

# South African content making waves internationally, from Annie to Bafta nominations

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*Moffie* up for Bafta; *The Snail and The Whale* up for Annie; *Fugitive presents DAM*, *Lioness* and *Legacy* at MipTV

## ***Moffie* up for Bafta**

*Moffie* has a big weekend coming up: producer Jack Sidey is nominated for an Outstanding Debut Bafta (British Academy Film Awards) and the critically acclaimed war movie is being released in the USA at select cinemas and streaming platforms by IFC Films.

Adapted from an autobiographical 2006 novel by André Carl van der Merwe, *Moffie* is set in South Africa, 1981, with the white minority government embroiled in a conflict on the southern Angolan border. Like all white boys over the age of 16, Nicholas Van der Swart (Kai Luke Brummer) must complete two years of compulsory military service to defend the Apartheid regime. The threat of communism and *die swart gevaar* is at an all-time high. But that's not the only danger Nicholas faces. He must survive the brutality of the army – something that becomes even more difficult when a connection is sparked between him and a fellow recruit.

Since premiering at Venice in 2019, *Moffie* has won the Mermaid Award at Thessaloniki and the Film Critics Special Jury Prize at Dublin. The film has a 97% critics rating from *Rotten Tomatoes*, with *Variety* raving, "South African auteur Oliver Hermanus makes his masterpiece with this brutal but radiant story of young gay desire on the Angolan war front... establishing him quite plainly as South Africa's most vital contemporary filmmaker... Both a shiver-delicate exploration of unspoken desire and a scarringly brilliant anatomy of white South African masculinity. It fair takes your breath away."

Similarly, *Sight and Sound* called *Moffie* "thrillingly cinematic... Recalls the brutality of *Full Metal Jacket* crossed with the eroticism of *Beau Travail*," while *The Hollywood Reporter* called it "mesmerizing."

Reviewing *Moffie* in March 2021, *Deadline* hailed Hermanus as a talent to watch. "Hermanus has delivered a war film distinctively different from others, partly due to the particular conflict he's chosen to dramatize, but much more from the

perspectives through which he asks the viewer to consider things, historically and personally. Based on what he's done here, it wouldn't be surprising to see him make the jump to bigger international projects sooner rather than later."

That's already happening, with Hermanus having signed on to direct *Living*, an adaptation of Akira Kurosawa's classic *Ikiru*, written by Nobel Prize and Booker Prize winner Kazuo Ishiguro (*Remains of the Day*, *Never Let Me Go*) and starring Golden Globe winner Bill Nighy (*Love Actually*) and Aimee Lou Wood (*Sex Education*).

## ***The Snail and the Whale* nominated at Annie Awards**

Next Friday, 16 April 2021, *The Snail and the Whale* is competing for Best Animated Special Production at The Annie Awards, one of the biggest awards globally for the animation industry.

Based on the bestselling picture book written by Julia Donaldson and illustrated by Axel Scheffler (creators of the modern classic *The Gruffalo*), *The Snail and The Whale* follows the amazing journey of a tiny snail who longs to see the world and hitches a ride on the tail of a huge humpback whale. *Radio Times* calls the animation "a beautiful visual treat"; *Animation World News* hails it as "enchanting"; and *Variety* describes it as "audacious... adorable... charming."

Animated in Cape Town by Triggerfish and produced by Magic Light Pictures, *The Snail and the Whale* is directed by Max Lang and South African Daniel Snaddon, who previously collaborated on the Annecy-winning *Stick Man* and the International Emmy-winning *Zog*. *The Snail and the Whale* has already won eight international awards at the likes of the British Animation Awards, Cartoons on the Bay, New York International Children's Film Festival, The Venice TV Awards, and the BANFF Rockie's Awards.

*The Snail and the Whale* was voiced by a starry British acting cast including Sally Hawkins (*Paddington*, *The Shape of Water*) as Snail, Rob Brydon (*Gavin & Stacey*, *The Trip*) as Whale, Ciriad Lloyd (*Peep Show*) as Teacher and the late Dame Diana Rigg (Olenna Tyrell in *Game of Thrones*) as the narrator.

## Fugitive to present *Dam*, *Lioness* and *Legacy* at MIPTV

UK-based distributor Fugitive has struck a deal with MultiChoice to distribute their original scripted series internationally. As part of this deal, at this month's MipTV, Fugitive will present three MultiChoice series: the Showmax Original psychological thriller *DAM*, M-Net's crime drama [Lioness](#), and M-Net's telenovela [Legacy](#).

In *DAM*, Silwerskerm Best Actress winner Lea Vivier (*Wonderlus*) stars as Yola, who returns from Chile to bury her estranged father. To her surprise, and her sister's irritation, he's left his farm to her, but this may be more of a curse than a blessing, as the house seems to be trying to tell her something. But with her mother institutionalised, and her own meds running out, Yola has to wonder if the spirits are real or just in her head?

Since launching in February 2021, *DAM*'s been earning rave reviews. YFM's resident critic Yazz the Student compares *DAM* to HBO's *The Outsider* and says the "eerie" and "unsettling" show feels "different to the South African television landscape;" *Sunday Times*' Tymon Smith calls it "chilling... well-acted, eerily realised and intriguing"; *Fortress of Solitude* says "it rivals any international production... a must-watch show that promises to fester in your mind long after the credits roll;" and *Watkykijy* hailed it as the "best South African series I've seen to date."

Two-time SAFTA winner Pallance Dladla (*Shadow*, *Isibaya*) co-stars as Themba, a biker on the run. Also look out for Hollywood actors Neil Sandilands (*The Flash*, *The 100*, *The Americans*) and Natasha Loring (*Beaver Falls*); SAFTA winner Antoinette Louw (*An Act of Defiance*, *Die Laaste Tango*); 2020 Africa Movie Academy Award nominee Faniswa Yisa (*Blood Psalms*, *Knuckle City* and *Skin*); aKing frontman Laudo Liebenberg (*Black Sails*, *Die Byl*), and Gerald Steyn (*Meisies Wat Fluit*, *Fielas Kind*).

## LOCAL FAVOURITES

Of course, international acclaim isn't as important as connecting with local audiences. Current fan favourites on Showmax include:

- [The Real Housewives of Durban](#), which broke Showmax's first-day viewing record at the end of January and remains the most popular series on Showmax as it approaches its final episode on 16 April 2021
- Mzansi Magic's new drama [The Station](#), starring SAFTA nominee Sello Maake kaNcube (*The Herd*, *The River*) and International Emmy nominee Lerato Mvelase (*Home Affairs*, *Life*, *Above All*)
- Season 5 of Ferguson Films' multi-SAFTA-winning drama series [Rockville](#), which sees creditors knocking at the door of JB (Shona Ferguson from *The Queen*) and Lindi (SAFTA nominee Enhle Mbali Mlotshwa from *Blood Psalms*) because of the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic
- [Mnakwethu: Happily Ever After?](#), Mzansi Magic's popular reality series about polygamous families
- Season 3 of kykNET's Karoo drama [Die Boekklub](#), winner of four SAFTAs, including Best Script (Louis Pretorius) and Best Supporting Actress (Jana Cilliers)
- Season 4 of Mzansi Magic's reality show [The Ranakas](#), about what *News24* calls "one of South Africa's most-loved families"
- The feature film [Swirl](#), SAFTA winner Quanita Adams' directorial debut about hair on the Cape Flats, starring the likes of SAFTA winner Ilse Klink and SAFTA nominees Vinette Ebrahim and Shaleen Surtie-Richards

To see everything on Showmax in April 2021, including the upcoming Showmax Original *Skemerdans*, the box set of *Love Island SA*, and the Oscar-nominated 1987 classic *Cry Freedom*, with Denzel Washington as Steve Biko, click [here](#). Please

note this release schedule is subject to change.

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