

Durban FilmMart project "snapped up" by international film festivals

Imbabazi: the Pardon recently had its world premiere at the Goteborg Film Festival in Sweden and has been snapped up by two other major international film festivals. The film was one of the officially selected projects in the 2011 Durban FilmMart (DFM), a joint programme of the Durban Film Office (DFO) and the Durban International Film Festival (DIFF).

Imbabazi: the Pardon, produced and directed by Rwandan film-maker Joel Karekezi, was one of the features that was selected for the 2011 Durban FilmMart, where the film was also awarded the CineMart Rotterdam Lab Award at the DFM, which provided the up-and-coming producer with accreditation, accommodation and transportation to attend the Lab, an incubator for producers of new projects that ran concurrently with the 2012 International Film Festival of Rotterdam.

Imbabazi: the Pardon had its US premiere at the San Diego Black Film Festival in January and this month will enjoy its Los Angeles premiere at the Pan-African Film Festival.

Clearly Karekezi is a young film-maker to watch. With a diploma in film directing from CinéCours Canada, he has fast garnered accolades, awards and notice for his work. In 2010 his short film *The Pardon* won the Best Short Film Award at Silicon Valley African Film Festival (SVAFF), California. In 2012 he had a second project, *The Mercy of the Jungle*, in the DFM, which was awarded the Canal France International (CFI) Award for the Most Promising Project with a prize of 5000 euros.

The story of the Tutsi Genocide

Imbabazi: the Pardon tells the story of the Tutsi Genocide through the friendship and separation of two protagonists and carries a deep reconciliation message.

"As an African and Rwandan director, I am proud to have helped bring this story to a wider audience," explained Karekezi, who is himself a genocide survivor. "I was honoured to work together with my team through pre-production, production and post-production to bring this story to life. I hope that audiences will embrace the message of hope and forgiveness that is at the heart of the film."

"Over the past three years, we have seen how the Durban FilmMart has provided important stepping blocks for film projects," said Toni Monty, of the Durban Film Office. "The process of creating film is long and arduous, and it is vital that emerging film-makers and projects are given the creative space to be able to develop their ideas and vision in the right kind of environment. Joel has clearly grasped at all the opportunities presented to him to develop this film. So we are truly pleased to see this, one of our selected projects, make it through to multi-festival releases."

The 4th edition of Durban FilmMart takes place from 19 to 22 July, 2013, during the Durban International Film Festival (18 to 28 July).

For more information on the Durban FilmMart, go to www.durbanfilmmart.com. For further enquires contact info@durbanfilmmart.com.

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