

"Yesterday" heads for the Oscars

The ground-breaking isiZulu feature film, Yesterday, has been selected as South Africa's Official Entry for Consideration for the 2005 Academy Awards in the category of Best Foreign Language Picture.

The selection was made by a committee that was especially constituted by the Independent Producers' Organisation (IPO), which was requested by the Academy Of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to oversee the selection process for a South African film.

The production of Yesterday saw key South African film industry players in Videovision Entertainment, M-Net and The National Film and Video Foundation, partnering with the Nelson Mandela Foundation to produce the first-ever commercial isiZulu feature film. Written and directed by veteran director Darrell James Roodt, Yesterday stars Leleti Khumalo, Kenneth Kambule and newcomer Lihle Mvelase.

Yesterday is a moving story of a young mother named Yesterday who falls ill and discovers that she is HIV positive. Her husband, a migrant mineworker, refuses to accept this. Yesterday is left to fend for herself and her young daughter, Beauty, hoping that she will survive long enough to see her child go to school.

"The selection of Yesterday as South Africa's Official Entry for Consideration for the 77th Academy Awards is certainly an achievement for the Yesterday team, especially director Darrell James Roodt, actress Leleti Khumalo and all the talented cast and crew of the film. We are proud that Yesterday has been chosen to represent South Africa at the Oscars next year," said producer, Anant Singh. "Although we have had fantastic reactions to Yesterday in South Africa and at the Venice and Toronto International Film Festivals, the selection of the film for Oscar Consideration is the first step in a long process which will see Yesterday competing against films from a number of other countries across the world and we hope that we will find success in this extremely competitive category."

Carl Fischer, head of M-Net's MagicWorks division commented, "We at M-Net are pleased to have supported the production of Yesterday. We are delighted that the film will be representing South Africa at the 2005 Academy Awards. We are privileged to be associated with the film which will be vying for the ultimate film accolade."

Eddie Mbalo, Chief Executive of the National Film and Video Foundation said, "We are delighted to have backed the production of an indigenous language film which will be the country's entry for the 2005 Academy Awards. The selection of Yesterday for Oscar consideration is indeed encouraging for local cinema. We believe in the film and its potential to bring an Oscar home to South Africa."

"We are thrilled that Yesterday will be representing South Africa at the Oscars next year," said Chief Executive of the Nelson Mandela Foundation, John Samuel. "We need films like Yesterday which tell us about challenges and about

difficulties but more than that, Yesterday is about hope. Mr Mandela has been full of praise for this film because he sees the film as an important way of fighting discrimination and stigma that is attached to the AIDS pandemic," added Samuel.

Yesterday is a Videovision Entertainment production in association with the Nelson Mandela Foundation, M-Net, The National Film And Video Foundation, Distant Horizon and was shot on location in KwaZulu Natal. Music was composed by Madala Kunene and it is executive produced by Sudhir Pragjee and Sanjeev Singh, produced by Anant Singh and Helena Spring, and written and directed by Darrell James Roodt.

Web: www.yesterdaythemovie.co.za.

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