

## 2012 Durban FilmMart offers international opportunities - enter now

A reminder to African filmmakers that their submissions for the [2012 Durban FilmMart](#) (DFM), which will be held 20-23 July 2012, during the 33rd [Durban International Film Festival](#) (19-29 July) must be in by 15 February 2012.



Submissions can lead to international exposure, as the winners of the "Most Promising Documentary Projects," awarded at the 2011 DFM, found out in Holland late last year.

The prize-winners from KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape have described their attendance at the International Documentary Festival of Amsterdam (IDFA) in November 2011 as an "experience of a lifetime," through which they gained "invaluable expertise."

Nicole Schafer, producer/director of *Buddha of Africa* and Bryony Roughton and Mayenzeke Baza, producer and director respectively of *Ndyindoda (I'm a Man)* were participants in the IDFAcademy, a three day training programme, followed by the IDFA Forum, heralded as the largest meeting place for documentary filmmakers, producers and commissioning in Europe. IDFA and the Jan Vrijman Fund, provided accommodation and accreditation, while the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF) funded travel grants.

### IDFA showcase for documentaries

IDFA, considered the largest documentary film festival in the world, is hosted annually during November in various locations in Amsterdam. The eleven-day festival screens more than 340 documentaries and transmedia projects from around the world, attracts over 200 000 attendees and more than 2500 film professionals.

IDFAcademy provides emerging filmmakers, producers and film students the opportunity of meeting documentary professionals who are willing to share their knowledge of the industry, whilst the Forum allows participants the opportunity to network with producers, funders and distributors within the industry.

[Toni Monty](#) of the [Durban Film Office](#), said, "IDFA is the best possible stage for documentary filmmakers to showcase their work to industry heavy-weights; because of this opportunity their films will now transform from a mere pitch to a reality."

"Participating in the academy provided a good foundation in the business of documentary film and fresh insights into new trends in documentary production and financing models. The forum was an invaluable opportunity to get a feel for the type of projects being pitched internationally and how the international market operates," said Schafer.

### Creating invaluable contacts

The highlight of attending IDFA was creating "invaluable contacts," including opening up discussion with potential funders. Schafer is the owner of her own local production company called Thinking Strings based in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands. "Sourcing funding and support for documentaries is a hugely competitive process, especially in the early stages. Having some recognition for the project helps considerably to get the project off the ground," she concluded.

Roughton and Baza, joint owners of film production company Mandela Day Pictures and founders of a film development project Nab'Ubomi based in Port Elizabeth, both agreed that the experience abroad was "enlightening."

"It was a significant learning experience for shedding light on the state of the industry on an international scale to gaining insight from cutting edge industry players," said Roughton. "It was also good to see opportunities for international

collaboration, funding, trends in the industry and also the faces behind the names of all the commissioning editors, broadcasters and agents," she added.

Both have secured connections for potential funding, broadcasting and sales because of networking with industry elite.

## **A partnership project**

The DFM is a partnership project between the Durban Film Office (DFO) and the Durban International Film Festival (DIFF) provide filmmakers an opportunity to pitch projects to financiers, distributors, sales agents and potential co-producers. Over 200 industry professionals attended the 2011 DFM, participating in meetings, project presentations and a series of master classes and workshops on latest trends in film finance, marketing, distribution and new media technologies.

Peter Rorvik, director of the Centre for Creative Arts and the DIFF reaffirmed the need for such opportunities within the local film industry. "Such partnerships, between Durban FilmMart and IDFA are a reflection of South Africa's commitment to developing films and filmmakers and being a part of the international market place," he said.

For more, go to [www.durbanfilmmart.com](http://www.durbanfilmmart.com).

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