

Mark Kaplan: Between Joyce and Remembrance

Mark Kaplan is the director of 'Between Joyce and Remembrance' a hard-hitting documentary about truth and reconciliation focusing on the family of murdered student activist Sphiwo Mtimkulu. Following the lives of Joyce and Sikhumbuzo Mtimkulu, mother and son of the murdered young man, Kaplan uses 7 years of footage to build up to a meeting of the family with Sphiwo's killer Gideon Nieuwoudt (inset). The film is currently being used in conflict situations all over the world. Photo: Sean Hawkey



Mark Kaplan, who was imprisoned for his films during the apartheid regime, has recently released a hard-hitting documentary on reconciliation focusing on the family of a slain student activist that confronts his killer.

With footage shot over seven years Kaplan displays the fragility of South Africa's transition through the feelings of the family of the tortured, poisoned and murdered student activist Sphiwo Mtimkulu.

This film does what the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission did not. It offers a deeper understanding of how truth and reconciliation matter on a personal level, whether reconciliation ever took place, whether it can take place.

By unflinchingly confronting these questions on the complex level of real people's experience and feelings, following the lives of Joyce and Sikhumbuzo Mtimkulu, mother and son of the murdered young man, Kaplan carries us to a uncomfortable denouement, a meeting with Sphiwo's killer Gideon Nieuwoudt.

A burial of the only physical remains of Sphiwo - a handful of his hair - is a pitiful closure. For Sphiwo's son Sikhumbuzo this may just not be enough.

This film helps us to understand how big a sacrifice is being made by a generation, forgoing not only revenge but the satisfaction of even the most superficial punitive justice.

For copies of the film contact [Mark Kaplan](#) .