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ENCOUNTERS

SWISS SOUTH AFRICAN DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL

20th JUNE - 3rd JULY 1999

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PROHELVETIA



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All shows R10 No other discounts apply		
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Welcome to the Encounters Swiss South African Documentary Film Festival, the first of its kind in South Africa. Documentaries in South Africa are generally associated with being viewed on television. Now this Festival allows these to be screened in all their glory on the big screen, giving them the status that they deserve. This is an exciting opportunity for Swiss and South African filmmakers to exchange ideas. Their films reflect their view of society; it is our great pleasure to welcome so many of the filmmakers to this Festival and to have the opportunity to present them to the public. We are certain the audience will enjoy engaging with them.

We have a great line-up. From Switzerland come Alexander J. Seiler, Thomas Imbach and Richard Dindo. The Swiss have maintained an internationally acclaimed standard of auteur-driven documentaries, many of which will be screened in South Africa for the first time at the festival. Among the internationally acclaimed South Africans at this Festival are Clifford Bestall, Liz Fish, Harriet Gavshon and Zola Maseko. There will be discussions after the screenings convened by Lesley Fordred and Gabeba Baderoon of the UCT Media and Society Seminar. These will involve the makers, the academics, the critics and you.

The Festival will premiere many films including World Premieres of Clifford Bestall's *Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela – an intimate portrait*, *Main Reef Road* by Nicolaas Hofmeyr, *River of Memory* by Craig Matthew and Joëlle Chesselet and *One Day on the Path* by Francesca Bartellini.

Documentaries often take years to complete. We have included two 'works in progress' – they are *The Great Dance* by Craig and Damon Foster and *Extracts from The Black* by Eddie Edwards. The filmmakers will be there to discuss the process.

Documentary films made by the Apartheid state will be screened alongside contemporary documentaries to illustrate varying interpretations of similar subject matters. We thank Trevor Moses of the National Film Archives and Antonia Vermeulen of Government Communication and Information Services (GCIS) for their invaluable assistance.

Our heartfelt thanks to the sponsor of this Festival, Pro Helvetia, in particular Peter Da Fina of the Film Department in Zurich and Mirjam Asmal of Pro Helvetia Liaison Office South Africa. Without their support, this festival would not have been possible. Thank you to various Swiss businesses in SA whose generous contributions will make this Festival truly festive. They are Devon Hill / SAVISA (Pty) Ltd., Robert Bader of Cape Cheese Products (Pty) Ltd. and Nestlé (Pty) Ltd. Thank you to Nico van der Merwe of Cinema Nouveau for his tangible support for this important event. We are grateful to e.tv, SABC and all the production houses for granting us screening rights.

Thank you to Sheila van Zyl, Administrator, and assistant Tegan Heneke who have ensured the smooth running of this Festival.

Finally, thank you to all the filmmakers for participating and congratulations on your wonderful films.

Nodi Murphy & Steven Markovitz

What is documentary?

Images can lie; microphones do not make people honest; mirrors of reality can be curved or even shattered. So, what is documentary? Ask most South Africans and you'll probably hear that it's boring and didactic. Promising truths, realist and objectivist styles have become a dominant form in South Africa because they are so well suited to the task of confronting publics with the ills and illusions of contemporary life. But the most enduring definition has been John Grierson's: documentary is the creative treatment of actuality. What actuality is; whose actuality is shown; and which creative treatments approach fakery and distortion – such debates have filled the first 103 years of documentary. Technological advances – small, portable, hidden cameras have introduced new possibilities for the relationships between audiences and subjects. Equally interesting are those moments of radical social change in which documentarists recognise the relationship between power and truth and aesthetics, and alter established routines of representing social reality. The **objective** approach insists 'the camera never lies': what you see is *The Truth*. Its pitfalls are many and several alternatives have emerged. The **subjective**, where the subject films itself, accesses a more personal truth. **Cinema verité** argues that

the camera and crew are always an intrusion and can generate performance and fantasy. South Africans are all too familiar with **social realism** – the arguing talking-head that seeks social change.

Reflexive styles include crew and gear in picture; the idea is that viewers will see the film as a reflection of the truth, not the Truth itself.

Personalised styles are built around the story of the director's exploration of an issue. And then there's **documentation**, a scripted drama based on intensive research. In practice, many documentaries use a range of approaches. In the quest to access truths, techniques guarantee little. If nothing else the variety of documentary styles suggests that the creative treatment of actuality is easily institutionalised; always elusive. The Swiss and South African documentaries selected for

Encounters 1999 represent a range of alternative styles that seek to access less visible social realities. A selection of old documentaries poses the question – how different are current documentaries? Are documentarists sufficiently questioning the relationship between creative choices, production habits, and relationships of power? This is an extraordinary opportunity to engage with these makers of truths. Be there.

Lesley Fordred

Department of Social Anthropology, UCT

Pro Helvetia is pleased to present a season of internationally acclaimed Swiss documentary films and their makers. *Alexander J. Seiler*, *Richard Dindo* and *Thomas Imbach* all operate in the independent documentary filmmaking circuit in Switzerland and, surprisingly, all are self-taught. *Seiler* studied literature, philosophy and sociology, then worked as a journalist. *Dindo*, who left school at the age of 15 and was not permitted to sit the entrance exam of the Berlin Academy of Film and Television, learned his trade by watching hundreds of films in Paris. *Imbach* was a history and philosophy student before he made his first film. Together, these three cineasts represent three generations of Swiss documentary filmmakers. Contemporary technological advances, initially lightweight 16mm and then video, had important financial implications for filmmakers. They allowed for smaller crews and made previously inaccessible locations accessible. As a consequence, independent filmmaking flourished and was to prove a powerful extra-parliamentary voice in a country where women were denied the vote until 1971, where people went to the polls to decide upon the abolition of the Army and where four different national languages fuel debates on cultural diversity and membership of

the European Union. *Seiler*, a leading exponent of the ground-breaking *New Swiss Cinema* of the 60s, is an auteur, governing the whole process of filmmaking and displaying a particular social responsibility, focussing on marginalised people in Swiss society. *Dindo's* work, often characterised as political and controversial, extends the notion of the filmmaker as auteur. He profiled himself as a virtuoso storyteller who recreating the lives of Max Frisch, Arthur Rimbaud, Che Guevara and Breyten Breytenbach. *Imbach* films non-stop on film and video, amassing hours of footage. He decides upon the dramaturgy only during editing, and radically manipulates sound. He is a cineast and video artist who explores the limits of the medium, employing them as means of expression. Swiss filmmaking has come a long way from the sugar-sweet picture of Alpine villages and Swiss-produced feature-length documentaries have an international reputation as an undisputed counterpart of fiction. The documentaries scheduled in **Encounters** is a must for anyone who enjoys good film and wants to explore the hidden dimensions of Swiss life.

Mirjam Asmal,

Pro Helvetia Liaison Office South Africa

PROHELVETIA





Alexander J. Seiler, an exponent of the new-wave of Swiss cinema of the 1960's, is partially responsible for the shift in Swiss film from pastoral Alpine mountain scenes and peasant dramas to one of social responsibility and consciousness. Seiler's background in drama was an advantage – he was not bound by the existing conventions and rules of the trade of filmmaking. His *Siamo Italiani* (The Italians 1964) was "the

thunderbolt that rudely awakened Swiss cinema from the slumbers in which it had been since the end of the War". Seiler's cameras descended from the lofty Alpine peaks into the streets of everyday life. *Siamo Italiani* marked an ideological and stylistic change in Swiss filmmaking and now cinema was to be seized upon as a cultural tool and means of personal expression. Seiler revealed the Swiss as more than a nation that hid behind their banal defensiveness and hypocritical neutralism. *Palaver, Palaver*, a work made some 25 years later, continued this revelatory process and secures his legacy as a maker of quality documentaries. Born in 1928 in Zurich, Seiler studied and worked as a journalist, and completed his Ph.D. on the theatrical work of Jean Giraudoux in 1957. From 1961, he worked in collaboration with Rob Grant and June Kovach and was active in film politics, being a founding member of the Swiss Film Centre and Executive Secretary of the Association of Swiss Film Makers. We are pleased to have Alexander J. Seiler here as a guest of this festival. He will introduce a screening of each of his films and answer questions from the audience. They are *Siamo Italiani* Sunday 20th June and *Palaver, Palaver* Friday 25th June.



SIA ITALIANI

1964 Switzerland 79min 35mm
Dir: Alexander J. Seiler

In 1964 in Switzerland, one out of every three workers was foreign and two out of every three foreigners were Italian. Beautifully shot in black and white, this sensitive documentary about the 500 000-strong Italian community living in Switzerland tells the story of the Swiss discrimination against Italian immigrants looking for work in their country. Considered 'a problem' by the Swiss, the Italians were stereotyped as noisy, dirty, dangerous non-citizens and were treated accordingly by immigration officers and the Swiss public. As an ethnographic account told from the perspective of working-class Italians, this film was called "a thunderbolt" when it first hit Swiss screens in 1964 because it portrays an on-the-street reality previously untapped in Swiss cinema. An interesting historical perspective on the immigrant 'problem' that continues to plague Europe.

Sun 20 8pm
Panel: S Markovitz, A J Seiler, W Smyrton & G Brateroom
Fri 2 6pm



PALAVR, PALAVR

1989 Switzerland 93 min 35mm
Dir: Alexander J. Seiler

1989 marked an unprecedented event in modern history, it was the first time a country put to the vote whether or not it wanted an army. While celebrations for the 50-year commemoration of the outbreak of World War II are well under way, more liberal Swiss element collected thousands of signatures to support the motion to disband the Swiss army. Stirring speeches thanking hundreds of old veterans for their efforts to safeguard Switzerland from Hitler are juxtaposed with youth rallies and arguments from the left about the glorification of war and the social and financial burdens of an army. The film, documenting the intense debate that raged amongst the Swiss public in the months leading up to the referendum, asks the question: Is an army the precondition of freedom?

Fri 25 6pm
Panel: K Gillespie, A J Seiler & J Higgins
Thu 1 8.30pm





Richard Dindo is an important contributor to the development of the modern documentary. His films have provoked heated debates, partly because of their content matter (anti-fascism, Switzerland in World War II, the Zurich youth revolts), but also because of his passion for the art of remembering. Described variously as the 'memory composer', biographer and portraitist, Dindo's project is above all the redemption of memory as the ultimate form of consciousness. His films are reconstructions of the past, traversing whatever materials and traces of memory are available in order for history to be brought to life. Dindo was born in Zurich in 1944 to parents of Italian descent. Soon after leaving school at the age of 15, he started traveling, taking odd jobs to pay his way. "I started going to the cinema very early... I went to Paris

because I'd heard that you could see films at the *Cinematheque Française*. Then I married a French woman who supported me for several years. For several years I saw three or four films a day. I spent years just going to the cinema and reading hundreds of books. That's how I educated myself". Dindo returned to Zurich in 1970 to launch a career which has produced more than 15 feature documentary titles and has put him at the forefront of Swiss filmmaking. He lives and works in Paris and Zurich. We are pleased to welcome Richard Dindo here as a guest of the Festival. He will introduce a screening of each of his films and answer questions from the audience. They are *Une Saison au Paradis (A Season in Paradise)* Wednesday 23 June at 5.45pm and *Ernesto 'Che' Guevara* Tuesday 22 June at 8pm.



UN SAISON AU PARADIS

1996 Switzerland 112min 35mm

Dir: Richard Dindo

From political exile in France, *Breyten Breytenbach* came to South Africa in 1972 on a special visit to introduce his wife, *Yolande*, to his family and to the country of his heart. On this trip he was informed by the South African state that he would no longer be accepted into the country after his return to France. In 1975, however, *Breytenbach* made an illegal entrance to South Africa to recruit members to an anti-apartheid movement being set up outside the country. The security police became aware of his presence in the country and he was caught, interrogated and imprisoned in isolation in Pretoria. This poignantly told (auto) biography reveals the pain and the beauty of the life of a South African visionary, as he returns to his beloved country to travel his landscape of memory.

Wed 23 5.45pm
Panel: N. Murphy, R. Dindo & L. Marx
Wed 30 8pm



ERNESTO 'CHE' GUEVARA THE BOLIVIAN DIARY

1993 Switzerland 94min 35mm

Dir: Richard Dindo

While *Che* is idolised, the reality of his activism is often lost behind the icon. Dindo's film gives substance to the legend. In 1961 Guevara became a minister in Castro's government. In this capacity, in Algiers in 1965, he delivered a powerful speech indicting socialist powers for exploiting the Third World and, in effect, colluding with US imperialism. Soon he was forced to resign and leave Cuba for good. In 1966, with 16 comrades, he entered Bolivia to conduct a guerilla war but in less than a year later he would be dead, his wide-eyed corpse (and his diary) on display for the world to see. Based on this very diary and the memories of those who met him, this moving portrait lends substance to the man on the T-shirt.

Tue 22 8pm
Panel: S. Markovitz, R. Dindo, J. Higgins & I. Mahabadi
Tue 29 6pm



Thomas Imbach is a filmmaker whose passion for innovation pushes his films to the edge of comfortable viewing. Searching for a filmic language capable of giving adequate expression to our daily lives, he attempts to reinvent film with every new release. Born in 1961 in Lucerne, Switzerland, Imbach studied history and philosophy before beginning a career in cinema, shooting news and making short films. He received acclaim as an independent filmmaker with his documentary works *Schlachtzeichen* (1988) and *Restlessness* (1991) both of which depict Swiss social relationships.

Imbach's first pure documentary, *Well Done* was released in 1994.

Enthusiastically received, it scooped 5 European awards and pitched a radical new set of propositions to challenge traditional documentary techniques. Imbach and cameraman Jürg Hassler prefer to follow a method they call 'relaxed shooting': minimal organisation, a total ban on stage and much use of 'productive hanging around'. Their method is to stick close to their subjects in order to capture the detail and texture of their lives. "We completely avoid the gap that usually opens up when the film crew hides behind too much equipment", they remark on their use of hand held mini-dv cameras, a minimalism that allows a new kind of intimacy to open up between filmmaker, subject and spectator. The wide shot images are filmed on 35mm to complement the video close-ups and lend atmospheric depth to the subjects' environment. Imbach's innovative use of technology and filming methodology have won him an enviable and well-deserved reputation as a documentary-maker.

We are pleased to welcome Thomas Imbach as a guest of Pro Helvetia at this Festival. He will introduce a screening of each of his films and answer questions from the audience. They are *Ghetto* Monday 21 at 5.45pm and *Well Done* Thursday 24 at 9pm.



WELL DONE

1994 Switzerland 75min 35mm
Dir: Thomas Imbach

At last! An intelligent and more-than-creative documentary on life behind large banking corporations. Imbach gets to the heartbeat of what it means to work in a high-tech, high-powered industry with this devastatingly articulate and innovative work. *Well Done* cuts directly to the subtext of working life: as the tirade of statistics, numbers, deadlines are punctuated by a sideways glance, the tapping of a red fingernail, a burst of laughter, we are asked to examine the moments of human quirk that crack the facade of 'professionalism'. With furious editing finesse and an almost-too-close handheld camera, Imbach leads us on an absorbing and passionate vendetta against the right of big business to control human lives.



Thu 24 9pm
Panel: S Markovitz, T Imbach & J Lewis
Sat 3 6pm



GHETTO

1997 Switzerland 122min 35mm
Dir: Thomas Imbach

Documentary meets Art House meets home video in this hard hitting, hyper-real ride through the lives of eight Swiss teenagers as they face the challenge of entering life-after-school. With a "mother-fucker" and a roll of the eyes that take us on a breakbeat journey through their classroom, bedrooms, nightclubs, their secret telephone conversations, their politics. Imbach's camera gets in close to find the fear, the beauty of what it means to be a teenager. The film has six chapters – *Ghetto, Auto, Sex, Drugs, Techno, Marronage* each of which spins on real-life dialogue to create two hours of incredible directness that will get you to the screen. *Ghetto* is a brilliantly paced, fascinating film that avoids flashy stereotypes in favour of emphatic relationship with its almost-adult subjects. Highly entertaining.

Mon 21 5.45pm
Panel: N Murphy, T Imbach & K Gillespie
Mon 28 8pm



Harriet Gavshon, one of South Africa's most prolific film producers, has built a reputation for telling extraordinary tales about ordinary people. The producer of such South African classics as *Ordinary People*, *Ghetto Diaries* and *Real Lives*, award-winning Gavshon documentaries allow us access to the stories behind the headlines. From mail-order matchmaking to virginity testing, Gavshon's cameras use cinema verite to get a grip on South African lives. After graduating from the University of the Witwatersrand she went on to complete an MA at the Tisch School of the Arts, New York University. On her return in 1984 she lectured at UNISA and Wits before embarking on her film career with Mail & Guardian Television. We are pleased to welcome Harriet Gavshon as a guest of Pro Helvetia and this Festival. She will introduce a screening of each of her productions and answer questions from the audience. They are *Real Lives* Tuesday 22 June at 5.45pm and *Charmaine's Story/Sara Baartman* Wednesday 23 June at 8.45pm.



CHARMAINE'S STORY

1996 SA 26min Beta

Dir: Sara Blecher

June 1983. Four seemingly random murders occur across South Africa. Police eventually find evidence which links all four to a renegade couple, Charmaine Phillips and Peter Grundlingh, who are on a road run across the country with their baby. NYU film graduate Blecher has constructed a part murder mystery, part 'dear diary' account of South Africa's very own Bonny and Clyde murderers. *Charmaine's Story* documents the four murders, using news broadcasts, detective photographs and interviews with Charmaine's family, friends of the couple and their investigating officer. This story of violence, obsession, and dysfunctional relationships that captured the fascination of the South African public is narrated by Charmaine herself. The twist in the tale reminds us that fact will always remain more extraordinary than fiction. Plays with *The Life and Times of Sara Baartman* which Gavshon also produced.

Wed 23 8.45pm
Panel: A Manna, H Gavshon, Z Maseko & I Mahabane
Tue 29 8pm



THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SARA BAARTMAN

1998 SA 52min Beta

Dir: Zola Maseko

The tale of Sara Baartman should be known to every South African. For it is a story that distills the audacity of European racism: and is an accessible and moving account of her life. Sara was a Khoi-Khoi woman, born in the Cape in 1790, who at the age of 20 was taken to London by two Europeans visiting Cape Town – one the brother of her Dutch employer. It was there she was named 'the Hottentot Venus' and sold by her travelling companions as a freak act to London audiences fascinated with the exotic. The subsequent battle over her remains is recounted by French, British and South African historians. This film grapples with issues of race,



ownership and the practice of history. Award-winning Maseko is a graduate of the National Film and Television School (UK) where he specialised in documentary direction.



REAL LIVES: From Russia with Love & The House of Mpanza Road

1998 SA 52min x 2 Beta

Dirs: Sara Blecher & Nadine Zylberberg

Real Lives tells of the extraordinary events in people's lives. Compelling and entertaining, the series offers rare depth of insight into the lives of South African stories.

First is the rivetting account of beautiful Erica of Omsk in Siberia who sent her photograph to EuroClub, a matchmaking agency. She's looking for a better life. Komatipoorter Ricardo Espag chooses Erica from the catalogue and has tailor-made his home to please her. Virginity testing is a long-standing cultural practice in KwaZulu-Natal. Here are three remarkable women: MaZungu, the traditional healer who practices virginity testing; Silindwe, a 17-year old who has been tested every month since her tenth birthday; and Xolisile who 'failed' the test. These perspectives give meaning to a tradition both honoured and reviled.

Tue 22 5.45pm
Panel: H Gavshon, E Edwards & S Diken



Extracts from THE BLACK – a work in progress

1999 SA 28min Beta
Dir: Eddie Edwards

We are pleased to present a "work in progress" about Cape Town's Black River and the musicians who live along its banks. This is a hugely enjoyable exploration of musical styles and musicians' fantasies. Musings on the much-maligned river provide ingenious links between the four segments. Close-up camera work provides a feast of visual detail. Featured gigs include Penny Pinchers All Stars, Seventh Breed, The Honeymoon Suites, and Toyer Abrahams. *Extracts from The Black* walked away with four Avanti Awards this year: a Silver in the Best Documentary category, and awards for camera, editing, and final mix. A 52-minute version is in post-production. Director Eddie Edwards will be present at the screening on Tuesday 22 at 5.45pm to answer questions from the audience. *Extracts from The Black* plays with *Real Lives*.

Tue 22 5.45pm
Panel: N Murphy, H Gavshan, E Edwards & S Diken



Liz Fish is an award-winning director and producer who has been in the business for some fifteen years now. Trained at the BBC's *Elstree Studios*, she was director of the Community Video Education Trust (CVET) from 1982 to 1989 where she shot, edited and produced over 50 programmes. She has produced and directed film for South African television, among them *Cutting the Cord* and *Where There Is No Doctor*. She also directed and edited *Thokoza Video Dialogues for the Africa: Search For Common Ground* project. Currently she is working at Ubuntu Television as both producer and director on a programme called *Ubuntu*.

Liz Fish is a guest of Pro Helvetia and this Festival. She will introduce the screening of her film and answer questions from the audience on Monday 21 June at 8.30pm.



THE LONG JOURNEY OF CLEMENT ZULU

1994 SA 59min Beta
Dir: Liz Fish

In this, one of the best documentaries made in South Africa, we follow the journeys of three men from the moment of their release from *Robben Island* to a painful and often contradictory freedom. They are *Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim*, *James Mange* and *Clement Zulu*. In this deeply moving, still heart-breaking film each man reveals how his sense of self changes upon release, as he encounters friends, family, loves and the new South Africa. 'I wanted to pay tribute and give exposure to these ordinary heroes who paid the price of imprisonment. They could so easily be overlooked as they were reabsorbed into the mass of unemployed South Africans. I also wanted to debunk the media images of political prisoners – terrorists, hard-bitten politicians, tough, skilled and wily political fighters'. *Not to be missed*. Plays with *Where Truth Lies*.

Mon 21 8.30pm
Panel: J Taylor, L Fish, S Snel & E Solo
Sat 3 8pm



WHERE TRUTH LIES

1998 SA 28min Beta
Dir: Mark Kaplan

Kaplan has been making films since the late 70s. He was detained and deported in 1982 for his role in the Community Video Education Trust. This film shows the difficulty the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had to construct the "truth" of South Africa's past from the testimonies of 7 000 perpetrators and 21 000 victims. Of course, not all the answers given were truthful. Sipiwo Mtimkulu was arrested, tortured, poisoned, released, abducted, killed and his body burned. His family suffered a 15 year long sadistic misinformation campaign by the security forces. Two days before the deadline "Notorious" Niewoudt applied for amnesty for Mtimkulu's death. We see Niewoudt visit Mtimkulu's parents to ask forgiveness. Mtimkulu's mother says "For God it is not late. For me you are late." Mtimkulu's son's response was to crack open Niewoudt's skull, all memorably captured on camera.



Cliff Bestall has made over 50 documentaries in the past 20 years and received many international prizes for his work, among them the Artes Award for the original series of *Ordinary People*. Bestall's interest in the conventions of documentary is evident in his innovative approach to the making of *Nelson Rolihlala Mandela – an intimate portrait*. Bestall avoids the classic mode of "objective" filming, here there is no single authorial voice, rather a range of perspectives and often striking contradictions which encourages the exploration of the subtle textures of truth. We are pleased to welcome Cliff Bestall as a guest of Pro Helvetia and this Festival. He will introduce the screening and answer questions from the audience on Thursday 24 June at 6pm. We are grateful to the SABC for the opportunity to have the **World Premiere** screening of the complete *intimate portrait*.



NELSON ROLIHLEHLA MANDELA – an intimate portrait

1999 SA 104min Beta
Dir: Cliff Bestall

The rhetoric of sainthood that surrounds Nelson Mandela is built on legendary details. This very sainthood erases other details and presents no mean challenge for the documentarist. Bestall's "intimate portrait" has approached the task by NOT interviewing the most authoritative source – the man himself. He appears only in archival footage, some of it very rare. So, without the stamp of Mandela's words, what's on offer? Comrades, allies and even enemies introduce us to the shifts in the person who is Mandela, noting his strengths, blind spots and personal style, his growth, anger, regrets and strategic insight. This film points to the complexities behind all the representations we have received and there are interesting lessons in this approach. Stark contradictions in testimonies suggest that "truth" is a construct, though not necessarily false.

Thu 24 6pm
Panel G Baderoux, C. Bestall & D. Lewis
Sun 27 8pm



Nicolaas Hofmeyr has been working in the television industry for the past fifteen years. He shot 13 episodes of the award winning documentary series *Ordinary People* and won an award for best investigative journalism for his story on illegal immigrants in South Africa. Hofmeyr also produced and directed 4 stories for Channel Four's *Africa Express*. He was the director of photography for the acclaimed SABC series *Africa Salutes Mandela*, directed by John Matshikiza. In addition, he has made award-winning music videos for South African artists. As a documentary photographer and photo-journalist his work has appeared in several exhibitions and journals. He recently photographed a 40 minute documentary on the artist William Kentridge for the German television network WDR. We are pleased to welcome Nicolaas Hofmeyr as a guest of Pro Helvetia and this Festival. He will introduce the **World Premiere** screening of *Main Reef Road* and answer questions from the audience on Friday 25 June at 8.15pm.



MAIN REEF ROAD

1999 SA 90min Beta
Dir: Nicolaas Hofmeyr

Avoiding the "shopping malls and fake piazzas" of Gauteng, the film follows the road that runs through the province's history and present. The journey to find out "Why we are here" is a task Hofmeyr takes on with humour and commitment. He meets a housing activist named Rasta, who represents people fighting eviction from an area threatened by sinkholes and the white councillor who sympathises because he once lived without electricity. There are the hidden subcultures of American car buffs, who smeaak their Wildcats and the beauty queen who races cars for her father, her country and God. The mines that mark the route continue to shape the lives of people we meet. The search for the metal that gives Gauteng its name commits men to the deep to dig for the thousands of tons of rock needed to produce \$400 000 worth of gold every week.

Fri 25 8.15pm
Panel S Markovitz, N. Hofmeyr, S. Dixon & D. Burt
Wed 30 6pm



Liza Key is presently the director of SCRAWL, the South African Screenwriters Laboratory, an initiative to develop feature film scripts which is run annually in Cape Town. In 1987 she directed the first Weekly Mail Film Festival which was to become the respected Mail & Guardian Film Festival. She also founded the Mail & Guardian Short Film Competition and the Limits of Liberty Festival. In 1997 she formed Key Films and was associate producer on Songs for the Golden City for Channel 4 (UK). *The Furiosus* is her first film as a director. We are pleased to welcome Liza Key here as a guest of Pro Helvetia and this Festival. She will introduce the screening of *The Furiosus* and answer questions from the audience on Saturday 26 at 6pm.



THE FURIOSUS

1999 SA 52min Beta
Dir: Liza Key

The Furiosus explores the tortured story of Dimitri Tsafendas, assassin of Hendrik Verwoerd. Declared by a judge to be a madman – 'a Furiosus' in Roman law – Tsafendas spent 28 years on death row. Produced as if giving evidence before the TRC, the director becomes the attorney in the trial that never was, arguing that Tsafendas had raged against Verwoerd's classifications of race. Interviewed after his release from prison to Sterkfontein Hospital, Tsafendas is an ill man, suffering the continuing effects of years of brutal treatment. Nonetheless, he comes across as engaging, even lucid. The genius of the film is in the director's capacity to allow contradictory impressions of Tsafendas to emerge. Fragments of memories collected from many who knew Tsafendas in prison years and before, generate a portrait of one of the most complex figures of South African history; someone loathed by many, admired by most, and misunderstood by all.

Sat 26 6pm
Panel: G. Baderon, V. Bickford-Smith, L. Key & B. Nussion
Fri 2 8pm



ALIENS OR BROERS

1998 SA / France 52min Beta
Dir: Thulani Mokoena

Trade Unionist. This film deals sensitively with the challenges faced by the growing Francophone African community in Johannesburg. The reasons they are here are varied, pursuing their studies, seeking assylum from political and religious persecution. In return, they bring new cultures and valuable skills. South Africans have not always responded hospitably, seeing foreigners as competitors for jobs. The term "makwerekwere" signals this disdain. Journey with Marcellin Zounmenou of Benin, who works at the Soweto branch of Alliance Française, through his experiences of South Africa and travel home with him to Benin. Through such mutual exchange, the film undercuts the widespread xenophobia in South Africa. Former Trade Unionist Mokoena studied filmmaking in France. He is the author of numerous scripts and co-director of the award-winning documentary 'My vote is my secret'.

Sat 27 6pm
Panel: A. Hage, T. Mokoena, S. Frankental & S. Diken

JOHN CITIZEN AND THE STATE

1967 SA 19min Beta
Union of SA Film Services

John Citizen, white and Afrikaans, is introduced to a panoply of State apparatuses at his disposal – the departments of Water, Pensions, Work, Labour, even SAA. The ideas, like the music, are brutally spliced, the lack of subtlety is revealing. In describing the work of Native Affairs the voice over at its most euphemistic. Mrs Citizen checks "whether her servant has his reference book". This is the only role which Black people feature in this world.

GO VIA THE RIGHT AUTHORITIES

1967 SA 12min Beta
Union of SA Film Services

Aimed at Black people, this film is an indication of the way its authors saw the intended audience. It lies in the patronising metaphors used. The film is pregnant with fear of the arrival of Blacks in urban areas. The fantasy which informs the film soon reveals itself overtly: "Sometimes it may not even be necessary for you to leave your own area because work may be available to you on your own doorstep." As a document in which the Apartheid government presents its influx control policy, this from the State archives is a stark reminder of the official ideology of the recent past. These films are too concrete to make for easy forgetting and perhaps this is their only virtue.



Craig Matthew and Joëlle Chesselet (Doxa Productions) have a particular interest in the relationship between people and the environment. Their focus on the people and landscape of the Kaokoveld began in 1987. First there was a film about innovative conservation schemes for the Namibian desert elephant and rhino, then an award winning film on the western flowing ephemeral rivers of Namibia. This film is about the struggle of the Himba people to preserve their lands around the Epupa Falls and the Cunene River. Their other prize-winning works include *This Crazy Thing Called Grace* (1997; on Archbishop Desmond Tutu) and *Mercury – An Island Diary* (1995), a visual poem that has received five awards at a range of international festivals.

We are pleased to welcome Craig and Joëlle as guests of Pro Helvetia and this Festival. They will introduce the screening and answer questions from the audience on Saturday 26 June at 8pm.

RIVER OF MEMORY

SA 1999 26mins Beta
Dirs: Craig Matthew and Joëlle Chesselet

Shot in Namibia, Sweden and England, *River of Memory* documents Himba leaders' moving and eloquent protests against the building of a hydropower dam on their land along the Cunene River, bordering Namibia and Angola. Arresting images of the river explore landscapes that will be lost should the building of the dam go ahead. Questions about the relationships between globalisation and development, land rights and cultural survival pervade this disturbing and beautiful documentary. The soundtrack deserves special mention: much of it produced by travelling South Africans together with Himba musicians on the banks of the river. *River of Memory* plays in a triple bill with the "work in progress" *The Great Dance*, and *Remnants of a Stone Age People*.

Sat 26 8pm
Panel: E. Salo, J. Chesselet, C. Foster & D. Foster
Thu 1 6pm



THE GREAT DANCE – a work in progress

1999 SA 15min Beta
Dirs: Craig and Damon Foster

Craig Foster (Earthrise Films) and Damon Foster (Liquid Pictures) specialise in an organic style of filmmaking designed to stimulate the viewers' deep sense of animals, landscape and fellow human beings. *The Great Dance*, on the master trackers of the Kalahari, (co-produced with Discovery, National Geographic and TBS), has led to the use of miniature cameras mounted in unusual places, sometimes on animals. The idea was inspired by the Gwi trackers' extreme ability to project their minds into the animals they hunt. Craig and Damon work closely with executive producers Ellen Widemuth and James Herson in an ongoing process of shooting and editing, slowly nurturing the film into shape over a period of 2 years. We are very pleased to have them both present an extract of their visually stunning work on Saturday 26 June at 8pm.

REMNANTS OF A STONE AGE PEOPLE

c1960 SA 31min Beta
Union of SA Information Office Production

"From the throbbing of virile cities" to "relics of a bygone and leisurely age" – with such phrases *Remnants of a Stone Age People* invited audiences of the 1960s to a journey from Johannesburg to the Kalahari to view the producers' ultimate Other: the Bushmen.

More curious and bizarre than the hunter-gatherers' images are the ideological gems in the script. Do you know that the Bushmen fled to the desert because they refused to cooperate...? A fascinating and eerie study of the logic of racial superiority, and the craft of 'Othering' subjects via moving images. This film is screened courtesy of the Government Communication Information Services and is part of a triple bill with *River of Memory* and *The Great Dance*.





ONE DAY ON THE PATH

1998 SA 30min Beta

Dir: Francesca Bartellini

This documentary, set in remote Transkei, uses the passage of time (dawn, noon and dusk) and a footpath that traverses a certain village as a metaphor for *Life*. Everyone must walk along it. There are interviews with the *Sangomas* who reflect on the symbolic presence of animals in divination, magic and the ancestors. The poetry of Xhosa poet and scholar Abner Nyamende features in a soundtrack that tries to suggest a harmony between classical European melodies and traditional Xhosa music. Francesca Bartellini has a degree in Political Philosophy from the State University of Milan and is currently reading for her Ph.D. at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes in Paris. She also writes for theatre and has taken roles in many films. She came to South Africa to work on the documentary on the TRC "*Ubuntu and the Naked Rage*". *One Day on the Path*, shot by Guy Tillim, is her debut as documentary director.

Mon 28 6pm
Panel: S Markovitz, L Marx & A Hanwana

THE FOX HAS FOUR EYES

1958 SA 24min Beta

Dir: Jamie Uys

Born in Boksburg in 1921, Jacobus Johannes 'Jamie' Uys became an internationally acclaimed director with 24 films to his credit. His features and documentaries included *Funny People*, *Animals are Beautiful People* and, of course, *The Gods Must Be Crazy*. He died in Johannesburg in 1996. This mini-drama was produced by the Apartheid State. Narrated in a pseudo-African accent, it is an effort to discredit traditional African beliefs. A man, Masava, wishing to gain strength consults a witch doctor. He is advised to kill a young girl, a twin, and eat her heart. The tale is taken up by the girl's father; we learn of his unsuccessful attempt to take revenge on Masava and his subsequent incarceration in parts of prison. His rehabilitation includes the realisation that witchdoctors have no real power. It is awesome to reflect upon the arrogance of the makers, to believe that rural Africans would be convinced by such a plot is awfully revealing to see from whence Jamie *The Gods Must be Crazy* Uys hails.

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The Media and Society Seminar, University of Cape Town

The media touches everyone. Truths, memories, stereotypes are framed in the complex relationship between media and social life.

This is the focus of the Media and Society Seminar, recently established at the University of Cape Town by Gabeba Baderoon and Lesley Fordred. The flagship of the Seminar is the recent Friday Festival of Documentary.

A series of screenings and discussions, the Festival drew students, filmmakers, academics and the public into critical debate on the power of documentary to generate images through which people understand one another. Among the charged issues that have been raised are: who has the right to tell stories? How can access to the means to make films be broadened? How can visions from the margins be realised on film? And what professional habits create relationships of domination between filmmakers and their subjects?

The *Encounters Swiss South African Documentary Film Festival* offers an international forum to broaden these debates. The Festival offers unmissable works. Films on myth examine the values that inform social life. Films on memory and truth probe the way in which documentaries deal with history. Films from the South African State Archive show attempts to control sources of truth under apartheid, raising questions about the relationship between power and documentary practices. The Swiss films have redefined documentary style and appeal. And the presence of the directors, both Swiss and South African, offers the public the opportunity to explore innovations and challenge conventions. *Encounters* aims to kindle public debate on the media's representation of truth in its many versions. Discussions after the screenings will include filmmakers and panelists drawn from the media and the academic community. We have no doubt that the debates will be invigorating and challenging. You're invited. Speak your mind.

The Panelists

Gabeba Baderoon: Researcher in the English department at UCT and a lecturer on visual representation, race and media in South Africa.

Vivian Bickford-Smith: He lectures at the Department of History at UCT. He teaches a long running course on documentary film.

David Bunn: Professor of English at UWC with a particular research interest in visual representation, and is a specialist in theories of landscape.*

Sandile Dikeni: Activist, acclaimed poet and public speaker, he is currently editor of the Arts and Lifestyle section of the *Cape Times*.*

Angelo Fick: A researcher in literature and media, he has been a freelance journalist and has lectured at UCT and Wits.

Lesley Fordred: Lecturer in the Social Anthropology department at UCT teaching courses on media and culture.

Sally Frankental: Specialises in matters of migration, ethnicity and identity. A consultant attached to the Department of Social Anthropology at UCT.

Kelly Gillespie: Documentary maker and presenter of an international youth television show, YNTV.

Ada Haupt: Lecturer at Cape Technikon; a young filmmaker and freelance journalist with a major interest in issues of gender and representation.

John Higgins: Senior Lecturer in the English department at UCT specialising in the field of film, subjectivity, and psychoanalytic theory.

Aicinda Honwana: Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology at UCT, researches spirit possession in Mozambique and New Age groups in Cape Town.

Desiree Lewis: Lecturer in the English Department at UWC and an authority in the fields of South African gender studies, representation and autobiography.

Jack Lewis: A filmmaker and former lecturer in economic history, he has directed several documentaries and docu-dramas. He is a co-founder of the Gay and Lesbian Film Festival.

Ithumeleng Mahabane: Iconoclastic journalist and pace-setting editor of a publication which is redefining South African magazine journalism.*

Amina Mama: Director of the African Gender Institute at UCT. An eminent scholar in the fields of gender, race and representation, she conducted influential research into the life of Sara Baartman.

Lesley Marx: Head of the Department of English at UCT, teaches scriptwriting and visual studies and is a regular contributor to radio discussions on film.

Bill Nasson: Professor in the Department of History at UCT, he specialises in South African history.*

Eliza Salo: Lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at UWC researching questions of gender and identity in Manenberg.

Wilhelm Snyman: Arts writer for the *Cape Times*, he lectured for six years in the Italian Department at UCT.

Jane Taylor: Playwright and celebrated author of *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, she is a senior lecturer in the English department at UWC.
* subject to availability



DAY	TIME	TITLE
Sun 20	8pm	Siamo Italiani Panel: S Markovitz, AJ Seiler, W Snyman & G Baderoon
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Mon 21	5.45pm	Ghetto Panel: N Murphy, T Imbach, & K Gillespie
	8.30pm	The Long Journey of Clement Zulu Where Truth Lies Panel: J Taylor, L Fish, S Snel & E Salo
Tue 22	5.45pm	Real Lives: From Russia with Love & The House on Mpanza Road & Extracts from The Black Panel: H Gavshon, S Blecher, E Edwards & S Dikeni
	8pm	Ernesto 'Che' Guevara – The Bolivian Diary Panel: S Markovitz, R Dindo, J Higgins & I Mahabane
Wed 23	5.45pm	A Season in Paradise Panel: N Murphy, R Dindo & L Marx
	8.45pm	Charmaine's Story The Life and Times of Sara Baartman Panel: A Mama, H Gavshon, Z Maseko & I Mahabane
Thu 24	6pm	Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela – an intimate portrait Panel: G Baderoon, C Bestall & D Lewis
	9pm	Well Done Panel: S Markovitz, T Imbach & J Lewis
Fri 25	6pm	Palaver, Palaver Panel: K Gillespie, AJ Seiler & J Higgins
	8.15pm	Main Reef Road Panel: S Dikeni, N Hofmeyr, D Bunn & S Markovitz
Sat 26	6pm	The Furiosus Panel: G Baderoon, V Bickford-Smith, L Key & B Nasson
	8pm	River of Memory The Great Dance Remnants of a Stone Age People Panel: E Salo, J Chesselet, C Foster & D Foster

DAY	TIME	TITLE
Sun 27	6pm	Aliens or Broers John Citizen and The State Go Via The Right Authorities Panel: A Haupt, T Mokoena, S Frankental & S Dikeni
	8pm	Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela – an intimate portrait
Mon 28	6pm	One Day on the Path The Fox has Four Eyes Panel: S Markovitz, L Marx, AC Fick & A Horwana
	8pm	Ghetto
Tues 29	6pm	Ernesto 'Che' Guevara – The Bolivian Diary
	8pm	Charmaine's Story The Life and Times of Sara Baartman
Wed 30	6pm	Main Reef Road
	8pm	A Season in Paradise
Thu 1	6pm	River of Memory The Great Dance Remnants of a Stone Age People
	8.30pm	Palaver, Palaver
Fri 2	6pm	Siamo Italiani
	8pm	The Furiosus
Sat 3	6pm	Well Done
	8pm	The Long Journey of Clement Zulu Where Truth Lies Panel: S Markovitz, N Murphy, L Fish, M Kaplan