

Time of the Writer Festival | Artfluence Human Rights Festival | Durban International Film Festival |  
JOMBA! Contemporary Dance Festival | Poetry Africa Festival

## STATEMENT ON SCREENING ISRAELI FILMS

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Durban, 24 May

The Centre for Creative Arts at the University of KwaZulu Natal, the organiser of the Durban International Film Festival, is committed to being a vibrantly creative enabler and advocate for social justice and democracy.

Marking our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, earlier this month, we launched the inaugural Artfluence Human Rights Festival, which focuses on arts, democracy and the constitution and aims to strengthen the link with the arts and civil society, active citizenship and politics.

We launched Artfluence to achieve a dedicated virtual space where South African and international artists share, celebrate, remember, explore, provoke and promote how the arts contribute to a culture of human rights. This festival, alongside our other festivals, unwrite the powerful role that the arts and creative industries have to play in achieving a better future for all humankind, one predicated on an unwavering opposition to all racism and discrimination. This vision demands that we also show solidarity with the indigenous people of Palestine.

International solidarity played a critical role in supporting the struggle on the ground by the oppressed black majority to dismantle Apartheid in South Africa. Many thousands of conscientious artists across the globe have publicly endorsed a boycott of Israel's complicit cultural sector, including many in South Africa, reminding us of the meaningful solidarity shown to the South African people during apartheid.

Therefore, we decided not to screen any films produced and funded by the Israeli Apartheid state and its complicit institutions. Our deeply-held principles include the firm commitment to freedom of artistic expression and are founded in a longing for freedom, justice and equality for all. We are fully aware of the impact that this has on individual filmmakers and would like to emphasise that we did not do this against any person or entity based on identity and strictly aim to target Israeli and international institutions and corporations that are *complicit* in the violation of Palestinian human rights.

We believe we all carry the responsibility to do what is within our power to lend international support for the cause of the Palestinian struggle. We hope to continue to play a modest role in bringing closer a just future that is rooted in the liberation of all peoples. Our collective conscience insists upon this, and our cultural programming reflects this.

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