

Seven awards at Durban FilmMart

Seven awards were made at the close of the 2011 edition of [Durban FilmMart](#) (DFM), the joint project of the Durban Film Office (DFO) and the [Durban International Film Festival](#) (DIFF). Described as the largest co-production market on the African continent, this year it attracted nearly 300 delegates from around Africa and the rest of the world.



"We have seen a distinct shift in the market this year, in so many areas," says [Toni Monty](#), acting CEO of the Durban Film Office. "Last year the delegates weren't sure what to expect and were pleasantly surprised by the standard of the market. This year, filmmakers and producers came well prepared with strategies and plans and very definite ideas as to who they wanted to meet and what they wanted to get out of the four-day event."

"The networking and relationship-building was intense and we fully expect this to yield results in the months ahead. This is a real accolade for the DFM, as it shows that our own industry-players are taking the market seriously."

"The signs of the growing confidence in the DFM can be seen all round," adds [Peter Rovik](#), director of the Centre for Creative Arts and Durban International Film Festival (DIFF). "The response from participants has been very encouraging and the increase in the number of awards that were made possible by sponsors and funders, points to this growing commitment and support for the DFM."

Awards

This year 126 projects from both the feature film and documentary genres qualified for consideration; 20 of these (10 documentary and 10 features) were chosen for the Finance Forum. Projects were received from South Africa, Egypt, Kenya, Rwanda, Tunisia, Cote D'Ivoire, Cameroon, Morocco and Algeria.

- Hubert Bals Fund Award of 5000 Euros towards script and project development, for 'The Most Promising African Project', was presented to '69 Messaha Square'/director Ayten Amin and producer Wael Omar. The jury, comprising Jane Williams (UK/head of Dubai Film Connection), Pedro Pimenta (Mozambican filmmaker and producer) and Iwana Chronis (Hubert Bals Fund/Netherlands), were full of praise for the 'high standard and versatility' of the subject matter presented in the submissions
- Three projects were chosen to attend the CineMart Rotterdam Lab. These are James Taylor and Donald Mugisha's 'Boda Boda Thieves', David Max-Brown and Lyle Lewis' 'This Boy' and Joel Karekezi's 'Imbabazi/The Pardon'. They were presented by Jacobine van der Vloed of CineMart and The Rotterdam Lab.
- The International Documentary Festival of Amsterdam (IDFA) and Jan Vrijman Fund for the 'Most Promising Documentary Projects' grant, which enables the winning filmmakers and producers to attend the IDFA festival in November, where they will receive accreditation and accommodation. The jury comprising Bruni Burres (USA), Kate Townsend (UK) and Cynthia Kane (USA) chose two projects, both from South Africa; 'Homage to the Buddha' and 'Ndiyindoda/ I am Man'.
- The VideoVision Entertainment award, valued at R75 000 for the 'Best South African Film Project', was

to Kyle Lewis (director) and David Max Brown (producer) for 'This Boy'. The prize includes a commitment in terms of local distribution, a cash commitment towards P&A and guidance on the film's potential for international release.

- Two PUMA.Creative Catalyst Awards of R50 000 were made to 'Femme a la Camera' from Karima Zoubir and Hicham Brini and to Eddie Edwards and Steven Markovitz's 'Rollaball'.
- Two R15 000 PUMA.Creative Mobility Awards recognised 'The Flight Pilot', from director Peggy Mbiye and 'I, Afrikaner' from director Annalet Steenkamp and producer, Lauren Groenewald.
- Previous Creative Catalyst awardee, Nonhlanhla Dlamini was given an additional contribution of R50 000, towards the development of the next part of her story, 'Shattered Pieces of Peace'. The 'Flight Pilot' and 'Shattered Pieces of Peace' were special entrants from the Talent Campus Durban Doc Station, which participated in the DFM DOC Circle.

IDFA representative, Adriek van Nieuwenhuijzen says, "IDFA is proud of the process that allowed us to put 10 documentary projects in the spotlight for the inaugural 'Doc Circle' event. We are thrilled that our partners (DFM and DIFF) believe in the strength of documentary film and are committed to finding opportunities for African filmmakers to tell their own unique stories to the world."

Catalyst for growth

The delegate programme, presented by local and international specialists, took the form of master classes, workshops and forums and covered industry-related issues, such as film financing and funding, new media and distribution strategies, digital and online developments.

"The DFM promises to be a further catalyst for growth in the region by becoming one of the key events of the South African and African film industry and a focal point to interface with global parties and stimulate interest and activity in the city," continues Monty.

"In addition, it has given African filmmakers the opportunity to pitch film projects and network with financier funding organisations, sales agents and internationally-reputed directors and producers and network in order to form alliances for future collaborations. We hope that because of these partnerships DFM will become 'feeder' of African product to other international festivals and markets. We trust that the number of fundable African projects will ultimately find their way to the big screen."

"The success of DFM this year and its close relationship with the Durban International Film Festival, contributes enormously to the business component of the festival. Running a film festival and co-productive market in tandem is essential to the longevity of a market of this nature," adds Rorvik.

"Without the support, in cash and in kind and co-operation of local role players, partners and sponsors, we could never dream of enjoying such success so quickly for the DFM and we are most grateful, as it gives impetus to the growth of the DFM for the years ahead," concludes Monty.