



Dr Bev Palesa Ditsie
Activist Filmmaker Speaker
She/her/they/them

Who is Dr Bev Palesa Ditsie?

- Dr Bev Ditsie (Hon) is a gender-non conforming lesbian activist, award winning filmmaker, reality TV director and writer and musician. For decades has shifted many perspectives on our agency, voices but more importantly, spoke up for black African lesbians and continues to do phenomenal work for the LGBTQI community as a whole.
- Born during the apartheid regime, Dr Bev Palesa Ditsie is a filmmaker and advocate for the marginalised
- One of the founders of the gay rights organisation, Gay and Lesbian Organisation of the Witwatersrand (GLOW). South Africa's first multiracial and political lesbian and gay rights group.



In 2019 Bev was awarded an honorary doctorate from the Claremont Graduate University in California.

The honorary doctorate was to acknowledge this dedication and hard work in the fight for LGBTI equality.



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"WE SHINE ON AFRICA'S TALENT"

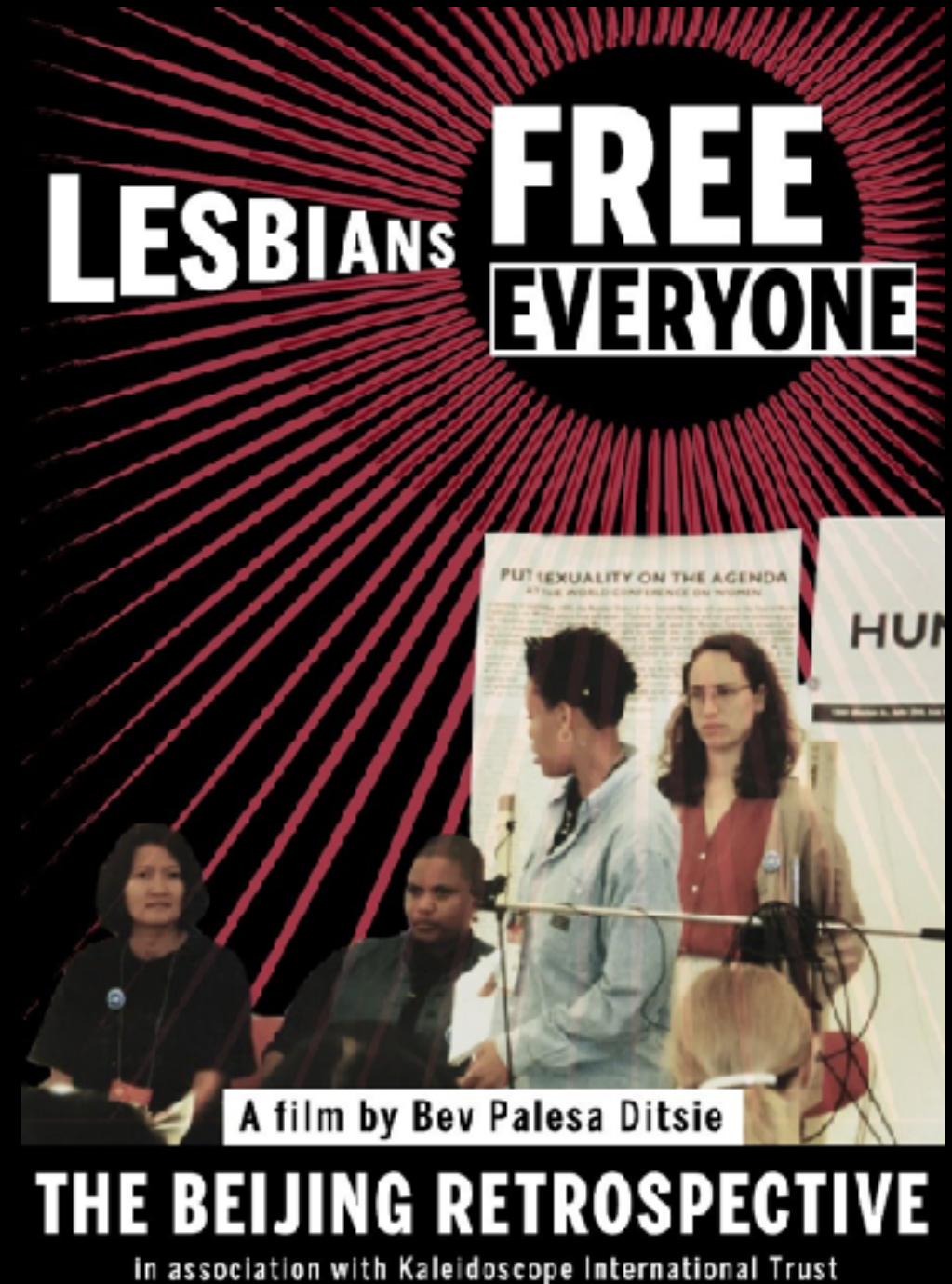
Career

- Since 1980, Ditsie has worked as an actor and director in television making them the first black female child star in television.
- In the late 1990s, with the emergence of reality TV, Dr Bev starred in the reality show, Livewire-Communities.
- Dr Bev has directed and consulted in over 20 Documentaries, screened nationally and internationally. Their first documentary film, Simon and I (2001), won several Audience Awards, including the 2004 Oxfam/Vues d Afrique best documentary, Montreal, Canada.



Lesbians Free Everyone – The Beijing Perspective.

- To mark the 25th anniversary of the address, Ditsie has put together a 55-minute documentary *Lesbians Free Everyone – The Beijing Perspective*. Unlike Ditsie's other film, *Simon and I*, a portrait of gay rights activist Simon Nkoli, this offers an intimate and insightful behind-the-scenes look into the women who helped shape the historic event and its aftermath.



The 4th UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995.

- Dr Bev spoke at the United Nations Conference on Women in 1995 and was the first person to address gay and lesbian rights before at The United Nations. The aim was to convince UN delegates to adopt resolutions recognising sexual diversity. A revolutionary moment for the African LGBTQI community as a whole.
- Dr Ditsie made a statement about the importance of including lesbian rights in discussions about the empowerment and upliftment of women. The speech is noted as being incredibly revolutionary as it was the first time an openly Black lesbian person did so. It was also the first time that the United Nations faced a discussion on considering the realities of LGBT people in the protection of human rights. In their address, Dr Ditsie argued that a focus on women's rights should include the struggles of all women, saying that the world conference on women is to address the concerns of all women, it must similarly recognise that discrimination based on sexual orientation is a violation of basic human rights.



The first and original pride.

Dr Bev is one of the organisers of the first Pride March in South Africa, which took place in Johannesburg in 1990. Along with their friend and activist, Simon Nkoli, they worked together on creating the first South African pride event. It was a pride of importance and a platform to target societal hatred and bigotry.



Awards and citations

- 1994, June 17. Bev Ditsie/Simon Nkoli Day, Washington DC, USA
- 1994, July 5. Bev Ditsie/Simon Nkoli Day, San Fransisco USA
- 1995, June 12. Citation. (Key of the city). Philadelphia, Penn. USA
- 1995, September. Historic speech- The 4th UN World Conference on Women in Beijing.
- 2012, 08 November. The feather of the year, The SA feather awards
- 2017, August. The commission opening night at Mzansi Women's festival.
- 2019, May. Alumni. International visitors leadership program, state department, USA.



Notable links

- NEW FILM TEASER <https://youtu.be/h7exlJ1txmE>
- The Commission: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pq0Pu7Nq6MQ>
- Simon and I: https://youtu.be/yIk_-1x7bqA
- Family Affair: <https://vimeo.com/123901810>
- CLAREMONT GRADUATE UNIVERSITY, Key Note Address 2019: <https://youtu.be/TcPyOE0oke4?t=1842>
- STELLENBOSH UNIVERSITY 2019: <https://youtu.be/S457wi4C9hA?t=394>



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