

South African film, *Smart Casuals* makes Netflix debut

Zwo Farisani's (*Make-Up and Cigarettes*), much anticipated romantic drama, *Smart Casuals*, premiered on Netflix globally on Friday, 12 April 2024.



Written and produced by Zwo Farisani together with Ndamu Farisani of Farisani Creations, *Smart Casuals* marks Zwo's feature film directorial debut. The film is one of six micro budget projects supported through a joint film-fund by Netflix and the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF), an agency of the Department of Sport Arts and Culture of South Africa.

The fund aim was to alleviate the pressure filmmakers face to raise additional funding and boost recovery of the creative industry from the pandemic, whilst ensuring job creation.

The film stars Anga Makubalo (*Jiva!*, *Broken Vows*), Angela Sithole (*Savage Beauty*, *The Queen*), Terrence Ngwila (*The Wife*, *Generations: The Legacy*), Mandisa Constable, Nyaniso Dzedze (*Black is King*, *Hear Me Move*), Nomsa Twala (*Savage Beauty*) and hip-hop dance pioneer, Kudzai Mureriwa.

Set in Johannesburg, South Africa's 'City of Gold', two couples travel equal and opposite paths in their search to find love. Taki, a photographer in his mid-thirties has sworn off serious relationships for the time being. He is happily playing the field, enjoying the thrills of casual relationships until he meets Tumi who unexpectedly rocks his world, leading to a change of heart.

Mahlatsi and Bheka are in a steady, 12-year long relationship. They have had to postpone getting married twice over the years owing to circumstances. Viewers meet the couple as they make their third attempt at tying the knot. While Mahlatsi has always wanted to marry, a part of her feels that there is a reason why the wedding has never happened, however, she fears that it might be too late for her to leave and start over.

Smart Casuals is an honest exploration of romantic relationships and their many permutations, set against the backdrop of Africa's most cosmopolitan city.

"I have always preferred films that lean towards an authentic experience, over those that are fairytales," says director Farisani.

"With *Smart Casuals*, we have attempted to create an authentic experience by finding a sense of transparency and vulnerability within ourselves, which we hope has been infused into the film's DNA."

Shot entirely on location in Johannesburg, the film captures the various faces of this bustling economic hub, where the spirit and drive of the original gold diggers lives on, and where everything seems possible.