convicted and sentenced to life at the Rivonia Trials, Denis Goldberg will always have a unique place in South African history. Peter Heller's film is a personal and political account of the man who became an MK commander, bomb maker and saboteur and who spent 22 years in Pretoria Central as a consequence. His segregation from the others sent to Robben Island denied him the contact and the companionship of his fellow accused. This film tells about the human side of the often painful road to freedom, about the joy of living, love and death, human dignity, political passion and a very long imprisonment.

On The Other Side of Life Germany 2009 88min

Filmmakers Brockhaus and Wolff follow Bongani and Lucky, young brothers living on the "edge of the edge" in Khayelitsha shantyland, to Pollsmoor, where they await trial for murder until their grandmother posts their bail with her pension. Out on bail they travel to the beautiful mountains of the Eastern Cape, where newly circumcised, they are initiated into the ways of men – time now to put aside rape, robbery and drugs, and live responsible lives! This is not the story of just two young South African men, but of millions. Directors Stefanie Brockhaus and Andy Wolff are guests of the Festival and travel courtesy of the Goethe-Institut.

Made by South Africans for South Africans

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From the Gallery

4th SAFTA 2010



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Three of the best South African documentary filmmakers will be shown at this year's Encounters: Clifford Bestall, Rehad Desai and Jo Menell.

Rehad Desai's The Battle for Johannesburg (SA 2010 71min) centres on the run up to the World Cup, where the long-running struggle for control of central Jozi has intensified. But, the ambitious urban renewal projects aimed at transforming the mean streets into a "World Class city" haven't made much headway against endemic crime, and a burgeoning population of poor migrants occupying crumbling tenements. Desai turns investigative reporter as he exposes the brutality of evictions, police raids and self-appointed landlords, the appalling living conditions of the residents and the lofty ambitions of property developers hoping to transform derelict buildings into islands of security and comfort among the deprivation and decay.

The National Film and Video Foundation is the primary sponsor of the Festival. Encounters is made possible by the further support of the City of Cape Town, Cape Film Commission, Provincial Government of Western Cape, The Times, Nu Metro, Tempest Car Hire, Out In Africa Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, Pro Helvetia, The Swiss Arts Council, French Embassy, British Council, Goethe Institut and Cape Town TV.

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