

BIOGRAPHY

Clarence HAMILTON

Clarence Hamilton was head of production and development at the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF), an agency of the South African Department of Arts and Culture from April 2009 until December 2014. During this period he was responsible for the establishment of a production and development team specialising in the development and supervision of fiction and documentary projects funded by the NFVF. His responsibilities also involved setting up guidelines and processes for the selection, monitoring, mentoring and supervision of work that met and or exceeded the mandate of the institution and the department.

In his seven years at the NFVF, Clarence helped to increase the institution's annual allocation from the fiscus by almost three times. This allowed the NFVF to increase grants and investments in project development and production, both in individual budget amounts as well as number of projects supported by the institution. It also enabled the NFVF to expand the provision of slate funding from one company per annum to three companies per annum over three years. Slate funding allowed the companies in receipt of the award to develop three to four projects per annum and to select the best of these projects to go into production every year while being assisted in the development of their business plans. A similar documentary slate was launched in 2014. Under his watch fiction development increased from 10 per annum to 15; documentary development increased from 15 per annum to 20 per annum, each with significantly increased amounts to make a real difference to the development and packaging of projects. This also led to an increase in the number of productions in both genres.

Clarence was responsible for instituting specific initiatives designed to address the scarcity of black and female writers, directors and producers in the film and television industry. This included the launching of projects to give specific writing and directing opportunities to ten black film school graduates and a separate program to do the same for ten women filmmakers. The first of the black youth films will premier at the Durban International Film Festival (DIFF) in July 2015. The women's films premiered at DIFF in July 2014. Both projects are scheduled to run for a period of three years to give the production companies a real shot at adding creative and technical skills to the industry from these sectors of historically disadvantaged filmmakers. These initiatives were in addition to Clarence's responsibility for supervising the NFVF's Sediba training projects for writing and producing.

A few highlights from his period as head of production and development are the following: ***Father Christmas Doesn't Come Here***, a short film by a first time filmmaker that won best narrative short at Tribeca; ***Otelo Burning*** and ***Four Corners*** – two films that tested conventional storytelling, adding to the language of South African cinema by being invited to many major international film festivals. Clarence is also very proud to have been associated with Triggerfish Animation's two first 3D animation films, ***Zambezia*** and ***Khumba***, which became South Africa's most commercially successful films in 2012 and 2014 with over US\$30 million in sales each, worldwide. In the non-fiction genre Clarence was instrumental in the success of ***Miner's Shot Down*** which went on to win major international documentary prizes for human rights for its depiction of the struggle of mineworkers at Marikana.

Clarence was awarded a Bachelor of Applied Arts - Photographic Arts - Film Studies by Ryerson Polytechnic, Toronto, in 1990, and in 2006 a Postgraduate Diploma in Arts with distinction by the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. He has worked as writer, head-writer, director, producer and story editor on seminal South African film and television projects since 1992, including ***Molo Fish!***, ***Takalani Sesame***, ***Ulibambe Lingashone*** and ***Flowers of the Revolution***.