



# MURDER IN PARIS

## MAY 2021 NEWSLETTER

MURDER IN PARIS is a political crime thriller that traces the motives for the assassination of anti-Apartheid activist, Dulcie September. The story travels from the heart of Paris in March 1988 to the pursuit of justice in 2021.





23rd Edition  
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## ENCOUNTERS

SOUTH AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL  
DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL

10 — 20 JUNE 2021

#virtuallyeverywhere

## ***Murder in Paris* to screen at Encounters South African International Documentary Festival**

Following on from its hugely successful virtual festival in 2020 — a year that will surely go down as one of cinematic history's most challenging — the Encounters South African International Documentary Festival will once again be coming to screens 'virtually everywhere' for its 2021 edition. From 10th - 20th June, audiences will see 10 days of inspiring films, webinars, debates and Q&A's, and meet directors locally and from around the globe.

Standouts from this year's exciting programme of South African films include a fascinating and little-known narrative of a unique and inspiring figure in our history. **Murder in Paris**, directed by Enver Samuel, is a political crime thriller that traces the motives for the assassination of anti-Apartheid activist, Dulcie September. The story travels from the heart of Paris in March 1988 to the pursuit of justice in 2021. This forensic documentary chronicles activist and investigative journalist Evelyn Groenink's 30-year-long quest to get to the bottom of the murder of Dulcie September, the then Chief Representative of the African National Congress in France.

The film traces the motives for September's assassination while shedding some light on the actual course of the events, which seem to have more to do with the Apartheid regime's close ties to the French weapons industry than with neutralising an ANC cadre. The film also provides a portrait of a remarkable and formidable woman. Although she has been given her dues by the ANC, as far as public perceptions go, Dulcie September is largely an unsung struggle hero. **Murder in Paris** should go some way to changing that.

“Having **Murder in Paris** selected for the 23rd Edition of the Encounters South Africa International Documentary Festival is a proud moment as it is considered one of Africa’s foremost documentary festivals. For a festival with its roots in Cape Town, considering that Dulcie September hailed from the Cape Flats, it is particularly poignant. The film aims to ‘un-erase’ the silencing of Dulcie September and your support by watching Murder in Paris during the festival will help contribute to this. Discover a multifaceted person and what motivated her to fight for the liberation of South Africa and her headstrong attempts to uncover the murky world of arms deals between the apartheid regime and France,” says director Enver Samuel. “Say her name and support justice for Dulcie”.

Visit [www.encounters.co.za](http://www.encounters.co.za) for more details on screenings from 10-20 June, tickets will be available from 1 June 2021. Besides the screening of the film online (99 minutes), there will be two in-person screenings in Johannesburg at The Bioscope and two held in Cape Town at Isivivana Centre For Activist Education and Bertha Movie House in Khayalitsha, with details to be shared on the Murder in Paris and Encounters social media platforms. Bookings via the Encounters website will be essential and all COVID-10 protocols will be followed.

A special screening with Q and A with the director and a invited panel is scheduled for the 11th of June at 6pm with speakers Evelyn Groenink, Author of *Incorruptible* and Andrew Feinstein, author of *The Shadow World*.



## **Encounters 2021: Murder in Paris Impact Panel Discussion**

Fri 11 June 11h00 – 12h00 (TBC), open to the public

The UCT / Sunshine Cinema Film Impact Screening Facilitator short course hosts a panel discussion with the Murder in Paris impact team, filmmaker Enver Samuel and impact producer, Miki Redelinghuys. We’ll dive into the film’s impact goals, change dynamics, and impact strategy design and hear about the impact roll-out plans for the coming months. Join us to learn more about the **Murder In Paris** Justice for Dulcie campaign and and how you can get involved



## **Nelson Mandela Foundation - *September Amnesia***

The Nelson Mandela Foundation in collaboration with EMS Productions held a dialogue: *September Amnesia: Reckoning with the life and still unexplained murder of Dulcie September* on 26 April 2021. To watch a recording of the webinar click here: <http://ow.ly/A43n50EAjEU>. Verne Harris, Head: Leadership & Knowledge Development, Nelson Mandela Foundation, responds to the session:

Reckoning with oppressive pasts has been a line of enquiry, and an institutional mandate, for the Nelson Mandela Foundation over more than fifteen years now. The underlying premise has been that if pasts are not reckoned with by a society, then those pasts will certainly reckon with society.

This was one of the contexts to the virtual dialogue *September Amnesia*, hosted by the Foundation on Monday 26 April. Facilitated by Kneo Mokgopa and framed as an inter-generational conversation, not surprisingly the question of reckoning became almost a sub-text to the discussion. Why does South Africa still not know who ordered the assassination of African National Congress representative in Paris, Dulcie September, in 1988?

Why are archives related to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's investigation of her murder still not accessible to the public? Why only now is the French government considering reopening the official investigation into her murder?

Panelists for the discussion were Nicola Arendse (one of Dulcie September's nieces and a social worker in Cape Town), Kelly Eve Koopman (activist, author and senior fellow of the Atlantic Fellows for Racial Equity), Enver Samuel (filmmaker and producer of the just-released documentary *Murder in Paris*), and Busi Seabe (activist, author and political analyst).



Arendse and Samuel offered reflections which were more personal and biographical. Arendse shared memories of her aunt – “I knew her ... but I am still getting to know her” – and pondered the challenge which she feels Dulcie still poses her today, namely, “given what I did with my life, what are you doing with yours?”

Samuel talked briefly about the making of his documentary, focusing instead on the person he encountered through the production. He described her as a disciplined cadre who nonetheless always asked the difficult questions; she was someone who said it like it was. He read moving extracts from her archive – a political speech, an extract from a piece of creative writing, a letter about the benefits of yoga.

Both Koopman and Seabe offered robust political analyses. The latter talked about patriarchy within the liberation movements and its continuing destructiveness in contemporary South Africa. She pointed out how so much memorialisation of female struggle veterans either makes them accessories of male figures or subordinates their struggles to those led by men.

Koopman focused on the global apparatuses of power which Dulcie September had been uncovering through her work, and argued that these apparatuses are still very much in place and remain the primary impediment to continuing struggles for justice, in South Africa and elsewhere. She closed by reflecting on the need for younger generations to make time to listen to the stories of their mothers and grandmothers. Dulcie is gone, but others of her generation are still with us.

In their closing reflection, Mokgopa named Dulcie’s “ongoingness”. She is gone, but she lives on through the work of memory and through continuing endeavour to ensure accountability for her murder. The Nelson Mandela Foundation has joined many other organisations in petitioning Le Président du Tribunal Judiciaire de Paris to reopen the official investigation into the murder of Dulcie September.

## September Amnesia Snippets



In my country, symbols are like lucky charms or totems we use to ward off injustice and trauma. Their names are like incantations to protect the present from the past. Our Mandela Bridge, Who art in Sontonga Memorial Park, hallowed be thy Brenda Fassie Statue. Give us Constitution Hill, our daily Madiba coins and forgive us from Rhodes Memorial. For thine is Albertina Street, Sarah Baartman Hall and the name of the next commission forever and ever. Amen. But none for Dulcie September. ~ Kneo Mokgopa, Nelson Mandela Foundation



When we speak about Dulcie September we realise that she didn't even get acknowledgement because she conform or embody the traditional stereotypical lifestyle of what a woman is supposed to be and do in society. She didn't stick to the script, she couldn't be reduced to being an accessory to a man... The re-telling of the story of Dulcie gives the opportunity to shame those that have insisted that African women have made little or no contribution to the continent's intellectual history and mass participatory struggle. ~ Busi Seabe



It's difficult to feel for someone that you haven't actually spoken to, had a conversation with. So I connect with her through the stories other people tell, what people have written. I have had to learn to be her niece in a different way. Although she was separated, exiled & the regime imposed things on her that she couldn't come back on the exit permit, it's important that my relationship with her was not going to be determined by what other people had imposed"~ Nicola Arendse, Dulcie's youngest niece

## September Amnesia Snippets



The erasure and amnesia of Dulcie September, the silence is slowly graduating from being off the radar to being on the radar. Forums like this, active citizens can contribute to bring the name Dulcie September back into the public arena where it should be. I'd like to share a quote from advocate Thuli Madonsela: 'When secretive evil deeds are covered in darkness, they prosper.' Dulcie September shone a light on these secrets and evil deeds. Long may we cherish her bravery and memory ~ Enver Samuel, director of **Murder in Paris**



The work Dulcie did is so incredibly relevant because if we look at just one of the companies that she wrote about - Thompson - they changed their name to Thales which is now being explored when we look at the arms deal and the Zondo Commission... What we gain through engaging with Dulcie's story is this similar thread of how colonialism, apartheid, the state capture and disenfranchisement we experience now is a discrimination project that makes a lot of money.  
~ Kelly Eve Koopman



The trauma on our collective psyche as a nation caused by Dulcie's assassination continues to haunt us and lingers, as it should. As a diplomat who comes from the Cape Flats, I have always drawn inspiration from her, and share her story with communities in all of my postings. Her legacy lives on, not just in South Africa, but also in the rest of the world. We shall never forget".  
~ Ambassador Ruby Marks, SA Ambassador to Benin and Togo



## **BEHIND THE SCENES: Meet Lindiwe Mabuza**

Lindiwe Mabuza was born in the coal-mining town of Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal in 1938 to a truck driver father and housekeeper mother. After matriculation she enrolled at Roma University in Lesotho. In 1961 she moved to Swaziland, where she taught English and isiZulu literature. In 1964 she began graduate studies at Stanford University, California where she completed a Masters degree in English, followed by a second Masters in History from the University of Minnesota where she then lectured in Sociology. In 1969 she became an assistant professor at Ohio University, teaching literature, history, studies of international racism and injustice for eight years.

Mabuza is a widely respected poet with five volumes of poetry published around the world. Her publications include: *Malibongwe*, *One Never Knows* – poetry and short stories by African Congress Women; *From ANC to Sweden*, *Letter to Letta*, *Africa to me*, *Voices that Lead* – all poetry collections. *To Quincy*, is one of her longest poems that was published in *Feminist Studies* in 1995.

Mabuza joined the African National Congress (ANC) in 1975 and became a journalist for the ANC's *Radio Freedom*, based in Lusaka. Her concern with women's issues led to her involvement with *Voice of the Women (VOW)*, the ANC's feminist journal, which encouraged women to write poetry. The *VOW* gave its readers a forum in which to express themselves and their feelings and to tell the world about their lives. These stories were later published in a collection in 1980 under the title *Malibongwe*. She is the co-editor with Pallo Jordan of *Oliver Tambo Remembered*, a tribute to one of South Africa's greatest leaders.



Through her role as Chairperson of the ANC Cultural Committee from 1977 to 1979, Mabuza gave expression to her creative and artistic spirit. In an interview in 1995 she stated:

*Poetry is part of the struggle. You use the armed struggle; you use political methods.... You recite a poem. It's better than a three-hour speech. It gets to the heart of the matter. It moves people.*

In 1979 the then ANC president Oliver Tambo assigned Mabuza to open ANC offices in Scandinavia and to become the ANC's Chief Representative to Scandinavian countries, residing in Stockholm, Sweden. She became such a formidable force against the apartheid government that on Monday, 8 September 1986, the ANC office was bombed with the hope of killing her and sabotaging the work she was doing. In 1986, Mabuza was transferred from Sweden to the United States where she served as the ANC's Chief Representative. She organised anti-apartheid boycotts and rallies, putting pressure on major corporations to withdraw their investments and facilities from South Africa. She was nominated into the first democratic parliament of South Africa serving under president Mandela in 1994 but her passion was still diplomacy and the ANC knew this. She was appointed as South African Ambassador to Germany in 1995 followed by Malaysia and the Philippines (1999-2000) and the United Kingdom (2002-2010).

Throughout her life, Mabuza has been a cultural activist and received numerous awards, including an honorary doctorate degree from the University of Durban-Westville in 1993, the Yari Yari Award for contributions to Human Rights and Literature from the New York University in 1997.

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Lindiwe Mabuza was a great friend of Dulcie September and generously shared her memories of her comrade in Murder in Paris. She also delivered the keynote speech at the SA Embassy in France's webinar commemorating Dulcie September on 29 March 2021 which you can **[watch here.](#)**



## **TO READ: *Apartheid's Friends: The Rise and Fall of South African Intelligence* by James Sanders**

Very little has been written about the South African secret intelligence, but revelations to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the new culture of confessions now make that possible. James Sanders has gathered classified documents and interviewed ex-operatives since 1997 and has pieced together an extraordinary, unsavoury picture of the Intelligence Service, both inside South Africa and overseas.

He reveals evidence of state-sponsored murder not only to intimidate the ANC but also to allow hard men within the police and the armed forces to let off steam. He reveals that Republican political candidates in the US were assisted in elections against anti-Apartheid Democrats. He shows that South Africa supplied Argentina with weapons during the Falklands War and that Harold Wilson's surprising outbursts, when he claimed that South African intelligence agents were trying to bring down his government, were based on hard evidence. At operational level, South African Intelligence had intimate links with counterparts in the CIA, British Intelligence, and other agencies worldwide. *Apartheid's Friends* not only provides an insight into a dark area of South Africa's past, it is also an important contribution to the international history of secret service.

Reviewer Derek Catsam says: "It is difficult to write histories of people who do not want their stories to be told. It is even more difficult to write histories of people whose job it was to keep their stories hidden, to misdirect observers to believe that the story is something else, and to keep those stories quiet by any necessary means, including enforcing silence by killing".

In **Murder in Paris** Sanders offers his opinion on the possible motives for Dulcie September's assassination as well as his evaluation of Evelyn Groenink's theories around Dulcie's death. Available on [Amazon](#).

# IN THE NEWS: Coverage of *Murder in Paris*

## Remembering the legacy of Dulcie September

When Stellenbosch resident Stephanie Arendse cast her vote in the first democratic election on April 27 1994, she was doing so for her sister, anti-apartheid activist Dulcie September, who did not live to see the free South Africa she had dedicated her life to fighting for. Read the rest of the article by Roshila Moonsamy, that was published for Freedom Day, in the *Athlone News* [here](#).

## Elevating unsung heroes through film

Ling Shephard from [Daily Vox](#) speaks to **Murder in Paris** director Enver Samuel about the film and his passion for documentary filmmaking. Enver also outlines his research process: "I immersed myself into the research - I loved this part because I love reading. I become like a detective; opening so many doors of information. It's a labyrinth. With Dulcie's case it was so complex, dark and intriguing. It was like a spy movie".

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**Murder in Paris** has been supported by the National Film and Video Foundation, the Presidential Employment Stimulus Programme, South African Broadcasting Corporation, Nelson Mandela Foundation, Sol Plaatje Educational Project, Gauteng Film Commission and Encounters / UCT Impact Springboard. The project was also presented at Durban FilmMart.

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