

FilmFest '15 on the fringe of unusualness

 By [Jessica Taylor](#)

23 Feb 2015

The redeeming power of tattoo art; the conscientising power of hip hop in places like Yemen, Uganda, Columbia and Cambodia; gay life in Kenya where homosexuality is criminalised; and the strange case of American art forger, Mark Landis, says something of the unusual stories currently being screened at this year's Design Indaba FilmFest.

We asked PR, Marketing and Communications Manager of Design Indaba Megan Wolstenholme to elaborate on the diverse line-up and share some insights into film as part of this multifaceted platform.

■ What makes this year's FilmFest different from last year's?

Wolstenholme: We have such a diverse range of films, even more so than in previous years. Many of them find their creative subjects on the fringes, unearthing unusual and compelling stories that you will never be able to see in the cinemas (besides Tim Burton's *Big Eyes*).

■ Why The Labia Theatre?

Wolstenholme: The Labia is Cape Town's oldest independent cinema. It has also recently been on the brink of having to close its doors as it was in desperate need of technology upgrading and renovation. We saw this as another opportunity to help out in the spirit of our *Make. Change.* creative campaign for 2015. We donated a sizeable amount to the cinema to assist with the much needed upgrades and bring patrons back to this jewel in our creative community.

■ Which of this year's films have received the greatest response to date?

Wolstenholme: *Big Eyes* was a massive hit, but with a director like Tim Burton, how could it not be? The other films that have had great interest so far have been *Regarding Susan Sontag*, *Dior and I*, *Project Phoenix*, *Saint Laurent*, and *Art and Craft*. But tickets are still being sold, so watch this space! There might be some surprise sleepers...

■ Which of this year's films are premieres in South Africa?

Wolstenholme: All except for *Big Eyes*, and that is even technical - it opened at Nu Metro on the same day.



■ *I'm going to be watching Dior and I. Any comments on this film, or fashion films specifically?*

Wolstenholme: Fashion films are often a "gateway drug" to some of the other, perhaps more serious, films about creative topics out there.

Everyone is influenced by fashion, even if they choose not to adhere to it. And iconic designers, such as Dior and Yves Saint Laurent are household names.

Fashion is a big part of our programme at the Design Indaba Expo. We have 10 fashion shows in the [Events Arena](#) this year. We are featuring the latest collections from Tzvi Karp, Rubicon, Jacques LaGrange Couture, Lara Klawikowski, David Tiale, Jenevieve Lyons, CSquared, Craig Port, Chu Suwannapha and Thula Sindi.

■ *What was the thinking behind FilmFestFriday?*

Wolstenholme: Much like the reason we chose to have a Design Indaba FilmFest, FilmFestFriday was a through-the-year opportunity to showcase film as a creative medium. We carry the spirit of creative enquiry and intellectual curiosity so fundamental to our festival in our online publication [Designindaba.com](#) throughout the year.

■ *Anything to add on Design Indaba Film Fest '15?*

Wolstenholme: Many of the films are notable for various reasons. We felt strongly about screening *The Stories of Our Lives*, which is banned in Kenya for its depiction of LGBT life. And the quality of the line-up is significant: *Art and Craft* was singled out as one of the 10 must-see films at Tribeca Film Festival, Wim Wenders' *The Salt of the Earth* was nominated for an Oscar, *Tomorrow We Disappear* was named Indiewire's *The Best Documentaries of 2014 So Far*.

FilmFest '15 ends on Sunday, 1 March. For the full programme, visit [Designindaba.com](#).

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