

CTFS unveils forthcoming attractions



CTFS Arch perspective birds eye

The thrilling new vision for the Cape Town Film Studios (CTFS) was unveiled to film industry stakeholders at an exclusive event on the 1st December, 2008. CTFS is the first custom-built, Hollywood-style studios in South Africa's history, boasting residential and commercial properties. The event took place on site in Faure, a secluded area 20km outside of Cape Town, where Phase 1 of construction is underway. It was a golden afternoon of movie magic and action-packed stunts but also an intimate event beset with nostalgic music. Distinguished guests included representatives from all of South Africa's most notable film companies. Regrettably, due to it being 'peak season' in the industry, not all of the invited guests could attend as many were on

location filming.

In honour of World AIDS Day, ribbon-shaped brooches were given to guests on arrival. Guests were also graciously met with a choice of ice-cold beverages at the door. Inside the tent, wine flowed and popcorn popped to recognisable movie soundtracks.

Ross Rayners, co-ordinator of this exclusive event, envisioned a 'movie-making' feel and designed the event to simulate an on-set film experience even through to the events programme which resembled an on set "call sheet".

"We are in the movie business after all said Rayners, Manager of Studio Projects for CTFS, "We want to create excitement!"

Excitement, indeed.

After being welcomed by Riaad Moosa, M.C and Comedian at the event, guests were invited to gather outside for a stunt show. I doubt anyone was expecting what came next. CEO of Videovision Entertainment and Chairperson of CTFS, Anant Singh flew in on a helicopter, after which newly-appointed CEO, Nico Dekker orchestrated perfectly timed stunts, while assisted by Pyranha Stunts. A car suddenly barrel-rolled over his head and everyone in the crowd jumped when a "bomb" like explosion went off and a fireball leapt into the sky.

As soon as the mushroom cloud had dissipated, guests were ushered inside where stand-up comedian, Riaad Moosa took centre stage and dignitaries



addressed the audience. Moosa was a hilarious master of ceremonies, providing some comic relief after "all due protocol was observed."

In order to keep to the timing schedule, Rayners organised for ambient music to start playing to make dignitaries aware that their five minutes of allocated speech time is almost over. Mayor Helen Zille had guests in stitches when she started her speech by saying: "If you play the music before I'm finished, I'll sing the rest of my speech!"

Zille said the CTFS project was in line with her aim of stimulating economic growth and described the project as "a much needed boost to this part of the city."

The studio is set to boost the local economy by contributing to the creation of thousands of jobs in the construction phase over the next three years, many of which will be permanent once the film studio is operational.

Then, it was time for an opera sundowner. Golda Schultz, supported by talented pianist, José Dias, blew the audience away with her amazing voice. It's hard to believe that such a talented musician is still only a student at UCT.

After a few more insightful speeches, it was time for Singh, Dekker and Managing Director, Rashay Magan to unveil the planned vision for the studio space. If you were expecting CTFS to be a cheap Hollywood imitation, then you will be sadly mistaken. Heavy emphasis is being placed on nature conservation and CTFS is going green. Thankfully, there

won't be a palm tree in sight; only indigenous South African fever trees lining the main street, aptly named the 'Conservation Corridor.'

The site in Faure boasts expanses of wetlands, which will be carefully protected but also incorporated into the design. The concrete, modern structures of the residential, commercial and studio spaces will have water elements integrated into the architecture. Think Gaudi with a distinctly African twist.

Dekker described CTFS as a place "to make love and war, where we will all be able to forget about our daily lives for a moment."

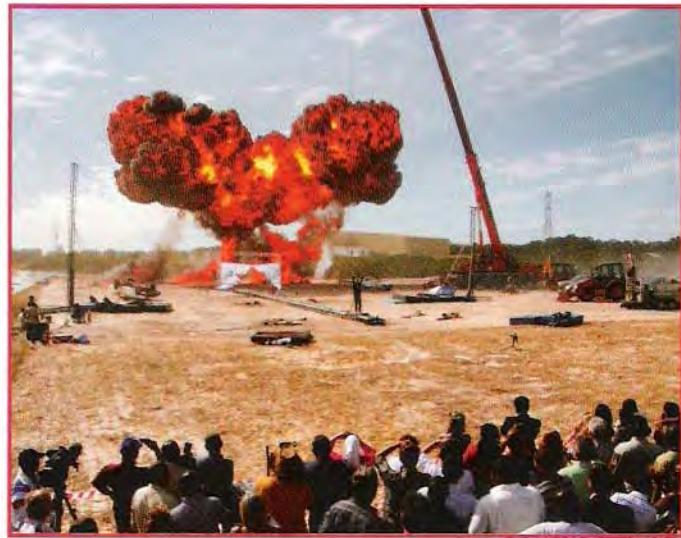
the world and we hope our links will bring top-notch productions to CTFS," he said. "We intend to establish high quality film training facilities for crew under the guidance of a selection of master filmmakers to ensure that movie production in Africa is taken to a new level."

As twilight faded, guests were entertained by U-Carmen eKhayelitsha Choir from the internationally acclaimed South African theatre company, Dimpho Di Kopane (DDK).

Choir members humorously invited the audience to pronounce words in Xhosa. Although we all felt nervous to make the clicks at first, everyone joined in when they started to sing 'The Click Song,' paying a poignant tribute to Miriam Makeba. Her voice might have fallen silent now, but her legacy lives on.

And so, an amazing event drew to a close. I had the same feeling you get after you've been enthralled by great movie on the big screen. When the credits roll, you find yourself not wanting to leave the darkened room where you've indulged in some much-needed escapism for a few hours.

Thankfully, the CTFS project is not a movie that will come to an end and apparently there's a lot more excitement on the way. "We are already planning events for 2009 and we are going to include the public in an exciting way. Watch out for the forthcoming attractions!" Magan said with a pert smile. ☺



Singh announced his intentions for the Studios, after admitting he had felt a bit like Sol Kerzner, hovering over Atlantis, when making his grand entrance via helicopter.

"Videovision Entertainment has an extensive network of contacts around

