

A local surfing movie with heart

 By [Daniel Derksen](#)

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Die PRO is an absolutely delightful Afrikaans coming-of-age surf film that proudly showcases the best local filmmaking has to offer.

It's refreshing to find a film that steers away from radical political agendas, rather focussing on the politics of friendship, emotionally exploring the lives of a group of teenagers in a coastal town where surfing rules.

Director André Velts, who gave us Knysna, draws the best out of his cast, allowing us to take an emotional journey into youthful aspirations and first love, as well as a very touching bromance between two surfers.

Edwin van der Walt (Ballade Vir 'N Enkeling, Hollywood In My Huis) delivers a powerful performance as Tiaan, a 17-year-old surfer who needs to make peace with the death of his best friend, with strong support from Viljé Maritz as his surfing buddy, Dirkie.



The story focusses on Tiaan, who swears off surfing for good, as he can't stand to be reminded of everything that he and his friend shared. Until his friend's twin sister Yvette is selected to go on Wave-Seekers, a fictional World Surf Tour - and something that Tiaan and Dirkie dreamed of doing themselves. But for her to succeed, she needs Tiaan's help, and, by implication, she needs him to get back on his surfboard.

Coming to terms with who they are

It's a film about people coming to terms with who they are in a community and society are not always that supportive or forgiving, taking us into the lives of ordinary South Africans we all know so well, but might not always understand.

Reine Swart is perfectly cast as a matric girl who has to cope with the pressure of making peace with her brother's death, as well as trying to guide his best friend on a path of redemption and forgiveness.



In a world of hate and mistrust we need friends and Bennie Fourie (Moorivier) is great as the new matric boy, giving us the perspective of an outsider who sees Tiaan's world with new eyes, and Morne du Toit is the supportive older buddy and owner of a pizza hang out who fully understands what Tiaan has to deal with.

Neels van Jaarsveld (Knysna) is equally wonderful at the school psychologist who tries to guide Tiaan to a better understanding, but has to deal with his own baggage, with Albert Maritz (Verraiers) in another memorable role as the vice-principal.

The story focusses strongly on the competitive nature of matrices and Arno Greeff (Binnelanders) shines as the sexy bad boy and bully who is Tiaan's worst enemy.

Beautifully captured

Shot in Jeffrey's Bay and Humansdorp in the Eastern Cape, Die PRO is beautifully captured by cinematographer Eduard Kitching, with excellent water cinematography by Wayne de Lange, in particular a scene where the surfers bid farewell to their surfing hero.

Wayne began his cinematography career shooting the surfers at his local break on Jeffrey's Bay, in South Africa's Eastern Cape. An accomplished surfer himself (and fully certified commercial diver) Wayne was soon the 'go to' South African water cinematographer, taking on the role of Water DOP on high-end productions, such as the US movies Blue Crush 2 & The Perfect Wave with Scott Eastwood and shooting water on BBC's flagship documentary series The Wonder Of Nature.

The theme song for Die PRO was written by well-known Afrikaans singer and personality Bouwer Bosch of Straatligkinders and speaks to the same themes of fear of loss, friendship and embracing life.

Die PRO is an intimate coming-of-age story with a big heart and is ideal for those who are looking for meaningful entertainment that shines a light on the people who share our lives.

Die PRO is in Afrikaans with English subtitles.

ABOUT DANIEL DERCKSEN

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