



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**3 JULY 2018**

### **'SISTERS OF THE WILDERNESS' SOCIAL IMPACT DOCUMENTARY AIMS TO EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE AND DEVELOP LEADERSHIP USING THE POWER OF WILD NATURE**

*Sisters of the Wilderness*, a new South African feature documentary and a social impact project, which features as a case study at this year's Nature, Environment and Wildlife Film Congress (16-18 July) and will be screened at this year's Durban International Film Festival (19-29 July), aims to re-connect audiences to nature, raise awareness to the value of wild nature to our well-being; and empower young people, especially women.

The film which is set entirely in the iMfolozi wilderness, South Africa, in the oldest game park in Africa, follows the story of five young Zulu women venturing into the wilderness on a journey of self-discovery, where they learn about the plight of this primordial wilderness, which is now severely threatened by open-cast coal mining on its borders, and an intensifying rhino poaching calamity.

The film follows the women as they walk in big game country and camp under the stars, totally surrounded by wild animals. Exposed to the elements and carrying on their backs all they need for the journey, they face emotional and physical challenges, and learn what it takes to survive in the wild.

Creator / Producer, Ronit Shapiro, of One Nature Films conceived the project following her experience in the iMfolozi wilderness and a meeting with South Africa's legendary conservationist, the late Dr Ian Player.

*"Sisters of the Wilderness serves as a reminder that we are all intimately linked to nature, and what we do to her, we do to ourselves."* says Shapiro, *"We want to 'transfer' the audience to an ancient wilderness, where no barriers separate human and nature. The place where we all came from originally."*

*"There is no replacement for a real nature experience, but we know that not everyone can go on foot into the wilderness. Hence, the idea behind the film is to revive nature in the viewer's imagination using visual story-telling and music in the form of a film."*

The film is the foundation for an outreach and audience engagement programme that will use multiple communication platforms (physical and virtual) to raise awareness, inspire, communicate and engage audiences in South Africa and worldwide.



The project's key impact goals are:

- Young people empowerment and leadership development, special focus on women empowerment.
- Re-connect audiences to wild nature and raise awareness to the value of nature to our well-being.
- Help in the efforts to save the rhino, elephant and other endangered species affected by poaching.
- Help the efforts to save the iMfolozi wilderness from the threat of unsustainable open-cast coal mining.

“We will start rolling out the social impact programme in KwaZulu-Natal and other regions in South Africa, this year. The outreach and audience engagement programme will include: community screenings, schools, higher education, advocates and ambassadors, equipping the community and lobbying, special events and screenings to decision makers.”

“We especially like to take the film to under-served rural and urban communities. Each screening will be followed by an interactive activity around the themes in the film, delivered by local community facilitators,” says Ronit.

In South Africa, the social impact programme will be overseen by Durban based, Pragna Parsotam and Noel Kok, the founders of Nature, Environment, Wildlife Filmmakers' Congress (NEWF).

The vision for the global impact plan includes a multi-platform immersive audience engagement experience combining an interactive website, app, virtual reality and a multi-media art installation which will be travelling to different geographical locations and exhibited along the film in special events.

“We would like audiences to continue their interaction with the film beyond the cinema hall,” explains Shapiro. “We wish to touch hearts and minds, and in turn change behaviours.”

“To accomplish the social impact programme, we are looking to collaborate with strategic partners and sponsors, in South Africa and beyond, and ask that should anyone be interested, to please contact us,” says Shapiro.

The film, directed by award-winning filmmaker, Karin Slater, had its world premiere at the Encounters International Documentary Film Festival in June; and will be screened at the Durban International Film Festival in July and at the Mzansi Women's Film Festival in Johannesburg in August. It is featured as a case study at the Nature, Environment, Wildlife Filmmakers (NEWF) Congress in Durban on 18 July.



Screenings at Durban International Film Festival are on July 22 at 4pm at the Elizabeth Sneddon Theatre, 23 July at 8pm at the Marine Parade Garden Court Hotel (free public screening), and on July 26 at 6pm at Musgrave Ster Kinekor.

Full details can be found on [www.durbanfilmfest.co.za](http://www.durbanfilmfest.co.za) and for NEWF on [www.newf.co.za](http://www.newf.co.za)

**Trailer :** <https://vimeo.com/254099298>

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**For additional information about Sisters of the Wilderness please contact:**

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## **NOTES:**

### **About One Nature Films:**

One Nature Films is a social impact film production company based in London, UK, founded by Ronit Shapiro in 2011. Our vision is to create engaging high quality films that inspire, connect and make a difference. We believe in the power of film to make social and environmental impact. One Nature Films has a deep-rooted passion for the environment, the natural world and human society. Our name 'One Nature' reflects our belief in the oneness of humanity and the interconnectedness of all things. We strive to be ethical and socially responsible. One Nature, beyond film-making, is a social enterprise focused on the wellness of people and the environment. Our aim is to bring about a positive social impact in any project we develop.

### **Key Credits:**

**Film Director & Cinematographer:** Karin Slater

**Project Creator / Producer:** Ronit Shapiro

**Executive Producers:** Ken and Liz Whitney, Antonia Bothner, Ronit Shapiro

**Editor:** Anja Bombelli

**Composer:** Ian Arber

**Production Company:** One Nature Films



## Social Media Links:

**The project's website:** [www.sistersofthewilderness.com](http://www.sistersofthewilderness.com)

**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/Sistersofthewilderness/>

**Twitter** <https://twitter.com/WildSisters16>

**Instagram** <https://www.instagram.com/sistersofthewilderness/>

<https://www.instagram.com/onenaturefilms/?hl=en>

**YouTube** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iA7UcUauAkk&t=2s>

**Indiegogo 2017** <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/sisters-of-the-wilderness-part-2-social-impact/x/14796140#/>

**Indiegogo 2016** <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/sisters-of-the-wilderness-leadership#/>

**Highlights from the film's sound track** <https://m.soundcloud.com/ianarber/sisters-of-the-wilderness-suite-2>