

BAXU AND THE GIANTS

COMING SOON

Electronic Press Kit





LOGLINE:

A Short Fiction Film about rhino poaching triggering social change in a village in rural Namibia, seen through the eyes of a 9 year old girl

SYNOPSIS:

Baxu, a 9 year old girl in touch with nature and tradition but toughened by life in poverty, lives with her street-smart older brother Khata and alcoholic grandmother in a village in Damaraland.

They live a peaceful life until strange men show up and cause change in the village. First the neighbour starts acting suspicious, then Baxu notices changes in her own household.

Keen on finding out what Khata is hiding from her, Baxu investigates and learns that her brother started poaching, in order to improve his family's living conditions.

Baxu has to make a tough decision - will she stay quiet or will she listen to the rhinos, the giants of the Savannah, who she talks to in her dreams and risk losing the people she loves the most?



BACKGROUND:

The Short Film BAXU AND THE GIANTS was commissioned by the Legal Assistance Centre Namibia with the aim of sensitising teenagers to the issue of poaching in rural Namibia.

Writers Florian Schott and Girley Jazama chose to tell the story from the inside out - through the eyes of an innocent but toughened-by-life 9 year old who is deeply rooted in nature and her own heritage.

In fact, the name Baxu is short for "!Khubaxu", which means "I come from the soil".

Through this storytelling device which spans time between the age of hunters and gatherers until today, the aim is to reach an audience worldwide and for audiences to understand some of the underlying social issues in rural Namibia that can lead to poaching.



CAST:

BAXU Camilla Jo-Ann Daries

KHATA Wafeeq /Narimab

OUMA Anna Louw

NEIGHBOUR Robert Hara#gaeb

HIMBA TRACKER West Uarije

MAIN HUNTER Steven Afrikaner

VOICE KING RHINO Ashwyn Mberi



MAIN CREW:

Directed by	Florian Schott
Written by	Florian Schott & Girley Jazama
Produced by	Andrew Botelle
Co-Produced by	Girley Jazama Florian Schott
Executive Producers	Willem Odendaal (Legal Assistance Centre Namibia) Clive Johnson
Director of Photography	Kit Hoffmann
Editor	Robert Scott
Production Designer	Tanya Stroh
Costume Designer / Make-Up Artist	Kulan Ganes
Music Composers	Lize Ehlers Karl Ehlers Imms Nicolau
Sound Designer	Wojtek Majewski
VFX Supervisor	Inna Goroh
Production Manager	Girley Jazama
First Assistant Director	Fellemon Ndongo
Unit Manager	Gerson Gawanab



DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY:



FLORIAN SCHOTT

Director / Co-Writer / Co-Producer

Florian Schott is a German born filmmaker living in Namibia since 2009, after meeting his wife on a film shoot.

He has worked in the film-business since 2002 and worked as a First Assistant Director all over the world, from Europe to Africa, South America and the Antarctica.

In 2012 he wrote, produced and directed his self-financed Short Comedy 'Everything Happens for a Reason' which won the Afrinolly Short Film Competition in Nigeria in 2014 as well as Awards for Best Director and Best Editor at the 2014 Namibian Theatre & Film Awards.

Florian directed and co-wrote his first feature film in 2014, 'Katutura', an Action Drama set in Namibia's famous township, produced by Tulinane Entertainment which went on to become the most successful Namibian film to date, screened at various Film Festivals around the world and is available for streaming worldwide.

Florian has a number of projects in development, from feature films to television series, next to this he also directs for German television.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT:

In late 2018 I was approached by Producer Andrew Botelle, asking if I would be interested in directing a Short Film aiming to sensitise Namibian teenagers of Wildlife Poaching in rural Namibia, commissioned by the Legal Assistance Centre. I was intrigued, but I realised that I did not know too much about the issue - not more than any fairly interested person from reading about poaching in newspapers and watching documentaries.

Giving it a bit of thought though I realised that, however limited my knowledge at the time - I did have an opinion. I felt that the reasons for Wildlife crime - why do poachers poach? what are the social and economic reasons behind it? - was somewhat missing from the conversation. Another thought was - wouldn't it be great to see the issue through the eyes of a young girl? A girl that does not understand why anyone would kill animals for monetary gain, but is forced to learn as she comes into contact with it. And we - the audience - learn about it with her. Watch her forced to grow up and make difficult moral decisions.

I started developing the script with my co-writer and - from that time on - partner-in-crime, Girley Jazama. And in writing I found myself more and more dealing with issues but also beautiful idiosyncrasies that I carried inside of me from having married into a family from the Damara tribe myself. We quickly fell in love with Baxu and her way of seeing the world. Finding her was another mission. After auditioning almost 50 girls, from public auditions to visiting schools and churches, we finally found our perfect Baxu in 9-year old Camilla Jo-Ann Daries.

Making this film was a beautiful, informative and emotional process. We travelled, we met people, and everybody that came into contact with our story and our young heroine helped in some way, many people working hard on bringing Baxu and her story to life, and out into the world.

With this film we aim to create a discussion around Wildlife Crime. And to highlight one of the roots of the issue - a lack of perspective and opportunities for young people in the villages in rural Namibia. And - hopefully - this film can be part of the change and inspire the youth to be the generation that ends Rhino Poaching.



PRODUCER'S BIOGRAPHIES:



ANDREW BOTELLE
MAMOKOBO VIDEO & RESEARCH
Producer

In 2019, MaMoKoBo Video & Research celebrate 25 years of independent filmmaking in Namibia, producing more than 70 films. 'The Power Stone' (1999), 'Big Mouths, Open Minds' (2000), 'Journey of a Rain Shaman' (2008), 'Waterberg to Waterberg' (2014), and 'The Damara Kings Festival' (2017) are a few of the award-winning films they have produced.



GIRLEY JAZAMA
Co-Writer / Co-Producer

Girley has been acting in film and theatre productions in Namibia for more than 12 years. She was a nominee for Best Supporting Role as Divine Edison, a transgender woman, in the Theatre Play 'Revere Them Those Men', directed by Hafeni Muzanima. Girley studied drama at the College of the Arts in Windhoek, Namibia.

She acted in 'The Ties That Bind', a local Namibian TV Series and was part of the scriptwriters' team for the one season series.

Most recently she co-produced and was the Lead Actress in 'The White Line', a Feature Film set in apartheid, to be released in 2019.

Girley is also a Hollywood Immersive alumna.



PRODUCER'S STATEMENT:

The controversy and buzz around rhino poaching made the "Baxu and the Giants" film a natural choice for our latest film project.

"If the current rate of wildlife poaching persists the black rhino will be extinct by 2026." (Statistic by Ministry of Environment & Tourism Namibia, 2019).

Our decisions today will determine the future of these ancient giants - Namibia's highly valuable and rare rhino population.

This is why writers Girley Jazama and Florian Schott tell the story of rhino poaching from the perspective of a local Namibian family, as they experience radical changes brought about by rhino poachers coming to their area. We see how the decisions of Namibians, especially the younger generation, determine the future of our rhino and the fate of Namibia's rich cultural and natural heritage.

Baxu and the Giants is a film aimed at high school students. It is the youth in Namibia who are most likely to be recruited into poaching syndicates and it is the youth who can learn from the previous generation's mistakes. International audiences too will enjoy this film because rhino poaching is a global issue which affects us all.

This environmental fantasy will be used to advocate against the illegal wildlife trade, encourage teenagers to speak up against wildlife crime and be the generation that ends rhino poaching.

Andrew Botelle - Producer



EXECUTIVE PRODUCER'S STATEMENT:

As a public interest law firm, the LAC fully supports the Namibian authorities' efforts in fighting wildlife crime in Namibia. Wildlife crime syndicates are not only responsible for the diminution of some of our most iconic wildlife species, they are also robbing Namibia and its people of legitimate income opportunities.

With Baxu and the Giants we want our audiences to realise that by committing a wildlife crime, we are stealing from ourselves and giving away something that is precious to the greedy. Baxu's message is a strong and inspiring one - it shows that poverty should never be used as an excuse to commit wildlife crime.

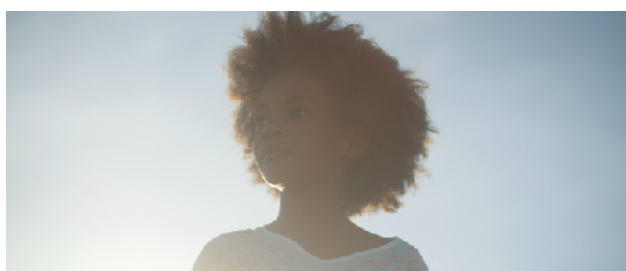
Willem Odendaal - Legal Assistance Centre, Windhoek



TECHNICAL SPECS:

TITLE	Baxu and the Giants
RUNNING TIME	28:40 mins
COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION	Namibia
LANGUAGES	English / Khoekhoegowab / Afrikaans
SHOOTING FORMAT	4K Video (shot on Sony FS7)
ASPECT RATIO	1:2.35
EXHIBITION FORMATS	4K DCP 25fps, 4K DCP 24fps, Media Files (mov, mp4), BluRay, DVD
SOUND FORMAT	5.1 Surround, Stereo
SHOOT DATE	February 2019
COMPLETION DATE	May 2019

PRODUCTION STILLS:





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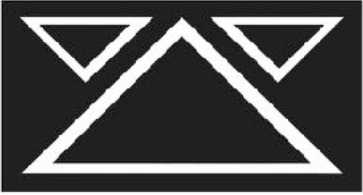
WEBLINKS:

OFFICIAL WEBSITE: [**www.baxuandthegiants.com**](http://www.baxuandthegiants.com)

FACEBOOK: [**www.facebook.com/baxuandthegiants**](http://www.facebook.com/baxuandthegiants)

INSTAGRAM: [**@baxuandthegiants**](https://www.instagram.com/baxuandthegiants)

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