

KATINKA HEYNS: RESUMÉ

HONORARY DOCTORATE

Katinka Heyns, an alumnus of the UP Drama department, is a prominent actress, director and producer of radio, theatre and television in the genres documentary, children's series and drama as well as feature films.

She is the recipient of numerous awards, including the international Crystal Award for Women in Film, ten MNET Vita Awards, the Rapport City Press Woman of the Year Award and Academy Awards from the South African Academy of Arts and Science. Katinka has been awarded a gold medal on two occasions from the same Academy for her films *Fiela se Kind (Fiela's Child)* and *Paljas*. *Paljas* was the first feature film in South African history of film making to be accepted for an Oscar nomination in the category *Best Foreign Film*. She was the first woman to be welcomed to the Hall of Fame by the National Film and Television foundation, was appointed by the Department of Arts and Culture as council member of the NFVF and received the NTVA LIFE TIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD. She was a Laureate recipient at UP and the recipient of the Councilor's Medal of Honor from the TUT. At present Katinka and her company Sonneblom Films is actively involved in a series on mental health commissioned by MediHelp.

Ms Heyns is one of the most prominent figures in not only the history of Afrikaans cinema, but also in the history of South African cinema. As a woman director she has distinguished herself in a profession that was male dominated. With the increasing popularity of television, Ms Heyns' films were some of the very few original films made in the mid-1980s and were beacons in an otherwise monochromatic cinema landscape. Her work reshaped and reinvented the landscape of South African film, as is evidenced in her award-winning films *Fiela se kind* (1988), *Die storie van Klara Viljee* (1992) and *Paljas* (1998). Her work is typified by her commitment to the South African context, the subtlety of her work, the magical-realist quality in her films, and her powerful, unconventional way of telling stories.

Ms Heyns' work has been the focus of scholarly inquiry in diverse arenas ranging from film and media studies to literature and more. Her work has been studied in terms of form, content, production, reception and as socio-political commentary. For many film scholars, Heyns' films are examples of the 'post' period of the New African Movement in film, and of the development of an indigenous filmic art centred on indigenous themes - a groundbreaking trend in South African film.

Of particular prominence in her oeuvre is the way in which her films both celebrate and interrogate Afrikaans culture and female identity. For Levitin, Plessis and Raoul (2003), this puts Heyns in the presence of renowned 'feminist' filmmakers such as India's Deepa Mehta. On the whole, Ms Heyns' films are attempts at cultural decolonization and re-imagination that repositions Afrikaans film in the greater cinematic and scholarly landscapes. Her television work demonstrates a commitment to resurfacing and reframing historical figures and repositioning their work in the current South African milieu. Ms Heyns' current work on mental illnesses, her creative signature with its emphasis on female voices and her interrogation of the challenges of living in a changing South African society demonstrates a social agenda and a dedication to projecting local concerns into a global arena.