

SA film competing at Berlin Film Festival

Shot in Cape Town during 2006, feature film Goodbye Bafana is among the first six pictures selected to compete in the 57th Berlin Film Festival, 8 - 18 February 2007. South African film u-Carmen eKhayelitsha won the top prize there in 2005.

The Berlin Film Festival is considered to be one of the most important film festivals in Europe, and Goodbye Bafana will have its world premiere there on 11 February.

Goodbye Bafana is directed by Academy Award winner and double Cannes Palme d'Or winner, Bille August (Pelle The Conqueror, House Of Spirits, Smilla's Sense Of Snow). It is the true story of James Gregory - played by UK actor, Joseph Fiennes (Shakespeare in Love) - a white South African racist whose life was profoundly altered by the black political prisoners he guarded, in particular Nelson Mandela. Dennis Haysbert (President Palmer in 24, Far from Heaven) plays Mandela. German actress Diane Kruger (Helen in Troy) stars as James Gregory's wife Gloria. Tsotsi star Terry Pheto, Patrick Lyster, Lesley Mongezi, Mehboob Bawa, Zingi Mtuzua and Shakes Myeka head up the South African cast.

Goodbye Bafana was penned by South African screenwriter Greg Latter and shot on location in South Africa by cinematographer Robert Fraisse (Ronin, and "Seven Years in Tibet"). The music is composed by Academy award nominee Dario Marianelli, with a title track by Johnny Clegg.

Belgium filmmaker Jean Luc Van Damme developed the project with Ilann Girard, the executive producer of March Of The Penguins. They teamed with South African producer David Wicht of Film Afrika and X-Film of Germany (Run Lola Run), and the film was produced in 2006 as a European co-production between SA, France, Belgium, Germany and Italy.

Goodbye Bafana is the second of Wicht's productions that have been selected to compete in the Berlin Festival. In 2004, the feature film Country Of My Skull, based on Antjie Krog's award winning book, starring Samuel L Jackson and Juliette Binoche, was selected for competition in Berlin.