



BY ZANE HENRY

Cape Town plays host to an international delegation of filmmakers as part of the American Film Institute's Project 20/20. Their films will be screened at the Labia Theatre on Orange and Zolani Centre in Nyanga.

The films will be the base for workshops presented by the filmmakers themselves. The AFI's aim with Project 20/20 is to enhance cultural exchange and challenge stereotypes through collaboration among filmmakers from around the world.

Included in the selected films is SA filmmaker, Norman Maake's *Homecoming*, which focuses on three friends and their return and integration into a new SA after exile during apartheid. The story is inspired by filmmaker Zola Maseko's real-life experiences, for which he also wrote the screenplay.

"It's been an amazing experience," says Maake. "I've been learning so much from the other delegates. I was shocked to discover that in the States they have so many tiers of filmmaking. It's really been an eye-opener. But what's been most amazing is that even with such different backgrounds we still have more in common than we have differences."

Beyond the SA selection, other selected films hail from Rwanda, the US, Japan and the UK. All deal with pertinent, cultural and social issues such as cultural and racial identity and teenage pregnancy. Real-life survivor, JB Rutagarama, provides a personal account of the Rwandan genocide in his film, *Back Home*.

"We've received really positive responses," he says. "Especially the kids from the schools and colleges we've visited - there's this positive energy that's very encouraging. South African directors have amazing stories to tell and it's important to develop a culture of film-addicts. Film is a universal language that almost anyone can relate to."

Director Jay Craven's *Disappearances* is a powerful film about honour set during Prohibition. He is equally enthusiastic about the fledgling SA film industry.

"I thought I'd come here, show my film, shake hands and go home. But there've been such positive responses and real relationships have been forged. This trip has increased awareness of SA as a viable destination of the global film map. The facilities are in place, the energy's here, there's just a whole lot of work to do."

Cape Town is the final leg of the SA tour after screening in Joburg and Pretoria during May.

The festival is a partnership between the AFI, the US Consulate in Cape Town and the Cape Film Commission, with the aim of broadening local filmmakers' understanding and knowledge of filmmaking.

Workshops will also be held in Nyanga, so as to involve a broader scope of filmmakers and the audience who does not have the funds or time to travel into the city.

Call Mark Visser of the Cape Film Commission on 021-483-9070.

Collaborating to bring film to all

UNITED: Norman Maake, Chad Lowe, JB Rutagarama and Jay Craven are part of the AFI's Project 20/20.



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