ENCOUNTERS FESTIVAL REPORT 2025



SOUTH AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL

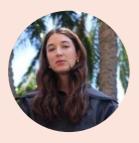


JOHANNESBURG & CAPE TOWN WWW.ENCOUNTERS.CO.ZA

MEET THE DIRECTORS



Alison McAlpinePerfectly A Strangeness



Amy Louise WilsonThe Rock Speaks



Anas Saeed Khartoum



Annabelle Ayangbade What I Do Not Know Will Not Kill Me



Areeb ZuaiterYalla Parkour



Arthur MusahBrief Tender Light



Aurelia Driver
Ahmad Alive



Ayman El AmirThe Brink of Dreams



Bassam Mortada Abo Zaabal 89



Bentley BrownGuardian of the Well



Brenda Michell Yintah



Brett Story
Union



Carlos Valle CasasSeeds from Kivu



Chris KingHow to Build a Library



Cleveland HoppOnthou vi Fredo?



Danielle VillanovaAt the Edge of Skin



David BorensteinMr Nobody against Putin



David Périssère Kabul Chaos



Eisha MarjaraAm I the Skinniest Person
You've Ever Seen?



Eloise KingThe Shadow Scholars









Eugene AhlersFacing Forward



Fabienne Steiner
Fitting in



Felix Golenko Yumi - The Whole World



Francois Knoetze
The Rock Speaks



François-Xavier Destors
didy



Gaël Kamilindi didy



Georges GachotMisty: The Erroll
Garner Story



Greg KohsThe Thinking Game



Hannah Rafkin Keeper



Ibrahim Snoopy AhmadKhartoum



Janna Grosfeld
The Fries Philosopher



Jennifer Wickham Yintah



Jessie AylesNever Come Fetch Me



Joe-Yves Salankang Sa-Ngol The Rock Speaks



Joel Kachi BensonMothers of Chibok



Jose Cardoso
Flowers / Flores



Judith WesterveldThe Sending of the Crows



Julien ElieShifting Baselines



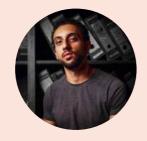
JuruThis is Ballroom
(SALÃO DE BAILE)



Kethiwe Ngcobo And She Didn't Die



Lilitha BaartmanSprouting



Loai GalalMessage from Anonymous



Loic NiyonkuruBefore 16



Luca Smith Undercurrent



Luke SharlandNormal To Me



Maia LekowHow to Build a Library



Michael Toledano Yintah



Molatelo Bossman6 Kings and 6 Queens



Myriam Weil Kabul Chaos



Nada RiyadhBrink of Dreams, The



Nantenaina LovaWhere Zebus Speak French



Nariman Massoumi
Pouring Water on
Troubled Oil



Néstor López Seeds from Kivu



Nhlanhla Mthethwa Sam Nzima: A Journey Through His Lens



Nils Montel Kabul Chaos



Nondumiso MasacheUmhlaba Wokhokho Land of My Ancestors



Nyasha Kadandara Matabeleland



Oksana KarpovychIntercepted



Pavel TalankinMr Nobody against Putin



Pedro NevesDreams of a Revolution



Philip Cox Khartoum



Pranami KochThe Flow of Resilience



Rehad Desai Capturing Water



Ruth HundumaThe Medallion



Rawia Alhag Khartoum



Sam Soko Victoria



Sami Saif SirelkhatimThe Other Side of Beauty



Sammy Baloji
The Tree of
Authenticity



Sara GouveiaAlbie: A Strange Alchemy



Sepideh FarsiPut Your Soul on Your
Hand and Walk



Shanelle JewnarainWomxn: Working



Sinead O'Shea Blue Road: The Edna O'Brien Story



Stephen Maing Union



Saitabao Kaiyare Unyagoni: Bahati's Sex Education Journey



Tahir Ben Mahamat Zene Guardian of the Well



Tamara KotevskaThe Walk



Thomas BrémondKabul Chaos



Timeea Mohamed Khartoum



Tsogo KupaSpirits of the Land



Tuva Björk Fear Fokol



Ulisses Arthur
They dug a grave
in my heart



VitãThis is Ballroom
(SALÃO DE BAILE)



Wim Wenders
Anselm



Yusuf Omar Ahmad Alive



Zoey Black Slut Club





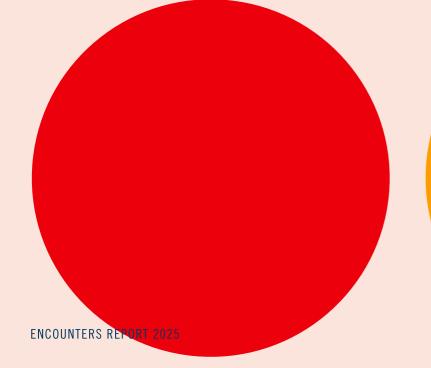
CONTENTS

Festival Summary Page	6
Funders and Sponsors	8
I. Funders	9
II. Sponsors and Partners	9
Introduction and Opening Night	10
The Festival Programme	13
I. Spotlight on African Filmmaking	14
II. Country Focus' at Encounters	15
III. Festival Film Highlights	18
IV. Industry Programme	21
V. Live Music Events	21
Festival Guest Feedback	22
Industry Programme Overview	26
I. Encounters InFocus (CT)	27
II. Encounters x RCLA x Goethe-Institut Industry Day (JHB)	29
III. Netflix Special Presentation (CT)	31
Creating Access to the Festival	32
I. Outreach	33
II. Bertha Movie House Khayelitsha	33
III. Sunshine Cinema	34
IV. Inreach	35
Encounters Awards	38
I. Encounters / Al Jazeera Documentary Award	39
II. Ster-Kinekor Encounters Youth Experience (EYE) Award	40
III. Ronelle Loots Award	41
IV. Liezel Vermeulen Award	42
V. RCLA Awards	43
Marketing and Publicity	44
I. Screen Adverts	45
II. Festival Trailers	45
III. Encounters Website	45
IV. Newsclip	46
V. Social Media	49
Partnership Programmes	54
I. Cannes Docs	55
II. Rough Cut Labs Africa	55
III. Durban FilmMart Institute	56
Conclusion	57
Festival Statistics	59
Staff	65





FESTIVAL SUMMARY



FESTIVAL SUMMARY PAGE

27th Encounters South African International Documentary Festival 19 - 29 June 2025

CINEMA VENUES

CAPE TOWN

The Labia Theatre, Ster-Kinekor V&A Waterfront, Bertha Movie House Isivivana Centre Khayelitsha

JOHANNESBURG

The Bioscope Independent Cinema, The Zone @ Rosebank, Nelson Mandela Foundation

ADDITIONAL

Mdantsane Art Centre East London, Masifunde Changemaker Academy Gqeberha, Emaphethelweni Conference Centre Pietermaritzburg, Fano Ngcobo Resource Centre Mfuleni, Thandanani Drop-inn Centre Mamelodi, Mzintlava Hall Lusikisiki, Afrika Tikkun Arekopaneng Community Centre Orange Farm, Mafikeng, North West Province, Fano Ngcobo Resource Centre, Mfuleni, Cape Town, Thusong Service's Centre, Mashishing, Mpumalanga, Toronto Primary School, Polokwane, Limpopo, Newborn Christian Primary School, Manguzi, Kwa Zulu Natal

Industry Venues

INDUSTRY SESSIONS

The Centre for Humanities Research - University of the Western Cape, Bertha House Mowbray, Goethe-Institut Johannesburg

NETWORKING EVENTS

Goethe-Institut Johannesburg, 6 Spin Street Cape Town, One Park

FUNDERS

The support of our funders and partners made it possible to deliver a comprehensive and impactful programme for this 27th edition. Globally, the cultural funding landscape has become increasingly strained, with government contributions in particular continuing to decline. Through concerted fundraising efforts this year, we secured support from international foundations, government departments, civil society organisations, and select private companies. Despite ongoing strategies, attracting corporate sponsorship remains a challenge. Looking ahead, the Institute's Board will prioritise initiatives aimed at cultivating partnerships with private sector organisations whose values align with our mission – a vital step towards strengthening our institutional infrastructure.

The operational needs of Encounters in 2025 were generously supported by the Bertha Foundation, whose mandate champions storytellers advocating for social and economic justice and human rights. The City of Cape Town and the National Film and Video Foundation continue as core festival partners. Programmatic funding was further bolstered by the UMI Fund for climate justice initiatives, Al Jazeera for African Stories, industry and primary awards, and Netflix for industry opportunities.

In the midst of the prevailing political and economic challenges, we remain deeply grateful to the partners who upheld our mandate to spotlight documentaries and nurture the growth of the sector in South Africa.

FESTIVAL PARTNERS AND SPONSORS

Bertha Foundation, National Film and Video Foundation of South Africa, City of Cape Town, Film Cape Town, Urban Movement Innovation Fund, Netflix, Al Jazeera Documentary, Astraea Foundation, Wesgro, Rough Cut Lab Africa, South African Guild of Editors, Documentary Filmmakers Association of South Africa, French Institute of South Africa, SWISS Films, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, German Films, DOK.fest München, Ster-Kinekor, Centre for Humanities Research at the University of the Western Cape, University of Cape Town and UCT TV, Climate Story Lab ZA, Heineken Beverages, German Documentaries, the High Commission of Canada in South Africa, Durban FilmMart Institute, filmmart.africa, Cinema Solidarity, Nelson Mandela Foundation, Nelson Mandela Children's Film Festival, Modern Times Review, Kamva Collective, Goethe-Institut, Mail & Guardian.

PUBLICITY

Encounters was widely covered nationally in print, on radio and television and on social media platforms. The total media value was R7,335,115.00 as verified by Newsclip.

ENCOUNTERS TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE NPC

Section 21 Registration No: 2008/026397/08

NPO Number: 070-809-NPO

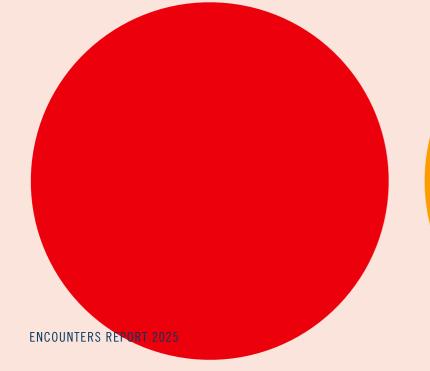
67 - 69 Main Road, Mowbray, 7705. Cape Town, South Africa

P.O. Box 2228, Cape Town 8000, South Africa

email: info@encounters.co.za website: www.encounters.co.za







FUNDERS & SPONSORS

THE 27TH ENCOUNTERS SOUTH AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL IS FUNDED BY:





















FILM SPONSORS & PARTNERS























































MEDIA PARTNERS











VENUE SPONSORS & PARTNERS







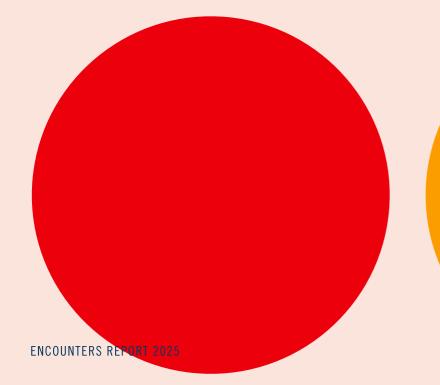








INTRODUCTION





INTRODUCTION AND OPENING NIGHT 2025

The Encounters South African International Documentary Festival—co-founded in 1999 by Steven Markovitz and Nodi Murphy to address a long-standing gap in the local film market—entered its 27th edition in 2025. Over more than a quarter-century, the festival has evolved from a modest showcase into one of Africa's most vibrant cultural events and the premier documentary festival on the African continent, advancing both audience development and the craft of nonfiction filmmaking in South Africa.

Encounters has consistently demonstrated resilience: it weathered the withdrawal of international funding in the post-democracy period, navigated shifts in the broadcasting landscape, and sustained its community through the COVID-19 pandemic by embracing digital engagement and alternative distribution models. Today it remains one of the country's best-attended film festivals, celebrated for programmes that resonate with local audiences while presenting the most talked-about documentaries from around the globe. In addition to premiering new work, the festival is recognised as a key incubator of skills and knowledge for the African documentary sector.

Running across Johannesburg and Cape Town from 19 - 29 June in 2025, the festival team reviewed more than 550 submissions to curate a programme of 65 films representing 40 countries. These works—ranging from shorts to feature-length documentaries—mapped urgent stories from Afghanistan, the DRC, Egypt, Palestine, Rwanda, Sudan, South Africa, Ukraine, and beyond. Threads of resistance, memory, identity, defiance, justice and courage united five curatorial pillars:

- 1. The Frightening Reality of Now
- 2. Ways of Learning
- 3. Agency: Standing Up to Power
- 4. Memory, Trauma & Identity
- 5. Art & Impact

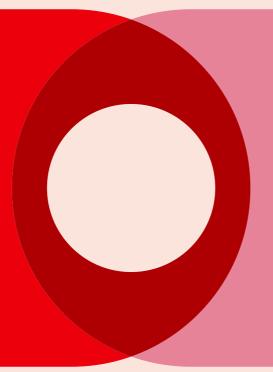
Encounters again presented a robust Industry Programme, this year nearly branded as **Encounters InFocus**, where filmmakers and professionals convened at various industry hubs, including Bertha House Mowbray and the Centre for Humanities Research in Woodstock, Cape Town, the Goethe-Institut in Johannesburg and at select venues for standalone events. Outreach screenings in townships and community halls extended the festival's reach, while the 8th Rough Cut Lab Africa—in partnership with SAGE, NFVF, Goethe-Institut, Al Jazeera Documentary and others—supported emerging directors

in shaping works-in-progress. Special awards also provided vital resources for continued storytelling.

Festival Director Mandisa Zitha welcomed special guests, partners and filmmakers to an Opening Night that embodied Encounters' spirit of international and regional collaboration. This year's curtain-raiser was the African premiere of *How to Build a Library* by Kenyan directors Maia Lekow and Chris King —a compelling portrait of two women transforming a colonial library into a hub for Africa's next generation. Although the filmmakers were in the UK for Sheffield Doc/Fest, they addressed the Encounters audience via video, while Cape Town audience members were greeted in person by Councillor lan McMahon, representing core partner The City of Cape Town.

Zitha also recognised South African director Kethiwe Ncgobo, whose film *And She Didn't Die* enjoyed its world premiere in Sheffield before screening at Encounters, and invited the many visiting filmmakers—from Canada, Sudan, Kenya, the UK, Germany, Egypt, Mozambique, Switzerland, Qatar, the USA and several South African provinces—to stand for a well-deserved ovation.

With expert curation, strong industry engagement and notable public participation, the 27th Encounters South African International Documentary Festival once again affirmed its position as the continent's premier platform for documentary. As Zitha noted in her Opening-Night address, Encounters remains "a safe space of respect, inclusion and thoughtful exchange," dedicated to freedom of expression and to documentary storytelling that provokes reflection, inspires action and strengthens global solidarity.



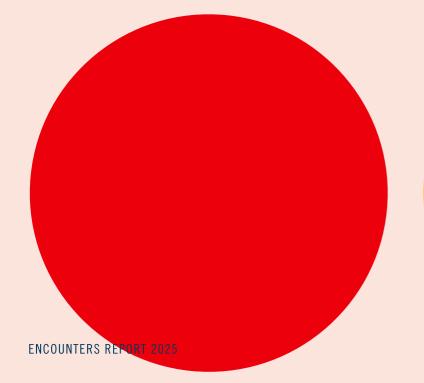








THE FESTIVAL PROGRAMME



THE FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

Encounters promised a stellar line-up of documentaries that spanned diverse topics and geographies, offering a platform for thought-provoking cinema, dialogue, and social cohesion.

Here are some key highlights of the Festival's programme.

SPOTLIGHT ON AFRICAN FILMMAKING



The African Stories Al Jazeera Programme at Encounters 27 presented a curated selection of exceptional African documentaries, celebrated for their powerful storytelling and distinctive perspectives. The programme highlighted the diversity and dynamism of African filmmakers, showcasing narratives that resonated locally and internationally.

Through this partnership, Encounters and Al Jazeera amplified African voices and fostered meaningful dialogue and cultural exchange.

Reflecting Al Jazeera's commitment to underrepresented voices and in-depth storytelling, the collaboration brought African perspectives to global audiences and strengthened the visibility of the continent's documentary talent.















COUNTRY FOCUS' AT ENCOUNTERS SUPPORTED BY CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANISATIONS

PALESTINIAN AND PALESTINIAN CO-PRODUCED FILMS



Yalla Parkour Gaza/Palestine



Ahmad Alive
Palestine/South Africa



Put Your Soul on Your Hand and Walk France/Palestine

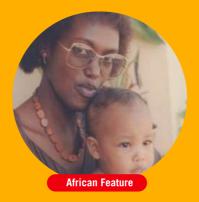


The Palestinian Focus at Encounters always uses the power of documentary to bring important issues to light and to provide a platform for filmmakers to share their stories. The Palestinian Focus supports marginalised voices and shows solidarity with the Palestinian people during the ongoing Gaza genocide. Encounters has always been a safe space for discussing the struggles and resilience of marginalised communities. We believe that film festivals can foster understanding and critical thinking during times of crisis. We are proud to continue promoting solidarity with those involved in struggles for social and ecological justice.

FRENCH PRODUCED AND CO-PRODUCED FILMS



The Brink of Dreams Egypt/France



didy Rwanda/Switzerland/France



Where Zebus Speak French France/Madagascar/Germany/ Burkina Faso



Intercepted
Canada/France/Ukraine



Misty: The Erroll Garner Story Switzerland/France/Germany



Put Your Soul on Your Hands and Walk France/Palestine



Dreams of a Revolution France/Mozambique/Portugal



SWISS PRODUCED AND CO-PRODUCED FILMS



Fitting In South Africa SWISS FILMS



didy Rwanda/Switzerland/France SWISS FILMS



Misty: The Erroll Garner Story Switzerland/France/Germany SWISS FILMS

GERMAN PRODUCED AND CO-PRODUCED FILMS



Khartoum Germany/United Kingdom/Sudan/Qatar



Where Zebus Speak French France/Madagascar/Germany/Burkina Faso



Abo Zaabal 89 Egypt/Germany



Anselm Germany



Misty: The Erroll Garner Story Switzerland/France/Germany



Yumi - The Whole World
Egypt/Fiji/Germany/Netherlands/Scotland/United States/Vanuatu







CANADIAN PRODUCED AND CO-PRODUCED FILMS



Intercepted
Canada/France/Ukraine

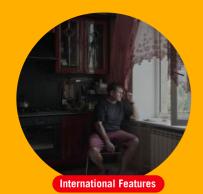


Shifting Baselines Canada

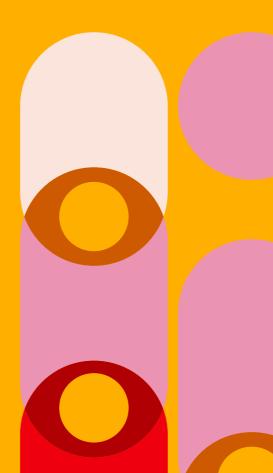


Yintah Canada

UKRAINIAN CO-PRODUCED FILMS

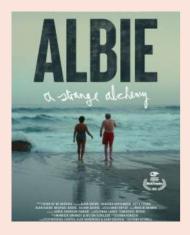


Intercepted
Canada/France/Ukraine





FESTIVAL FILM HIGHLIGHTS







"ALBIE: A STRANGE ALCHEMY"

Albie Sachs served as a central figure in South African liberation efforts before surviving prison time and exile and a bombing attack to become South Africa's leading legal expert. Through his position as Constitutional Court judge Sachs developed a groundbreaking constitution which united legal frameworks with restorative processes. Sachs at 90 years old examines how his life and the evolution of South Africa resulted from a "strange alchemy" between perseverance and practical thinking. This poetic documentary blends lyrical visuals, archives, and introspection to honor his legacy.







"AND SHE DIDN'T DIE"

This film uses Kethiwe's point of view to show how Lauretta Ngcobo evolved from her work as an anti-apartheid courier into an exiled feminist writer. The film displays both historical records and scripted scenes and readings of Lauretta's work to show her personal development and the connection between her story and Kethiwe's. A tribute to resistance, resilience, and storytelling as defiance.







"SAM NZIMA: A JOURNEY THROUGH HIS LENS"

The documentary investigates the existence of Sam Nzima who took the famous picture of Hector Pieterson during the Soweto Uprising of 1976. Nzima's photographic work exposed apartheid atrocities which led to his imprisonment but did not stop him from continuing to fight against apartheid. Through his interviews and unique archival materials he demonstrated his quest to restore his personal story along with his historical legacy.







"KHARTOUM"

Five Sudanese civilians—Majdi, Khadmallah, Jawad, Lokain, and Wilson—navigate life before the 2022 military coup. The civilians leave their homeland after war displaces them to construct their broken world through dreams and memories and multimedia elements in East Africa. A raw yet hopeful critique of violence and solidarity.



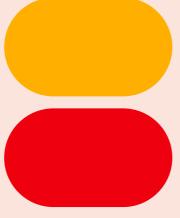




"THE SHADOW SCHOLARS"

Kenyan contract cheating functions as an industrial operation that lets skilled yet jobless writers complete papers for worldwide students. The film reveals colonial origins of this exploitation by interviewing writers together with their clients and author Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. This work presents a harsh examination of how education creates systematic inequalities.





"MR PUTIN AGAINST NOBODY"

Mr Nobody Against Putin tells the story of Pavel Talankin, a school videographer in small-town Russia whose deep engagement with his students is interrupted when the country invades Ukraine, and a soviet-style propaganda programme is suddenly instituted at the school. Now, instead of documenting school life, Pavel is required to record the new nationalist activities. When Pavel comes across an Instagram post looking for people prepared to talk about the impact of the war on education, he embraces the opportunity to use his camera as a weapon against Putin's information war.

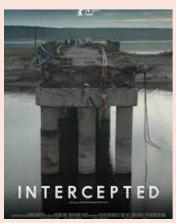






"PUT YOUR SOUL ON YOUR HAND AND WALK"

The documentary production of filmmaker Sepideh Farsi and Gaza journalist Fatem Hassona developed a connection to share war reporting until Fatem died during an Israeli military raid. The fragments of sound and pixel exchanged by the two women evolved into a burning memorial about their fight for survival and what they lost.







"INTERCEPTED"

Russian soldiers' intercepted phone calls with their families expose the complete dehumanization of warfare according to Ukrainian intelligence. The static footage of destruction accompanies these fearful yet weary and non-hateful voices to create an unsettling view of propaganda's influence.





"FITTING IN"

The Stellenbosch University residential area serves as an apartheid heritage site where South African young men experience structural racism. The year-long stay at Eendrag male residence reveals the ongoing conflict between transformation efforts and colonial heritage which breaks apart contemporary male identities.







"SLUT CLUB"

The Slut Club in Cape Town uses pole dancing to create a queer space that worships sacred sexuality and celebrates joyful self-expression. As a radical safe space this organization fights against social body control by giving LGBTQ+ people the opportunity to reject confinement and claim their freedom.

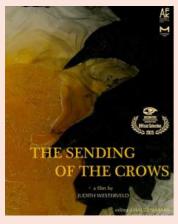






"THE ROCK SPEAKS"

The hybrid documentary allows a cobalt mine rock to tell its story and disclose the colonial price of technology in the Congo. Progress reveals its violent truth through generative AI and archival content combined with poetic expression to expose how land destruction and community removal occurs in a protest against greed.



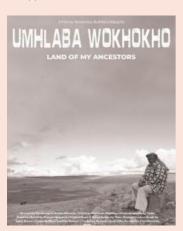






"THE SENDING OF THE CROWS"

San legends meet colonial violence in this animated elegy. The three crows search for their slain husbands while the spoken word artist Blaq Pearl combines with soundscapes to express their grief about cultural disappearance.







"UMHLABA WOKHOKHO - LAND OF MY ANCESTORS"

The apartheid regime took away eMgundeni land from iNkosi Mabaso so he fights to get it back. His search for his grandfather's tomb and environmental justice turns into an inspiring movement for heritage protection and sustainability.

"FLOWERS / FLORES"

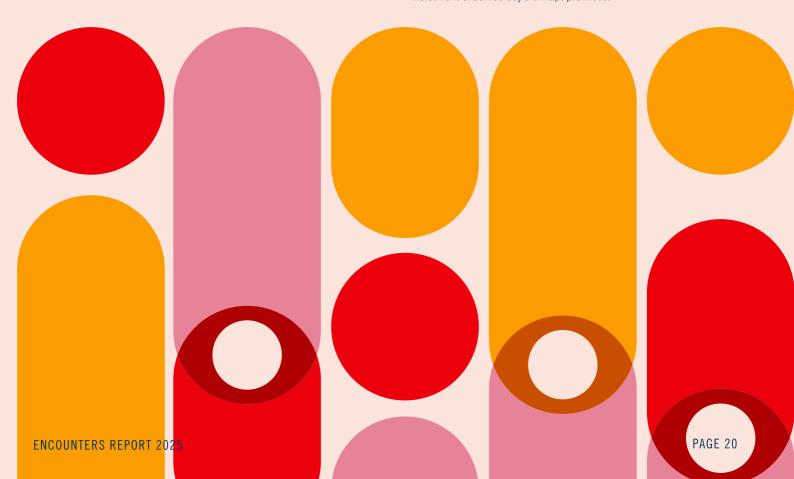
José Cardoso explores Amazonian threats alongside Brazilian far-right rule and Ukraine's war while asking this question: How do we maintain our capacity for compassion? A toddler's fascination with frogs and flowers serves as the base for his exploration of desensitization and hope.





"SPIRITS OF THE LAND"

The unresolved South African land claims demonstrate the ongoing effects of apartheid on the nation. Black tenants face white farmers' violence while battling for restitution, dignity, and the right to bury their dead. A damning indictment of democracy's unkept promises.







INDUSTRY PROGRAMME

The Industry Programme, featuring Encounters InFocus, Encounters x RCLA Day, and two standalone events co-organised with CSLZA and Netflix was a collaborative effort with several academic and cultural institutions. Inviting critical conversations among filmmakers, industry professionals, academics and civil society, the events on offer included panel discussions, in-conversations, keynote addresses, special presentations and networking opportunities, fostering alliances and exposure for African documentaries.

LIVE MUSIC EVENTS





KAMVA COLLECTIVE'S ANNUAL ENCOUNTERS PARTY

Cultural Production House KAMVA Collective's annual Encounters Party kicked off with the first edition of our MicroDose screenings where a selection of micro documentaries that explore the sacred spaces between art, sound, movement and nature were screened. The dance floor became a space to unwind post screenings with academic, artist, and cratedigger Michael Bhatch played from his extensive archival collection with a nod to Afrofuturism and Black speculative arts. Khoi Khonnexion musician Garth Erasmus played self-made instruments & sax to Grant Jurius sample based Analog loop creations. DJ Athi Maq took us through midnight with classic Kwaito and Amapiano electronic sets with the Encounters audience demanding an encore! KAMVA enjoyed collaborating on the opening night event - that has become a space for the fusion of documentary and music! Big appreciation to the whole Encounters Team for putting on such an important and well run and curated festival, such a warm, welcoming and vital space for the documentary film community.

VINYL MIXER

In Johannesburg, the Vinyl Mixer event at the Goethe-Institut showcased the unique charm of vinyl records, offering a nostalgic yet contemporary experience for music lovers. This event, which capped off the day, featured music and mingling with DJs Khalid Shamis, Tymon Smith, and The Straitjacket Tailor. Attendees enjoyed drinks, grooved to the vinyl vibes, and networked with fellow creatives, making it a perfect opportunity to socialise, unwind, and create something extraordinary.

These live music events were a resounding success, drawing enthusiastic crowds and enhancing the overall festival experience by blending the worlds of film and music in a harmonious celebration of creativity and culture.







FESTIVAL GUEST FEEDBACK



FESTIVAL GUEST FEEDBACK

"I just wanted to thank you all for your hard work and dedication. We really enjoyed the screenings of FITTING IN and all the panels we could visit in the time we were here. It meant so much to us to share the film with the South African public and that some of the participants of our film could join the Q&As. It really made our work come together so nicely. Also the outreach screening in Stellenbosch was amazing!" – Fabienne Steiner, Fitting in Director.

"Thank you so much for your message and for such an incredible festival. I'm deeply grateful to you and the whole Encounters team for including Normal To Me in your lineup. You've created something truly special, and by giving our cast this platform and experience, you've changed their lives in ways that are hard to put into words. It's something not many people in the world are afforded to experience, so thank you sincerely from the bottom of my heart." – Luke Sharland, Normal To Me Director.

"I wanted to express my heartfelt thanks for the opportunity to be part of such an important moment in documentary filmmaking. From the powerful opening film to the engaging panel discussions, I had an absolute ball. For Auntie Sophia, this experience was deeply meaningful. She felt truly seen and was incredibly proud to have her son's legacy respected and celebrated in such a beautiful way. Thank you for championing our film and welcoming it into the Encounters family. Thanks once again for all your support and for putting together such an inspiring festival. Rest well, and I look forward to the next edition!" – Cleveland Hopp, Onthou vi Fredo? Director.

"Thank you very much for this message and for hosting the film and me! It was an honour!" – Felix Golenko, YUMI Director.

"Encounters have given it magnificent exposure, both in Cape Town and Joburg. Thank you." – Albie Sachs, Albie Protagonist.

"It was a unique opportunity for us to share this rich material during Albie's 90th year. Thank you for putting on the film a second time at the Labia. We went to the Cape Town Symphony on the Thursday afterwards, a woman passed Albie and said... 'He's still here'... I couldn't help laughing and thinking... And How!.. Your festival helped us to show just how very much he is still here." – Vanessa September, Albie Producer/Protagonist.

"Thank you. It was an extraordinary 'maiden' Encounters experience for me. I was astounded with the extent of organisation involved and how you manage things so efficiently in such a cool, calm and professional way. I really enjoyed meeting you all. I also found the engagement with other fillmmakers and your team at the different weekend events very interesting. Thank you for the wonderful lunch and chance to interact and meet others in such a warm and welcoming way. As I mentioned to your Instagram community manager during the festival, compliments on your social media, and thank you for the collaborations on that. It had a big impact on our reach. As an aside, it was great to have so many people contact me to find out how they could somehow get tickets second screening at the Labia, which was SOLD OUT so quickly. There was great demand following the first screening. Some people mentioned that they picked up totally different layers seeing the film a second time." – Carolyn Parton, Albie Producer.

"I'd like to say that I am deeply thankful for Encounters for screening the film, for accommodating to us till the last minute and for promoting it so well. We had two full houses in Cape Town and have received multiple messages from different people that enjoyed the film and the experience. Thank you for all the work you do with the festival, for opening the space for important conversations and for sharing films from all over the continent and beyond." – Sara Gouveia, Albie Director.

"It was a pleasure to be part of Encounters with THE BRINK OF DREAMS, we are glad the film was well received by your audience and we hope we'll be able to collaborate again on other titles next year." – **Théo Lionel, The Party Sales agent.**

"I am very glad the festival went well and Anselm was included." – **Cécile Bordas, The Festival Agency sales agent.**

"Thank you for the invite to be part of Encounters. We really appreciate it, and are so glad The Walk was well received." – Harri Grace, The Walk Producer.

"Many thanks for your engagement and support for our films." – **Georges** Gachot, Misty Director.

"Congratulations on your festival! I know it was a lot of work and I hope it was rewarding. From my end, I'm deeply grateful that people like you create important forums like Encounters to tell our stories. Thank you for including Brief Tender Light in your 2025 edition. The BTL family is deeply honored."—Arthur Musah, Brief Tender Light Director.

"We are still reeling from how good the festival was! We are so grateful for the support from Encounters. We are so excited about how well-received 'Matabeleland' was among audiences. I'm sure we will cross paths on the festival journey one way or the other, and it was truly an honour to attend, be in such good company." — Nyasha Kadandara, Matabeleland Director.

"It was an absolute pleasure bringing Mothers of Chibok to Encounters, and the warmth and hospitality from the entire team made it worth the trip. I look forward to many more engagements and will keep you posted as Mothers of Chibok continues to travel." – Joel 'Kachi Benson, Mothers of Chibok Director.

"Let me first congratulate Encounters for 10-days of nothing but celebrating the documentary genre only you know how." - Molatelo Bossman, 6 Kings and 6 Queens Director.

"I really enjoyed the screening and Q&A. Great turnout and selection of films." - Nariman Massoumi, Pouring Water on Troubled Oil Director.

"Honestly, unexpected as we were just happy for an opportunity to showcase our film at Encounters festival platform and we are grateful for the prestige you all afforded us." - Nhlanhla Mthethwa, Sam Nzima: A Journey Through His Lens Director.

"It was great to be there, to meet you and I hope to be back!" - Pedro Neves, Dreams of a Revolution Director.

"Last night was amazing! It was my first time at the venue, and we received the warmest welcome from the team there. We had a great crowd, lots of interesting responses and a wonderfully robust and thoughtful exchange between the audience and our panelists from SWEAT." Shanelle Jewnarain, Womxn: Working Director.

"It was so nice to hang out more with the Encounters team. Thanks for such a great Cape Town experience." - Eloise King, The Shadow Scholars Director.

"What a beautiful festival and such an exciting moment for our whole team." - Bentley Brown, Guardian of the Well Director.

"It was a pleasure being on the jury though I am sorry to not have been able to participate more. One day soon. Thanks to you all for your critically important work. I hope you are all enjoying some deep rest!" - Dr Nataleah Hunter-Young, writer, independent curator, Assistant Professor, Curator and **Encounters Juror.**

"It has been such an honour for me to be part of the jury and I appreciate your consideration in having me participate." - Samuel Tebandeke, Great Lakes Creative Producers Lab Project Co-Lead and Encounters Juror.

"Congratulations on finishing yet another great edition of Encounters! From what I heard and saw on social media it was a very powerful one with a marvelous selection of films of which I had the honor to see many of them as being part of the jury. Thank you so much for thinking of me and inviting and trusting me to be a juror." - Julie Nederkoorn, Head of International Support at Movies that Matter and Encounters Juror.

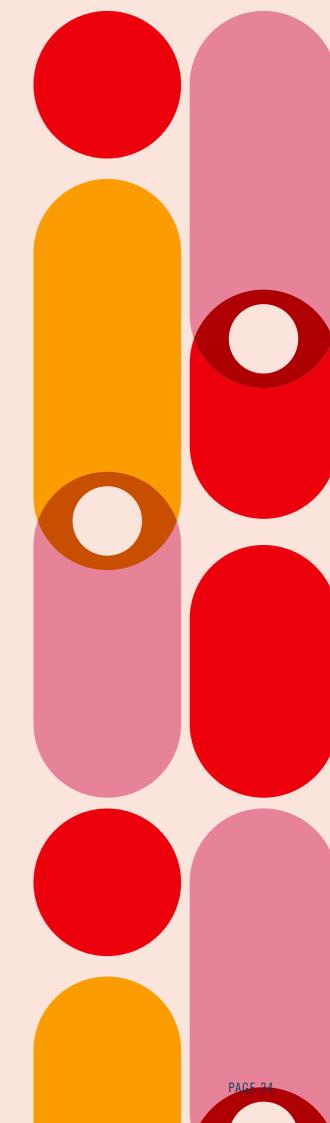
"Many thanks for inviting me to be on the jury this year, the films were really excellent, and I absolutely enjoyed it all" - Peter Rorvik, Durban International Film Festival Former Director and Encounters Juror.

"Thank you so much for your kind words and for the invitation to be part of this year's jury. It was truly an honour. The films we reviewed left a deep impression on me and reminded me of the extraordinary talent emerging from across the continent. I feel privileged to have been part of the process. You and the team did an outstanding job this year and I have no doubt the festival will continue to go from strength to strength." - Sihle Hlophe,

Director, Producer and Story Development Consultant, and Encounters Juror.

"Congratulations once again on a fantastically run festival." - Mmabatho Montsho, multidisciplinary filmmaker, writer, director and Encounters Juror.

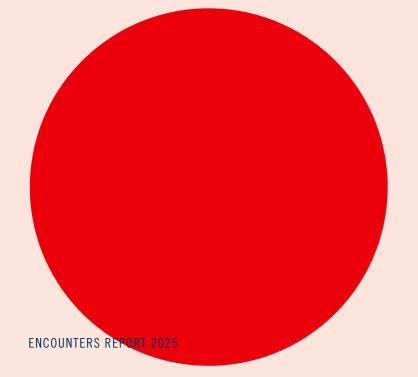
"I wanted to express our gratitude in allowing us to be part of your event this year. We really enjoyed the conversations we had with the documentary filmmaking community in Cape Town. We're a learning organisation and so we constantly try to find ways to improve our collaborations with partners like yourselves for the benefit of the industry. Thank you once again and I look forward to doing more great things with you to strengthen the documentary filmmaking community in SA!" - Mokgadi Seabi, Senior PR Manager - Netflix Sub-Saharan Africa.







INDUSTRY PROGRAMME OVERVIEW



INDUSTRY PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

ENCOUNTERS INFOCUS – DEEPER DIALOGUES, SHARPER VISIONS—ONE STORY AT A TIME.

This year, we rise. With a sharp eye and a bold heart, we bring the finest in non-fiction, stories that speak, stir and stand tall.

For in a world shifting beneath our feet, our films must echo the truth of now, capturing the beauty, the chaos, and the pulse of real life; raw, urgent and unforgettable. These are stories born from memory and identity; from the frightening reality of now and the many ways we learn to make sense of it. They explore art as impact, and knowledge as resistance. They amplify agency, rebel, and stand up to power. Through them, we don't just witness the world, we feel it, question it and reimagine our place within it.

The 2025 **Encounters InFocus** industry programme comprised in-depth sessions, including dynamic panel discussions, masterclasses, and in-conversations in Cape Town and Johannesburg. Once again, we hosted the impactful Rough Cut Lab Africa Day (RCLA) in Johannesburg. Our series highlights several key themes, each revealing social, cultural, and political realities. We successfully explore critical concepts such as generational trauma, protest, creative expression, education, culture, climate change, solidarity in film and more, inviting festivalgoers, industry professionals, and civil society to reflect on how documentary can illuminate and challenge the forces shaping our world.

THE BREAKDOWN OF THE PROGRAMME

SATURDAY 21 JUNE Bertha House, Mowbray

PROGRESS OR DESTRUCTION? THE FRIGHTENING REALITY OF NOW IN-CONVERSATION







Time: 10:00 - 11:15 SAST

Shifting Baselines, directed by Julien Elie, examines the environmental and social consequences of private companies like SpaceX altering local communities and ecosystems. While rocket launches and Starlink satellites promise new frontiers for humanity, they also raise pertinent questions: "Are we moving towards a brighter future, or are we simply accelerating environmental degradation?" In this in-conversation, Elie will delve into how space exploration can both inspire people and imperil our world. His highly innovative artistic approach to this complex topic offers a touch of genius and makes you deeply reflect on how the race to the stars might reshape life on Earth—for better or worse.

Speakers:

Julien Elie (Dir. Shifting Baselines)

Moderator: Sean Drummond (Screenwriter, Producer)

RISE AND RESIST: FEMINIST STORIES OF DEFIANCE AND EMPOWERMENT IN-CONVERSATION



Time: 11:45 - 13:15 SAST

Womxn: Working by South African filmmaker Shanelle Jewnarain and **Mothers of Chibok** by Nigerian director Joel 'Kachi' Benson offer intimate portraits of women navigating the frontlines of work and education. While rooted in different social contexts—sex workers fighting for decriminalisation in South Africa and mothers working to pave a better way for their children's futures after the Boko Haram kidnappings in Nigeria—both films are deeply connected by themes of maternal

and political resistance and the need to challenge the systems that marginalise women. This in-conversation brings together two visionary filmmakers who use storytelling to lay bare the agency of their protagonists and dives into the practical and ethical choices behind their filmmaking practices.

Speakers:

Shanelle Jewnarain (Dir. Womxn Working)

Joel 'Kachi' Benson (Dir. Mothers of Chibok)

Joy Watson (Global consultant, researcher, and writer working at the intersection of gender, public policy, and social change)

 ${\bf Moderator: Lee \ Walters \ (Postdoctoral \ Fellow \ in \ Culture \ \& \ Technics \ at \ the \ Culture \ \& \ Technics \ at \ Culture \ \& \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \$

Centre for Humanities Research, UWC)

MONDAY 23 JUNE Centre for Humanities Research (CHR), University of the Western Cape (UWC)

Welcome Address by Professor Heidi Grunebaum (Writer and Scholar; DST/NRF Flagship on Critical Thought in African Humanities, CHR, UWC)

MAKING IT: THE BUSINESS AND FUTURE OF AFRICAN DOCUMENTARIES KEYNOTE PANEL



MAKING IT: THE BUSINESS AND FUTURE OF AFRICAN DOCUMENTARIES

A SHAME

Time: 10:00 - 11:30 SAST

Join us for a rigorous look at how African documentaries are financed, produced, and distributed. This session brings together industry experts

—producers, directors, and distributors—to discuss how films are chosen, what the market truly values, and how projects can successfully navigate festivals and sales channels. We'll delve into questions around intellectual property and independent filmmaking, explore audience responses, and consider the perspectives of both director and on-screen protagonists. We'll also examine how organisations like DFA can support emerging and established filmmakers in developing sustainable careers. With an eye on the future of documentary in Africa, this conversation promises candid insights and practical strategies for anyone passionate about telling authentic African stories.

Speakers:

Mohamed Saïd Ouma (Exec. Dir. DocA) (Keynote address delivered in absentia) Don Edkins (Filmmaker and Producer)

Miki Redelinghuys (DFA Representative & Filmmaker & Documentary Filmmaker)

Richard Finn Gregory (Documentary Director, Founder - Picture Cult)

Nadine Cloete (Filmmaker. Director. Writer.)

Moderator: Antoinette Engel (DFM as Industry Programme Curator & Manager)

COLLECTIVE RESISTANCE IN DOCUMENTARY STORYTELLING (SHORT FILM FOCUS) PANEL



Time: 11:45 - 13:15 SAST

Encounters invites audiences to explore collective resistance as expressed through the impactful short documentary format—highlighting films that amplify marginalised voices, champion resilience and interrogate social struggles. From the urgent immediacy of **Ahmad Alive**, offering a powerful, first-hand glimpse into the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people under brutal occupation, to the evocative portrayal of ecological injustice confronting Western Cape fishermen in **Undercurrent**, these documentaries highlight solidarity as an act of survival and empowerment.

This panel further celebrates solidarity in personal contexts. In **Onthou vi Fredo?**, audiences encounter the moving legacy of queer icon Alfredo April, whose life continues to inspire collective pride, love and resilience within his community after his cruel murder. Meanwhile, **Slut Club** proudly challenges societal norms and patriarchy through body politics and reclaiming femininity, as well as unapologetic queer defiance. Collectively, these films demonstrate how documentary storytelling, particularly in concise formats, can profoundly embody acts of resistance, illuminating diverse identities and fostering communal resilience.

Speakers:

Aurelia Driver (Co-Dir. Ahmad Alive) Luca Smith (Dir. Undercurrent) Cleveland Hopp (Dir. Onthou vi Fredo?)

Zoey Black (Dir. Slut Club)

Moderator: Dylan Valley (Filmmaker & Lecturer at the Centre for Film and Media Studies (CFMS) at the University of Cape Town (UCT))



WOUNDS & WHISPERS: NARRATIVES SHAPED BY HISTORY AND HEALING PANEL



Time: 14:00 - 15:30 SAST

Once deemed a private or familial issue, generational trauma is now recognised as a systemic burden shared by entire communities.

Matabeleland reveals one man's quest to give his father, a victim of state-sanctioned violence, a dignified burial—while his country still grapples with the weight of its past. Fitting in explores how longstanding traditions at a South African university male-only residence are challenged by a new generation of students who wish to celebrate their diverse identities and seek new spaces to 'fit in'. In The Brink of Dreams, an all-female theatre troupe in Egypt confronts rigid social norms, embodying the collective scars and quiet hopes of marginalised women. This panel will consider how these documentaries collectively illuminate how cycles of harm can be disrupted and chart a path towards deeper societal healing.

The participating directors will also address their experiences closely working with protagonists who have opened themselves up to the camera

Speakers:

Nyasha Kadandara (Dir. Matabeleland)

Dr Shari Eppel (Director of Ukuthula Forensic Anthropology Team, Protagonist in Matabeleland)

Fabienne Steiner (Dir. Fitting In)

Moderator: Shameela Seedat (Dir. Whispering Truth to Power and African Moot; Prod. Girl, Taken)

TUESDAY 24 JUNE Centre for Humanities Research (CHR), University of the Western Cape (UWC)

Welcome Address by Professor Heidi Grunebaum (Writer and Scholar; DST/NRF Flagship on Critical Thought in African Humanities, CHR, UWC)

EDGE OF NOW: AFRICA AND THE DIASPORA IN DIALOGUE PANEL



Time: 13:00 - 14:30 SAST

From a rallying cry against Apartheid to war, three personal films look at and explore an artistic response to the violence of oppression illustrating the transformative power of creativity. Sam Nzima: A Journey Through His Lens captures the photographer whose iconic image of Hector Pieterson exposed apartheid's brutality, highlighting the media as a powerful agent of change. In And She Didn't Die, acclaimed feminist writer Lauretta Ngcobo's story—told through her daughter's archival deep dive—illuminates how liberation and exile shaped African identity across generations. Finally, Khartoum brings together Sudanese filmmakers displaced by conflict to re-enact their memories, underscoring the resilience of a continent forging creative alliances. Together, these films illustrate how protest and creativity, including photography, literature, and filmmaking, remains a cultural force, bridging past struggles and present collaborations for empowerment.

Speakers:

Nhlanhla Mthethwa (Dir. Sam Nzima: A Journey Through His Lens) Ibrahim Snoopy (Co-Dir. Khartoum)

Dr. Barbara Boswell (Creative Writer, Associate Professor and Head of the Department of English Literary Studies at the University of Cape Town and Protagonist in And She Didn't Die)

Moderator: Dr Meghna Singh (Visual Artist, Creative Technologist and Researcher)

Presented in partnership with Al Jazeera, IFAS, Heinrich Böll Stiftung

REWIRING KNOWLEDGE: NEW PATHS TO UNDERSTANDING IN-CONVERSATION



NEW PATHS TO UNDERSTANDING



Time: 14:45 - 16:00 SAST

From Kenya's thriving contract-cheating economy to DeepMind's cutting-edge AI ventures, **The Shadow Scholars** and **The Thinking Game** reveal seismic shifts in how knowledge is created, accessed and valued. As many students worldwide outsource their work to online providers—and AI increasingly rivals human intellect—these films prompt critical questions about the future of education, the credibility of academic degrees, and the unequal power structures that shape global learning. Bringing together educators, technologists, and filmmakers, this in-conversation will examine hidden exploitations, shifting power dynamics, and the challenges of verifying knowledge in an AI-driven landscape. Ultimately, we ask: "How we can "rewire" learning to ensure equitable access and harness new tools responsibly, so that tomorrow's education fosters genuine understanding rather than hollow credentials."

Presented in partnership with CHR, UWC

Speakers:

Eloïse King (Dir. The Shadow Scholars)

Moderator: Dr. Valmont Layne (Programme Director, New Archival Visions, Centre for Humanities Research, UWC)



RCLA X GOETHE-INSTITUT X ENCOUNTERS INDUSTRY DAY BREAKDOWN

10:00 - 12:00 SAST

The life of the artefact. How do filmmakers, researchers and editors find, stumble across, use and choose footage of the past and present within the personal, political and practical.

Khalid Shamis in his editing work is always curious as to the gaps we think we are filling with the material we think we have found and are allowed, and disallowed to use.

Kethiwe Ngcobo's Film and Television career for more than 30 years has brought her to the place where she has made a film about her mother's life that contains a multitude of archival sources and expressions. Kethiwe's avant garde biopic **'And She Didn't Die'** brought her a blend of rich material and archival obstacles and triumphs.

Nhlanhla Mthethwa's years, and tears, of producing work and archival research skills have coalesced in his new film on **Sam Nzima: A Journey Through His Lens,** where the problems and politics precisely of working with and about specific material holds a torch light to the unseen and erased in image and history.



PAGE 29



APPROACHES TO ARCHIVES AND PRACTICE AS PROCESS



14:00 - 15:30 SAST APPROACHES TO ARCHIVES AND PRACTICE AS PROCESS.

Arya Lalloo has been engaged with archival material coming from all angles. Past artefacts looking at others and the other being looked at and constructed anew, shot footage from both sides of her camera and how one looks at ones own deconstruction.

Always deep into a number of archival rabbit holes, Sifiso Khanyile is known for his producing and directing but most importantly for his digging through history and throwing up the dust into our futures.

Catherine Meyburgh's familial filmmaking pedigree in all aspects of the industry has brought her and her brothers into the expansive collection of her father, Felix Meyburgh's films, outtakes and trims. Over the past two years Catherine has been slowly watching and databasing while reconnecting with a long lost relationship with celluloid.



15:45 - 16:45 SAST **CRAFTING THE CLIMATE CRISIS!**

Archiving the present and future proofing climate justice. A masterclass with Felix Golenko's Yumi, The Whole World.



ITING EDGE CONNECTIONS: NETWORKING WITH ENCOUNTERS AND ROUGH CUT LAB AFRICA

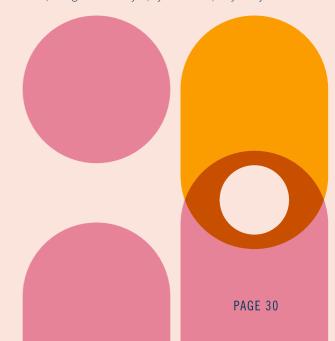


16:45 - 18:00 SAST **CUTTING EDGE CONNECTIONS: NETWORKING WITH ENCOUNTERS** AND ROUGH CUT LAB AFRICA



VINYL MIXER - NETWORKING

DJs: Khalid Shamis, Straight Jacket Taylor, Tymon Smith, Salym Fayad





NETFLIX SPECIAL PRESENTATION

For the first time, Netflix participated at Encounters by hosting a special presentation session focused on the rise of docuseries and their role in the contemporary audiovisual landscape. This presentation highlighted the evolution of the documentary-series genre, its cultural impact, and how platforms like Netflix contribute to its development. Imane Mezher provided expert insights and real-world examples. Encounters Board member Odette Geldenhuys moderated an interactive Q&A session, fielding questions from the audience and further probing Netflix's strategy. To cap off the event, Netflix (in partnership with Encounters) hosted a networking mixer, giving attendees an opportunity to connect directly with Netflix representatives and fellow filmmakers in an informal setting.

OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

The Netflix presentation and networking mixer were designed to meet several key objectives:

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: Build meaningful relationships with the local documentary filmmaking community.

HIGHLIGHTING DOCUMENTARIES: Emphasise the importance of documentaries in Netflix's content offering and illustrate the evolution of the genre, as well as its growing appeal to audiences in South Africa and around the world.

Showcasing Strategy: Showcase Netflix's editorial and strategic choices in documentary production in South Africa.



THE PRESENTATION & MIXER

Date: Saturday, 28 June 2025
Time: 10:00 – 12:30 SAST
Format: 60-minute presentation,
15-minute audience Q&A, followed
by 75–90 minutes of networking
(with refreshments)

PRESENTATION TOPIC: INSIGHTS TO NETFLIX'S STRATEGY AND UNIQUE APPROACH FOR DOCUMENTARIES

The increase in popularity of documentary features and series not

only in South Africa but across the globe has been unprecedented over the last several years, and Netflix is considered to be a leader in this ever evolving genre of storytelling that captures diverse stories for a varied audience around the world. This session is must for all seasoned and aspiring documentary filmmakers focusing on Netflix's strategy and unique approach to documentary storytelling, be it documentary features or series particularly in the "True Crime" and "Journalism" genres of the medium.



ENCOUNTERS REPORT 2025

PAGE 32



CREATING ACCESS TO THE FESTIVAL

OUTREACH

The Encounters Inreach/Outreach Programme plays a vital role in ensuring broad-based access to the Festival and creating opportunities to introduce new audiences to the power of documentary film. Since its launch in 2005, the programme has facilitated the participation of over 10,000 individuals.

This multi-stakeholder initiative is made possible through the support of key partners, including Bertha Movie House in Khayelitsha, Nelson Mandela Foundation and Sunshine Cinema. Together, these partnerships help extend the reach of Encounters beyond traditional venues, making documentary cinema more inclusive and accessible across diverse communities.

BERTHA MOVIE HOUSE KHAYELITSHA

Saturday 21 June - Sunday 29 June 2025 | Isivivana Centre Khayelitsha | Cape Town

The Bertha Movie House, based at the Isivivana Centre in Khayelitsha, has been an important screening venue for Encounters since 2017. Through this valued partnership, the festival has brought powerful and thought-provoking documentaries to local audiences.

This year's screenings were well attended, with a strong sense of community and engagement evident among viewers. The ongoing collaboration with the Bertha Movie House remains a meaningful and impactful part of the Festival's outreach efforts, helping to foster dialogue and connection through documentary film.

SCREENING DETAILS:

SATURDAY 21 JUNE 2025

Venue: Bertha Movie House Khayelitsha Documentary: Shifting Baselines Youth audience: 76



SUNDAY 22 JUNE 2025

Venue: Bertha Movie House Khayelitsha Documentary: Matabeleland Youth audience: 38



SATURDAY 21 JUNE 2025

Venue: Bertha Movie House Khayelitsha Documentary: Albie: A Strange Alchemy Youth audience: 57



WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE 2025

Venue: Bertha Movie House Khayelitsha Documentary: And She Didn't Die Youth audience: 47



THURSDAY 26 JUNE 2025

Venue: Bertha Movie House Khayelitsha Documentary: Womxn: Working

Youth audience: 56



SATURDAY 28 JUNE 2025

Venue: Bertha Movie House Khayelitsha Documentary: The Walk

Youth audience: 53



FRIDAY 27 JUNE 2025

Venue: Bertha Movie House Khayelitsha Documentary: Sam Nzima: A Journey

Through His Lens Youth audience: 53



SATURDAY 28 JUNE 2025

Venue: Bertha Movie House

Khayelitsha

Documentary: Normal To Me Youth audience: 33



SUNDAY 29 JUNE 2025

Venue: Bertha Movie House Khayelitsha Documentary: Capturing Water Youth audience: 55



SUNSHINE CINEMA

MONDAY 23 JUNE 2025

Venue: Newborn Christian Primary School , Manguzi KwaZulu-Natal Documentary: Capturing Water



TUESDAY 24 JUNE 2025

Venue: Toronto Primary School, Polokwane, Limpopo Documentary: Yintah



Tuesday 24 June 2025

Mike Mashale

Venue: Thusong Service's Centre, Mashishing, Mpumalanga Documentary: "Currents of Resilience" Shorts Block films I Screened by Senzo Jiyana &



SUNDAY 29 JUNE 2025

Venue: Mafikeng, North West

Province

Documentary: "Currents of Resilience" Shorts Block films I Screened by Atlegang Shuenyane

& Masego Bogatsu





PAGE 34 **ENCOUNTERS REPORT 2025**

INREACH



MATABELELAND

Group Invited: Film Students Dates: 21 & 28 June 2025 City: Cape Town I Ster Kinekor V&A Waterfront Number of Audiences Attended: 31

Johannesburg | The Zone @ Rosebank

Number of Audiences Attended: 63



MOTHERS OF CHIBOK

Group Invited: Women Groups (Scalabrini Centre), Film Groups (Qhakaza) and filmmakers Number of Audiences Attended: 48

Date: 21 June 2025

City: Cape Town I Ster Kinekor V&A

Waterfront



ANSELM

Group Invited: Filmmakers Number of Audiences Attended: 4 Date: 21 June 2025 City: Cape Town I Ster Kinekor V&A

Waterfront



ROOTS OF RESISTANCE SHORT

The Other Side of Beauty [11 min] Dreams of a Revolution [13 min] + Q&A, Medallion [19 min], Ahmad Alive [21 min] + Q&A Group Invited: Hanover Park Community Boys group Number of Audiences Attended: 20

Date: 21 June 2025

City: Cape Town I Ster Kinekor V&A

Waterfront



NORMAL TO ME

Group Invited: Disability organisation - Cape Town Association for the Physically Disabled and the Film Crew Number of Audiences Attended: 26 Date: 21 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



YALLA PARKOUR

Group Invited: Filmmakers Number of Audiences Attended: 5

Date: 21 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



WOMXN: WORKING

Group Invited: Sex workers organisations - Sisonke, SWEAT, and Women's Legal Centre Communications, and filmmakers Number of Audiences Attended: 34 Date: 21 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



AND SHE DIDN'T DIE

Group Invited: Literature Students Number of Audiences Attended: 8

Date: 22 June 2025

City: Cape Town I Ster Kinekor V&A

Waterfront



DEATH BY DISCRIMINATION SHORT BLOCK

Group Invited: Activist Groups Number of Audiences Attended: 19 Date: 22 June 2025 City: Cape Town | Ster Kinekor V&A Waterfront



TREE OF AUTHENTICITY

Group Invited: Film Students Number of Audiences Attended: 2 Date: 22 June 2025

City: Cape Town I Ster Kinekor V&A

Waterfront

PAGE 35 **ENCOUNTERS REPORT 2025**



6 KINGS AND 6 QUEENS

Group Invited: SWIFT, Sonke Gender Justice and Woza Women Number of Audiences Attended: 46

Date: 22 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



YINTAH

Group Invited: Social and Climate

Justice Activist

Number of Audiences Attended: 24

Date: 22 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



CAPTURING WATER

Group Invited: Film Activists and Students

Number of Audiences Attended: 14

Date: 22 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



SAM NZIMA: A JOURNEY THROUGH HIS LENS

Group Invited: Photography Students Number of Audiences Attended: 15

Date: 24 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



THE LAND'S A SILENT WITNESS SHORTS BLOCK

Umhlaba Wokhokho - Land of My Ancestors [17min] + Q&A Spirits of the Land [39 min]

Group Invited: Film Activists
Number of Audiences Attended: 16

Date: 24 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



"FRAGMENTS OF THE FORGOTTEN LAND" SHORT BLOCK

The Rock Speaks [7 min] + Q&A The Sending of the Crows [15 min] + Q&A Flowers / Flores [30 min] + Q&A

Group Invited: Filmmakers

Number of Audiences Attended: x 15

Date: 24 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



THIS IS BALLROOM

Group Invited: Hanover Park Cape Flats Ladies Group Number of Audiences Attended: 15 Date: 25 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



REDEFINING DESIRE: FROM FEAR TO FREEDOM" SHORT BLOCK

WHAT I DO NOT KNOW WILL NOT KILL ME [16 min], Slut Club [23 min] + Q&A Unyagoni: Bahati's Sex Education Journey

Group Invited: University Students Number of Audiences Attended: 11

Date: 25 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



THE SHADOW OF SCHOLARS

Waterfront

Group Invited: Film Institutions and Education Departments such as AFDA, CPUT, Association for Educational Transformation Number of Audiences Attended: 40 Date: 25 June 2025 City: Cape Town I Ster Kinekor V&A



KHARTOUM

Group Invited: Muslim Organisations

(Islamic Relief)

Number of Audiences Attended: 33

Date: 25 June 2025

City: Cape Town I Ster Kinekor V&A

Waterfront



HOW TO BUILD A LIBRARY

Group Invited: University Students Number of Audiences Attended: 5

Date: 26 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



INTERCEPTED

Group Invited: University Students Number of Audiences Attended: 2

Date: 26 June 2025 City: Cape Town



THE BRINK OF DREAMS

Group Invited: Khayelitsha Cohort Number of Audiences Attended: 2

Date: 27 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



BLUE ROAD: THE EDNA O'BRIEN STORY

Group Invited: Filmmakers Number of Audiences Attended: 3

Date: 28 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



MOTHERS OF CHIBOK

Group Invited: Filmmakers Number of Audiences Attended: 4

Date: 28 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



KABUL CHAOS

Group Invited: French Students Number of Audiences Attended: 43

Date: 28 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre



"BETWEEN FEAR AND FORGETTING" SHORT BLOCK

Never Come Fetch Me [6 min] + Q&A Fear Fokol [15 min] They dug a grave in my heart [24 min]

Group Invited: Filmmakers

Number of Audiences Attended: 3

Date: 28 June 2025

City: Cape Town, The Labia

Theatre



"BETWEEN THE ORDINARY AND THE **UNCANNY" SHORTS BLOCK**

perfectly a strangeness [15 min] The Fries Philosopher [17 min]

Group Invited: Filmmakers

Number of Audiences Attended: 2

Date: 28 June 2025

City: Cape Town | Ster Kinekor V&A

Waterfront



THE SHADOW OF SCHOLARS

Group Invited: UCT Student Number of Audiences Attended: 1

Date: 29 June 2025

City: Johannesburg I The Zone @

Rosebank



KABUL CHAOS

Group Invited: Media Students Number of Audiences Attended: 30

Date: 29 June 2025

City: Johannesburg | The Zone @

Rosebank



ALBIE: A STRANGE ALCHEMY

Group Invited: UCT Students and

Filmmakers

Number of Audiences Attended: 9

Date: 29 June 2025

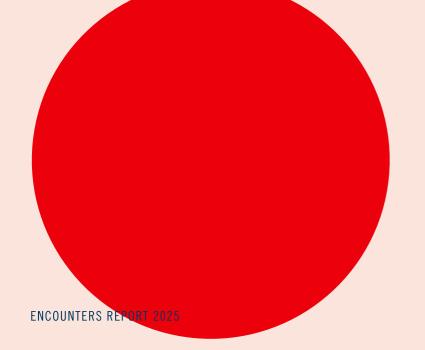
City: Cape Town, The Labia Theatre

PAGE 37 **ENCOUNTERS REPORT 2025**





ENCOUNTERS AWARDS



ENCOUNTERS AWARDS

ENCOUNTERS ANNOUNCES 2025 AWARD-WINNERS
ENCOUNTERS SOUTH AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL
HAS ANNOUNCED THE AWARD-WINNERS OF ITS 2025 EDITION WHICH
TOOK PLACE IN CAPE TOWN AND JOHANNESBURG FROM 19 TO 29 JUNE.

Awards Breakdown Below:

ENCOUNTERS AL JAZEERA AWARD FOR BEST AFRICAN FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

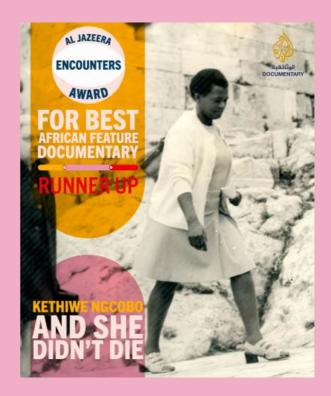


The judges in this category were Dr. Nataleah Hunter-Young, Samuel Tebandeke and Sihle Hlophe.

WINNER - MOTHERS OF CHIBOK by Director Joel "Kachi" Benson USA | Australia | Nigeria | 88 min | 2024

JURY STATEMENT:

"This year's winner of the AJD Award for Best African Feature offers a patient portrayal of what it means to persist in spite of terror, personal loss, and indefinite longing. This film salutes the caretaking work of mothers and sisters who toil as cash-crop farmers while awaiting the return of their daughters — among the schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram in 2014. Framed gracefully in natural light, the director measures the passage of time from seed to harvest, exalting these women who — undeterred by fear — continue to cultivate the land so they can formally educate their children. For this, and its delicate treatment of incorruptible love, the AJD Award for Best African Feature goes to MOTHERS OF CHIBOK directed by Joel "Kachi" Benson"



RUNNER-UP - AND SHE DIDN'T DIE by Dir. Kethiwe Ngcobo | South Africa | UK 102 min | 2025

JURY STATEMENT:

"A captivating visual love letter from a daughter to a mother. Ngcobo confidently subverts the conventions of the personal documentary, making it her own. She boldly weaves together a layered portrait of her family's history, bearing her soul to us in the process. Ngcobo's mother, Lauretta, was a pioneer, a thought leader, a warrior queen and a force of nature. This documentary is a celebration of her complex and colorful life. Ngcobo gives us a rare glimpse into the life of an exiled South African family based in London during the height of apartheid. By exploring Lauretta's literary work, the film unpacks how she captured the lived experiences of black women in a raw and authentic manner. Lauretta was ahead of her time and many of her ideas still resonate today. This is a fitting tribute, a timely film, a visual feast. Ngcobo has captured the nuances of the relationship between mother and daughter intricately, subtly. She is a masterful director and the gift of storytelling flows through her veins."

SPECIAL MENTIONS - KHARTOUM BY DIRECTORS IBRAHIM SNOOPY AHMAD, TIMEEA MOHAMED AHMED, RAWIA ALHAG, PHILIP COX & ANAS SAEED I GERMANY I UNITED KINGDOM I SUDAN I QATAR I 80 MIN I 2025 AND DIDY BY DIRECTORS GAËL KAMILINDI & FRANÇOIS-XAVIER DESTORS I RWANDA I SWITZERLAND I FRANCE I 83 MIN I 2024

JURY STATEMENT:

"We were honoured to witness a remarkable range of bold, diverse, and imaginative storytelling from all the filmmakers in competition. Each film offered a unique lens into powerful narratives, making the decision for Special Mention incredibly challenging. After thoughtful deliberation, we have chosen to recognise two exceptional films. The first stands out for its audacity, inventiveness, and the filmmaker's unwavering commitment to telling a necessary story under difficult circumstances. The second captivated us with its tender, deeply human portrait of its central character—brought to life through a consistent, evocative visual language and a profound sense of care. It is with great pleasure that we, the jury, award Special Mentions to the following films: Khartoum and Didy."

ENCOUNTERS AL JAZEERA AWARDS FOR BEST INTERNATIONAL FEATURE DOCUMENTARY



The judges in this category were Peter Rorvik, Mmabatho Montsho and Julie Nederkoorn.

WINNER - PUT YOUR SOUL ON YOUR HAND AND WALK by Director Sepideh Farsi | France | Palestine | 112 min | 2025

JURY STATEMENT:

ENCOUNTERS REPORT 2025

"When film director Sepideh Farsi is blocked from entering Gaza to film there she is put in contact with a young Gaza-based photojournalist Fatem Hassouna and over a series of phone calls she films the calls instead. Fatem's luminous presence is compelling her ever present smile, her simple answers from the heart, she is a light that shines. We witness her joy when Sepideh breaks the news that the film has been selected for Cannes. Then, less than a day later, Fatem, along with ten family members, was killed in a targeted Israeli bombing. How can it be that this radiant woman was such a threat as to warrant her death? Was it the envisaged media coverage that would result from her participation in Cannes? In a time when media freedom is threatened from all sides this deeply humanising film gives face and voice to Fatem, and to life in Gaza - it stands as a powerful and moving tribute, not just for Fatem, but also for the more than 200 journalists killed in Gaza, and for all the countless innocent lives lost."

RUNNER-UP - UNION by Directors Stephen Maing & Brett Story | United States 104 min | 2024

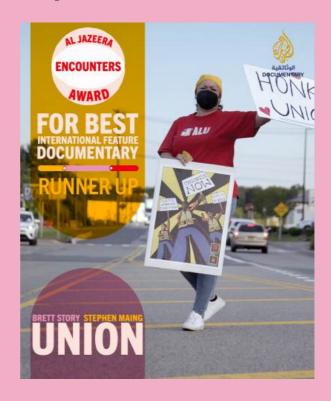
JURY STATEMENT:

"Union" is a tender but uncompromising look at a labour union being born at a bus stop. Through an intimate vérité lens, the film doesn't just explore questions of exploitation, power, leadership and collective bargaining, it elevates the slow and often invisible labour it takes for workers to organise and confront a Goliath- in this case, a billion-dollar company. This film is not just timely, it is a powerful reminder that any meaningful effort toward change requires personal risk, selfless participation, and collective will. It calls for the "smallest" among us to throw their own stone at the giant too."

SPECIAL MENTION - MR NOBODY AGAINST PUTIN BY DIRECTORS DAVID BORENSTEIN & PAVEL TALANKIN I DENMARK I CZECH REPUBLIC I 90 MIN I 2025

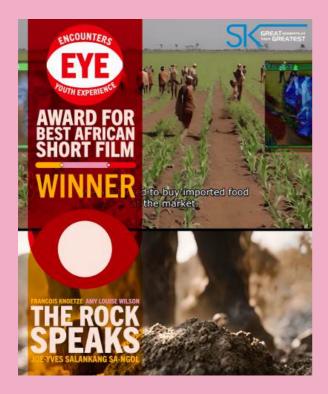
JURY STATEMENT:

"The film Mr. Nobody Against Putin impressively depicts the workings of indoctrination and propaganda machines in schools in Russia and how a dictatorship 'works'. The film is symbolic of so many similar situations in countries and shows the use of misinformation. In a time like this we need courageous and bold storytellers who dare to show what is really going on. We congratulate the makers for this excellent film."





STER-KINEKOR ENCOUNTERS YOUTH EXPERIENCE (EYE) AWARD FOR BEST AFRICAN SHORT DOCUMENTARY



The judges in this category were Elizabeth-Ann Oratile Fosu, Elizabeth-Ann Oratile Fosu and Zoë Magwaza.

WINNER - THE ROCK SPEAKS by Directors Francois Knoetze & Amy Louise Wilson | South Africa | 7 min | 2024

JURY STATEMENT:

"As jury panelists for the 2025 Encounters Documentary Film Festival's Short Film circuit, we were deeply moved and humbly challenged by the exceptional slate of films.

In a world where truth is often contested and justice remains elusive for many, these documentaries serve as vital interventions

— humanising the lived experiences behind headlines, on voices too often marginalized, and on environmental realities too often ignored. The selected films did not simply observe; they interrogated systems, confronted injustices, and called on us all to bear witness. The opportunity to engage with these films reflects the undeniable skill and talent within African Cinema. As well as the powerful space that African filmmakers are creating for thoughtful dialogue to evolving

societies where different voices and perspectives matter.

The Rock Speaks is a documentary which speaks thematically to the pressing socio-political and environmental issues that have sieged the state of Congo. By boldly shattering the conventions of documentary film-making. Additionally, Guardian of the Well which highlights Chad in its call to action in the climate crisis.

From communities fighting for environmental sovereignty to individuals confronting systemic inequity, these works stood out for their creative exploration of emotional depth. They remind us that documentary filmmaking is not just an art form, but a form of resistance and advocacy. We applaud all the filmmakers for their courage and craft. The winning films exemplify what it means to tell stories that matter — stories that push the conversation forward and invite real-world change.

Congratulations to the winners, and to every filmmaker who contributed to this powerful, essential program."

RUNNER-UP - GUARDIAN OF THE WELL by Directors Bentley Brown & Tahir Ben Mahamat Zene | Chad | 6 min | 2025





RONELLE LOOTS AWARD FOR BEST EDITED SOUTH AFRICAN FEATURE AND SHORT



The judges in this category were Catherine Meyburgh, Nikki Comninos and Yoav Dagan.

FEATURE WINNER - AND SHE DIDN'T DIE by Editor: Khalid Shamis and Kuti Rashikhuthuma

JURY STATEMENT:

"The jury is pleased to recognise "And She Didn't Die" for its exceptional editorial craft in BEST EDITED FEATURE as part of the Ronelle Loots Best Edited South African Feature Documentary Awards. This film demonstrates a masterful command of rhythm and pace that creates a satisfying viewing experience. The edit shows precision and clarity.

The personal narrative is presented in a brave, intimate and self-reflective way. And the film's rhythmic sophistication reveals an editor who understands that great editing is felt as much as it is seen.

The film's beauty lies in the integrated use of archive, voiceover, and - at times - humour, making the history and heritage of our country deeply understood.

The jury commends "And She Didn't Die" for the editor's commitment to creating cinema where the edit becomes an integral part of the storytelling language."

SHORT WINNER - NEVER COME FETCH ME by Editors Dan Canyon and Xander Vander

JURY STATEMENT:

"The Jury is delighted to award "Never Come Fetch Me" as the BEST EDITED SHORT as part of the Ronelle Loots Best Edited South African Short Documentary Awards. It stands out as a beautiful poetic film that conjures a deep sense of subjectivity with its central character. The audience is invited into his world and is left with lingering emotional resonance long after watching.

The editing reveals a refined understanding of visual and emotional narrative, using cuts that enhance rather than simply underline the story. Each frame feels deliberately chosen, contributing to a cohesive whole where the editor's eye is felt.

RUNNER-UP - GUARDIAN OF THE WELL by Directors Bentley Brown & Tahir Ben Mahamat Zene | Chad | 6 min | 2025



The sound design deserves particular recognition for its nuanced contribution to the film's atmospheric qualities, creating an immersive experience.

The interplay between dialogue, music, and sound effects work together to create the film's overall impact.

The jury recognises "Never Come Fetch Me" for its artistic ambition, visual excellence, and the editor's commitment to creating cinema that operates on both intellectual and emotional levels."

The South African Guild of Editors (SAGE) is proud to be a part of Encounters South African International Documentary Festival. SAGE supports filmmakers in their journey to construct and develop their film's language, and we encourage filmmakers to reach out to them!

LIEZEL VERMEULEN AWARD FOR SERVICE TO THE DOCUMENTARY SECTOR



The Liezel Vermeulen Award for Service to the Documentary Sector was established by the Documentary Filmmakers Association of South Africa (DFA) in 2024. The award is in honour of Liezel whose passing was a deep loss to the association and the industry. Liezel was an established producer and served as the DFA's Communications Manager for 12 years.

WINNER: MIKI REDELINGHUYS

ENCOUNTERS REPORT 2025

jury Statement:

"Miki supports fellow filmmakers as a coach and impact producer, and leads initiatives like Climate Story Lab ZA. She serves the DFA with generosity, vision, and unwavering dedication, mirroring the same commitment that Liezel had to the organisation. She co-initiated the DFA's docLOVE programme in 2018, which has grown documentary audiences and sparked socially conscious dialogue countrywide.

Through her work, Miki continues to inspire and empower documentary filmmakers, fostering a community that drives social impact. She truly embodies the essence of what the Liezel Vermeulen Award seeks to recognise and celebrate. Congratulations Miki!"

THE ROUGH CUT LAB (RCLA) AWARDS

This year we had a total of 13 awards. From South Africa, The Refinery and Pressure Cooker Studios, Legends Post Production, Fig Leaf Studios, Cairo Film Connection from Egypt, Al Jazeera Documentary, Qatar, Anima Creative Studio, Mozambique and Free Monkeyz from Morocco, Docs, Kenya, Yennega from Senegal.

AL JAZEERA DOCUMENTARY (DOHA) - \$1,000.00 - AGU RIXU
AL JAZEERA DOCUMENTARY (DOHA) - Co-pro deal possibility - AGU RIXU
PRESSURE COOKER STUDIOS (SOUTH AFRICA) - 1x Rough Cut Lab Audio
Package to the amount of Total Audio Post Production R142,401.88 - \$8,000.
60% of the budget will be sponsored by Pressure Cooker Studios (R85,441.13 - \$4,800) The remaining 40% will be covered by Rough Cut Labs or the relevant counterparts of the film (R56,960.75 - \$3,200) - BIG BOYS DON'T CRY

THE REFINERY (SOUTH AFRICA) - 1x Picture finishing award that would enable the upskilling of a junior Refinery operator - Colour grade to the extent of 2 weeks / 10 days, with the option of negotiation on further days at a discounted rate at the cost of the selected project. This plus a DCP Publication - Pülö: BLOODSTREAM OF THE KIRIKE

FIGLEAF STUDIOS (EGYPT) 2 x - 2 x Sound services equivalent to €5,000 for a duration of 4 weeks. Including, but are not limited to, sound editing, sound design and mixing. An additional 2 weeks may be required to complete work during the prize period at an additional cost to the production of €5,000 euros negotiable by Fig Leaf Studios - THE TRANS REVOLUTION, MY FATHERS SON, BIG BOYS DON'T CRY

CAIRO FILM CONNECTION (EGYPT) - Invitation to attend the Cairo Film Connection as a special guest. In addition, one-on-one meetings with potential funding and mentorship opportunities - SAFE MEMORIES

ANIMA ESTUDIO CREATIVO (MOZAMBIQUE) - Poster design package - BIG BOYS DON'T CRY

YENNEGA (Senegal - one week (5 days) of color grading (room, software, and equipment) offered by the Yennenga Center. Additional days are available at 50% off. The technician's fee is not included and remains the responsibility of the production. In-house technicians, whose indicative weekly rate is between 250',000 and 300,000 FCFA (approximately €381 to €457) - REMAINS OF THE PAST

DOCA (KENYA) - 1×3 -5 rounds of consultation over 6 months - STAR BEHIND ICONS

FREE MONKEYZ (MOROCCO) - last touches : Fine cutting if need be, Beginning and ending credits Masters (prores and h264), DCP - NAITRE FILLE, REMAINS OF THE PAST Consultation - NAITRE FILLE

LEGENDS POST PRODUCTION (JHB). 2x Grade. Conform and checkbacks - 1 day - R13000 Colour grade SDR - 10 days R15,000 p/day (R150,000) Final render SDR - 1 day - R7500 All prices discounted by %60 Final payment liable would be R68,200 / \$3,830 / 3,280 euros TRUCK MAMA, NAITRE FILLE

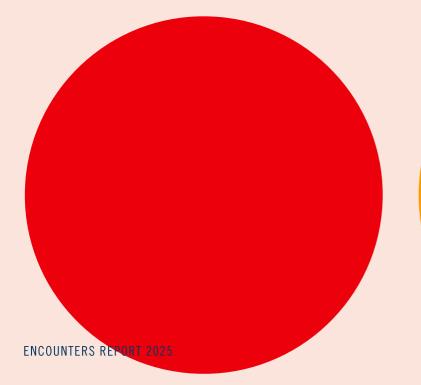
AL JAZEERA DOCUMENTARY (DOHA) - 10 x DCP (1 per per project. 2 weeks heads up, contact Mehdi. Deliver film & mix, Pro Res / MXF) - EVERYONE

PAGE 43





MARKETING AND PUBLICITY



MARKETING AND PUBLICITY

A six-week social media build-up ahead of the festival allowed us to maximise reach and strengthen brand awareness among Encounters' target audience.

With the festival returning to an in-person format this year, we also took the opportunity to refresh our approach to how filmmakers engaged with audiences online. Rather than the typical introductions to screening details, we invited filmmakers and protagonists to share their most memorable experiences, guided by the five core themes of the festival programme. Carefully crafted questions were developed for each filmmaker to ensure authentic, theme-driven storytelling that resonated with our digital audience and extended the reach of each film.

Content that was well received:

- Photos from Encounters Live Events
- Videos from Directors, Producers and Protagonists
- · Short film trailers
- Meet the filmmaker graphics
- Award Jury graphics
- Award winner videos and graphics
- Live reels and stories during the festivals

This dual strategy not only enhanced our local outreach but also significantly boosted our connection with a more youthful audience.

SCREEN ADVERTS 116 SCREENINGS

Featuring all funder logos

FESTIVAL TRAILERS (ALL PLATFORMS) 46,207 VIEWS

Created by Ashliegh da Silva, the trailers showcased excerpts from all the documentaries featured at the Festival, enhanced by animated elements including the logo, statistics, and key messaging designed by Shukry Adams. This added animation overlay elevated the overall production value, resulting in an engaging and visually striking viewing experience.

ENCOUNTERS WEBSITE

AUDIENCE:

NEW USERS: 11,200 (UP 11.2%) TOTAL USERS: 11,900 (UP 14.95%) PAGE VIEWS: 65,700 (UP 31.5%)

TOTAL EVENTS: 167,000 (UP 20.73%)

(includes clicks, scrolls, downloads, etc)

ACQUISITION CHANNELS (TOTAL EVENTS/

MEDIUM)

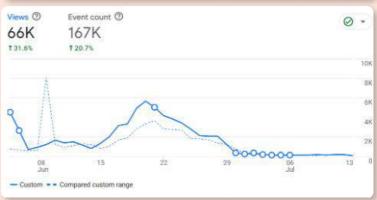
ORGANIC SEARCH: 94K (UP 31.7%)

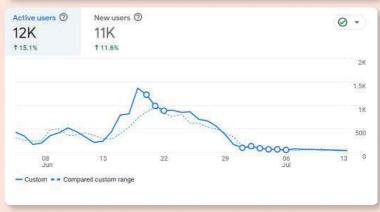
DIRECT: 51K (UP 30.7%)

www.encounters.co.za was managed by Amanda this year.









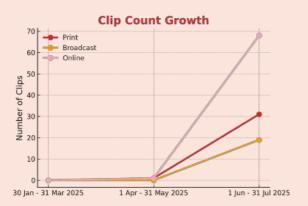
PUBLICITY AND PR (NEWSCLIP)

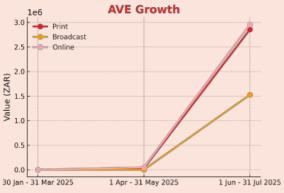
The total publicity value accrued was **R7,335,115.00**, a growth of **6.98**% with a total of 118 clippings/mentions across all media.

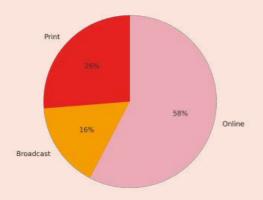
PRINT 31 CLIPPINGS R2,854,563.00

BROADCAST 19 CLIPPINGS R1,526,037.00

ONLINE 68 CLIPPINGS R2,954,515.00







Total combined monitoring units for Encounters South African International Documentary Festival Media coverage is often the cherry on top of any publicity campaign – and for Encounters, it formed a key part of a creative and well-rounded strategy, backed by strong marketing and social media support.

Our publicists have built solid, long-standing relationships with major media outlets, whose ongoing loyalty continues to serve the festival well. While we regularly target film writers and arts journalists, the strength and range of the 2025 line-up gave us the opportunity to engage with media platforms covering a wider variety of themes – including trauma, protest, creative expression, education, culture, climate change, solidarity in film, the legacy of colonisation in Africa, and global conflict zones.

We have a strong understanding of what different media platforms need, as well as what individual journalists and editors are looking for. This insight helped us guide them in selecting films that would resonate with their audiences, resulting in excellent coverage across leading publications and broadcasters such as the Sunday Times, Business Day, Daily Maverick, Men's Health, IOL, eNCA, News24, City Press, Channel Africa, and the Mail & Guardian, to name a few.

As is often the case across the local and global media landscape, high staff turnover in print, broadcast, and online platforms means we frequently have to rebuild contacts and start from scratch. In 2025, we dedicated time to mentoring young and inexperienced journalists – helping them identify stories they could cover, guiding them on how to conduct interviews with filmmakers, and exposing them to a variety of content to sharpen their storytelling and presentation skills.

- Our general media releases were well received and widely used across various platforms.
- We also saw a noticeable improvement in the quality of film stills provided this year – it seems that distributors and filmmakers are finally recognising the importance of strong visuals as powerful promotional tools.
- We initially focused our efforts on promoting the entire feature's programme according to five specific themes, anticipating how audiences would respond to them. This approach helped generate early interest and momentum for the festival as a whole.
- A large number of screenings were sold out, which speaks to the
 effectiveness of our overall communication strategy. Radio and
 online coverage were especially strong this year, with consistent
 engagement across platforms.
- We were also pleased to facilitate a media partnership with the Mail
 & Guardian
- The publicity campaign, particularly the reviews, contributed significantly to positive word of mouth – ultimately helping us build the critical mass of audiences that is essential to the festival's success.



MEN'S HEALTH

Film "Mothers of Chibok" Shines a Light on Resilience and Healing

BY MEN'S HEALTH | JUN 2, 2025 | ENTERTAINMENT



The Nigerian director behind 'Daughters of Chibok' returns with a powerful story of survival. The story is set to screen at the Encounters

DAILY MAVERICK

DEFEND TRUTH

ANALYSIS

New documentary shines a light on the environmental damage caused by Elon Musk's tech ambitions



Illustrative image | A SpaceX Falcon Heavy rocket with the Psyche spacecraft onboard is launched from Launch Complex 39A. (Photo: Aubrey Gemignani / Nasa via Getty Images) | Elon

Short Films That Challenge Perspectives: Highlights from the 27th Encounters Festival

Staff Reporter | Published I month ago



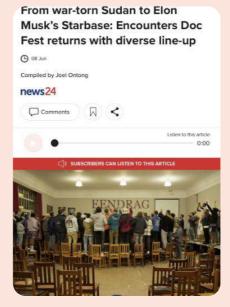


THE 27th Encounters South African International Documentary Festival Includes a bold, diverse, and boundary-pushing selection of 31 short films in this year's programme packed with features, panel discussions, and community screenings in Cape Town and Johannesburg from 19 to 29 June.

ENCA



NEWS 24



DAILY MAVERICK

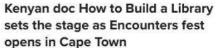


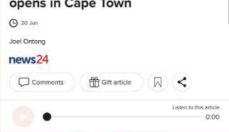


MAIL & GUARDIAN



NEWS24







DAILY NEWS

EYE-OPENING

Doccie sheds light on sex workers' stru

THADS MAKKURWA

A NEW documentary, Worson Working, making its world premiere at the Encounters South African International Documentery Forthal, sheds urgent light on the organing struggle of any workers in South Africa.

Directed by Shanelle lewearain an readacad by Tory Mangwesard Mitch il Harper, the filter chronicles a loarne of activism spanning a decade of actism, realizate, and relentless advocator decrininalisation and justice.

and KwaZulu-Natal Pilm and Tourise Authority, out against the backdrup of South Africa's alarming femicide cross Wouxar: Wawking follows the line of promisent sea work activities such a Noupho Vidina, Judo Dismini, Cor

According to Shariene Versite from Versield & Associates, the women are fighting in courtments a Parlament, leading protests, organis vigits, and supporting their commu-

Their stories are a testamer for courage and leadership of t



Women: Working is a powerful connectary or said work activities in South rica. I ARMAND HOOGH integrations and

colonice and societal stigms," she sail. Filmed over 10 years, the docnetstary exemplifies a collaborativ approach rosted in the grinciples. Nothing short us, without us, woring closely with activities groups life SWEAT and Sisonito.

Verweld said this partner insured the voices of sex we emained at the heart of the namhallenging streetypes and high in their sarner.

The film explores key reference South Africa's sex workers' right owners, including offerts to infuice policy through the Asijiii Coulition, a coalizon unitin legal experts, grader a times, and pridical allo linedelines, liferace is evance paign site. Toy the legal case involving Mitachwels prosecution of a sex oscience, illustrat light for jurice and see Pandicare. Time Mit

> ised the importance of somer's voices in the lescribing it as a deept ornmand, journey. "We have tried to pu your and focus on Blare often silenced. Their solarising debate surror. In South Africa, where on South Africa, where

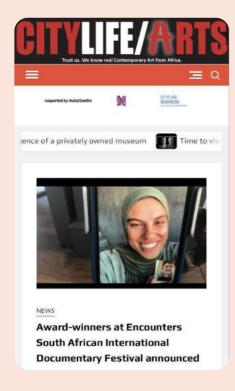
> n South Africa, where o o focus on morality ear of autonomy over the SWEAT spokespers ing highlighted the b ance of the film. "This documentar ourage, positione, an

courage, nedlance, and sex workers who have leasly for their rights, safe "Th a story from sexsalves. We hope suddens that decriminalisation is reform; it's about recogniund protection the loss."

SUNDAY TIMES



CITY LIFE ARTS



DAILY MAVERICK



on love, loss, and the shadows of history



A scene from the documentary Matabeleland. (Image: Supplied)

CITY PRESS





MAIL & GUARDIAN

FRIDAY / 27 JUNE 2025 The 'weight of heavy logs': Masculinity and memory in Matabeleland







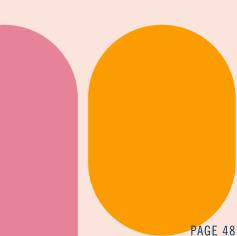












SOCIAL MEDIA INSTAGRAM REPORT

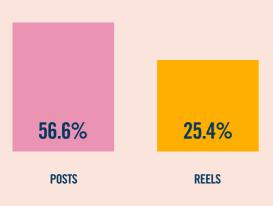
#ENCOUNTERSDOCFEST #ENCOUNTERSDOC CAMPAIGN DATES 5 MAY - 4 JULY

> 5 MAY FOLLOWERS - 6,598 4 JULY FOLLOWERS - 7,975

NEW FOLLOWERS 1,377



BY CONTENT TYPE





INTERACTION BY CONTENT TYPE



AGE RANGE

18-24	7.4%
25-34	36.5%
35-44	33.2%
45-54	13.3%
55-64	5.6%

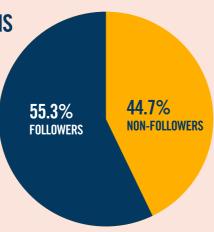
TOP LOCATIONS BY COUNTRY

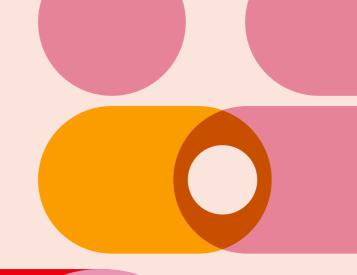
SOUTH AFRICA	66.8%
UNITED STATES	3.1%
UNITED KINGDOM	2.9%
KENYA	2.4%
NIGERIA	2.1%

OVERALL INTERACTIONS

TOTAL INTERACTIONS: 18,837

FROM ADS: 1.8% ACCOUNTS ENGAGED: 8.2





549,449 VIEWS, 3.7% FROM ADS, 41.2% VIEWS FROM FOLLOWERS, 58.8% NON-FOLLOWERS ACCOUNTS REACHED = 133,321 (+ 345.2%)

PEAK ACTIVITY: WEEKDAYS, **ESPECIALLY THURSDAY AND** FRIDAY PEAK HOURS: 12 PM - 6 PM (WITH A HIGH AT 3 PM)

BY TOP CONTENT:

MEET THE JURY: MMABATHO MONTSHO 68K

KHARTOUM TRAILER: 13K

STER KINEKOR PHOTOGRAPHY INTERCEPTED

ROSEBANK: 12K SAVE THE DATE: 10K

PROFILE ACTIVITY:

4 MARCH- 4 MAY

VIEWS: 8484 (+412.6%) VISITS: 7470 (+377.0%)

EXTERNAL LINKS (+1039,3%)

INTERACTION BREAKDOWN ALL CONTENT

LIKES: 9,773





INTERACTION BREAKDOWN **REELS**

LIKES: 4,382



COMMENTS: 165 ♥ SHARES: 293 □





SAVES: 886

TOP PERFORMING

TOP POSTS (BY LIKES)

ENCOUNTERS REPORT 2025

- 1. MMABATHO MONTSHO JURY POST 3.1K (17 JUN)
- 2. GAEL KAMILINDI (MEET THE FILMMAKER) 253 (10 MAY)
- 3. JURY ANNOUNCEMENT 222 (20 JUN)

NOMINEE POST (EYE) – 206 (23 MAY)

TOP REELS (BY LIKES)

- 1. SAVE THE DATE 267 (5 MAY)
- 2. KHARTOUM REEL 265 (8 JUN)
- 3. 6 KINGS & 6 QUEENS 213 (25 MAY)
- 4. AWARD WINNERS 189 (1 JUL)

TOP STORIES (BY REPLIES)

- 1. ENCOUNTERS 2025 SAVE THE DATE 2 REPLIES (5 MAY)
- 2. BLANK STORY 1 REPLY (25 JUN)
- 3. BEHIND THE SCENES 1 REPLY (24 JUN)
- 4. FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS / CAROUSEL 1 REPLY (23 JUN)

PAGE 51

META INSIGHTS ANALYTICS REPORT

#ENCOUNTERSDOCFEST #ENCOUNTERSDOC CAMPAIGN DATES 5 MAY - 4 JULY

TOP LOCATIONS BY COUNTRY

SOUTH AFRICA	76.4%
UNITED KINGDOM	5.6%
FRANCE	2.4%
GERMANY	2.3%
GHANA	2.1%

TO		01	ы	
	L)			ES
				\mathbf{r}
		U		

CAPE TOWN	56.2%
JOHANNESBURG	13.5%
PRETORIA	5.1%
SANDTON & SOWETO	4.6% (EACH)
DURBAN	4.3%

AGE RANGE	• WOMEN • MEN
35-44	33.6%
25-34	28%
45-54	18/1%
55-64	9.5%
65+	8.5%

CONTENT PERFORMANCE

- TOP CONTENT BY VIEWS:
- HIGHEST-PERFORMING POST: 102,797 VIEWS (TUE, JUN 17, 12:30PM).
- OTHER HIGH-VIEW POSTS:
 - 35,157 VIEWS (MON, MAY 5)
 - 11,285 VIEWS (THU, JUN 19)
 - 10,034 VIEWS (SUN, JUN 22)

CONTENT TYPE POPULARITY

- PHOTOS DOMINATE (62.9% OF INTERACTIONS), FOLLOWED BY:
 - VIDEO (20.8%)
 - MULTI-PHOTO (13.5%)
 - STORIES (1.6%)
- POSTS DRIVE 92.1% OF NET FOLLOWS VS. VIDEOS (7.9%).

INTERACTIONS (May 5 — IIII 4)

(MAY 5 — JUL 4): 6,578 TOTAL INTERACTIONS (+2,345.4% GROWTH VS. PRIOR PERIOD) BREAKDOWN:

REACTIONS (88.2%), SHARES (6%), COMMENTS (5.8%)

FOLLOWER GROWTH:

11,362

TOTAL FOLLOWERS (+3.8% GROWTH IN 61 DAYS).

+417 NEW FOLLOWERS

FOLLOWERS VS. NON-FOLLOWERS:
NON-FOLLOWERS DRIVE MOST ENGAGEMENT (63–81%),
SUGGESTING STRONG ORGANIC REACH.
FOLLOWERS CONTRIBUTE 19–37% OF INTERACTIONS.
REACTIONS DOMINATE:
88.2% OF INTERACTIONS ARE REACTIONS (LIKES, ETC.), WITH SHARES (6%) AND COMMENTS (5.8%) TRAILING.

LINKEDIN PERFORMANCE METRICS

#ENCOUNTERSDOCFEST #ENCOUNTERSDOC CAMPAIGN DATES 5 MAY - 4 JULY

REACH & VISIBILITY

Highlights

Data for 4/16/2025 - 7/14/2025

24,400Impressions
A 2,436.4% **1,089**Reactions
A 2,556.1%

32

Comments Reposts

•0% •933.3%

31

CLICK-THROUGH ACTIVITY

LINK CLICKS (TOTAL): 1,495 ORGANIC: 1,495 SPONSORED: 0

PEAK ACTIVITY: MAY/JUNE (VISIBLE IN GRAPHS FOR IMPRESSIONS, REACTIONS, REPOSTS).

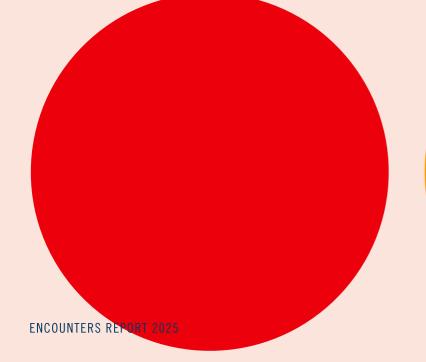
LATE-PERIOD DIP: METRICS DECLINE POST-JUN 25 (E.G., REACTIONS, CLICKS).







PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMMES



PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMMES

CANNES DOCS

In 2025, the Encounters South African International Documentary Festival proudly marked its second consecutive year of official partnership with Cannes Docs, a milestone moment in the festival's 27-year journey. As a leading platform for African and international documentaries, Encounters continues to shine as a cultural beacon through its dynamic 10-day festival held in Cape Town, Johannesburg, and several satellite venues. This collaboration with Cannes Docs, an integral part of the prestigious Festival de Cannes and the Marché du Film, reflects Encounters' ongoing commitment to growth, international collaboration, and amplifying African voices on the global stage. Strategic partnerships with Cannes Docs, the City of Cape Town, the National Film and Video Foundation, IFAS, and DOK, fest Munich further solidify Encounters' role as a pillar of South Africa's documentary ecosystem and a launchpad for world-class African storytelling. Cannes Docs offers a dedicated platform for documentary professionals, curating focused events that elevate the genre within the global film landscape. Through this partnership, Encounters reaffirms its mission to support filmmaker development locally and globally, foster a vibrant international documentary community, and cement its reputation as Africa's leading documentary film festival.

Encounters set itself a number of objectives for its attendance at Cannes Docs 2025: to promote documentary cinema and thereby secure benefits for South African filmmakers, to extend our regional and international reach and collaboration, and to work at strategic partnerships. In relation to strategic partnerships, the objectives were two-fold: to cement existing relationships and explore new collaborations towards the sustainability of Encounters. We believe that we achieved all these objectives with our attendance at Cannes Docs 2025, as will be outlined in the report below.

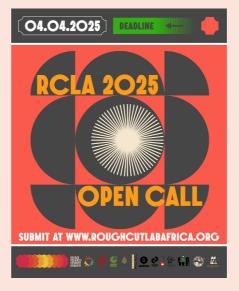
To have a better understanding of the significant benefits that were attained by a board member of Encounters attending the Cannes Film Festival, it may be useful to consider the current global documentary ecosystem. In a landmark collaboration, the Golden Globe Awards and the Artemis Rising Foundation launched the Golden Globes Documentary Prize during the 2025 Cannes Film Festival, honouring excellence in documentary filmmaking. This initiative signals the global film industry's increasing appreciation of documentary cinema. The new prize represents a pivotal shift in film recognition, addressing the genre's historical marginalisation within the industry, while potentially inspiring broader industry change. By elevating documentary work to prominence, it acknowledges the form's unique power to illuminate truth and catalyse social discourse, qualities that deserve celebration alongside narrative filmmaking.



The presence of the South African pavilion was a visible demonstration that South Africa is a part of the global documentary ecosystem. Having the South African pavilion as a central point also made it possible for us to meet in person with South African industry players such as Denise Reddy, IDC sponsorship manager; Magdalene Reddy, Durban Film Market director; Jimmy Ranamane, Brand South Africa General Manager: Global Markets; representatives of the KZN Film and Tourism Authority; Neil Brandt, a 6 film producer; and Tiny Mungwe, film producer and jury member. Tiny Mungwe, who is also an Encounters board member, and Odette

Geldenhuys did a joint interview with Brand South Africa, about the participation of Encounters in Cannes Docs and the promotion of documentary cinema in South Africa, as part of the mission of Brand South Africa to advance South Africa's long-term positive reputation and global competitiveness.

ENCOUNTERS X RCLA PARTNERSHIP: A HISTORY AND EVOLUTION



Rough Cut Lab Africa - RCLA is a perennial virtual editing lab that supports longform independent African films in the editing, story construction phase of their films. RCLA gives African filmmakers an opportunity to work with the rough cut of their films with African film readers from all areas of the filmmaking craft. Consultants range from editors to directors to academics to programmers, recognising that to 'read story' is not just an editorial discipline. This space allows the collaboration of filmmakers and consultants to be open to experimentation and practical solutions at a time when new and fresh thinking is invaluable. RCLA is a Pan-African

continental wide network of filmmakers and film readers dedicated to supporting African stories.

In 2017 SAGE, in partnership with the Encounters South African International Documentary Festival identified the need for such an intervention because access to expert industry advice

from outside of 'first world' consultative frameworks during the final editing stages of a project is instrumental to shaping the success of documentary films as filmmakers complete their vision with integrity and enter the marketplace. The National Film and Video Foundation is a founding partner and main sponsor and the lab has grown to be in conversation with over 30 projects, 60 filmmakers, 24 consultants and a host of more supporters, juniors, partners and followers.

Now in its 8th edition, our flagship all Africa online lab was open to all Africa and diaspora. From 23 submissions, we hosted 10 projects attached to 6 consultants who engaged with one or two projects over a four week period from the 31st May - 29th June 2025.

2025 CONSULTANTS

Sam Soko (Kenya)

Angela Wamai (Kenya)

Youssef Barrada (Mozambique)

Gugu Sibandze (South Africa)

Mehdi Bekkar (Al Jazeera Documentary - Morocco)

Khalid Shamis (South Africa/Mozambique)

2025 PARTNERS

SAGE - The South African Guild of Editors

NFVF - National Film and Video Foundation of South Africa

Encounters South African International Documentary Festival

Goethe Institut Johannesburg

Al Jazeera Documentary - Qatar

CFC - Cairo Film Connection - Egypt

Refinery Post Production - South Africa

Pressure Cooker Studios - South Africa

FigLeaf Studios - Egypt

Anima Creative Studio - Mozambique

A Kiss In The Desert - Egypt

Legends Post Production - South Africa

Free Monkeyz - Morocco

Yennega Centre - Senegal

DocA - Kenya

ENCOUNTERS X DURBAN FILMMART INSTITUTE (DFMI) 2025 PARTNERSHIP



The 2025 partnership between the Encounters and Durban FilmMart Institute (DFMI) marked a strategic alignment aimed at amplifying African documentary visibility and professional exchange. Central to this collaboration was the integration of Encounters into the Filmmart.Africa platform—a growing digital hub for the African screen industries. DFMI created and maintained a dedicated section on Filmmart.Africa to showcase Encounters' key events and initiatives, accessible to the platform's registered user base. This digital space supported real-time visibility and positioned Encounters within a broader ecosystem of film professionals.

As part of the reciprocal agreement, Encounters committed to actively promoting the Filmmart. Africa platform during the 2025 festival, encouraging delegates and attendees to register via a simplified process provided by DFMI. Filmmart. Africa branding was integrated into sponsor acknowledgements and promotional collateral. Together, the two organisations also produced co-branded social media campaigns across platforms including Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, X (Twitter) and YouTube, spotlighting shared goals and key festival moments.

This partnership also found physical expression during the festival itself. DFMI Industry Programme Curator Antoinette Engel participated in the keynote panel as a moderator in the Encounters InFocus Industry Programme, contributing valuable insight into the state of African documentary filmmaking. Meanwhile, the vital and valuable collaboration with Talents Durban Press continued as the 2025 cohort covered Encounters' screenings and events, publishing thoughtful pieces that added editorial depth and broadened the festival's reach. The collaboration exemplified how digital infrastructure and strategic media partnerships can expand visibility, drive cross-continental engagement, and support the development of African documentary film talent.

DURBAN TALENTS

Ahmed Alive - Reviewed by Alice Johnson for Talents Press titled "Ahmad Alive: Don't look away!"

Albie A Strange Alchemy - Reviewed by Sean Jacobs for Eleven Named People titled "The diary we carry"

And She Didn't Die - Reviewed by Mohamed Sayed for Talents Press titled "Echoes of Exile: A Daughter's Tribute" to Lauretta Ngcobo

Before 16 - Reviewed by Alice Johnson for Talents Press titled "Before 16: A Quiet Healing"

Didy - Reviewed by Gloria Nkatha for Modern Times

Guardian of the Well - Reviewed by Letter Box

Khartoum - Reviewed by Gloria Nkatha for Talents Press titled "Khartoum Review: A Mirror to Pain, Resistance, and Hope"

Mothers of Chibok - Reviewed by Mohamed Sayed for Modern Times

Normal To Me - Reviewed by Alice Johnson for Talents Press titled

"Normal To Me: A Testament to The Power of Inclusion"

What I Do Not Know Will Not Kill Me - Reviewed by Alice Johnson for Talents Press titled "What I Do Not Know Will Not Kill Me: A Manifesto for Action"

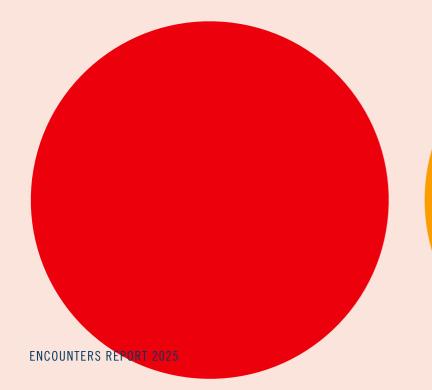
Womxn: Working - Reviewed by Tshi Malatji for Talents Press titled "Sex work on spotlight at Encounters South African International Documentary Film Festival"

This partnership between Encounters and DFM exemplifies the power of collaboration in elevating African cinema, providing platforms for critical engagement and developing a vibrant community of filmmakers, critics, and audiences.





CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

Encounters 2025 once again affirmed why it stands as Africa's premier documentary festival. Celebrating its 27th edition, the festival delivered a ten-day event from 19 - 29 June 2025 that captivated audiences in Cape Town and Johannesburg. This year's programme featured 65 compelling documentaries from over 43 countries, showcasing a rich and diverse array of stories. True to its reputation, Encounters tackled some of the world's most pressing issues – from the rise of authoritarianism to indigenous land rights and the effects of war – highlighting the global disruptors and changemakers behind these stories. The curated selection spanned new voices and veteran filmmakers alike, including numerous world and African premieres that kept the festival buzz high.

Encounters 2025 opened with **How to Build a Library**, a Sundance-lauded Kenyan documentary about revitalising a public library, setting an uplifting tone for a line-up of award-winning films that speak to the vital role of documentary storytelling in today's world. The festival's content was thoughtfully curated into five thematic strands, each probing a critical facet of contemporary life. "The Frightening Reality of Now" confronted global instability, climate collapse and unchecked technology, while "Ways of Learning" examined the politics of education and knowledge. "Agency – Standing up to Power" spotlighted stories of resistance and defiance, "Memory, Trauma and Identity" explored how history's scars continue to shape the present, and "The Art and Impact" celebrated art's power to inspire social change.

These thematic groupings allowed audiences to navigate urgent topics and engage deeply with the films' subjects. For example, **Union** and **Mr Nobody Against Putin** offered powerful tales of workers' and citizens' resistance to tyranny, **Mothers of Chibok** provided a poignant look at hope and education a decade after Nigeria's schoolgirl kidnappings, and **The Walk** followed Little Amal – a 12-foot puppet of a Syrian refugee girl – on her journey across Europe, symbolising the intersection of art and activism in raising awareness.

Each screening not only entertained, but also sparked meaningful conversations about resilience, justice and our shared future. This year also saw an evolution in Encounters' industry engagement. The Industry Programme was rebranded as Encounters InFocus, reflecting a commitment to "deeper dialogues, sharper visions – one story at a time." Encounters InFocus comprised 13 in-depth events including dynamic panel discussions, masterclasses, special presentations, and in-conversation sessions held in both Cape Town and Johannesburg. Notably, the festival once again hosted the impactful Rough Cut Lab Africa (RCLA) workshop in Johannesburg, providing mentorship to emerging African fillmmakers.



Through the InFocus series, Encounters explored concepts such as generational trauma, protest and solidarity, creative expression, education, and climate change – inviting filmmakers, industry professionals and civil society to reflect on how documentaries can illuminate and challenge the forces shaping our world. Encounters 2025 reinforced its commitment to professional development and industry growth in the documentary field. Participants could engage with experts and creators behind the festival's films and delve into the stories behind the stories. Beyond screenings and talks, Encounters 2025 added extra dimensions to the festival experience. A series of live events and social gatherings complemented the film programme, underlining the festival's celebration of culture and community. Encounters was pleased to once again collaborate with KAMVA Collective to bring guests and audiences an opening night party and, in another highlight, a vinyl DJ mixer evening brought together festival-goers, filmmakers and musicians for a lively night of music and mingling at the Goethe-Institut in Johannesburg.

Feedback from participants and guests underscored the festival's success in creating a vibrant, inclusive and thought-provoking environment. Filmmakers and audience members alike praised Encounters 2025 for its exceptional curation of films and the dynamic Q&As and panel discussions that followed each screening. Many noted that the festival's organisation and hospitality made it a welcoming space for dialogue, networking and inspiration. The dedication and hard work of the Encounters team, along with the support of numerous partners and funders, were widely recognised as instrumental in this year's achievements. Encounters 2025 was not only a showcase of documentary filmmaking at its finest, but also a celebration of storytelling's power to inform, challenge and unite.







FESTIVAL IN NUMBERS

TOTAL FESTIVAL ATTENDANCE 7,896

NUMBER OF SCREENINGS 116

VENUES 15

FEATURES 33

SHORTS

31

WORLD PREMIERES11

SA/AFRICAN PREMIERES 54

PROGRAMME BREAKDOWN SA/AFRICAN FEATURES 18

INTERNATIONAL FEATURES 15

SA/AFRICAN SHORTS 19

INTERNATIONAL SHORTS 12

ATTENDANCE FIGURES

```
2011* 11,060
2012* 10,909
2013 6,030
2014 6,817
2015 6,915
2016 11,997
2017 10,302
2018 10,803
2019 9,672
2020** 16,000
2021*** 4,966
2022 6,588
2023 6,097
2024 6,368
2025 7,896
```

^{*18} DAY FESTIVAL

^{** 10} DAY VIRTUAL FESTIVAL - FREE TICKETS *** 10 DAY HYBRID FESTIVAL - NO FREE TICKETS NO* 10 DAY FESTIVAL

PROGRAMME SELECTION BREAKDOWN

ATTENDANCE FIGURES PER VENUE

CAPE TOWN

CENTRE FOR HUMANITIES RESEARCH (CHR) UWC 170
THE LABIA THEATRE 2746
STER-KINEKOR V&A WATERFRONT 1893
BERTHA HOUSE MOWBRAY 47
BERTHA MOVIE HOUSE ISIVIVANA CENTRE KHAYELITSHA 468
6 SPIN STREET 42
COY RESTAURANT V&A WATERFRONT 42

JOHANNESBURG

THE ZONE @ ROSEBANK 1275
THE BIOSCOPE INDEPENDENT CINEMA 772
GOETHE-INSTITUTE JOBURG 210

ADDITIONAL

SUNSHINE CINEMA (NUMEROUS VENUES AROUND SOUTH AFRICA) 231



INDUSTRY SESSIONS

Centre for Humanities Research (CHR) UWC, Bertha House Mowbray, Goethe-Institut Johannesburg

NETWORKING EVENTS

Goethe-Institut Johannesburg, Centre for Humanities Research (CHR) UWC, 6 Spin Street Cape, Coy Restaurant V&A Waterfront

SOUTH AFRICAN SELECTION DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN

OVERALL PROGRAMME REPRESENTATION

FEMALE

11

FEMALE

36

MALE

9

MALE

49

BLACK/POC

11

BLACK / POC

46

WHITE

9

WHITE

39

MOST VIEWED FILMS

Albie: A Strange Alchemy

Anselm

And She Didn't Die

Blue Road: The Edna O'Brien Story

Capturing Water

Fitting in

Matabeleland

Normal To Me

Put Your Soul on Your Hand and Walk

Sam Nzima: A Journey Through His Lens

This is Ballroom (SALÃO DE BAILE)

6 Kings and 6 Queens

COUNTRIES OF PRODUCTION

- 1. Afghanistan
- 2. Australia
- 3. Belgium
- 4. Botswana
- 5. Brazil
- 6. Burkina Faso (BF)
- 7. Burundi
- 8. Canada
- 9. Chad
- 10. Czech Republic
- 11. Denmark
- 12. Democratic Republic of the Congo
- 13. Ecuador

- 13. Ecuador
- 14. Egypt
- 15. Ethiopia
- 16. Fiji
- 17. France
- 18. Gaza
- 19. Germany
- 20. India
- 21. Iran
- 22. Ireland
- 23. Kenya
- 24. Macedonia
- 25. Madagascar
- 26. Morocco
- 27. Mozambique
- 28. Netherlands
- 29. Nigeria
- 30. Palestine
- 31. Portugal
- 32. Qatar
- 33. Rwanda
- 34. Scotland
- 35. South Africa
- 36. Spain
- 37. Sudan
- 38. Sweden
- 39. Switzerland
- 40. United Kingdom
- 41. United States
- 42. Vanuatu
- 43. Zimbabwe

GLOBAL FESTIVAL STATS

AFRICAN TITLES 671

INTERNATIONAL TITLES 633

TOTAL SCREENINGS 2,867

TOTAL ATTENDANCE 227,589

FILMS PRODUCED 48

LABS RUN 15

LAB PARTICIPANTS 705

INDUSTRY SESSION 122

LIVE Q&AS, PANEL DISCUSSIONS AND INDUSTRY EVENTS

SOUTH AFRICAN GUESTS 477

INTERNATIONAL GUESTS 228



STAFF

BOARD MEMBERS

Ms Tiny Mungwe, Ms Moroba Nkawe, Ms Toni Monty, Ms Mandisa Zitha, Ms Odette Geldenhuys, Mr Premesh Lalu, Ms Shameela Seedat

CORE STAFF

Mandisa Zitha - **Festival Director** Crystal Beukes - **Bookkeeper**

FESTIVAL STAFF

Tarha McKenzie - Festival Manager

Freddy Ogterop - Film Archivist and Programmer

Joy Sapieka - Publicist and Programmer

Sharlene Versfeld - Publicist

Monwabisi Mhlophe - Fundraiser

Taryn Joffe - Industry Coordinator

Rafeeqah Galant - Technical Coordinator

Fanney Tsimong - Festival Coordinator (Johannesburg)

Nhlanhla Ndaba - Festival Coordinator (Johannesburg)

Yusra Peters - Inreach/Outreach Coordinator

Lizanne Visser - Guest Liaison / Industry Coordinator Assistant

Donovan Oostendorp - Driver / Distribution

Sally Mckenzie - Chaperone / Tour Guide

Amanda Dominy - Web Designer

Toby Atwell - Key Art Designer

Quinton Bruton - Key Art Designer Assistant

Ashleigh da Silva - Trailer Editor

Shukry Adams - Animator

Zakiyya Karim - **Graphic Designer**

Sade Donnel - Social Media Strategist

Alice Voigt - Social Media Multimedia Designer & Photographer

Cameron Naidoo - Social Media Editor & Community Manager

Ridwaan Fridie - Labia Projectionist

Peter May - Labia Projectionist

Denzil Adams - Labia Cinema Manager

Neo Kgola - Ster-Kinekor V&A Waterfront Cinema Manager

Tabisa Raziya (JHB) - The Zone Cinema Manager

Malefetsane Masitha (JHB) - The Bioscope Cinema Manager

Peter Machen - Film Writer

Ara Bhabha - Film Writer

Busisiwe Ngubane - Film School Africa Intern

Michelle Name - Film School Africa Intern

Lesedi Kolotsi - NFVF Intern

Keira Myers - Connect123 Intern

Abbey Kgetse (SA) - Film Reader

Antonique Dick (SA) - Film Reader

Chinazam Uwaoma (Nigeria) - Film Reader

Churchill Osimbo (Kenya) - Film Reader

Didi Netshiswinzhe (SA) - Film Reader

Edom Dube Bekele (Ethiopia) - Film Reader

Ehsan Amidian (Iran) - Film Reader

Farhid Mallackpour (Iran) - Film Reader

Jyothika Persadh (SA) - Film Reader

Karabelo Shirinde (SA) - Film Reader

Kutlwano Mabusela (SA) - Film Reader

Lebogang Veronica Pilane (Botswana) - Film Reader

Lemi Mwaniki (SA/Kenya) - Film Reader Lena Naassana (Egypt) - Film Reader

ENCOUNTERS REPORT 2025

Leonard Mopeli (SA) - Film Reader

Lesego Maya (SA) - Film Reader

Luka Hoyte (SA) - Film Reader

Mahlatse Moeketsi (SA) - Film Reader & NFVF Intern

Nondumiso Masache (SA) - Film Reader

Olwethu Dumzela (SA - Film Reader

Sandra Small (SA) - Film Reader

Siboniso Zwane (SA) - Film Reader

Stefanie Titus (SA) - Film Reader

Steven Anu' Adesemoye (Nigeria) - Film Reader

Tabisa Raziya (SA) - Film Reader

Tabo Inamboa (SA) - Film Reader

Thabang Mhlabane (SA) - Film Reader

Thihangwi Ramutsindela (SA) - Film Reader

Victor Wachira (Kenya) - Film Reader

Vidal Thaver (SA) - Film Reader

Charlene Veloppe (CPT) - Volunteer

Cynthia Mahlatsi (JHB) - Volunteer

Hope Mareka (JHB) - Volunteer

Jamie Franks (CPT) - Volunteer

Jonathan Inglis (CPT) - Volunteer

Keanu Booysen (CPT) - Volunteer

......

Kopano Seutlwadi (CPT) - Volunteer

Lamont Khoza (CPT) - Volunteer

Lilitha Ngumla (CPT) - Volunteer

Liyema Duze (CPT) - **Volunteer**

Lwazi Mazibuko (JHB) - **Volunteer** Mphatso Nkhoma (CPT) - **Volunteer**

Nompumelelo Isabel Ngoma (CPT) - Volunteer

Palesa Pahlana (CPT) - Volunteer

Philisa Masito (CPT) - Volunteer

Rugaya Crombie (CPT) - Volunteer

Sazi Mdladla (CPT) - Volunteer

Siphokazi Gwampi (CPT) - Volunteer

Taleah Jullies (CPT) - **Volunteer**

Thabang Mhlabane (JHB) - Volunteer

Tyler Savannah Bagus (CPT) - **Volunteer**

Vuyo Qwayi (CPT) - Volunteer

Zara Smith (CPT) - Volunteer





Mandisa Zitha: Festival Director Email: director@encounters.co.za Mobile: +27 76 684 0144

Address: Bertha House 67 – 69 Main Road Cape Town, Western Cape 7705 South Africa

WWW.ENCOUNTERS.CO.ZA

