

Durban teenager wins African Movie Academy Award

The Durban Film Office has applauded local actor Tshepang Mohlomi who recently received his second Best Child Actor Award at the African Movie Academy Awards (AMAA) for his role in Durban film "Otelo Burning". Muhlomi, an 18-year old high school learner from Ntuzuma is cast as "Ntwe" in the feature film which debuted countrywide in cinemas on 11 May 2012.

Durban Film Office head Toni Monty has welcomed the win as well as the forthcoming screening of the film which Monty believes is created by a deluge of home-grown talent. "Otelo Burning is a proudly Durban film that will undoubtedly make lasting impressions to an international audience. It is reminiscent of the fact that Durban is gifted with talented local actors and filmmaking professionals," Monty said.

"The film is a microcosm of our society and we are encouraged by the sheer effort of filmmakers who want to tell real life stories and promote actors and actresses who have that raw talent which tells the story so convincingly," Monty said.

No training in acting

Otelo Burning tells the tale a group of township boys who discover the joys of surfing. The story is set in 1989, against a backdrop of brewing conflict between two groups in Lamontville, KwaZulu Natal. For the boys, who previously had a deep-seated fear of the sea, flying on water comes to represent freedom and escapism during a time of conflict.

Despite having no acting training, Muhlomi is no stranger to the film industry and already boasts an armful of enviable awards. Mohlomi was cast in his first role as "Chilli-bite" in award-winning Durban film Izulu Lami: My Secret Sky at the age of 13 which rocketed the teenager into international fame for his portrayal of a street-child.

Mentor Madoda Ncayiyana, co-producer and writer of iZulu Lami, discovered Mohlomi in a local informal settlement during casting of the feature film. Said Ncayiyana: "I knew that I had discovered a rough diamond who would really brighten up the future of South Africa's film industry. Even though he is still a teenager, he has matured into a powerful professional actor who never stops until he gets his character right; he is always busy trying to improve his abilities."

Highest number of nominations

The role landed him his first AMAA Best Child Actor Award last year as well as a South African Film and Television Awards (SAFTA) for Best Supporting Actor, through which he competed against adult actors. Since then Muhlomi has starred in other locally produced films including Florida Road, At Ellens Age and most recently Otelo Burning.

The film, nominated in 13 categories in the 2012 AMAAs recorded the highest number of nominations for a feature film at

this year's event. In addition to the AMAAs, where Otelo Burning received the Best Cinematography as well as Best Child Actor Awards, the film has also been awarded the Golden Owl audience award at the Cinerama BC International Film Festival in Brazil and the Best South African Feature Film award at the Cape Winelands Film Festival in March 2012.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>