

— DOK-WERK filmcooperative presents —

WHEN THE MOUNTAIN MEETS ITS SHADOW

— A Documentary by
ALEXANDER KLEIDER and DANIELA MICHEL
— in Cooperation with ROMIN KHAN —

Cape Town, South Africa

In hardly any other city of the world can poverty and wealth be found as close together. When the mountain meets its shadow tells the stories of Ashraf, Mne, Zoliswa and Arnold, who, each in their own way, fight for survival in the informal settlements around Cape Town. While Ashraf and his friend Mne from the Anti Eviction Campaign fight against evictions, water- and electricity cut-offs in the townships, Zoliswa and Arnold put their trust in their ability to work. Zoliswa, a single mother, is looking for a new position as a cleaner and Arnold trains as an armed guard to work in the booming security industry. When the city council wants to clear an entire informal settlement, Ashraf and his friend Mne are confronted with their own, undigested experiences from the apartheid years ...



PROTAGONISTS



Ashraf, Mne and their friends roam the streets of Cape Town's Townships every night. Armed with monkey wrenches and screw drivers, they reopen disconnected water supplies and recruit others for the collective fight against the privatisation of water, electricity and land. When the situation escalates, with the city council wanting to clear an entire informal settlement in preparation for the World Cup, Ashraf and Mne are confronted with their own, undigested experiences from the apartheid years.



Arnold, who is 18 years younger, puts full trust in his ability to work his way out of poverty. Night after night he patrols unarmed along the high walls of a gated community inhabited by rich South Africans. At the beginning he is convinced that he will make it, but then he starts to realize that his meagre wages will never allow him to leave his corrugated iron hut. Exhausted, he comes to a decision...



PROTAGONISTS



Narrated in the pace of the new South Africa, the viewer realises with astonishment that even the most adverse circumstances cannot extinguish humanity, humour and the lust for life. With powerful images and impressive personal stories the film offers a sensitive portrait of a society in transition from apartheid to postmodern capitalism.

Zoliswa, a 36 year old single mother, is desperately looking for a new job. She bears the awkward situations at the employment office just as much as the harshness of daily life in the informal settlement. All she wants is a financial base for the future of her children. But these, even at such a young age, are already involved in their own struggle — against crime and drugs.



SOUTH AFRICA TODAY

written by Romin Khan

The student uprising in Soweto, the liberation of Nelson Mandela and the queues of voters during the first free elections in 1994 - the recent history of South Africa has produced many striking images which have left a lasting impression. This also includes the political goals of the liberation struggle which motivated millions of people inside and outside of the country: freedom, social security, work and a reasonable standard of living for everyone, regardless of the colour of their skin! The hope for a better life after the end of apartheid was linked inextricably with these demands from the Freedom Charter, the most important document of the liberation struggle. And the end came far more quickly than many observers had expected. As a consequence of the liberation of Nelson Mandela in 1990, the ban of the African National Congress (ANC) was lifted. The liberation movement personified the ideas of the Freedom Charter and enjoyed the confidence of the large majority of black South Africans, and also of many whites. After the drawn-out negotiations with the white regime at the beginning of the nineties, the first free elections took place. They culminated in an overwhelming victory for the former liberation movement. It seemed as if the country was headed towards a promising future. The South African miracle, the proclaimed rainbow nation, shimmered in the brightest colours.



South Africa after 14 years of democracy

More than a decade after the official abolition of apartheid, a large part of the black population finds that their hopes for a fundamental improvement in their situation have not been fulfilled. More than 300 years of colonialism and apartheid have produced social rifts and inequalities which for a long time to come will determine the daily lives and the destiny of the population of the Cape. Not even the politics of the ruling ANC party have been able to change this. The reason for this is that already during the presidency of Nelson Mandela the party distanced itself from the original idea of a deft economic redistribution, adopting an increasingly neo-liberal stance over the last few years. Cut-backs, privatisation and the opening of the internal market to foreign investors were the pillars of the new path. The incorporation into the global market has made the unemployment rate climb to 40 percent, due to structural flaws in the South African economy. This disastrous situation

has been worsened over the last few years by the social policies of the government. In accordance with neo-liberal principles, social spending was linked to economic growth. Consequently, the provision of fundamental social services such as water, electricity and housing was either privatised, or made subject to the logic of market forces by the government. Since the end of the 1990s, the consequences of the cut-backs and privatisations have been felt all over the country. The number of households whose water and electricity supplies have been cut due to unpaid bills has risen sharply, and many families have been evicted after falling behind with their rent.

Resistance

These social conditions, dominated by an apartheid which appears to have lost its racist element while continuing as a social and economic framework, are not acceptable to Ashraf and Mne. As the perspective

of a better life dwindled, they became increasingly dissatisfied with a government which they used to support. They have dedicated themselves to a struggle whose goal is to fulfill the demands of the Freedom Charter as outlined above. The Anti-Eviction Campaign (AEC) which was set up by them, belongs to a network of social movements which have started springing up since the beginning of the decade. These movements consist of people who have been marginalised, not only economically, but also geographically, due to their concentration in townships - a legacy of the apartheid years - as well as informal settlements. Grass roots organisations are taking charge of the problems posed by daily life, such as the access to water and electricity, unemployment and food shortages. Many of the leading activists used to be involved in the ANC or actively support it. Over the last few years, they have left the former liberation movement or have been excluded from the party due to their criticism of the privatisation process.

Cape Town



Over the last few years, the metropolis of the Cape of Good Hope has developed into a magnet for sun-starved holiday makers and the international media industry. What remains mostly unseen is the fact that the racist concept of city planning has imprinted itself on the urban geography of Cape Town in a way unparalleled in any other South African city. The white districts and the city centre are situated in close proximity to Table Mountain. In terms of daily life, Table Mountain thus functions as a point of reference for the social conditions in the city. Every inhabitant of Cape Town, regardless of skin colour, knows that social status can be gauged to a certain extent by the distance of his or her house to the Mountain. And far from it, lying in its shadow from the early afternoon onwards, the so-called Cape Flats are situated. On this sandy plain, which borders onto the massif of Table Mountain, the informal settlements and townships of the city can be found. It is estimated that 3.5 million people live here, approximately seven times as many as in the city centre or alongside Table

Mountain and the coastal strip, which we normally connect with the city. There, in the townships, the protagonists of the film live, fighting on a daily basis for an improvement in their living conditions.

Housing shortage

An issue especially close to the heart of the AEC is the situation in the city with regard to housing. In Cape Town alone, according to official figures, there is a shortfall of approximately 260,000 and 400,000 houses as well as rented flats.

If construction work continues at the present speed and assuming that population figures stagnate, 65 years will be needed to create sufficient accommodation in the city. The neo-liberal stance of the government, which links social spending to economic growth, has effectively turned the inhabitants of corrugated iron huts into the slaves of economic indicators.

Furthermore, the few public housing projects in the city which have been completed to date have failed to contribute significantly to a growth in trust, as far as the poor population is concerned. This is especially



apparent in the Joe Slovo settlement, situated alongside the N2 motorway. A massive social conflict has developed there over the last few years, in which both Ashraf and Mne play a key part. Joe Slovo is an informal settlement of shacks ("barracks or corrugated iron huts") near the city centre which is to be pulled down to make room for a social housing project. It is one of the few informal settlements visible to visitors who are on their way from the city to the airport. It is precisely this fact which has given rise to the suspicion that the main motivation behind the plans of the city officials is the wish to hide the unattractive shacks from the eyes of visitors.

DOK-WERK FILMCOOPERATIVE

DOK-WERK was founded in 2004 by Daniela Michel and Alexander Kleider with the aim to produce captivating documentaries about challenging issues. Instead of the fake objectivity created by a narration, we want strong images and stories to speak for themselves.



ALEXANDER KLEIDER

Writer · Director · Cameraman

Born 1975 in Böblingen. Communication Studies at the Free University of Berlin. Since 2001 he has made feature-length documentaries as well as magazine items for theatrical release, television (ZDF, ARTE) and radio. Since 2004 he is a lecturer for documentary filmmaking.



DANIELA MICHEL

Writer · Director · Producer

Born 1975 in Stuttgart. Degree in Arts, Film Studies and International Relations from the London Guildhall University in the UK. Since 2001 she has made feature-length documentaries as well as magazine items for theatrical release, television (ZDF, ARTE) and radio. Since 2004 she is a lecturer for documentary filmmaking.



ROMIN KHAN

Writer and freelance Journalist

Born 1975 in Onitsha in Nigeria. Degree in Political Science, History and Sociology from the Humboldt University in Berlin, and the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in Cape Town. He contributes regularly to publications such as ver.di-publik, jungle World and telepolis, writing about the political and social development of South Africa. For the summer of 2009, the publisher Assoziation A (Berlin) has scheduled the publication of the anthology „Südafrika nach dem Ende der Apartheid - Die Grenzen der Befreiung“ (‘South Africa After the End of Apartheid — the Limits of Liberation’) which Khan has edited together with Jens Erik Ambacher.



ECKES MALZ

Composer · Musician

Born in 1962. Professional studies in flute, piano, violin, percussion and composition. After completing an apprenticeship as a piano maker, he performed in live music events with Donald Tillman, Six was Nine, Lyx-die Auvray, Freddy Wonder and others, as well as composing soundtracks for theatre and film (Tatort, Häupter meiner Lieben, Aimee & Jaguar, Emil & die Detektive, Sumo Bruno, etc.).

Since 2002 he has had his own music project:

www.eccomoreno.com

www.eckesmalz.de



TEBA SHUMBA

Musician

The Original Social worker who is also known by various names such as The Shepherd, Mr. Shumba and Teba 20.5.2.1 Digitally is a Ragga muffin artist born and bred in Gugulethu (a township in Cape Town). He started recording in 1996 with a Kwaito Band called Skeem.

In 1997 the band was awarded the FNB Sama Award for Best Township Pop. 2004 he released his debut Soul Afro Reggae Dancehall album called "20-5-2-1 Manifesto". He used his skills to rise above the poverty he was exposed to daily and works with community and youth projects. The objective of this project is to revive the revolutionary spirit that had ceased to flame after the 1994 election to emphasize the importance to continue the struggle towards achieving humanity. www.myspace.com/tebashumba

Gatyeeni

Performed by Teba

Lyrics by T.Shumba, Music by G.Williams

Published by 20-5-2-1 Publishing

Courtesy 20-5-2-1 Productions / High Voltage Entertainment

Blackness Anthem

Performed by Teba feat Crosby and Red Lion

Lyrics by A. Schoeman, C. Bolani, T. Shumba. Music by A.Denholm, HQF Beadon

Published by African Dope Publishing

Courtesy African Dope Records · www.africandope.co.za

Sokka (Diski)

Performed by Teba

Lyrics by T.Shumba, Music by G.Williams

Published by 20-5-2-1 Publishing

Courtesy 20-5-2-1 Productions / High Voltage Entertainment

Music by Teba
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Germany 2009 | 75/60/52 min.
HD | Colour

PROTAGONISTS

Ashraf Cassiem and Mncedisi Twalo
Zoliswa, Inga and Sinenjongo Maqabuka
Siphelele Arnold Maqakalana

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Alexander Kleider

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Romin Khan

EDITORS

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WITH THE SUPPORT OF

Stiftung Menschenwürde und Arbeitswelt
Stiftung Umverteilen
Solidaritätsfonds Hans-Böckler-Stiftung
Filmstiftung Nordrhein-Westfalen



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