

**Dr Nikki Comninos (SAGE)**  
**Director | Senior Editor | Story Consultant**  
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## Profile Summary

**SAFTA-winning documentary director and editor** specialising in premium limited series for Netflix and Showmax. **American Cinema Editors (ACE)** International Partnership member and **South African Editors' Guild (SAGE)** acronym holder. I transform complex narratives into compelling multi-episode series, working across all production phases from story development through final delivery. Expert in archive-driven storytelling, narrative problem-solving, and managing episodic content at the highest broadcast standard.

**Specialisations:** Long-form episodic storytelling | Archive-driven and investigative narratives | Story development through delivery | Narrative problem-solving

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## Awards + Recognition

- [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**

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## 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

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## Film and TV Experience Highlights

### Directing

[2026 - 2023] **Director: Idea Candy, Johannesburg**

*Shapeshifters*: 1 episode in 3-part doc series for M-Net

*Unspoken War*: 5-part Limited historical series for Showmax + M-Net (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)

**[2022-2017] 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*

**[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)

**[2013] Editor: John Trengove, Johannesburg**

*The Goat/iBhokwe* (short film)

**[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.

**[2007] Editor: Fusion Films, Johannesburg**

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

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## Professional Affiliations

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