

Movie review: Fanie Fourie's lobola

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There have been several movies made about love across the colour line. In America, *Jungle Fever* was a particularly graphic and disturbing observation of an interracial extra-marital relationship. In South Africa, film makers have tended to treat the subject in a more light-hearted way. None have managed to deal with this subject with both humour and the sensitivity needed to navigate the minefield of interracial marriage in a nation as divided as ours. Until now that is. *Fanie Fourie's Lobola* is both a contemporary love story and an honest exploration of the post-apartheid South African psyche. And it's a good laugh.

The film based on a novel of the same name by Nape 'a Motana charts the story of an Afrikaans 'panel artist', Fanie Fourie (Eduan van Jaarsveld) and a feisty, young Zulu woman, Dinky Magubane (Zethu Dloomo). The unlikely pair meets when Fanie's brother dares him to ask the next woman who enters a cake shop to his wedding. The captivating Dinky steals Fanie's heart from that moment and so begins the roller coaster ride of their love story.

The film does not shy away from dealing with the racial prejudices that still thrive in South African society. Fanie is a stereotypical boere seun who knows very little about Zulu culture and so he blunders into situations that have the potential to create serious offence but the script is so well written that you'll find yourself laughing out loud at some of his ludicrous antics.

Director, Henk Pretorius, juxtaposes Pretoria and Brazzaville, an informal settlement in Atteridgeville, to illustrate the differences in Dinky and Fanie's lives. As the relationship deepens, we see the characters spend more and more time in each other's worlds.

What makes the film exceptional is that it's not just about an interracial couple in South Africa but about two people who need each other to become better people and to realise their dreams.

"One of the central themes of the film is having the courage to chase your dreams," says Zethu. "Dinky has big dreams. She wants to start her own business but has struggled to raise the finance. It takes Fanie's insight to make her realise that she needs to rethink her approach."

In the same way Fanie does not realise that he can turn his dream into a business until Dinky shows him that he can sell the cars he restores for profit.

Fanie Fourie's Lobola is an honest but humorous look at how South Africans are negotiating a new future where race and gender cease to be defining factors in our relationships and where we treat other as people. The film, which won the Audience Choice award at the second annual Jozi Film Festival, opens in cinemas on March 1, 2013.

-by Nontsikelelo Mpulo