

More directors and films added to 2019 RapidLion lineup

The 2019 RapidLion South African International Film Festival will be held at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg from 1 March to 10 March 2019. The selection of directors, like the films on offer, is varied, including documentary filmmakers, short film specialists and seasoned feature film directors.

The strong presence of filmmakers bodes well for creative cross-pollination and intercultural dialogue across the Brics countries, enhancing RapidLion's profile as an unmissable event on the international cultural calendar.



Creative cross-pollination and intercultural dialogue

Among the heavy-hitters slated to speak is director Jahmil XT Qubeka and producer Layla Swart whose film *Sew The Winter to My Skin* presents the true story of John Kepe, dubbed the “Samson of the Boschberg Mountains”. Kepe, very much his own man was taken as something of a Robin Hood figure in the Karoo mountains that he called home. Like in his earlier film *Of Good Report*, Qubeka relies on little dialogue, preferring to propel his films through landscape, casting and cinematography. The 7.30pm screening of Qubeka’s film on 6 March will be followed by a question and answer session with the director and producer.

Representing China is director Da Fei, whose feature-length film, *Silent Winter*, is about the lengths people would go to have offspring or to protect their family from the supposed stigma of childlessness. The film will screen twice, first on 7 March (5pm) and again on 9 March (1.30pm).

Angela Matemotja, whose film *Elevate*, tells the story of a dispatch operator who struggles to complete just one day of healthy eating while being body shamed. Matemotja, who grew up in Tanzania, Russia and Kenya seeks to explore the social, sub-cultural and international aspects of the societies she has been a part of. Matemotja will participate in two Q&A sessions on two consecutive days, the first on 7 March at 10.30am and the second on 8 March at 5.30pm.

[Elevate Trailer 08/2018](#) from [Matemotja Productions](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Another Chinese film being screened and followed by a Q&A session is Zhang Taihai's *Whack*. The film, screening at 5pm on 3 March 2019, depicts the story of 39-year-old kickboxer Hongbing, a fighter close to retirement who must deal with a string of intertwined family dynamics and his fading fortunes.

There is also a strong selection of shorts, with Rafeeqah Galant's 13-minute film *In The Light of Fire* being screened twice on 2 March at 11am and 8 March at 6pm). The film tells the story of Slindile, who, having escaped a mental institution in KwaZulu-Natal finds herself alone to brave the woodland. By acknowledging her past, in the form of three characters who remind her to never forget where she comes from.

Some of the short films to be screened in the presence of their directors fall under the ambit of the festival's LGBTQI shorts, which explore the lives of characters in varying environments. Adetokunboh M'Cormack's 18-minute film *Irish Goodbye*, directed and acted by McCormack, tells the story of a young, closeted gay man who is a conflicted but devout Muslim refugee from Syria. On a night out with a quixotic Irishman named Eric, they will confront issues of trust, abandonment, tragedy and privilege. Born in Freetown, Sierra Leone, to diplomat parents, McCormack was raised in Kenya and England. His acting credits include leading roles in *Battle Los Angeles*, *Blood Diamonds* and *Captain America: Winter Soldier*. Representing his directorial debut, *Irish Goodbye* will screen on March 1, the opening day, at 2pm.

For more information visit www.rapidlion.co.za.

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