

Afda alumnus and colourist Kyle Stroebel on Oscar nomination for *My Octopus Teacher*

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Kyle Stroebel is an Afda alumnus and accomplished South African colourist. His recent work on the picturesque documentary *My Octopus Teacher* received national and international praise soon after it was released on Netflix in March of 2020.



On 9 March 2021, it was announced that *My Octopus Teacher* had been nominated for a Bafta award in the Documentary Feature category. Soon after this announcement, on 15 March, Oscar nominations were announced where *My Octopus Teacher* was nominated in the Documentary Feature category.

When interviewed about these nominations, Stroebel spoke with enthusiasm about his craft as a colourist and about the impact that *My Octopus Teacher* had on him. Having immersed himself in this documentary, Stroebel now swims in the ocean almost every day. He spoke fondly about working with Craig Foster, the narrator and filmmaker, and expressed how grateful he was to have had worked with such amazing crew members. Their intentions behind the creation of this documentary were embedded in authenticity and were all about capturing the story that was unfolding in front of them; something that Stroebel emphasised was a pleasure to be a part of. He continued to praise the crew and the team behind him, revealing that it couldn't have been done without them.

When news broke about the Oscar nomination Stroebel exclaimed: "It was a mixture of ugly crying and ecstatic laughter, and then I started doing push-ups to try and get rid of the adrenaline." He went on to explain that no one knew the impact that *My Octopus Teacher* would necessarily have or that people would relate to it as much as they did, but that it wasn't a surprise either. The documentary provided a heartwarming and genuine narrative when it was most needed during uncertain times.



South African documentary *My Octopus Teacher* nominated for an Oscar

17 Mar 2021



My Octopus Teacher colourist Kyle Stroebel

Kyle Stroebel's work, however, isn't limited to this originaive documentary. His colourist filmography includes another Netflix production titled *Blood & Water*; a series about a teenager working to uncover a mysterious family secret as well as navigate the complicated society in a South African high school.

Another South African work in Stroebel's colourist filmography is the comedy TV series *Tali's Baby Dairy*; a mockumentary that follows Tali while she works on becoming a 'momfleuncer', as well as the shenanigans of Darren and Rael negotiating the Cape Town property game.

Kyle Stroebel is one of the top colourists in South Africa and is in such a position due to his apparent talent and discernible aptitude. Stroebel completed his BA at Afda in 2007 before going on to do his honours. While completing his honours, Stroebel worked as an intern at Condor where he wrote his thesis and assisted the head colourist at the time; working at all hours (including 4am) to fetch negatives, film and tape stock and do whatever needed to be done.

In 2009, Stroebel was hired full time and after two years he was given one-light grade opportunities and transfers when the main colourists were too busy or didn't want to work at 2am. By 2010, Stroebel was a dailies colourist and an assistant editor working for Waterfront Studios where he worked on his first movie titled *Blue Crush 2*. Continuing to work on other projects, Stroebel was given a Coca-Cola commercial to grade, "and that's when people started to think that I may be a colourist in the making," he says.

Stroebel then worked on *Robert Mugabe*, a documentary that opened the Encounters South African International Documentary Festival where he began to make a name for himself. From there, Stroebel worked on *Spud 2* and *3*, *Perfect Wave*, *Wallander* and *Eye in the Sky* at a company called Collective Dream. Stroebel had also done commercial work for Panasonic, Audi, Sanlam, Woolworths, Castle Lite, Cape Union Mart, Nestle, and worked on documentaries for National Geographic and the Smithsonian. Stroebel also completed the first-ever final delivery in South Africa for Universal Pictures with *Bring it on 6* and *Samson*, both with international distribution deals.

Stroebel is currently employed at Refinery, a premium production company based in Cape Town. Future projects for Stroebel include South Africa's third Netflix original series, a series for Canal Plus in France and a movie shot by Zenn van Zyl. Such exciting future projects, and felicitous nominations, are truly indicative of Kyle's talent and skill set. A huge

congratulations to Kyle Stroebel, and his team, for the coveted and esteemed nominations.

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