



Rough Aunties

Director: Kim Longinotto, South Africa, 2008, 103 minutes

Fearless, feisty, and resolute. The 'Rough Aunties' are a remarkable group of women unwavering in their stand to protect and care for the abused, neglected, and forgotten children of Durban, South Africa. This latest documentary by celebrated director Kim Longinotto (*Sisters in Law*, *Divorce Iranian Style*) follows the outspoken, multiracial cadre of Thuli, Mildred, Sdudla, Eureka, and Jackie. They wage a daily battle to help the most vulnerable of their communities through their organization, Bobbi Bear.

Jackie, a survivor of abuse, is a white African who grew up in poverty. While working as an AIDS activist, she learned that young children were contracting HIV through rape. Infuriated, she fought to change South African laws that prevented the reporting of rape as a crime. Jackie then founded Bobbi Bear not only to educate women and children about abuse, but also to intervene in the community to protect children.

Thuli, Sdudla, Mildred, and Eureka were all drawn to Jackie and Bobbi Bear out of their desire to make change. Some had experienced abuse; all had experienced hardship and poverty. The women are now community workers, child safety officers, and educators. *Rough Aunties* follows them at home, at work, and in the community, bearing witness to their incredible skill, sensitivity, and tenacity. They demonstrate not only that they are not victims, but that they are role models for us all.

The women share a passion and commitment to make change for the next generation and when we witness them confronting an

abuser at home, anything seems possible. Despite the harsh realities of the women's work, the portraits that emerge on screen are filled with grace, wisdom, friendship, and a real sense of humour. Neither politics nor racial divisions stand a chance against the united force of the 'rough aunties.'

*Winner, Jury Prize in Documentary, Sundance World Cinema
Winner, Best Feature, Big Sky Documentary Film Festival*

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Internationally acclaimed director Kim Longinotto is one of the preeminent documentary filmmakers working today, renowned for creating extraordinary human portraits and tackling controversial topics with sensitivity and compassion. Longinotto's films have won international acclaim and dozens of premiere awards at festivals worldwide. Highlights include the Amnesty International DOEN Award at IDFA and Best Doc UK Spotlight at Hot Docs for *The Day I Will Never Forget*; the Grand Prize for Best Documentary San Francisco International Film Festival and Silver Hugo Award at the Chicago International Film Festival for *Divorce Iranian Style*; Best Documentary at Films de Femmes, Creteil for *Dream Girls*; and Outstanding Documentary at the SF Gay and Lesbian Film Festival for *Shinjuku Boys*.

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