

MELISSA  
DUBE

BABRA  
MAHLOLE

THEMBANI  
MOYO

WINFRED  
DINGANI

*"A GIRL SINKS INTO SHADOW AND SILENCE. UNTIL A KNOCK ON THE DOOR BEGINS TO CHANGE EVERYTHING."*

# THE DARKNESS BETWEEN THE LIGHT

A SHORT FILM BY MAITA MURADZIKWA

A 20 MINUTE EXPERIMENTAL DRAMA SHORT FILM

TAYANATALES IN ASSOCIATION KASS DESIGNS AND ACTING CHIEF IMAGES PRODUCTIONS PRESENT THE DARKNESS BETWEEN THE LIGHT

STARRING MELISSA DUBE BABRA MAHLOLE THEMBANI MOYO WINFRED DINGANI CINEMATOGRAPHY BY MALCOM AARON EDITED BY MAZWI NDLOVU SCORE BY MILES HOLLINGTON COSTUME DESIGN BY MAITA MURADZIKWA HOPE KUMADYARIWA MAKEUP BY HOPE KUMADYARIWA PRODUCTION DESIGNER MAITA MURADZIKWA KASSAN KASSIM AND PRISCILLAH MARTIN SOUND MIX BY MALCOM AARON AND KASSAN J. KASSIM EDITED BY MALCOM AARON AND MAZWI NDLOVU PRODUCER DANIEL NXUMALO WRITTEN BY KASSAN KASSIM AND MAITA MURADZIKWA DIRECTED BY MAITA MURADZIKWA





# FILM SUMMARY

The Darkness Between the Light was a 20-minute experimental drama short film directed by Maita Muradzikwa and co-written with award-winning poet Kassan Jahmal Kassim. Produced by Tayana Tales in collaboration with Kass Designs and Acting Chief Images, the film premiered on October 10, 2025, World Mental Health Day. A poetic and largely non-verbal exploration of depression, loneliness, and the quiet power of human connection, the film unfolds as a wordless study in emotion and silence. The Darkness Between the Light invited audiences to sit with stillness, vulnerability, and the possibility of healing.



# SYNOPSIS

Rue wakes up in a house where a slow, oppressive darkness begins to close around her. Without dialogue, the film follows her intimate, sensory journey through empty rooms, small domestic rituals, and the quiet interventions of friends who arrive with nothing more than presence. As the house and the girl wrestle with growing isolation, small acts, a warm plate of food, a hand offered, a familiar tune. They become the instruments of survival.

# LOGLINE

A girl sinks into shadow and silence. until a knock on the door begins to change everything.

# TAGLINE

When silence grows teeth, presence becomes rescue.

# GENRE

Drama, Experimental



The film is set in contemporary Bulawayo, inside a modest, lived-in home that transforms into a dreamlike psychological landscape. The space feels familiar but slightly surreal and is grounded in African domestic reality, but touched by poetic distortion. Furniture fades. Shadows linger too long. Reflections move out of sync.

The time is deliberately ambiguous. It could be 2023, or any moment post-lockdown, when youth mental health became a quiet emergency. The story takes place over several days, all contained within the home, giving it a soft, meditative rhythm.

# CAST AND CREW



# ABOUT US

We are a collective of young filmmakers based in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, united by a passion to tell authentic, impactful stories that resonate within our community



# CAST



**MELISSA DUBE**

Lead Actress



**BABRA MAHLOLE**

Supporting Actress



**THEMBANI MOYO**

Supporting Actor



**WINFRED DINGANI**

Supporting Actress

# MAIN CHARACTERS



## PROTAGONIST

Portrayed by 21-year-old Melissa Dube, Rue is a young woman in Bulawayo quietly battling depression, hiding her pain behind routine and retreat. Her journey moves from isolation to allowing presence, finding gentle healing in shared silence and friendship.

Melissa brings Rue to life with emotional precision drawn from her stage, screen, and youth drama experience, grounding the character's quiet strength and vulnerability in authenticity and lived truth.

## SUPPORTIVE BEST FRIEND

Babra plays the protagonist's closest friend — a calm, steady presence whose quiet care anchors the story. Through patience and gentle companionship, she embodies the courage of simply being there, letting connection grow in silence.

Off-screen, Babra is a driven emerging talent and Geraldine Roche Arts Academy graduate, blending her acting and modeling experience with a deep love for storytelling.

# SUPPORTING CHARACTERS



## GROUNDING FRIEND

Thembanani plays the loyal, grounded friend whose quiet strength speaks volumes. Off-screen, he's an emerging actor making his short film debut after building his craft on TikTok.



## EMPATHETIC FRIEND

Winny plays the warm, empathetic friend whose light brings balance and quiet care to the group. Off-screen, she's an actress and storyteller exploring the unspoken and resilient sides of human emotion.

# DIRECTED BY MAITA MURADZIKWA

Born and based in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, Maita Muradzikwa is a self-taught filmmaker, animator, and visual artist whose work explores silence, identity, and inner transformation. A competitive karate practitioner and avid anime lover, she brings precision and emotional discipline to every frame. As co-founder of Tayana Tales, a creative company dedicated to African stories by African voices, Maita's debut short film, *The Darkness Between the Light*, embodies her belief that powerful, poetic cinema can be crafted from modest means.





# WRITTEN BY KASSAN J. KASSIM

Born in Gweru, Zimbabwe, Kassan J. Kassim is a storyteller and poet whose work bridges the spiritual and the psychological. Writing under monikers like *odd\_odyssey\_poet* and *bipolar\_poet*, his lyrical voice has earned multiple awards across platforms such as Wattpad and AllPoetry, and features in the Poetry 4 Peace Anthology (Global Citizens Zimbabwe, 2022). His debut screenplay, *The Darkness Between the Light*, transforms his signature introspection and rhythm into cinema. Crafting a narrative that dwells in the tension between love, silence, and redemption

# CREW CREDITS



**DANIEL NXUMALO,  
PRODUCER**



**MAZWI NDLOVU,  
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER**



**MALCOM AARON,  
CINEMATOGRAPHER/  
EDITOR/SOUND DESIGNER**



**HOPE KUMADYARIWA,  
MAKE UP & STYLING**



**PRINCE NYONI,  
GAFFER & SOUND MIXER**



**SIMBARASHE NYONI,  
BOOM SWING**



**PRISCILLAH MARTIN,  
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR/  
PRODUCTION DESIGN ASSISTANT**



**ZIE,  
ON-SET PHOTOGRAPHER**



**MILES HOLLINGTON,  
COMPOSER**

# **CREW CREDITS**

# KEY FACTS

Production company

**Tayana Tales in association with  
Kass Designs and Acting Chief  
Images**

Production location

**Bulawayo, Zimbabwe**

Genre, subcategories

**Experimental Drama**

Running time

**20 Minutes**

Audio format

**WAV**

Length

**Text**

Shooting format

**4k, high resolution**

Aspect ratio

**1:1**

Exhibition format

**4k digital**

Languages

**English**

Subtitles

**English**

Production year

**2025**

# MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



**JOYFUL  
TREATS (PVT) LTD.**



**STRATHAVEN SHILOH  
GARDENS**



**THE GERLADINE  
ROCHE ARTS  
ACADEMY**

# GET IN TOUCH

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 [Acting Chief Images](https://www.youtube.com/ActingChiefImages)