



PRODUIRE AU SUD
FESTIVAL DES CINÉASTES
NANTES

MILES FROM NOWHERE

South Africa

Produire au Sud Nantes 2017

MAIN DATA

Category: Satire

Length : 120'

Language : English

Shooting format : HD Digital

Shooting location : South Africa

Shooting dates : July 2019

Expected dates of completion : September 2019

Stage of production : development stage

PRODUCTION

Budget : 750000 €

Financing in place : 13 000 €

Production company : Blingola Media

Coproducer attached : Uruco Media (South Africa)

Workshops and platforms attended : Realness screenwriters residency 2017, Durban FilmMart 2017

Current situation : Development stage, seeking for partners

BONGIWE SELANE, PRODUCER

Bongiwe Selane is an award-winning producer with credits that include Culture Shock (2013 SAFTA best reality show), *Unomalanga and The Witch*, best South African Short Film at DIFF 2015, *Great Africans*, a documentary series on African icons, and the NFVF's Female Only Filmmaker Project (2014-16), a series of short films by women filmmakers. Her feature film debut *Happiness is a Four-Letter-Word* is an adaptation of a novel by author Cynthia Jele. Released in February 2016, the film went on to break SA box office records. Bongiwe is the founder of her production company Blingola Media.



SAMANTHA NELL, DIRECTOR

Samantha Nell is a South African writer and director. She completed her MFA at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts Asia in Singapore in 2014. She has directed and produced short films on four continents. Her films have played at festivals including: Cannes Film Festival, Palm Springs International Shortsfest and Durban International Film Festival. In 2017 she participated in Realness, a pan-African screenwriter's residency. Her debut feature film *Miles From Nowhere* is in development with the support of the National Film and Video Foundation.



SYNOPSIS

Ben, an elderly racist, has his world thrown into disarray when the liberal manager of his old age home decides to integrate. He and the other residents openly criticise this change, while their children try to stop it without being perceived as racist. The new residents bring with them different realities. Each group fights to hold onto their space and identity. Lebo, a black grandmother emerges, as an antagonist to Ben. Lebo longs to be treated the way she has seen white people treated.

A comedy of manners ensues with both Ben and Lebo underestimating one another. They marshal their groups as they manipulate and push to make the home in their own image. Their movements put the precarious process of transforming the home in jeopardy. The conflict builds to Heritage Day when Ben humiliates Lebo. The conflict boils over to the younger generation. Everyone is unmasked and prejudices are revealed.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

« *Miles From Nowhere* is a film that explores the existential absurdity of a post-Apartheid South Africa. The film positions itself astride the chasm in the national mythology: We are a country that simultaneously views ourselves as having completed our journey -- from oppressive regime into peaceful democracy while also finding ourselves at the very beginning of the real process of transformation that is the meat of that journey. [...]

We have constructed a psyche in which these two things are not at odds with one another. This presents itself in different ways generationally: the older generation -- people who have lived through national change, but have often made no effort at personal growth; the middle generation -- aware of the social mores of the "Rainbow Nation", but often at their heart they carry as much prejudice as their parents; and the younger generation; idealistic and combative they are prepared to take the justice they deserve.

Miles From Nowhere is my way of exploring the twin narratives of the country in which I have grown up. Of looking at where we are and where we have come from. A way of trying to tease out these inconsistencies and expose the tenuous narratives we have constructed around them. It is much easier, as it turns out, to change a country than to change an individual. It is about the personal, but it speaks to the political. I am personally connected to this story because it is a part of the fabric that makes up my identity and speaking to this is a part of working out how I can move forward, without dismissing the past and without being drowned by it. »

CONTACTS

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Director

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