



Shirley Adams

Portrait of a mother



Dv8 Films



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PRESS BOOK
www.shirleyadamsmovie.com



Shirley Adams

Portrait of a mother

Length | 91 minutes 30 seconds

Original Language | English and Afrikaans

Subtitled Versions | English, French

Aspect Ratio | 1:1.77

Delivery Format | HD, Digibeta (Colour, PAL)

Sound | Stereo

Website | www.shirleyadamsmovie.com

Contents:

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Logline and Synopsis

Director's Vision

Production Notes

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Director

Writers

Cast

Crew

Credits: Cast and Crew

Producer Contact:

Jeremy Nathan and Michelle Wheatley

Dv8 Films

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Centropolis Entertainment Inc

London Film School

and

Dv8 Films

in association with

National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF)

Department of Trade and Industry of South Africa (DTI)

and **World Cinema Fund**

present

A film by Oliver Hermanus

SHIRLEY ADAMS

with

Denise Newman and Keenan Arrison

Director of Photography **Jamie Ramsay** Original Music Score **Philip Miller**

Editor **Garreth Fradgley** Production Designer **Nick Mostert** Costume Designer **Maleen Nökel**

Makeup/Hair **Naeema Clayton** Sound Design **Jim Petrak, Ivan Milborrow & Warrick Sony**

Sound Recordist **Gita Cerveira** Online Editor and Colourist **Paul Hanrahan**

Line Producer **Moroba Nkawe** 1st Assistant Director/Production Manager **Eva Franzen**

Executive Producer **Roland Emmerich** Co-Producer **Kirstin Winkler**

Written by **Oliver Hermanus and Stavros Pamballis**

Produced by **Jeremy Nathan and Michelle Wheatley**

Directed by **Oliver Hermanus**

www.shirleyadamsmovie.com





“I have known this woman for over a decade. I can’t remember when I first gave her this name.”

Oliver Hermanus

LOGLINE

The story of a woman who loses her family to violence and poverty, but gains her own sense of self worth.

SYNOPSIS

Shirley Adams spends her days caring for her disabled son, Donovan - he was shot in the back of the neck on his way home from school one afternoon over a year ago.

Since then the Adams family has lost all their worldly possessions to medical bills. Shirley has no money, no job and no husband - he left

without a trace months ago. Shirley's life now consists of trying to make ends meet by shop-lifting and relying on the charity of others.

When a young, eager occupational therapist, Tamsin Ranger, comes into their lives, Shirley hopes that it might lift her son's spirits and finally put them on the path to some form of stability.

At the same time Shirley receives a phone call one afternoon informing her that Donovan's case is finally going to trial, but the glory is short lived when Shirley discovers that the

shooter is one of Donovan's childhood friends.

Her reaction to the betrayal is so overwhelming that she chooses not to tell Donovan in fear of further damaging his already unstable emotional state.


Determined to make a change in their lives, Shirley actively decides to embrace their new circumstances, hoping that Donovan will follow her example.

But his mental state continues to deteriorate and Tamsin is unsuccessful in distracting him

from his ever-present disability. Shirley is eventually left without an sign of the family she once had.

Set in Mitchell's Plain, Cape Town, Shirley Adam's story is symptomatic of the relationship between violence and poverty – the destruction of an entire family is related to one single incident that cannot be erased or repaired.

Riddled with the socio-political and racial tensions that plague these Cape Flats slums, Shirley Adams is the story of one woman's amazing strength and self sacrifice.



“Yes – its about race, and crime in post apartheid South Africa, but at its core it is simply a film about a woman, named Shirley Adams.” *Oliver Hermanus*

DIRECTOR'S NOTES by **Oliver Hermanus**

Shirley Adams is a woman I have known for over a decade. I don't know when I first gave her this name, but she has always been a mother, who's son was shot while crossing a field on his way home from school.

I had heard of such a story at the supper table one night at home. My sister, retelling an experience she was having as an occupational therapy student, working with a disabled youth and his family. She was shocked at how this one single event had

destroyed an entire family. It has taken ten years or so to find the right way of telling this story – the right method or technique.

That method was portraiture. My hope is that this film allows you to coexist with Shirley, in her home, seeing her struggle to give her son Donovan some kind of reason to keep on fighting the demons that have poisoned his life.

It is only through the education that I have subsequently received in filmmaking, that I came to discover the filmmakers and the films that tell the stories of or

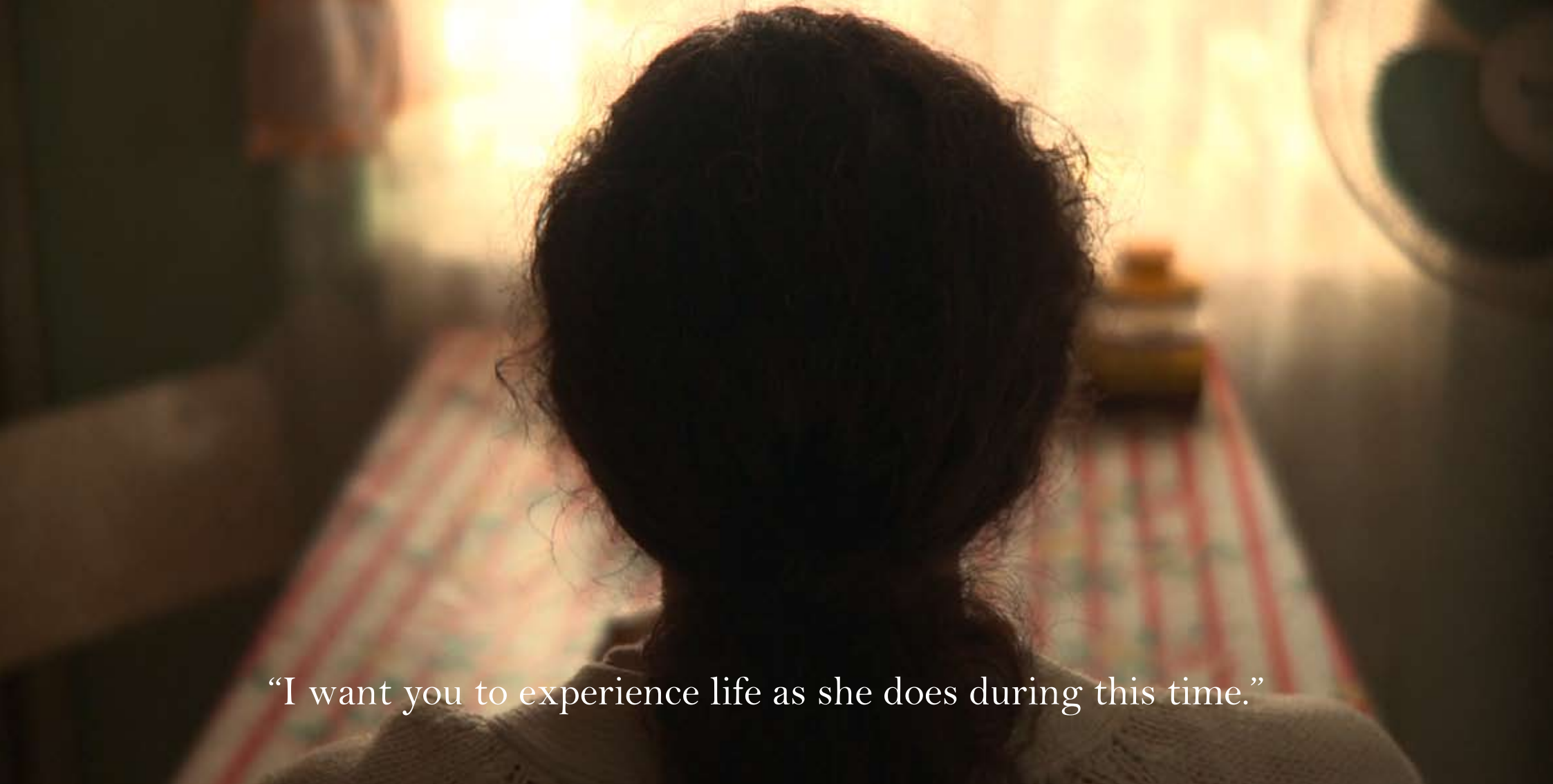
ordinary people, told in an ordinary way. 'Social realism' is not necessarily a movement reserved for cinema, it is a term that I use to express how I interpret this woman. I admire her, I believe her to be a true survivor – a true heroine. She is a coloured woman from Mitchell's Plain but she is just like any other poor disenfranchised mother of the world. She is desperate.

Her story is meant to be simple and unsentimental. As much as she fights against the extinction of everything she has worked for her entire life, she cannot stop it, and

it's the struggle that this character endures that I find most interesting as a filmmaker.

I want you to experience life as she does during this time. I want you to 'uncomfortably' suspend your disbelief and allow yourself to be introduced to a place and a time that is riddled with hypocrisy and hardship. But out of which should come a message about survival and strength.

Yes – its about race, and crime in post apartheid South Africa, but at its core it is simply the film about a woman, named Shirley Adams.

A person's silhouette is shown from behind, looking out over a road at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, hazy glow. The road has red and white markings. A car is visible in the distance on the road. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

“I want you to experience life as she does during this time.”

BIOGRAPHIES

DIRECTOR AND CO-WRITER **Oliver Hermanus**

25 year old Oliver, is a Cape Town native who started his professional career as a press photographer covering events such as the Glastonbury Music Festival and the G-8 Summit.

He has a BA in Film Media and Visual Studies from the University of Cape Town, during which time he was awarded a scholarship to attend the University of California.

In 2006 acclaimed Hollywood film director Roland Emmerich (Independence Day) offered him a private scholarship to complete an MA in practical filmmaking at the London Film School. Oliver has also shot many short films and documentaries.

CO-WRITER **Stavros Pamballis**

Stavros Pamballis received his BFA in Film Production from New York University in 2002. He then returned to his home country, Cyprus, where he spent three years writing and directing commercials before moving to London, where he completed an MA in Screenwriting at the London Film School. Shirley Adams is his first produced feature. He has recently been

commissioned to adapt the Graphic Novel, Quebrada for Filmmaker SRL (Italy) and his latest feature project, Saving Abeo has been selected to the final round of the Channel 4, 4Talent/SWF 2009 Pitch In Time competition.

CAST

SHIRLEY ADAMS **Denise Newman**

Denise Newman is a one of South Africa's foremost actresses, dominating the South African performance scene for decades. She has been seen in a slew of plays, working with Pieter Dirk-Uys and Athol Fugard, touring nationally and globally. Denise has also been part of the local television hits **Erfsondes**, **Generations**, **Zero Tolerance**, **7de Laan**, and **Isidingo** among others. She has starred in five feature films, including *Forgiveness*. Denise has won numerous awards and nominations for her work in theatre, television and the cinema.

DONOVAN ADAMS **Keenan Arrison**

Keenan Arrison (28) is a young vibrant and energetic actor, singer and performer, who graduated with a BA (Drama, 2005) from the AFDA film school in South Africa. His graduation short film, **Ongeriewe**, was nominated for the Palm d'Or Short Film Award at Cannes (2006).

His latest theatre production, **Dalliances**, travelled to Dublin Theatre Festival. Others theatre productions include; **The boy who fell from the roof**, **The Bacchae**, **King Lear** and his own award winning play, **A Birds Eye View** performed at festivals around South Africa.

Keenan has made guest appearances in local TV shows like **Madame and Eve** and **Interrogation Room**. His first big television role was in the action drama **Divers Down**. He is also a regular feature on ETV's **Shooting Stars**, in which he plays the lead.

KARIEMA SAMSODIEN **Theresa C Sedras**

Theresa C Sedras has worked in theatre, film, radio and television over the past two decades.

She has been the lead in several stage productions, including **Medea**, and acted in with renowned theatre artists such as Pieter Dirk Uys and Peter Snyders. On television she has performed in **Once upon a Krismis** and **D.O.T.S**.

She is a qualified voice artist, and performed on radio, in both English and Afrikaans. She also uses her talents to help her community, teaching a wide variety of workshops for high school and primary school children.

TAMSIN RANGER **Emily Childs**

Emily graduated from the University of Cape Town (2007) with a Theatre and Performance Degree. She won the Ruth Pfeffer Award for acting and a Fleur du Cap Award as Best Student for her final year's work.

Emily has been actively involved in theatre and television from a young age and has worked for numerous local and international channels including *National Geographic*. Last year Emily produced and starred in **Gone Dottie** - a one-woman show. Emily is currently a professional actor, M.C, voice artist and founder of new and upcoming production company - Child's Play Productions.

PHILDA JACOBS **Lee-Ann van Rooi**

Lee-Ann van Rooi has been working in the entertainment industry for nearly 18 years. She has acted in seven TV-series, and the feature films **Interrogation Room**, **This Life**, **Fishy Festivals**, **Cape of Good Hope** and **White Lioness**. In theatre she has performed in plays such as **Shirley Goodness & Mercy**, **Equus**, **Twelfth Night**, **Insane**, **a Dark Musical** and **Oedipus**, **Sex & Circus** alongside celebrated directors Janice Honeyman, Pieter-Dirk Uys and Roy Sargent.

CREW

CINEMATOGRAPHER **Jamie Ramsay**

Jamie Ramsey has photographed the feature films **Lullaby** by Darrell James Roodt (2007), and **Triomf** (2008) by Michael Raeburn.

He has filmed numerous short films, commercials and music videos across Africa.

EDITOR **Garreth Fradgely**

Garreth (AFDA Film School, 2000) trained as a writer/director and special effects artist.

He was Visual Effects Supervisor for the feature film **Soldiers of the Rock** and co-directed & animated the **Izinga Zam** music video for **TKZ**, winning an AVANTI award for Best Broadcast Animation.

Garreth freelances as a 2D, 3D and stop motion animator. He is a freelance Director and Editor, and has directed and edited numerous music videos, corporate films and TV commercials.

He recently completed a short film, **Making a Man**, which won *Best Experimental Film* at the Cape Town Horror Film Festival (2008).

SOUND DESIGNER AND RE-RECORDING MIXER **Jim Petrak**

Jim Petrak is South Africa's most prolific and experienced ADR recording engineer and 5.1 surround sound mixer specializing in Dolby digital for film.

Jim has mixed many full length features, short features, documentary features, television features and mini-series.

He's worked on many local and international projects with directors such as Bronwen Hughes on **Stander**, Darrel Roodt on **Lullaby** and **Yesterday**, Terry George on **Hotel Rwanda**, Phillip Noyce on **Catch a Fire**, Tom Hopper on **Red Dust**, Leon Schuster on **Mama Jack** and Gavin Hood on the Oscar-winning film, **Tsotsi**, among many others.

Ivan Milborrow

Ivan Milborrow has been recording location sound for films in South Africa for more than twenty years.

His credits include the Award Winning Films 'Yesterday' and 'Red Dust'. Following his passion for sound has led him into the challenging world of Post Production. 'Shirley Adams' is the second film he's worked on as a Sound Designer and Sound Editor.

MUSIC COMPOSER **Philip Miller**

Philip Miller has composed music for soundtracks to many local, international films and television productions.

Recent films include: **Catch A Fire** directed by Phillip Noyce, **Forgiveness, Max and Mona** and **The Flyer**. Recent television productions include the acclaimed documentary series, **The First Australians**, and **Glow of the White Woman** directed by Yunus Vally.

Miller has collaborated extensively with the internationally acclaimed artist William Kentridge, composing soundtracks to many of his animated films, which have been exhibited all over the world including the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum, New York, and the Serpentine Gallery and Tate Modern in London.

PRODUCTION DESIGNER **Nick Mostert**

Nicholas Mostert excelled in Art and started in the industry with **House and Leisure Magazine** as assistant to the **Decor Editor**.

Thereafter he worked for numerous photographers but moved into the film industry during the big change from film to digital and found

his niche in the art department.

Now after eight years he have learnt to visualise and interpret ideas gaining recognition in the international market in commercials, getting the opportunity to travel to places like the Maldives and Egypt.

COSTUME DESIGNER **Maleen Nökel**

Maleen Nökel began her career as Costume Designer in feature films in 1978 in Berlin assisting on the **Tin Drum** by Volker Schlöndorff.

Settling in 1980 in Paris she became member of the Maison des Artistes starting a career in fine art while working in theater as well as the Strasburg Opera and as fashion designer for the Parisian Haute Couture house Nina Ricci.

In 2001 she became contracted in South Africa and has been designing for international productions i.e. feature films, documentaries and TV-series as well as costumes for music shows.

LOCATION SOUND **Gita Cerveira**

Gita Cerveira has been working in the film industry since 1975. He has worked as a Sound Recorder for television and feature films in Europe,

Angola, South Africa and the United States.

Gita has worked on films such as: **Zulu Love Letter, 2004** (dir Ramadan Suleman), **A Tempestade da Terra, 1998** (dir Fernando D'Almeida e Silva), **The Man Who Drove with Mandela, 1998** (dir Greta Schiller), **Marie Baie des Anges, 1997** (dir Manuel Pradal), **Fadomajeuret mineur, 1994** (dir Raoul Ruiz), **Último Mergulho, 1992** (dir João César Monteiro), **A Divina Comédia, 1991** (dir Manoel de Oliveira). Gita is now Head of Production at Angola's television channel TV Zimbo.

1ST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Eva Franzen

After getting her start as a Production Coordinator in Germany, Eva moved to Los Angeles in 1993 where she attended film school at UCLA.

Afterwards she worked her way up the ladder and started working as a 1st AD in 1996.

She joined the Directors Guild of America in 2000.

In 2003, a project brought her to South Africa, and she fell in love with the country.

She moved to Cape Town in 2004 and is now


working as a 1st AD and Production Manager in both commercials and feature films.

LINE PRODUCER Moroba Nkawe

Moroba Nkawe completed a BComm Degree in Economics at the University of Cape Town in 2002.

She then entered the film and television industry working in various aspects of production.

In 2005 she studied Producing at AFDA. She has worked on various commercials, TV Series (**Jozi-H**) and feature films, including **Country of My Skull**. She was production manager on Dv8's **Izulu Lami (My Secret Sky, 2008)**.



“My story takes place in South Africa, but I hope that this character resonates universally.”

Oliver Hermanus

PRODUCERS

Centropolis Entertainment Inc



Centropolis Entertainment is the production company of director Roland Emmerich. He along with his sister, producer Uta Emmerich formed Centropolis in 1985 and have produced over 14 feature films.

London Film School



The LFS is an international graduate conservatory of Filmmaking founded in 1956. The school's core programme is a two year post-graduate degree, with currently 115 participants from over 80 countries.

In 2008, LFS films played in 105 festivals winning 12 major prizes. Since 2003 the school has been one of two graduate level institutions recognized as industry centres of excellence in the Skillset Screen Academy programme.

LFS graduates, known as associates, include Michael Mann, Mike Leigh (currently Chair of Governors), Iain Smith, Tak Fujimoto, Anne Hui, Bill Douglas, Horace Ove, Franc Roddam, Danny Huston and Ueli Steiger. Post- 2000 graduates include Duncan Jones (**Moon**), Pater Sparrow (1), Paz Fabrega (**Agua Fria de**

Mar), Carlos Armella (**Toro Negro**) and Babak Jalali (**Frontier Blues**). LFS also organizes international workshop events and master classes in the UK. Every year the school produces 40-50 graduation films. Shirley Adams is one of a very few final projects made by the school each year at feature length.

The current Director of the London Film School is Ben Gibson.

Ben Gibson: Director of LFS

Ben Gibson has been Director of the London Film School since 2000. As an independent producer and as Head of Production at the British Film Institute (BFI) from 1988-98, he commissioned and produced films by Terence Davies, Derek Jarman, Carine Adler, John Maybury, Lynn Ramsay, Patrick Keiller, Gurinder Chadha, Andrew Kottling, Isaac Julien and many others. His feature credits include **Love is the Devil**, **Beautiful People**, **The Long Day Closes**, **Wittgenstein** and **Under the Skin**.

Ben was also a partner in The Other Cinema and Metro Pictures during the '80s, and UK distributor of Godard, Almodovar and many others. He also runs workshops about low budget filmmaking. He was a co-founder of LIFT (London International Festival of Theatre) in 1981, and found-

ing Chairman of The Script Factory in 1992. He is a member of the Selection Committee of the Estoril Film Festival and is a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

Dv8 Films Profile



Dv8's focus is on commercial, challenging stories that are innovative, unique and suitable to be financed and produced in South Africa. Dv8 Films produces filmed content across the entire spectrum, including feature films, and documentaries, commercials and corporates. It produces for the cinema and television, mobile and Internet distribution platforms. Some of the recent work produced by the partners in Dv8 Films includes:

Feature Films

Izulu Lami (My Secret Sky) (Dubai, 2008)

by Madoda Ncayiyana

Zimbabwe (Rotterdam 08) by Darrell

James Roodt

Bunny Chow (Toronto, Rotterdam Tigers 07)

by John Barker

The Flyer (Locarno Grand Piazza, 06)

by Revel Fox

Forgiveness (Locarno Main, 05)

by Ian Gabriel

Max and Mona (FESPACO, 2006)

by Teddy Mattera

Boesman and Lena (Danny Glover, Angela Bassett, New York, 2000) by John Berry

Promised Land (Rotterdam, Tokyo 04)

by Jason Xenopoulos

Jump the Gun (Berlin 1997) by Les Blair

Shot Down (Mannheim, 1988)

by Andrew Worsdale

Jeremy Nathan

Jeremy Nathan has been involved in the South African film and television industries for nearly twenty years. He has produced numerous features, television dramas, documentaries and short films. He's lectured in many local institutions and written widely about the industry.

Michelle Wheatley

Michelle graduated from the AFDA Film School in 1998. She joined Devereaux-Harris, producing numerous music videos, documentaries, and live shows for Channel O. For Dv8 Films, she production managed **Max & Mona** and produced **The Flyer**. Michelle has produced the world's first feature film shot on mobile phones, **SMS Sugar Man**, and co-produced John Barker's **Bunny Chow**. Michelle has recently been made MD of Dv8 Films.

Buyisile Kubheka

Buyisile Kubheka completed a BCom Degree in Accounting and Economics at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1997 and did her accounting articles at KPMG. She worked in the corporate sector before joining a Film Distribution Company (Film Resource Unit) in 2004. In 2006 she moved to the production side as a Production accountant. She also provides accounting services to NGO's and small companies.

The National Film & Video Foundation



It is a statutory body mandated by a progressive act of Parliament to spearhead the equitable growth and development of the South African film and video industry.

Our mission

To create an environment that develops and promotes the South African film and video industry domestically and internationally.

Our vision

A quality South African film and video industry that mirrors and represents the nation, sustains commercial viability, encourages development and provides a medium through which the creative and technical talents of South Africans are able to reach the world.

Ster-Kinekor Distribution



They operate 8 Classic, 32 Junction and 5 Cinema Nouveau cinemas in South Africa, as well as cinemas in Namibia, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. Ster-Kinekor Home Entertainment handles DVD and video distribution in the same territories. Ster-Kinekor Product Distribution represents two major Hollywood studios, Sony Pictures International and Buena Vista International, and distributes to all exhibitors nationally. It also acquires many local and international independent titles.

CREDITS
FRONT CREDITS

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London Film School
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present

A film by Oliver Hermanus

SHIRLEY ADAMS

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Shirley Adams | Denise Newman | Original Music Score | Philip Miller | Production Co-Ordinator | Paul Harker | Special Effects Make-Up | Evelyn Gambe |
| Donovan | Keenan Arrison | Editor | Garreth Fradgley | Production Accountant | Buyisile Kubheka | Extras Casting | Colt Talent |
| Tamsin Ranger | Emily Child | Sound Editors | Jim Petrak | Production Assistants | Muditambi Mudau | Cast Driver | Fanie Muntz |
| Kariema Samsodien | Theresa Sedras | | Warrick Sony | | Ashley Corns | | |
| Kariem Samsodien | Gamiet Petersen | Costume Designer | Ivan Millborrow | | Pika Mlangeni | Post Production | |
| Pilda Jacobs | Lee-Ann van Rooi | Make-Up | Maleen Nökel | 2nd Assistant Director | Agnes Ditshwantsho | Online Editor & Colourist | Paul Hanrahan |
| Jeremy Jacobs | Travis Snyders | Line Producer | Naeema Clayton | Set PA/Trainee | Africa Munyama | Sound Rerecording | Jim Petrak |
| Kurt Williams | David Muller | 1st Assistant Director/ | Moroba Nkawe | Set PA | Marchellino Daniels | Mixer | |
| Doctor | Adrian Galley | Production Manager | Eva Frantzen | | Thando Hobongwana | Associate Editor | Ruheen Iyler |
| Chelsea | Sasha Lee | | | Script Supervisor | Matthew James | Assistant Editor | Aurora Drummer |
| Nurse | Lu Chase | London Film School | | Locations & Unit | Cyprian Obase | ADR Engineer | Murray Anderson |
| | | Director | Ben Gibson | Manager | | Music Sound Mixer | Gavan Eckhardt |
| Pharmacy Assistant #1 | Shanaaz Hendricks | Head of Studies | Alan Bernstein | Assistant Locations & | Seleimani Rugigane | Guitarists | Joel Klein |
| Pharmacy Assistant # 2 | Ruth Mpukwana | National Film and Video Foundation | | Unit Manager | | | Jannous Aukema |
| Receptionist | Suzanne Elizabeth | CEO | Eddie Mbalu | 1st Assistant Camera | Nick Turvey | Music Studios | Digital Cupboard, Jhb |
| Bailiff | Mntuwelilizwe Ndamane | CFO | Karen Son | VT/Camera Trainee | Liphumile-Ilanga | Publicity Skills | Jennifer Wheatley |
| Judge | Marlene Hyland | Head of Development & | Ryan Haidarian | | Goduka | | Flora Lau |
| Tamsin's boyfriend | Alfonzo Solomon | Production | | Key Grip | Jarrett Barr | Marketing Design | Yumna Sadan |
| Director | Oliver Hermanus | Development & | Clarence Hamilton | Gaffer | Jean du Plessis | | Rohan Reddy |
| Producers | Jeremy Nathan | Production Executive | | Spark | Golden Makhubu | French Translator | Emilie Demon |
| | Michelle Wheatley | Ster-Kinekor Distribution | | Spark | Elwin Buchel | | |
| Executive Producer | Roland Emmerich | CEO | Isabel Rao | Generator Operator | Frans Mgangane | Security | Waan Security Services |
| Co-Producer | Kirstin Winkler | Acquisitions Executive: | Helen Kuun | | | Legal Representation | Zain Randeree |
| Director of Photography | Jamie Ramsay | Local Content | | Boom Operators | Thabo Singeni | | Olof Esterhuizen |
| Production Designer | Nick Mostert | Marketing Manager | Thobashan Govindarajulu | | JL Roussouw | Cuzen Randeree | Hanlie Carstens |
| Screenplay | Stavros Pamballis and | Dv8 Films | Ndoda Madalane | Props & Sets | Broose Jones | & Associates | |
| | Oliver Hermanus | | Dennis Mashabela | Art Dept Assistant/Intern | Orli Barnett | Film Insurance | CGM Insurance Brokers |
| Dialogue Editor | Keenon Daniels | | | Carpenter | Fardiel Jamodien | Production Vehicles | Value Logistics |
| | | | | | | Lighting Equipment | MCC |

In association with

Pandora Films

Filmed with

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& Cooke Lenses

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Filmed on location in Cape Town

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The Bester Family
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Mitchell's Plain

A Dv8 Films Production

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