

5 African screenwriters selected to 7th Realness African Screenwriters' Residency programme

Five African screenwriters have been selected to participate in the 7th Realness African Screenwriters' Residency.



Image supplied. Selected participants in the 7th Realness African Screenwriters' Residency are left to right: Michael Omonua (Nigeria), Chantel Clark (South Africa), Babalwa Baartman (South Africa), Chadi Zeneddine (Gabon/Lebanon) and Amartei Armar (Ghana)

The six-week programme takes place from 14 July to 6 September in South Africa during a residency in Stanford in the Western Cape, where the participants will work with experienced mentors, story consultants Selina Ukwuoma and Thandeka Zwana as well as creative producer, Cait Pansegrouw.

The participants will be put to the test in September at Fame Week Africa - a major platform for the development and networking of the creative industries on the continent, which this year sees over 1,600 delegates attend.

The five scriptwriters

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- Amartei Armar (Ghana) is a writer/director whose most recent work, *TSUTSUE* premiered at Cannes as part of the official selection, competing for the Short Palm D'or; a first for Ghana. He will work on his second feature film a period drama titled *Ever Young*.

- Michael Omonua (Nigeria) is a writer/director whose short film *Rehearsal* (2021) had its world premiere in competition at the 71st Berlinale, and was in competition at many film festivals. He will work on his second feature film, *Galatians*, a dark comedy.
- Chantel Clark (South Africa) is screenwriter and director who will be working on her debut feature film *Pale Faces*, a drama/horror which is currently in development. The project was selected for the Sundance Institute's Screenwriters Lab, and two other labs.
- Chadi Zeneddine (Gabon/Lebanon) is a writer/director who has worked for 20 years in the film industry with the major international film festivals, developed a project with Walt Dinesy Studios and is currently doing his PHD in film. He will work on his second feature film - a project titled *This is What They Call Us* a drama/mystical/coming-of-age feature.
- Babalwa Baartman (South Africa) is a social entrepreneur and filmmaker who uses storytelling as a tool for healing and activism. Her project *Eziko* is her second feature film and her first solo scriptwriting experience.



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28 Jun 2023



"The residency is such a sacred and enriching space to create," explains Pansegrouw, co-founder and director of artistic operations at the Realness Institute.

"It's rare to be surrounded and supported by fellow Africans as you continue to discover your voice as a filmmaker. It is a privilege for me to play a small role in the development of these artists and their stories."

Taking projects to the next level

The aim of the programme is to mentor scriptwriters in a creative and nurturing environment, to enable them to advance their feature film projects.

By engaging with story consultants and creative producers, the screenwriters will work on the essence of their story concepts to develop them into compelling screenplays.

Alongside this, the cohort is also given guidance to effectively pitch their projects to industry partners for financing and production opportunities.

"It is always an honour to welcome exciting African voices to the residency and to provide the freedom and support the filmmakers need to take their projects to the next level. We look forward to continuing the residency's pursuit of excellence," says Zwana.

"I'm excited to be back on the continent sharing in the lucid dreams of the next group of visionary filmmakers," says Ukwuoma.

"They're encouraged to be expansive — to stretch their creativity to its limits — before then honing the craft skills that enable them to present the fruits of that exploration to the industry in their pitch at Fame Week Africa at the end. The emphasis on craft meeting creativity is crucial," adds Ukwuoma.

17 talented filmmakers selected for Youth Filmmaker Project

5 Jul 2023





An enabler for the economic growth of the creative sector

“We are really thrilled to host the Screenwriters' Residency at Fame Week Africa this year,” says Martin Hiller, portfolio director: Fame Week Africa.

“The convergence of significant stakeholders within the film and creative sectors at the event, offers an important opportunity for these scriptwriters to network, pitch and do “business”.

“Taking one’s story from the page into the development process is an important part of the filmmaking value chain, and this is ultimately what we set out to do – act as an enabler for the economic growth of the creative sector,” explains Hiller.

The development programme is presented by the Realness Institute, in partnership with the French Institute of South Africa and Institut Français, Locarno Filmmaker’s Academy, Cocoon Productions, The CNC, and Fame Week Africa.

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