

DON'T GIVE UP

From the team of the Academy Award Nominated film, **YESTERDAY**, comes a touching tale of a young, homeless, mother and her bid to survive in the harsh environment of modern day Johannesburg. Making their feature film debut are Thobani Khubeka and Sibonelo Xulu who were discovered while performing with a Zulu cultural group in Durban.

Don't Give Up follows the life of Faith, a homeless beggar and a single mother of two young sons Lucky and Siyabonga. They live in an abandoned car in an alleyway of central Johannesburg. One day while washing her sons at a tap in a bus depot, Faith is assaulted by a security guard. In her bid to escape this battering, she and her sons try to run away, but Siyabonga gets caught in the wire fence and almost has his thumb ripped off. Faith is unable to help him beyond wrapping it up in a torn piece of her skirt. She begs for money from disinterested commuters on her corner – Faith's corner. She tries to increase her takings with a sign, but has to beg the cardboard for the sign from antagonistic newsvendors. She cannot write so has to find someone to write the sign for her, which takes her into the dangerous area of Hillbrow.

CAST:	Leleti Khumalo	<i>Yesterday</i> <i>Sarafina!</i> <i>Cry, The Beloved Country</i> <i>Hotel Rwanda</i>
	Thobani Khubeka Sibonelo Xulu Anant Singh	
PRODUCERS:		<i>Yesterday</i> <i>Mr Bones</i> <i>Cry, The Beloved Country</i> <i>Sarafina!</i>
WRITER / DIRECTOR:	Darrell James Roodt	<i>Yesterday</i> <i>Sarafina!</i> <i>Cry, The Beloved Country</i>

RUNNING
84 MINUTES

TIME:

WHY DON'T GIVE UP IS STILL (UNFORTUNATELY) RELEVANT TODAY

One of the tragic consequences of Apartheid was poverty on a mass scale. When I first made this movie almost fifteen years ago, this was evident on EVERY street corner in South Africa. You couldn't stop at a traffic light without your heart and soul being ripped apart! Ashamed, I would give whatever change I had and drove on, trying to banish those sad encounters from my mind. But I couldn't. We- the drivers, the people of South Africa- were so dulled to their presence that we didn't give them a second thought(other than the spare change on our dashboard).

But it got me thinking- who were these people? How did they live their lives? Where did they go after the street corner? What happened to the babies they used to beg with?

Anant Singh and I had just made YESTERDAY, about the AIDS pandemic in South Africa, and we thought this would be a great follow up the Oscar-Nominated success of that film to bring a voice to these voiceless people on the streets!

I chose to shoot it as a silent movie- a powerful metaphor for the subject matter- and, of all the films, it is my favorite! But it never found an audience.

Until now.

Appalled by the poverty that persists on every street corner in South Africa, Anant thought it would be amazing to shoot a new ending, with the lead character fifteen years later, STILL LIVING ON THE STREETS! A powerful statement indeed!!

Moreover, the recent scourge of Covid-19, where every night on the news we see impoverished people in the townships struggling to cope with the twin horror of disease and poverty, makes the story twice as powerful in my estimation!

The blight of poverty needs to be addressed, both in South Africa and worldwide. Stamp out poverty and we go a long way to balancing nature and preventing things like Covid-19 from taking foothold ever again!

I truly hope this film finds a new audience. The time is now!