

Dr Nikki Comninos S.A.G.E.

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I have been in the industry for 17 years, working in genres ranging from documentary to drama, reality, advertising, news, corporate, lifestyle, wildlife and shorts. During my time working for local and international channels, streamers, and independent release, I have finely honed my storytelling skills and have become a narrative problem solver and adept story doctor. In 2022 I was recognised by the American Cinema Editors (ACE) as an experienced and well-established editor as part of their International Partnership. The projects I have worked on as editor have been consistently awarded both local and international prizes and have screened all over the world. At this year's South African Film and Television awards I was nominated for best documentary editor twice, for doc feature *Murder In Paris* and doc series *Devilsdorp*. Amongst other SAFTA nominations and awards for films I have edited, I have also been personally awarded two SAFTAs for editing (for documentary in 2011 and for drama in 2015) as well as a third nomination for documentary short editing in 2016. In 2021, I won best editing at the Beirut Shorts Film Festival for *Cause of Death*, an experimental short about femicide. The film was also awarded Best Film at the Vienna Shorts Film Festival qualifying it for the Academy Awards. In 2014 I was awarded the South African Editors Guild (S.A.G.E.) acronym for distinguished editors. I was selected as one of 6 directors for the Encounters Documentary Filmmaking Lab in 2007. In 2006 I was selected to attend the Berlin Talent Campus and in 2005 for the Sithengi Talent Campus. To add to my professional experience I have a strong academic background giving me a critical thinking approach to my work. In 2015 I completed my Ph.D. focusing on home video, personal history and memory. I have worked at universities like Wits and ADFA and I was also the training manager for Big Fish School of Digital Filmmaking. I am a swift and collaborative editor, earning the nickname comrade supercuts :)

Education

[2019-2020] Psychology undergraduate, University of South Africa

[2018] Sediba Spark, NFVF 6 month screenwriting course

[2011-2015] PhD, University of the Witwatersrand

Creative Arts - written thesis + 60-min documentary, *Fraternal*: Cambridge African FF, 2015

[2007] MA, University of the Witwatersrand

Intensive theory and practice, *Triptych of Her*: Durban International Film Festival, 2008

[2001-2004] BA in Film + Media with Honours, University of Cape Town

Final film, *Algemeen Befokte Afrikaans* - Official selection DIFF and NYIFVF, 2005

Awards

[2022] Recognised as part of the American Cinema Editors (ACE) International Partnership

SAFTA Winner: Best Made for TV Doc (*Devilsdorp*)

SAFTA nominee: Best Documentary Editing (*Devilsdorp*)

SAFTA nominee: Best Documentary Editing (*Murder in Paris*)

[2021] Best Short: Vienna Shorts Film Festival (*Cause of Death*) - Academy Awards qualifying

Best Editor and Best Experimental Short: Beirut Short Film Festival (*Cause of Death*)

Best Documentary: WRPN Women's Int film festival, Festival Napoleon on Champs-

Élysées, Africa Human Rights Festival, Impact Docs Award, Docs without Borders

(*Someone to Blame*)

[2020] Jury Prize: Festival Des Cinemas Differents Et Experimentaux De Paris (*Cause of Death*)

SAFTA nominee: Best Youth Programme (*MTV Shuga IRL Season 2+3*)

[2019] Best Documentary: Zanzibar Film Festival (*Someone to Blame*)
 Best Documentary: Jozi Film Festival (*Someone to Blame*)
 Best Documentary: Coalition of South Asian Film Festival (*Someone to Blame*)
 INPUT Africa Selection: *Someone to Blame*
 SAFTA Winner: Best Documentary Short (*Someone to Blame*)

[2018] SAFTA nominee: Best Current Affairs (*Life Esidemeni*)
 SAFTA Winner: Best Youth Programme (*MTV Shuga IRL Season 2*)

[2016] SAFTA nominee: Documentary Short editor (*Indians Can't Fly*)
 SAFTA Winner: Best Documentary Short (*Indians Can't Fly*)

[2015] SAFTA winner: Drama editing (*End Game*)
 Best Short: Slamdance Fusion Doc Challenge, NYC (*I am Juli*)

[2014] Best Documentary Short: California International Film Festival (*Hyena Boys*)
 Best Post Graduate Student: Film & TV division, Wits University
 Best Short Film: Independent Mzansi Short Film Festival (*iBhokwe*)

[2013] South African Editors Guild (S.A.G.E.) acronym for distinguished editors
 ATKV Feather award (*Tibbie Steyn*), ATKV nomination (*Emily Hobhouse*)

[2011-2014] Mellon Postgraduate Mentoring Award

[2011] SAFTA winner: Best documentary editor (*Fish Out of Water*)

[2009] South African Academy for Science and Art: Medal of Honour (*The Heart is Beautiful*)

[2007] Selected director for the Encounters Documentary Filmmaking Lab
 Postgraduate Merit award for MA degree (academic merit)

[2005-2006] Selected for the Berlin Talent Campus and Sithengi Talent Campus

[2004 - 2001] Graduated with a First Class pass in Honours, Class medal – Video Production,
 Class medal – Media studies, Placed on the Dean's List for undergraduate degree, Scholarship
 for undergraduate and Honours degrees (academic merit)

Academia and Training

[2020-2022] NFVF Education & Training board

[2020-2007] Lecturer, Tutor, External Examiner, Supervisor: WITS, AFDA, Johannesburg
 Edit Lecturing, external examiner of essays, dissertations and final film exams

[2020-2019] Talent Factory Mentor: Multichoice, Zambia
 Edit training and post supervision of final films

[2019] Newzroom Africa: Nala Media
 Edit training

[2018-2013] Course Convener: WITS, Johannesburg
 4th year + MA 'National Cinema and Fiction Film' (2018), MA 'Introduction to Production' (2013)

[2016-2015] Training Manager: Big Fish, Johannesburg
 Course convener and lecturer for 2nd years, project manager for GFC training course (2016)
 Wider managerial and operational duties: creating and implementing training programs

Conferences and Papers

PARSE Journal, Summer 2020

'Recollect: Snippets of Self' <https://parsejournal.com/journal/#intersections>

Journal for African Cinemas Special Edition, 2018

Comminos, N. (2017), 'Practice-led research: Home video and the autobiographical self'

CiILECT-CARA The Politics and Poetics of the Practices of Film, 2018 - round table

3rd Es'kia Mphahlele Postgraduate Colloquium and Arts Forum, Wits, 2011

'The Politics of Dissemination: Personal Archive and Memory'

Film and TV Experience

[2023-2014] Editor: EMS Productions, Johannesburg

Truth Be Told (doc series - post production), *Murder in Paris* (2 part doc series, SABC, various festivals) *Someone to Blame* (54min doc - Encounters, Input, Zanzibar film festival), *Indians Can't Fly* (48min doc, SABC, various festivals)

[2022] Editor: Plexus films

We Will Not Die Quietly (documentary) (**in post production)

[2022- 2021] Senior Editor: Idea Candy, Johannesburg

Steinheist: 3 part Limited series for Showmax (documentary)

Devilsdorp: 4 part Limited series for Showmax (documentary)

[2022-2017] Editor: Blackboard Trust, Johannesburg

Loving In-between (short doc), *Cause of Death* (short doc: Berlinale, IDFA, and many others),

When I Grow Up I Want to be a Black Man (Two screen projection for the Eye Institute +

Wintertur, Rotterdam, Gothenburg Film festival, DIFF and others)

[2021] Editor: Ten10 films, Johannesburg

Senzo: Death of a Soccer Star: 5 part Limited series for Netflix (documentary)

[2020-2014] Editor: TIA productions, Johannesburg

Various: *Carte Blanche* (investigative journalism), *MTV Shuga IRL SE1-3* (TV doccies), *MTV Young Moms Nigeria*, *Miss Trans Diva* (eTV, 24min doc), *Timelines* (feature doc, Durban International Film Festival, Jozi Film Fest, Indie Karoo Film Festival), *Guardian news*, *Hyena Boys* (short doc, various festivals), *I am Juli* (short doc, Big Sky, Slamdance, Indie Karoo Film Festival), *MTV inserts*, *Talk with Kwangu SE1+SE2* (Zambezi Magic)

[2020-2011] Editor: Uhuru, Johannesburg

RedFish stream (short doc), *How To Steal A Country* (feature doc, editing team - IDFA, showmax, Africa in Motion, Encounters, Doc Edge, Sydney South African Film Festival) *Everything Must Fall* (feature doc, editing team: IDFA, various other film festivals), Various short films (advocacy)

[2020-2009] Editor: Pulp Films, Johannesburg

Takalani Sesame SE11+SE12, 7x 23-min docs series *My Beautiful Game*

[2020] Editor: Blue Zone Media

Dialogue (talkshow)

[2019] Editor: Nala Media

Loved Like Crazy (46 min doc, Lifetime channel)

[2019-2018] Editor: Full Circle productions, Johannesburg

Negotiated Settlement (3x50min doc series), shorts for Con Hill museum

[2018] Editor: The Swank Group, Johannesburg

Lagos to London (online, 22min doc)

[2016-2009] Editor: Rapid Blue, Johannesburg

BBC's *Great South African Bake Off: Season2+3* (reality), ITV's *4 Weddings: Season 1* (reality),

BBC's *Come Dine With Me: Season 1-3* (reality), Ep 3 BBC's *Who Do You Think You Are?* (doc)

[2016-2014] Editor: Fireworx, Johannesburg

The Jews of Madagascar (doc), *Sticks and Stones* (13 ep drama), Ep 7: *End Game* (drama)

[2016] Editor: Good Cop, Johannesburg

People You Might Know (web-series)

[2016] Editor: Afrokaans, Johannesburg

Shoprite Stories (corporate)

[2015 - 2008] Director + Editor: Self produced, Johannesburg

Fraternal (doc, Cambridge African Film Festival), *Triptych of Her* (short film, DIFF)

[2014] Director: Fireworx, Johannesburg

1 Episode: *Mzansi Love* (drama, SABC)

[2014] Editor + Director, VVV, Johannesburg

Editor Comedy Central Roast promos, director-editor for Debonairs in house videos

[2013] Editor: John Trengove, Johannesburg

The Goat/iBhokwe (short film)

[2013] Editor: Freeway Productions, Johannesburg

Second editor on a five part series for MNET entitled *The History of Film in Africa* (doc)

[2013] Editor: Pantareimedia, Johannesburg

Various: OXFAM and Red Cross videos (advocacy)

[2013] Editor: e.News Channel/e.tv Prime Time News/eNCA /eTV, Johannesburg

News editor and team leader for the launch of South Africa's first 24 hour news channel, current affairs show Africa 360, obituaries for Mandela

[2012] Editor: Born-free Media, Johannesburg

Docu-reality series *Life's a Stage*, 7 x episodes (doc-reality)

[2012-2008] Editor + insert producer: Foxwood Films, Johannesburg

Kyknet: *Formidabele Vroue*, 2x48min, *Celeb se Kind*, Editor/insert producer *Robinson Regstreeks* (current affairs), *Sewe Sakke Sout* (doc-reality). Mnet: *The Heart is Beautiful*, 4x50min doc eps.

[2011] Editor: Jungle Works, Johannesburg

UN films - older women and discordant couples living with HIV/AIDS (advocacy)

[2009] Editor: Bonngoe Productions, Johannesburg

Editor of 2x26min episodes of a doc series, *Beyond Positive*

[2009] Editor: Dzuguda Productions, Johannesburg

Editor of a 52-min of *Gladiators of Venda* (doc), 1x24 min episode in *Sheroes* doc series

[2008] Director + Editor: High Rotation, Johannesburg

50sec Mother's Day Lentswe Poetry Project Poem for SABC2

[2008] Editor: Road Media, Johannesburg

Editor of 5-min promo of footage of chacma baboons for pitch

[2007] Editor: Fusion Films, Johannesburg

8 x 45sec adverts and other deliverables for the OUTsurance 'Staff Helping S.A. OUT' campaign

[2005-2007] Director, Editor, Production Manager: Vuleka Productions, Durban

- **Director+editor** *Do Girls Want It?* 48min doc for the Encounters doc lab + SABC 1
- **Director, researcher, editor** for 24-min documentary, *Zulu Nation*, for e.tv
- **Director-editor** for 5x25min docs for the Cato Manor museum
- **Editor, production manager** on 26min doc for SABC 3, *Pasta alla Shaik*
- **Director-editor** of a 5min film for AIDS Foundation (advocacy)
- **Assistant editor** on 52min doc *A Child is A Child (because of other people)* (DIFF)

[2004] Co-director and co-editor, UCT

Algemeen Befokte Afrikaans (short doc) (DIFF, New York Independent Film and Video Festival)

Extracurricular

Executive board member of the South African Guild of Editors - Portfolio: Treasurer. Member of the Documentary Filmmakers Association. South African Film and TV Awards Judge

References (contact details on request)

Wim Steyn, Exec Producer: Idea Candy Jyoti Mistry, Filmmaker/Academic: Valand, Sweden

Enver Samuel, Director: EMS Productions Sara Blecher, Director

Tarryn Crossman, Director/Producer: TIA Productions