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Exploring social identity in South African Indian cinema through filmmaking

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Abstract

In the following research report to accompany my creative output, I explore the construction of social and cultural identity through South African cinema with particular reference to the Indian community. Through my research I focus on how issues of social and cultural identity in South Africa are addressed by Indian filmmakers. Understanding the contextual space of cinema in South Africa is important to assess the context and issues filmmakers address in their films, by defining how they are applicable to the construction of cultural identity and the perpetuation of certain clichés. The themes investigated in relation to the construction of cultural identity will be based on race, class, and socio-economic inequalities. I will look at the issues explored in their films using these discoveries to inform my own filmmaking practice. In so doing, I explore certain themes within the films by the filmmakers under investigation, and apply the discussed analysis to my own short film. I apply the theoretical underpinning and analysis to my own practice in order to reach a conclusion concerning how the construction of social identity is addressed within South African film.