

Swift will have strong presence at 2018 DIFF and DFM

Sisters Working in Film and Television (Swift) will once again have a strong presence at the 2018 Durban International Film Festival (19 - 29 July) and the Durban FilmMart (20 - 23 July).



Petronella Tshuma in *The Tokoloshe*. Image supplied.

A women-focussed industry lobbying, advocacy and networking NPO, Swift focuses exclusively on the common concerns and shared experiences of women working in film and television, and has become a hub of support, empowerment and inspiration.

Force to be reckoned with

The organisation, which had its birth at the DIFF and DFM 2016, has in two short years become a force to be reckoned with within the South African film and television sector and is also making its mark on the international film arena with its formidable presence at the Berlinale this year.

The organisation recently launched its powerful #ThatsNotOk campaign of public service announcements (PSA's) which illustrates what sexual harassment in the film industry workplace is and how it affects women – all giving a visual reference to both victim and perpetrator. Funded by the KZN Film Commission, and directed by Sara Blecher in a collaborative effort of women, the PSA's will be screened before all films at DIFF.



#FairnessFirst: Stand with Swift SA's #ThatsNotOK

Leigh Andrews 14 May 2018



'We are most grateful to the KZN Film Commission for the funding of the PSA films,' says Sara Blecher, chairperson of Swift. 'The campaign came out of a survey we did on sexual harassment in the SA Film and TV industry in 2017. Besides other disturbing revelations, the survey indicated that over 66.7% of woman in film and TV feel unsafe at work.'

Swift: 78% of women in the film/TV industry victims of discrimination

Juanita Pienaar 19 Jul 2017





Those who speak up are not alone

“The six PSA’s are all based on real-life experiences of women and aims to help the industry to recognise what harassment is, and to reveal that those who speak up are not alone or imagining harassment. What is most important is for people to recognise that abusive behaviour is “NOT OK” in any shape or form and to make victims aware of the psycho-social and legal resources available to them via our membership,” Zoe Ramushu, a Swift board member.

“We are grateful that the funding enabled us to pay crew and cast for their creative and technical contributions,” says Sara. “We also had film trainees shadowing crew members on the two days of the shoot, and all the videos were filmed in KZN, scripted by KZN writers, who made submissions to the project.”

Uzalo stars Nyalleng Thibedi, Ntombifuthi Dlamini, Lungelo Madondo, Dawn Thandeka King, and celebrated SA actress Hlubi Mboya from Swift feature in the videos.

“By screening the PSA’s at DIFF, not only do we want to show our solidarity with women in the film industry, but we also hope the message around #ThatsNotOK is landed with the broader public - men and women - alike as what happens with our industry, happens elsewhere too,” says Chipo Zhou, manager of DIFF.

Screening of Swift members’ films

Swift members will also have a strong presence within the DIFF programme with the screening of their films. Opening night film *The Tokoloshe* has been produced by member Cati Weinek, *Mayfair*, directed by award-winning Sara Blecher, *Farewell Ella Bella* written and directed by Lwazi Mvusi, produced by Tsholo Mashile with executive producers Carolyn Carew and Kamscilla Naidoo.

Tendaiishe Chitima’s *Cook Off, Sisters of the Wilderness* directed by Karin Slater and produced by Ronit Shapiro, *Rumba in the Jungle - The Return*, produced by Dominique Jossie and directed by Yolanda Keabetswe Mogatusi . Lwazi Manzi and Pat van Heerden produced *Act of Defiance* and Manzi was also executive producer of *Love Jacked* and *3 Way Junction* and Reabetswe Moeti directed *Mother of Moeketsi (Mma Moeketsi)*.

At DFM, Swift will be presenting two panels, Sexual Harassment and Race in the Industry which looks at structural challenges and abuses of power as they affect women working in the local landscape lead by local producer and female powerhouse Lwazi Manzi who recently premiered her feature film *The Harvesters* in Cannes and Zoe Ramushu, a producer, legal consultant and Swift board member prominently driving Swift’s ‘That’s not OK’ platform as well as other

voices on the issue.



#FairnessFirst: #CannesYouSeeUs trends at Cannes Film Festival

Leigh Andrews 21 May 2018



Pioneering the route for women filmmakers

And 'Pioneering Diversity in the Industry' in-depth account of personal experiences from prominent and emerging voices on defining their trajectories as women in the film world including the likes of Sarah Dawson a festival program manager at Sheffield Doc Fest and filmmaker Jenna Bass who is embarking on women driven approach to production on her upcoming feature film *Flatland* and other prominent women on the rise. Swift will also host its AGM at the Durban FilmMart.

Durban FilmMart head, Toni Monty says "We are pleased to be able to continue these important discussions around the industry with Swift pioneering the route for women filmmakers. The organisation has already made such an impact on the role of women in film, as well as inroads into shifting policy within the industry in the country."

For more information about Swift/DIFF and DFM click [here](#) for Swift's website, [here](#) for DFF's website and [here](#) to visit the Durban FilmMart website.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>