



Press Release

UNIQUE SOUTH AFRICAN DOCCIES ON e THIS FEBRUARY

Rich in diversity, South Africa is home to many different cultural, language and social groups. There are many stories to tell about the people who make up our rainbow nation, but many relevant and interesting stories from far-flung and rural areas often go untold.

With this in mind, e.tv put out a call for local filmmakers to submit proposals for documentaries reflecting the unique stories of the people living in South Africa's various provinces. With the specific interest of developing production capacity in provinces that do not already boast thriving film and TV production industries, Gauteng and the Western Cape were excluded. Bronwyn Keene-Young, e.tv's Channel Director, said: "In this way the project provided an opportunity to young documentary producers in provinces that, historically, have not been part of mainstream television production in South Africa."

Of the ninety proposals submitted, four were chosen. Executive Producers from e.tv mentored the local producers where necessary and assisted in the development of these documentaries. This February, Sundays at 6.30pm, e.tv viewers can look forward to these unique stories of the people of South Africa.

Eastern Cape - Road to Xnau: 29 January at 6.30pm

In the first of the documentaries to be aired, we travel to the Eastern Cape for *Road to Xnau*. First time producer Lee McCabe, who also wrote and directed the documentary, covers the re-emergence of the Khoi San culture in the Eastern Cape.

In the documentary we witness how, for the first time in almost 350 years, the various tribes of Khoi San people in the Eastern Cape gather to take part in an ancient ritual called the Xnau. Revived in 2004 as part of their quest to reclaim their cultural and spiritual identity as well as their social historical recognition, the Xnau is a rite of passage performed at every stage of life. For an understanding of what the ceremony entails and what it means to the Khoi people, don't miss this riveting documentary.

Free State - Tjhobediso: 5 February at 6.30pm

The second documentary in this series, *Tjhobediso*, was produced in Qwa-Qwa in the Free State by Thapelo Moraka and offers an enlightening look into traditional BaSotho cultural practices. It examines a traditional BaSotho marriage custom and the impact of modern day South Africa on this very old practice. As a MoSotho, Thapelo had an interest in telling a story about a SeSotho traditional practice that has come under the spotlight because of the changing political climate in the country. The elopement or abduction marriage, depending on the circumstances, is only one of the many traditional practices going on today in Qwa-Qwa.

The documentary examines whether Tjhobediso is oppressive to women or not. It asks the question if this practice still has a place in South Africa today? And will it stand the test of time with all the laws and awareness about women abuse? Interviewees include people involved in Tjhobediso and cultural experts.

Limpopo - Rasta Women of Limpopo: 12 February at 6.30pm

The third documentary is *Rasta Women of Limpopo*. Mante Sekhukhune, a Rasta Woman who is a descendant of the great Sekhukhune clan in Limpopo, tells her story along with those of two other Rasta Sistas in her area. This documentary is about their struggles, challenges and experiences as they try to maintain their

Rasta culture in this very traditional Pedi environment that often misunderstands and is weary of their “foreign” lifestyles.

What the documentary actually exposes, contrary to popular belief, are the many similarities between the Pedi culture and the Rastafarian way of life. The biggest difference, and the bone of contention, is the issue around the use of ganja or marijuana. The Pedi people are totally opposed to this practice of the Rasta people. Many of the misconceptions and myths are due to lack of information and education about Rasta. The women see their role as that of educating their communities about Rasta in order to eradicate these myths.

Kwa-Zulu Natal - Downtown Hunters: 19 February at 6.30pm

The last in the series, is the fascinating *Downtown Hunters*, brought to you by first time producers Colwyn Thomas and Gabhisa Khuluse. This is a story of a traditional hunter operating in rural KZN, whose animal catches are sold by traditional healers as umuthi in the heart of the city of Durban at the Warwick Junction markets. The documentary is an examination of what occurs when the urban way of life meets the wild, when old customs are re-invented and wildlife conservation issues must be adapted in order to protect our cultural heritage. It is a portrait of an ancient way of life existing and adapting to our modern world.

This outstanding documentary series recognises the relevance of these intriguing and previously untold stories and celebrates the incredible diversity of South Africa.

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