

16th Durban FilmMart celebrates African cinema: Meet the 2025 Award Winners

The 16th Durban FilmMart wrapped on 21 July with the 2025 DFM Awards, bringing together 1,364 film professionals from 63 countries under the theme “Bridges Not Borders: Stories That Unite.”

This year’s winners were announced across multiple categories, celebrating outstanding projects in development and recognising the next generation of African filmmaking talent.



"We are delighted to have hosted such a dynamic array of filmmakers from across the African continent. They entrusted us with their projects and ideas, and generously shared their time, expertise, and passion through enriching conversations, creating a truly African event," says Magdalene Reddy, director of the Durban FilmMart Institute (DFMI).

"The talent showcased in this year's programme and film projects exemplifies the strength of African cinema. The memories made, networks expanded, and partnerships forged have significantly contributed DFM's enduring legacy and impact. We extend our gratitude to our partners for their support in celebrating and elevating African storytellers, producers, and content creators."

The event ended on a high with the presentation of 39 awards from 34 partners to the total of over R1,5m.

For cash awards:

Best fiction - Grant of R100,000

The Second Coming (South Africa)

Producer: Siyabonga Xaba

Director: Michael James

Best non-fiction - Grant of R100,000

The Salt of the South (Tunisia)

Producer: Ramzi Laâmourî

Director: Rami Jarboui

Best animation - Grant of R100,000

Crocodile Dance (South Africa, Nigeria)

Producer: Ingrid de Beer

Directors: Shofela Coker, Nadia Darries

Red Sea Film Fund Award of \$5,000

Golden (Zimbabwe)

Producers: Rumbi Katedza, Ingrid Martens

Director: Rumbi Katedza

Red Sea Film Fund Award of \$5,000

The Second Coming (South Africa)

Producer: Siyabonga Xaba

Director: Michael James

Red Sea Film Fund Award of \$5,000

Climbing the Mountains (Algeria)

Producers: Kenji Accard, Sabrina Chebbi

Co-producer: Oualid Baha

Director: Sabrina Chebbi

Al Jazeera Co-production Award of \$10,000

Climbing the Mountains (Algeria)

Producers: Kenji Accard, Sabrina Chebbi

Co-producer: Oualid Baha

Director: Sabrina Chebbi

Climate Story Labs Award of \$10,000

The award is on behalf of Climate Story Labs Africa and Doc Society, in collaboration with UMI Fund.

Plastic Atlantis (Cape Verde)

Producer: Pedro Soulé

Director: Samira Vera-Cruz

Inkaba Award (Stained Glass TV) Award of \$5,000 and consulting time

Inkaba, meaning “navel” or “origin,” speaks to where stories are birthed — a fitting symbol for bold new work seeking financing and co-production support.

The Second Coming (South Africa)

Producer: Siyabonga Xaba

Director: Michael James



FILM & CINEMATOGRAPHY

SA filmmakers win 8 awards at Durban FilmMart

27 Jul 2023

CANAL+ Development Grant of €5,000 with a development contract

Golden (Zimbabwe)

Producers: Rumbi Katedza, Ingrid Martens

Director: Rumbi Katedza

TRT Award of \$5,000

The Guardian (Libya, Algeria, Canada)

Producer: Lynda Belkhiria

Director: Muhannad Lamin

MTN Group Digital Award of R100,000

Nomvula (She Who Brings the Rain) (South Africa)

Producer: Kethiwe Ngcobo

Director: Sibusiso Khuzwayo

Sundance Institute Documentary Fund New Voices Award of \$5,000 grant

Plastic Atlantis (Cape Verde)

Producer: Pedro Soulé

Director: Samira Vera-Cruz

The Whickers Bursary Award of £3,000 for a first-time feature documentary director

Vuka (South Africa)

Producer: Rehad Desai

Director: Matthew Robinson

OIF-ACP-EU Award of €2.500

Plastic Atlantis (Cape Verde)

Producer: Pedro Soulé

Director: Samira Vera-Cruz

Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Award of 2,000 CAD

Climbing the Mountains (Algeria)

Producers: Kenji Accard, Sabrina Chebbi

Co-producer: Oualid Baha

Director: Sabrina Chebbi

Wrapped Talents Durban Prize of R10,000 cash prize; One-year Premium Subscription 1 Wrapped; and Featured spotlight on Wrapped

TRUCKER MAN (South Africa)

Director: Shiefaa Hendricks

Category - Market/Event Participation Award:

DFM Talents Durban Award

Flights and accommodation to participate in DFM Pitch and Finance Forum 2026

DESIGNING DIVIDE (South Africa)

Director: Jessie Ayles

Sørfond Award

Flights and accommodation to participate Participation in the Sørfond Pitch 2025

Baptism of Silence (South Africa)

Producer: Casey Diepeveen

Directors: Kanya Viljoen, Emilie Badenhorst

El Gouna Film Festival Award

Flights and accommodation to participate in CineGouna 2025

Samaa Gafa (Dry Sky) (Sudan)

Producer: Aya Tallah Yusuf

Director: Ibrahim Omar

The FIDADOC Award

Flights and accommodation to participate in FIDADOC Pan African Writing Residency 2026

KUMFOGA (Togo)

Dissirama Bessoga

Rotterdam Lab Award

Accreditation and accommodation to participate in the Rotterdam Lab 2026

Space Maasai (Tanzania)

Producer: Wilson Nkya

Director: Priscilla Marealle

Animation Production Days (APD) Award

Accreditation and accommodation to participate in Animation Production Days 2026

Tribe (South Africa)

Producer: Debbie Crosscup

Director: Tendayi Nyeke

Visions du Reel Award

Accreditation and accommodation to participate in the Visions du Reel Market 2026 (presentation in the Marketplace Pitching/Roundtables / One-on-One Meetings)

Akal (Morocco)

Producer: Karim Debbagh

Director: Basma Rkioui

Sheffield Doc Fest Award

Accreditation and accommodation to participate in Sheffield Doc Fest 2026

Plastic Atlantis (Cape Verde)

Producer: Pedro Soulé

Director: Samira Vera-Cruz

The DOK Leipzig Award

Accreditation and accommodation to participate in DOK Leipzig 2025

Akal (Morocco)

Producer: Karim Debbagh

Director: Basma Rkioui

DOK.fest München Award

Accreditation and accommodation to participate in the DOK.forum Marketplace 2026 (DOK Co-Pro Marke or in DOK Preview Training)

Golden (Zimbabwe)

Producers: Rumbi Katedza, Ingrid Martens

Director: Rumbi Katedza

Category - Mentorship, Distribution and Membership:

MAD Solutions Award

Sales and Distribution of one project in the Arab world. The award was presented to a project from the Palestine Film Institute Spotlight, presented at DFM 2025

Ping Pong (Palestine)

Producer: May Jabareen

Director: Saleh Saadi

Doc A Award

Consultation, training and granting of the impact campaign

Plastic Atlantis (Cape Verde)

Producer: Pedro Soulé

Director: Samira Vera-Cruz

EURODOC Award

Tuition and residential fees for one session in Euro Doc 2026 and 12 months-long membership

The Salt of the South (Tunisia)

Producer: Ramzi Laâmour

Director: Rami Jarboui

Fak'ugesi Residency Award

Participation in the Residency Programme

Kamaroza (Egypt)

Producer: Nouran Abdallah

Directors: Ahmad Abdelhameed, Islam Mazhar

Studio: Samaka

TFL Next IEFTA Award (supported by IEFTA)

Invitation to Film online workshop in 2025

Nomvula (She Who Brings the Rain) (South Africa)

Producer: Kethiwe Ngcobo

Director: Sibusiso Khuzwayo

Women Make Movies Award

Best Pitch by a Women Filmmaker.

Acceptance into the Production Assistance Program, which includes the following additional benefits: Fiscal sponsorship, allowing filmmakers to raise grants in the U.S.

Individualised fundraising, distribution, and ongoing project consultations, including feedback on rough cut
A project page on WMM's website to facilitate online donations. Access to WMM's catalogue of more than 700 films. Social media support for crowdfunding campaigns, screenings, and events. Promotion of the completed film.

One year of free WMM webinar on the business side of the business and case studies. Scheduled use of WMM's NYC office, including the conference room for meetings or rough-cut screenings.

Plastic Atlantis (Cape Verde)

Producer: Pedro Soulé

Director: Samira Vera-Cruz

Impronta Films Consultancy Award

Consultancy Award offering up to 4 sessions over a 12 month period, for two documentary projects in development

Planet Carnival (South Africa)

Producers: Thandi Davids

Co-producer: Luana Rocha

Director: Kurt Orderson

Vuka (South Africa)

Producer: Rehad Desai

Director: Matthew Robinson

Triggerfish Mentorship Award

Six-month mentorship of one-on-one sessions covering all the aspects of development, production and business/marketing for their project

Aisha Qandicha (Morocco)

Producer: Alyssa Harden

Director: Fatima Mahdar

Isiziba Award (Stained Glass TV)

40 hours of executive development and consultancy for a Talents Durban Story Junction participant.

Isiziba, meaning “a still and sacred water source,” reflects the quiet depth and potential of emerging talent those still waters that run deep.

Watching over you (South Africa)

Director Stephen Nagel

Talent Press Award Supported by FIPRESCI

One year membership to FIPRESCI

Alice Johnson (Ghana)

Wrapped Talent Press Prize

Press and publicity support

Tshi Malatji (South Africa)