

Wines of South Africa releases the Democracy Series

By **Ryan White** on February, 14 2014 | Spirits & Tobacco



To celebrate 20 years of democracy this April, Wines of South Africa (WOSA) is releasing a series of short videos that reflect in a personal but very powerful way, the life-changing experiences of people touched by transformation initiatives in the wine industry.

Beginning from the first week in February, a new video will be featured weekly on WOSA's website for the following six weeks.

From fifth-generation laborer to co-owner of a major farming venture, from refugee to nurseryman, from scholarship student to renowned winemaker and role model, from drug-addled gangster to farrier, each of the intimate stories in WOSA's The Democracy Series movingly charts a journey of progress.

The subjects talk to the camera about how far they have come. For some, they have been given a second chance. For others, they have seized opportunities with both hands.

In one instance, a woman, who represents the third generation of workers on a farm, becomes the principal of three day care centers. She recalls the days when women were forced to take their children into the vineyards with them, regardless of age or weather. Now they are given the early learning foundations at properly equipped schools for a head start in life. In another, a farm worker participates in a black economic empowerment winemaking venture and is able to buy his own home. A third recounts how a young mother starting out with an uncertain future is learning about wine through a youth development academy and already has a job.

Each vignette, running between two-and-a-half and three minutes, ends with a quotation from the late Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first democratically elected president, who came to power in 1994.

The videos are being screened at international wine shows during the course of the year and are also hosted on WOSA's website. A new video will be released on WOSA's website at the beginning of each week for the next six weeks.

Says communications manager, André Morgenthal: "The stories are a microcosm of what change means for people with a history of historical disadvantage. From potential victim to victor, each has turned the tables on disempowerment to become a person who can play their role in the wine industry with dignity and pride.

"The Democracy Series gives expression at a very intimate, human level to the impact of the many transformation initiatives occurring throughout the wine industry. These range from black economic

empowerment ventures to bursary and training programmes, as well as to various eco and social sustainability projects.

"As winemaker Ntsiki Biyela says, wine is for people to enjoy the journey!"