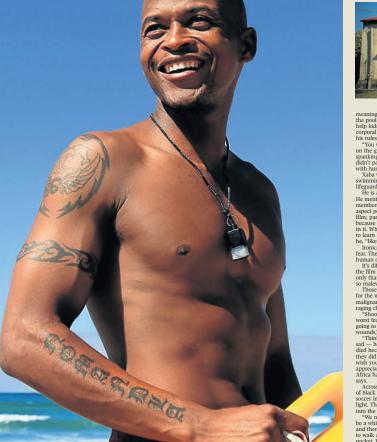
Surfing to salvation

Sihle Xaba tells Laurice Taitz about his journey from lifeguard to movie star in 'Otelo Burning', the award-winning film about surfing that's creating big waves

film about tour opes—sumun (played by Xaba). New Year (Thomas Gumede), orloid (Jate (Jate







meaning tough guy. He would fight for the pool. His love and passion was to help kids learn to swim. You would get corporal punishment for not following his rules.

"You seem't allowed to just walk "You wern't allowed to just walk "You seem't allowed to just walk you have been and were seen home if you didn't pass his inspection." He tells it with humour.

Xaba was seven when he started swimming lessons. "It's where my lifeguarding career came from? He mentions how some family members didn't like the idea. It's an armount of the work of the mentions how some family members didn't like the idea. It's an armount of the work of the mentions was not one of the boys says he wants to learn esefa, the others laugh and ask if he, "like Jesus", wants to walk on water. Ironically, the water is the last place to fear. The real snakes lying in waif are human ones.

fear. The real snakes lying in wait are human ones. It's difficult to talk about Xaba's role in the film without being a spoller, so I'll say only that at the heart of the story is an act so malevolent it left me recline; die ground for the most horrific acts to flower, with malignant agendas given licence by the raging chaos.

"Shooting the film, my worst fear was that it's going to open up old wounds,' says Xab. Was sad — how those people died because they believed they did the right thing. I wish young people could appreciate how South Africa has transformed," he says Arross from us a prount of the property of t



ugh and ask if alk on water. e last place to n wait are transformed are last place to n wait are for a South African audience but I believe it resonates far beyond us. Because it's an age-old story of children growing up too soon, and a world seen through their eyes in Brazil's facels or La's place those. Yab in Brazil's facels or La's place those. Was as we went along, we played it as close as we could to reality. She wanted to use people who was under the most amazing director and as we went along, we played it as close as we could to reality. She wanted to use people who was transformed appreciate how South Africa has transformed active. He was delayed this morning sorting out a passport renewal for a trip to Nigeria, where he'd been nominated for an African Movie Academy Award, (He didn't win on sorting sorting out a best child actor). It's been notching up awards from Brazil to Cape Town.

We get up to leave the beach. Tattooed across his back are the words "African built".