

REAL NESS 2018



REALNESS 2018

**“BIRDS SING NOT BECAUSE
THEY HAVE ANSWERS BUT
BECAUSE THEY HAVE SONGS.”**

- AFRICAN PROVERB

2017 proved to be a remarkable year for African cinema; we saw *I'm Not A Witch*, *Silas*, *Five Fingers for Marseilles*, *Félicité* and our very own *The Wound* take the international festival circuit by storm. The new wave of African cinema continues to grow with force and resilience in 2018 as *The Harversters* and *Rafiki* get ready to premiere in Un Certain Regard at Festival de Cannes, validating our vehement belief in the soaring talent that this continent holds.

After an extensive evaluation of more than 130 projects from 24 countries, it is our greatest pleasure to introduce you to the Realness Residents of 2018. Now entering its third edition, Realness continues to be a prestigious incubator that has fostered cinematic voices from 12 African countries. We will soon

welcome our new residents to their beautiful writing oasis at Nirox Sculpture Park in the Cradle of Humankind, South Africa. Over the course of six weeks, they will find the lyrics to their songs under the mentorship of story experts Selina Ukwuoma and Mmabatho Kau before participating in Africa's largest co-production market, The Durban Film Mart. The most promising projects to emerge will be invited to Locarno Filmmakers Academy, EAVE Producers Workshop, La Fabrique Cinéma de l'Institut Français, Torino Film Lab Meeting Event and TIFF Talent Lab where their projects will progress closer to being realised.

We would like to thank our incredible volunteers, readers and panelists for joining us on this journey again. Thank you to our partners, particularly those that are offering scholarships to their labs where our birds can spread their wings even further.

CAIT PANSEGRUW
REALNESS CO-FOUNDER



KANTARAMA GAHIGIRI AND KIVU RUHORAHOZA

Kantarama Gahigiri is a Rwandan film director. In 2004 she was a recipient of the prestigious Fulbright Award and completed her studies in New York City in order to get a Masters Degree in Cinema. Her first feature film ***Tapis Rouge*** has been screened and has received awards worldwide including TV5Monde best feature film at Geneva International Film Festival (2014) and best directing at Chelsea Film Festival (New York) in 2015, followed by a national theatrical release in France in May 2017. Back in Kigali, she is now excited to work on ***Tanzanite*** co-written and produced by her friend and collaborator Kivu Ruhorahoza.

Kivu Ruhorahoza is an award-winning Rwandan filmmaker. Kivu's visionary work has been officially screened at top international A-list festivals including Sundance, Tribeca, Sydney, Rotterdam, Warsaw, Melbourne, Rio, Venice and renowned museums and venues such as the Tate Modern (as part of Olafur Eliasson's Little Sun project), the MoMA, the BFI Southbank and many others. He is also a guest speaker at various North American Universities.



TANZANITE

In a dystopian future Kenya, the theft of a tanzanite gem causes the lives of a controversial female detective, a corrupt politician, a ruthless pimp and a young girl with psychic powers to collide in a tale of violence and redemption.





MATTHYS BOSHOFF

Matthys' journey into writing and directing includes stops in anthropology, business and economics, and performing arts. After film school he worked in the art department on feature films, then completed a filmmaker's residency at the International Film and Television Workshops.

He's adventured in diverse locations like Afghanistan, Patagonia and Uganda. In these places, as in his work, he always takes an eye for beauty, an appetite for risk, a sense of discovery and an appreciation for humanity.

His short film, *Vlees van my Vlees*, had its European premiere in competition at Clermont-Ferrand in 2018. To date it has played in 14 festivals around the world where it received four awards including best short film, best director and best actress. It was also nominated for a South African Film and Television Award (SAFTA) for best short film this year. Matthys is currently adapting *Vlees van my Vlees* into a feature film.

VLEES VAN MY VLEES

Vlees van my Vlees (Flesh of my Flesh) tells an honest and intimate story of how the relationship between a husband, wife, and their son changes and develops after a car accident leaves her quadriplegic.

Humorous, irreverent and dramatic, love is explored in its different guises and complexities as parent-child roles are reversed and lovers become caretakers and learn to be soul mates.





NG'ENDO MUKII

Ng'endo Mukii is an award-winning film director, most well known for *Yellow Fever*, her documentary-animation exploring Western influences on African women's beauty aesthetics.

She uses mixed-media techniques to explore hidden truths within our realities. At the prestigious Design Indaba conference (2015), she presented her talk, 'Film Taxidermy and Re-Animation', proposing the use of animation as a means to re-humanise the 'indigenous' image.

She is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design ('06), and holds an MA from the Royal College of Art ('12). She is a Berlinale Talents Alumni ('14, '15), and is based in Nairobi.

THE GOAT SUNDAY

In the midst of a ravaging drought, Naomi and her half-sister Stella, spend the Christmas weekend at Naomi's grandmother's house, which appears to be a mysterious oasis. When outdated beliefs threaten Stella's life, a withdrawn Naomi must harness all her remaining childhood imagination, to save her half-sister.

In this coming-of-age adventure, Naomi battles between nature and nurture, the religious and the mystical, to find out what 'true blood' really means.



REEM MORSI

Reem Morsi worked as a professional scuba diver and within the realm of international human rights before becoming a writer/director.

Morsi's film credits include ***Their Feast*** (2012 TIFF, BBC, Cine Sud), ***Nostalgia*** (2015 WIFTV), ***The Door*** (Whistler 2016) and best drama at the 2017 Yorkton Film Festival, audience choice award and best screenplay at WIFT Showcase 2018), ***Show & Tell*** (2016 - WIFT/BravoFact pitch competition and won multiple awards at festivals).

She has participated in the Berlinale Talents and Script Station (2012, Bootleg 2018) and TIFF (2016) Talent Labs, CFC's Directors' and WIDC Directors' Labs in 2014/2015. Reem received the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television Director Apprenticeship and shadowed on ***The Handmaid's Tale***. She is currently developing her debut feature film, ***Bootleg***.

BOOTLEG

Bootleg is a satirical dramatic comedy about Roukaya, an Egyptian woman in her 30s, in an unsatisfactory marriage, who experiences sexual pleasure through sex toys and decides to go back to Egypt; and how she and two other women start an underground sex toy manufacturing business despite all the risks.

REEM MORSI, EGYPT



A close-up portrait of Mohammed Siam, a man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a blue scarf. He is looking slightly to the right with a thoughtful expression.

MOHAMMED SIAM

Siam is a fiction and documentary filmmaker who has received grants from Sundance, World Cinema Fund and Aide aux Cinémas du Monde. His films have been screened at NYFF, Karlovy Vary and Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage, where he won best cinematography.

His recent documentary *Amal* was the opening film at IDFA 2017 and went on to screen at Göteborg, CPH Dox, Vision du Réel and Hot Docs and continues to travel to festivals worldwide.

An alumnus of the Sundance Lab, IDFA Academy, La Femis, La Fabrique des Cinémas du Monde in Cannes, Berlinale, Durban and Beirut Talent Campus, Siam is also a Robert Bosch Film Prize and Thessaloniki Award recipient. He is a MacDowell Colony, Global Media Makers Fellow. Siam is a jury member for Göteborg Film Festival, IDFA Bertha Fund and Hot Docs. He is currently a lecturer at The New School and Brooklyn College in NYC and a fellow scholar and filmmaker resident in the American University in Paris. Siam is now developing his feature film, *Blood and Honey*.

A silhouette of a man's face in profile, looking towards the left, set against a light background.

BLOOD AND HONEY

A middle-aged policeman suffers from chronic panic attacks and is about to quit his job when he is deployed for an outlandish mission during the Egyptian upheaval. He is personally tasked with saving his boss's daughter from the local zoo after the police force collapses.



ELIAS RIBEIRO & CAIT PANSEGROUW

PRODUCING MENTORS

Duo Elias Ribeiro and Cait Pansegrouw, through their production company Urucu Media, have produced numerous shorts, a feature documentary and five feature films in just six years. The work that they produce is often audacious and challenging of the status quo. They believe Cinema is a powerful tool to drive social change. They have become known for their great eye for talent, with both of their first-time feature directors from their last two productions going on to sign with CAA.

Urucu's titles include award-winners *The Wound* (South Africa) by John Trengove and *The Train of Salt and Sugar* (Mozambique) by Licinio Azevedo; both were selected as their country's official entry to the Academy Awards, with *The Wound* making it to the December shortlist of nine out of a record entry of 92 foreign language films. *The Wound* also won 26 prizes internationally, including the Sutherland Award at the London BFI for best first feature and six SAFTAS.

Urucu's projects have attracted funding from the likes of Hubert Bals, World Cinema Fund and Creative Europe, as well as national and regional funds and private equity in South Africa, Mozambique, Brazil, Portugal, France, Germany, The Netherlands and Canada. They have also licensed content to Netflix, HBO, ARTE, ZDF, SABC and MNET. Urucu's films have competed at Sundance, Berlinale, Tribeca, Toronto, Locarno and Venice among others and have sold to more than 50 territories worldwide.



SELINA UKWUOMA

STORY CONSULTANT

Selina is a freelance script consultant who has advised on a number of projects that have gone on to win multiple awards, from 2008 BAFTA winner ***Boy A*** and 2014 Teddy winner ***The Way He Looks*** to this year's Goyas triumph ***Summer 1993***. As well as consulting for production companies and designing and running development initiatives with various organisations, Selina teaches screenwriting at the UK's National Film and Television School and leads workshops on pitching at various film festivals worldwide.



MMABATHO KAU

STORY CONSULTANT

Mmabatho has worked as a producer, broadcaster, development executive and script consultant for over 15 years. She has produced a wide variety of shows in public service and commercial pay for various broadcasters in South Africa and has worked as a script consultant on films such as ***My Zulu Wedding***, ***Whale Caller*** (Zakes Mda), ***Kalushi*** and ***Beyond The River***. Her varied experiences are testament to her passion for re-telling Africa's story and finding ways to contribute towards building a sustainable film and television industry. She was recently selected to participate as a script editor in the Torino Script Lab 2018.

THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

ELIAS RIBEIRO

Producer

CAIT PANSEGRUW

Producer

SELINA UKWUOMA

Story consultant

MMABATHO KAU

Story consultant

BONGIWE SELANE

South African producer, best known for the local box office hit *Happiness Is a Four Letter Word*. Bongi also manages the female filmmaker slate for the National Film and Video Foundation of South Africa.

GUILLAUME DREYFUS

After a year working at the CNC, Guillaume created his production company to develop shorts, features and TV series in both fiction and documentary. He is currently developing a South African film entitled *The Tree* as a co-producer.

MARIE DUBAS

An independent producer and script consultant, Marie is also a decision maker for TorinoFilmLab and the CNC. She also co-produced the award-winning South African feature film *The Wound*.

SEAN DRUMMOND

Sean is a South African writer and producer. He is also the (South African) festival director of the Shnit International Short Film Festival. Sean's latest film *Five Fingers for Marseilles* premiered in competition at Toronto International Film Festival.

THANDEKA ZWANA

Former development and production manager of the National Film and Video Foundation of South Africa, Thandeka is now an executive at Indigenous Film Distribution, heading up the development and production arm of the company.

TODD BROWN

Todd is the head of international acquisitions for XYZ films in Canada. He is also the founder and editor of international film website Screen Anarchy. In 2017 Todd represented the acclaimed South African Western, *Five Fingers for Marseilles* and is currently developing the screen adaption of Charlie Human's *Apocalypse Now Now* with the same team of filmmakers.

DAVID KAYSER

David Kayser is a literary agent at Casarotto Ramsay & Associates Ltd, one of the world's leading creative agencies, representing both emerging and internationally acclaimed writers, directors and heads of department across film, television and theatre. David is South African, but is based in the UK.

MINA TAKLA

Mina Takla is an Egyptian film critic, digital strategist and researcher based in Dubai. He has worked with some of the top film institutes in the Middle East and led their social media and digital efforts for the past six years. He recently became the Foreign Correspondent for Awards Watch, a leading Hollywood website, with an emphasis on year-round coverage of the best foreign language Oscar race.

THEMBA BHEBHE

Themba Bhebhe is a British-born international sales agent. His company Flourishing Films specialises in the sales, production and North American distribution of independent films from across the black diaspora. Themba has also worked for the Berlinale's European Film Market as Diversity Liaison Officer in connection with the market's ongoing commitment to the corporate relevance of diversity for the international film industry.

EFURU FLOWERS

Efuru Flowers worked in production for John Singleton; distributor and broadcaster Alliance Atlantis; Paramount Pictures in feature acquisitions, and she's an alumna of the PGA's Power of Diversity program, as well as Sundance and Berlinale Talents. Efuru launched production company Flourishing Films, whose line up includes *Skylarking* written/directed by Sundance Fellow Tanya Hamilton; *Zion Music* by Hot Docs alumna and Blue Ice Fund recipient Rama Thiaw (*The Revolution Won't Be Televised*). Flourishing Films also represents diverse projects for worldwide sales.

SIMONE SOLEIL

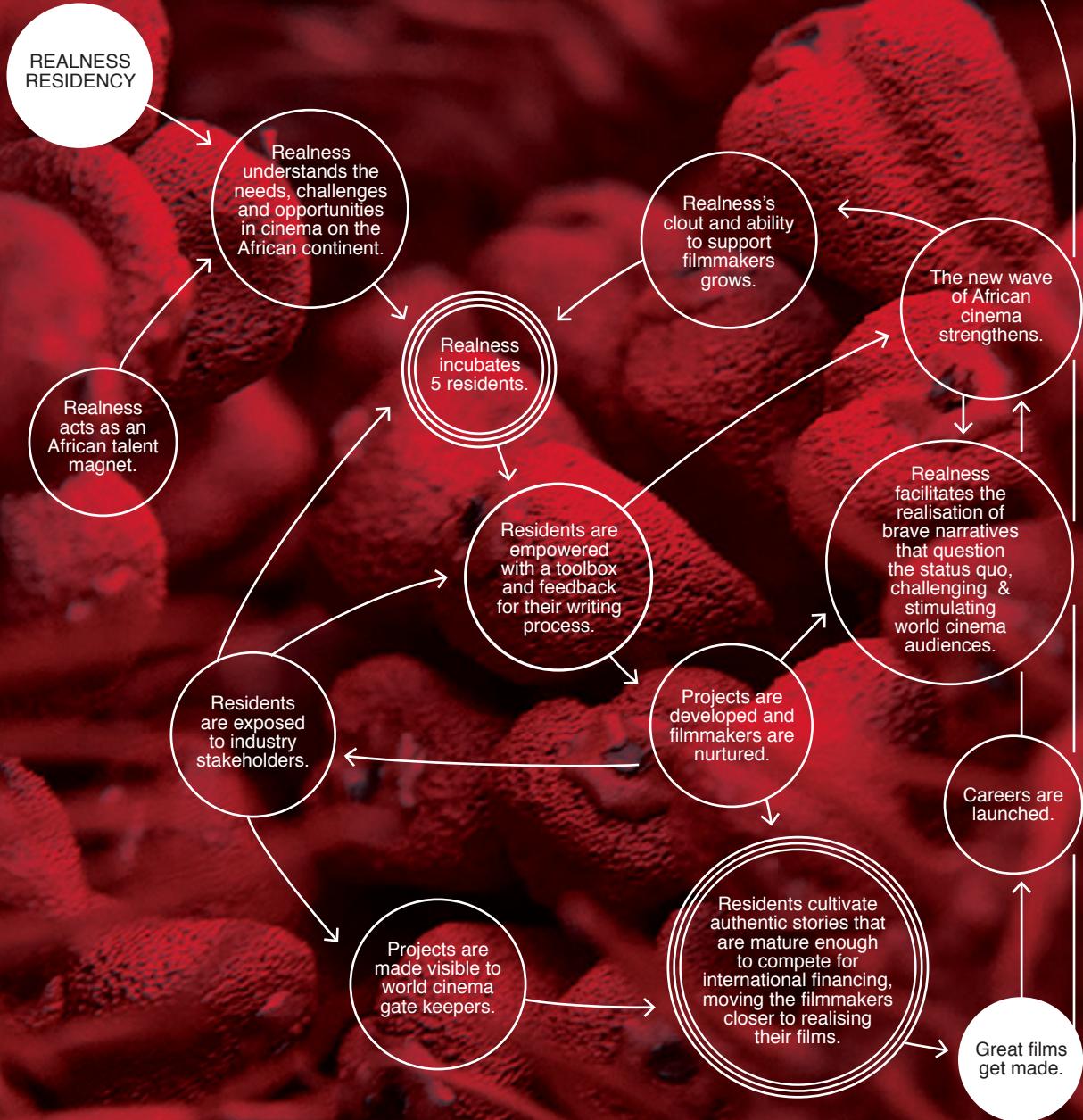
Simone is a programmer for Berlinale Shorts and was a long time programmer for Winterthur and other Oscar qualifying festivals. She works as a consultant for festivals and their workshop programs, mainly in Kigali, Switzerland and Berlin. Simone recently launched her indie production company Cocoon Productions and works mainly with African filmmakers (diaspora and on the continent) who tell urban present stories.

FLORIAN WEGHORN

Florian Weghorn is programme manager of Berlinale Talents. He is a member of the selection committee for the Berlinale's competition and also serves on the jury for the children's film fund of the BKM (Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media). Florian oversees the Durban Talent programme which takes place at the Durban International Film Festival.

SOCIAL IMPACT FRAMEWORK THEORY OF CHANGE

There is a global appetite for diversity and authentic representation across all storytelling mediums today. Realness fosters African stories from a uniquely African perspective.



TYPICAL TIMELINE OF REALNESS PROGRAMME

2017 SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER	Fundraising and Partnership Maintenance.
2017 NOVEMBER 1st	Call for Submissions.
2018 JANUARY 31st	Submissions close. Projects sent to reading committee.
2018 FEBRUARY TO MARCH	Project Evaluations.
2018 MARCH 15th	Interview top 20 proponents via Skype and offer producer's feedback to talent.
2018 APRIL	Top 10 projects assessed by selection committee.
2018 MAY	Residents announced. Development begins with panel feedback.
2018 JUNE	Residency starts. Input week with mentors. + 5 weeks writing time.

2018 JULY	International Film Festival and Market participation. Residency ends.
2018 AUGUST	Follow up consultations via Skype with Story Consultants.
2018 SEPTEMBER	Submission of final drafts for award consideration.
2018 OCTOBER TO DECEMBER	Awards and scholarships disbursed to Residents.

EACH URUCU FLOWER REPRESENTS A TALENT THAT HAS BEEN CULTIVATED FROM THAT COUNTRY THROUGH REALNESS.



RED ICON - 2018 RESIDENTS
GREY ICON - 2017 & 2016 RESIDENTS

REALNESS FOSTERS A NEW WAVE OF AFRICAN CINEMA

Realness was conceived by Urucu Media as a way of addressing a need for promising African film projects to be resourced and supported in the development phase in order to be competitive in the global film financing market. The format of the residency was collaboratively conceptualised through a series of public think tanks to ensure that it would be responsive to the unique demands of scriptwriters on the continent.

Realness is a pioneering residency initiative that will afford a new generation of filmmakers the opportunity to nurture and cultivate their talent as authentic voices in African cinema. Realness is only possible due to our partnerships with:

urucu

NIROX
FOUNDATION



AFRICAN
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL

TALENTS



LA
FABRIQUE
CINÉMA INSTITUT
FRANÇAIS

Locarno
Filmmakers Academy



la francophonie

CNC centre national
du cinéma et de
l'image animée

TFL
TorinoFilmLab
Writing Development Agency

Robert Bosch
Stiftung



eave



CO
CON

tiff

DEUXIEME LIGNE FILMS

THE
CRADLE
NATURE RESERVE

FEEDBACK FROM OUR PREVIOUS RESIDENTS



"REALNESS made me realise that there's hope for African cinema even though we have a long way to go. And that time and space really does make all the difference during script writing."

- Amirah Tajdin, Kenya, 2016



"Living in a country that is not conducive to 'writing' I am delighted to have been able to take part in REALNESS. The most important thing for me was the interaction with my co-residents and how much I learned from the consultants."

- Luck Razanajaona, Madagascar, 2016



"It's the first time, in our history of African Cinema, that we have this kind of program. The writing process is the most difficult phase of our work. Many of us can't afford to rent a house in the countryside far away from our family and daily work: so we have no choice other than writing our scripts in very bad conditions. That's one of our major weaknesses. Most of the time, our scripts and story telling are very original and full of creativity, but they are very badly written, due to a lack of time, means and money. And most of the time, all the good programs are in Europe or the US, and those programs are oriented for western directors. That's one of the main reasons why very few films and filmmakers can emerge internationally from Africa."

- Rama Thiaw, Senegal, 2017



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