

Dr Nikki Comninos (SAGE)
Director, Editor, occasional Academic
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Profile Summary

- Experienced Senior editor - South African Editor Guild (**SAGE**) acronym holder, recognised by the American Cinema Editors (**ACE**) in the International Partnership
 - **Directed 2x Showmax limited doc series** in the last year
 - Excellence awarded multiple times at local and international film festivals and craft awards
 - Well-versed across a range of genres: documentary, drama, reality, advertising, shorts etc.
 - Swift, collaborative and critical thinking
 - PhD and published author
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Specialisations

- Deeply engaged narrative and visual editor and director
 - Adept story doctor, narrative problem-solver
 - Skilled in content management for long-form and episodic series
 - Extensive documentary experience, deep knowledge of working with archive
 - Support across all phases of production: conceptualisation, technical workflow planning, shooting for edit, offline editing, and storytelling troubleshooting
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Awards

- [2024] **SAFTA nominee:** Best Made for TV Doc (*Convict Conman*)
SAFTA nominee: Best Made for TV Doc (*Rosemary's Hitlist*)
INPUT Africa Selection: *Truth Be Told*
No. 1 African Film Award: Ann Arbor - Film Festival (*Loving in Between*)
- [2023] **SAFTA Winner:** Best Made for TV Doc (*Senzo: Murder of a Soccer Star*)
SAFTA nominee: Best Documentary Editing (*Steinheist*)
- [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 - Oscar qualifying (*Cause of Death*)
The Eileen Maitland Award: Ann Arbor Film Festival (*Cause of Death*)
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, Durban International Film Festival, Jozi Film Festival, Paris Film Awards (*Murder in Paris*)
- [2020] **Jury Prize:** Festival Des Cinemas Differents Et Experimentaux De Paris (*Cause of Death*)
SAFTA nominee: Best Youth Programme (*MTV Shuga IRL Season 3*)
- [2019] **Best Documentary:** Zanzibar Film Festival, Jozi Film Festival, 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 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] **SAFTA winner:** Best documentary editor (*Fish Out of Water*)
 [2009] **Medal of Honour:** South African Academy for Science and Art (*The Heart is Beautiful*)
 [2007] Selected director for the **Encounters Documentary Filmmaking Lab**
 [2005-2006] Selected for the **Berlin Talent Campus** and **Sithengi Talent Campus**

Education

[2011-2015] **PhD, University of the Witwatersrand**
 Creative Arts - written thesis + 60-min documentary, *Fraternal*: Cambridge African FF, 2015
 [2011-2014] Mellon Postgraduate Mentoring Award
 [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
 First Class pass in Honours, Class medal - Video Production, Class medal - Media studies,
 Dean's List for undergraduate degree, Scholarship for undergraduate and honours degrees

Academia and Training

[2025-2024] **Botswana IgniteEdit training**
 [2025-2007] **Supervisor, Lecturer, External Examiner: Open Window, WITS, AFDA**
 Edit Lecturing, external examiner of essays, dissertations and final film exams
 [2020-2022] **NFVF Education & Training board**
 [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

Masterclasses, Conferences and Papers

[2025] **Adobe x Tempo - "Editors as Creators" & Best Practices for Non-Scripted Productions**
 [2024] **FAME WEEK MIP AFRICA**, 'Behind the Lens of True Crime Documentaries in South Africa'
 [2024] **26th Encounters South African International Documentary Festival**, SAGE editing panel: 'Crossing Boundaries, Crossing Borders'
 [2024] **Botswana Ignite**, Editing Masterclass
PARSE Journal, Summer 2020 'Recollect: Snippets of Self' <https://parsejournal.com/journal/#intersections>
 [2018] **Journal for African Cinemas Special Edition**
 Comninou, N. (2017), 'Practice-led research: Home video and the autobiographical self'

[2018] **CiLECT-CARA The Politics and Poetics of the Practices of Film**, round table
[2011] **3rd Es'kia Mphahlele Postgraduate Colloquium and Arts Forum, Wits**,
'The Politics of Dissemination: Personal Archive and Memory'

Film and TV Experience

Story Consulting

[2024] Story consultant on feature length doc, Pat van Heerden
[2023] Encounters + SAGE Rough Cut Lab story consultant
[2023] Indelible Media story consultant for 6-part doc series

Directing

[2025 - 2023] **Director: Idea Candy, Johannesburg**

Unspoken War: 5-part Limited historical series for Showmax (documentary)

Tracking Thabo Bester: 4-part Limited series for Showmax (documentary)

Convict Conman: 2-part Limited series for Showmax (documentary)

[2015] **Director + Editor: Self produced, Johannesburg**

Fraternal (doc, Cambridge African Film Festival)

[2014] **Director: Fireworx, Johannesburg**

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

[2014] **Director + Editor, VWV, Johannesburg**

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

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

Triptych of Her (short film, DIFF)

[2008] **Director + Editor: High Rotation, Johannesburg**

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

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

Director+editor *Do Girls Want It?* 48min doc, Encounters+SABC 1. 24-min doc, Zulu Nation, eTV.

5x25min docs, Cato Manor Museum – 5min film, AIDS Foundation (advocacy)

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

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

Editing

[2024- 2021] **Senior Editor: Idea Candy, Johannesburg**

Station Strangler: feature doc for Showmax (documentary)

Rosemary's Hitlist: 4-part Limited series for Showmax (documentary)

Steinheist: 3-part Limited series for Showmax (documentary)

Devilsdorp: 4-part Limited series for Showmax (documentary)

[2023-2014] **Editor: EMS Productions, Johannesburg**

Truth Be Told (doc series - ep 1+2), *Murder in Paris* (2-part doc - SABC, festival release) *Someone to Blame* (54min doc - SABC, festival release), *Indians Can't Fly* (48min doc, SABC)

[2022] **Editor: Plexus films**

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

[2022-2017] **Editor: Blackboard Trust, Johannesburg**

Loving In-between (short doc), *Cause of Death* (short doc: Berlinale, IDFA, and various international film festivals), *When I Grow Up I Want to be a Black Man* (Two screen projection for the Eye Institute and various international film festivals)

[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 (talk show)

[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-part drama), Ep 7: *End Game* (drama)

[2016] Editor: Good Cop, Johannesburg

People You Might Know (web-series)

[2016] Editor: Afrokaans, Johannesburg

Shoprite Stories (corporate)

[2013] Editor: John Trengove, Johannesburg

The Goat/iBhokwe (short film)

[2013] Editor: Freeway Productions, Johannesburg

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

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

News editor and team leader for eNews, 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

[2007] Editor: Fusion Films, Johannesburg

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

Extracurricular

Executive board member: South African Guild of Editors

Member: Documentary Filmmakers Association. South African Film and TV Awards Judge

References (contact details on request)

Wim Steyn, Executive Producer

Enver Samuel, Director

Xoliswa Sithole, Director/Producer

Jyoti Mistry, Filmmaker/Academic

Sara Blecher, Director

Richard Finn Gregory, Director