

Afda win 2 awards at the Durban International Film Festival 2023

By Earle Holmes, issued by AFDA

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Afda are delighted to announce that Afda Durban 2022 honours film "*Winterslaap*", directed by Leandros Brown and Daniel Howells won the Best South African Student Film award at the 2nd edition of the Isiphethu International Student Film Festival at the Durban International Film Festival 2023 and that Afda alumna Sandulela Asanda won the Best South African Short Film award for her film *Mirror Mirror*.



"The team of *Winterslaap* have done it again! This time they've won the most prestigious Durban International Film Festival Award for Best South African Student Film. I always knew they were an exceptional team and this has proved it again," says Dr Janet van Eeden.

"One of the most affirming comments I heard over the festival was from the director from the Centre for the Creative Arts, of UKZN, Dr Ismail Mohamed, who is in charge of DIFF itself, and who has a CV as long as our arms. He commented after watching *Winterslaap* that it was a beautiful film.

"I saw the film and attended the two talk sessions with the students. Afda certainly has the right approach with preparing student filmmakers for the industry.' This is the highest praise indeed, from Dr Mohamed who ran the Market Theatre as well as the National Arts Festival in Makhanda for many years before assuming his current role. I, of course, agree with him wholeheartedly."

"We, as a team, are incredibly proud to have won Best South African Student Film at DIFF. The journey has been long and tough, as filmmaking often is, but with the unwavering support of our families and the staff at Afda Durban, we have been able to achieve what we have so far. We are immensely thankful to them, and it's through Afda as an institution that this

accomplishment has become possible." says co-director of *Winterslaap*, Daniel Howells.

"We feel extremely happy and humbled by the positive reception for our film. Thank you to our hard-working and talented crew, our lecturers and families for all they have contributed to this project that we can all be so proud of. We look forward to seeing what is further possible with the film going into the future." Says co-director of *Winterslaap*, Leandros Brown.

The Durban International Festival had this to say about *Winterslaap* and *Mirror Mirror*:

"*Winterslaap*" delves into the intriguing ways in which individuals navigate the uncharted territory of the unknown. In the story setup, the director creatively captures the enigmatic nature of the unknown through vibrant and evocative visual descriptions. He effectively portrays a strong colour palette, texture, and characters.

Every element of the story complements the central question, allowing the characters to convey the main message effectively. Their body language indicates they are experiencing fear or apprehension, so they may be hesitant to discuss the matter.

The film is highly engaging and effectively maintains suspense until the very end. The camera work and mise-en-scène are executed in a truly magical manner."

"*Mirror Mirror* is a sassy, rapturous and fun coming-of-age story, told from a black girl's perspective. We need to see more of these stories. Stories that celebrate female blackness without the heavy burden of trauma and the ever-looming male presence. Wonderful artistic choices. Assured direction, inventive editing that evokes teenage diary obsession, anchored by a charming lead with a bright future ahead of her. This is a step in the right direction for local cinema, with its visible changing landscape and widening representation. Looks to be a crowd-pleaser and will play well with local audiences and the potential to grow into a feature film is quite clear."

The Durban International Film Festival (DIFF), presented by the Centre for Creative Arts at the University of Kwazulu-Natal, is widely regarded as a leading film festival on the African continent and a vital event on the international film calendar.

The DIFF's Isiphethu Industry Development Programme promotes and highlights opportunities and possibilities for local film production, and it stimulates the growth of the local film industry.

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