



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION SOUTH AFRICA

Remarks by Deputy High Commissioner, Mr Peter Budd Screening of “Intangible Asset Number 82”, directed by Emma Franz, at the 30th Durban International Film Festival on Thursday 24 July 2009

Ladies and Gentleman

I am very happy to be here in Durban today to attend the screening of “Intangible Asset Number 82”, directed by my fellow Australian Emma Franz.

I understand that the documentary has already been a hit with cinema-goers in festivals in Brazil, United States and Canada, will shortly head for Egypt, Israel and Europe, and will premiere in Australia early next month.

Part of the Australian High Commission’s mandate, consistent with the Australian Government’s commitment to enhanced African engagement, is to promote Australian culture in all its forms and also to encourage cultural exchange between Australian and South African artists, musicians and film-makers.

In this context, the High Commission is very pleased to be able to support Emma Franz’s presence here tonight – we certainly look forward to her film and having the opportunity to ask some questions in the post-film Q & A session.

During her visit to South Africa, Emma has also had the opportunity to interact with fellow South African artists from the South African School of Motion Picture Medium and Live Performance and the Documentary Filmmakers Association of

South Africa. The High Commission is pleased to support artist exchanges like this one.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to let you know about potential future opportunities for Australian and South Africans to deepen their collaboration in film co-production. The Australian and South African governments have recently concluded negotiations on a treaty on film co-production, which will help facilitate Australians and South Africans to pool their creative and financial resources to create films.

While this treaty is yet to come into force, and needs to go through both our respective countries approval processes, assuming it comes into force, the treaty will make it easier for South Africans and Australians to put their creative energies together to produce high quality film productions. Some of these benefits include:

- access for the Australian co-producer to various funding and tax benefits through Screen Australia;
- simplified immigration requirements for the entry of skilled personnel into Australia for the purposes of the co-production;
- importation of equipment for use in make the co-production free of customs duties, amongst others.

We can already see the linkages in film between our countries evident at this festival - it is great to see the Australian production of "Disgrace", directed by Stephen Jacobs, based on a South African novel by JM Coetzee, featured at this festival. The High Commission is hopeful that, once finalised, the film co-production treaty can facilitate more joint projects that will hopefully be featured at film festivals like this one.

But for now, I encourage you to sit back, relax and enjoy the documentary.
Thank you.