



9TH UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION FILM FESTIVAL
OCTOBER 25-29, STANFORD UNIVERSITY
WWW.UNAFF.ORG
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*Mental Retardation, AIDS Orphans, Homelessness and the Tsunami Disaster,
Education in Disputed Lands, Faith across Borders, Navajo Code Talkers,
Safe Spaces for Gays and Lesbians are the focus for the Fourth day*

9th Annual United Nations Association Film Festival (UNAFF)
SPARKS OF HUMANITY

Saturday, October 28, 2006

Stanford University (Annenberg Auditorium/Cummings Art Building)

Saturday's program presents a selection of films offering a variety of possibilities and solutions to these concerns with a specific focus on the environment and how it relates to the human condition.

Independent filmmaker Kate Riedl (*Baggage Claim, St Kilda*) follows Professor Cres Eastman in his quest to fight Iodine Deficiency Disorder through Tibet to Beijing and then back to Sydney. Australian doctor Cres Eastman's is the **Man Who Saved a Million Brains**. Eastman and his colleague Mu Li travel and work in some of the hardest and roughest terrain on the earth, to villages where IDD has gone unchecked for generations. In these regions, the villagers are living from the land, which is so barren that iodine has no way of making it into their food chain. IDD is the most common preventable cause of brain damage in the world today, resulting in varying degrees of physical and mental retardation. (Screening at 1:00 pm)

The Blood of Yingzhou District follows a year in the life of children in the Province of Anhui in China, who have lost their parents to AIDS. The documentary set in rural China, directed by Hong Kong born filmmaker Ruby Yang and produced by Academy Award nominated filmmaker Thomas Lennon, focuses on the orphans search for a family to call their own. The film tells the story of traditional Chinese obligations of family and village colliding with terror of infection, and how these forces play out in the lives of children in the remote villages of Anhui. (Screening at 1:35 pm)

Folke Rydén director and Dan Jåma photographer are two of Sweden's most internationally awarded documentary filmmakers. Their film **The Tsunami Generation** is the untold story of

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the Aceh province in the wake of the Tsunami disaster in which 200,000 people perished and half a million became homeless. For decades Aceh was an isolated province of Sumatra, Indonesia. Following the turmoil, the Indonesian government, religious organizations, the GAM guerrilla and NGOs, are all aspiring to gain from the promises of rebuilding Aceh. A generation of people, having suffered through one of the worst natural disasters, is still waiting for a place to stay and a life to live. (Screening at 2:20 pm)

The Festival roundtable **“Fair Use, Free Speech and Digital Future in Documentary Filmmaking”** takes place on Saturday afternoon, invited to the roundtable are representatives from Bullfrog Distribution, Center for Social Media, Film Arts Foundation, International Documentary Association, Jaman, Movie Picture Magazine and local and international filmmakers in attendance at the festival. (Admission is Free to the Roundtable at 3:15 pm)

Directed by Bay Area filmmaker Tiffany Shlain and narrated by actor Peter Coyote, **The Tribe** weaves together archival footage, graphics, animation, Barbie dioramas and slam poetry to take audiences through the complex history of the Barbie doll and of the Jewish people. By tracing Barbie’s history, The Tribe questions what it means to be American Jewish today and for that matter what it means to be a member of any tribe in the 21st century. Honored by Newsweek as one of the “Women Shaping the 21st Century”, Tiffany Shlain (*Life, Liberty & the Pursuit of Happiness*), is an award-winning filmmaker and the founder and ambassador of the Webby Awards. (Screening at 4:45 pm)

Canadian filmmaker James Cullingham in his film **Lessons in Fear** looks at education in the Palestinian and Israeli territories through the eyes of students and teachers and people who are actually involved in the education system. The film features interviews with high school, university and even a few elementary school students from both regions. The first time most Palestinian and Israeli children have a chance to interact with one another, is at university. There are separate schools for Hebrew children, Palestinian children and even a few Christian schools. The two groups are almost completely isolated from each other and the West Bank Barrier only serves to create another boundary between them. Segregation is one of many recurring themes in the film. (Screening at 5:15 pm)

Pilgrimage, directed by Iranian filmmaker Bahman Giarostami (*Two Bows, Infidels*) and produced by Bay Area filmmaker Marjaneh Moghimi, offers a fly-on-the-wall look at a border town where Iranian pilgrims enter Iraq illegally on their way to the holy city of Karbala. This city houses the magnificent shrine of seventh-century leader Imam Hussein, grandson of the prophet Mohamed. Hussein died in a battle in six hundred eighty one, a martyr to the Shiite faith. Since the fall of the Iraqi government as many as 3,000 Shiite Muslims cross the border everyday, despite the threat of mines, assassination, and death by dehydration and starvation. The intense devotion of these pilgrims to Imam Hussein and Karbala astounds outside observers at the same time that it puts the Iranian government in a major predicament, torn between bureaucracy and allegiance to Islam. Director Bahman Kiarostami stationed a camera in the border city of Mehran, the main crossing for the pilgrimage, to record this extraordinary phenomenon of faith. (Screening at 7:45 pm)

Exploring the personal and heartfelt story of the Navajo Code Talkers, **True Whispers** reveals the stories of the young Navajo men, about 400 youth recruited against their will from harsh government boarding schools into the Marines during World War II. The Code Talkers devised an unbreakable code from 1942-45 in their native language, which they had previously been forbidden to speak, and transmitted vital messages in the midst of combat against the Japanese. This poignant and thought-provoking documentary explores the complex story of the Code Talkers from the Navajo point of view and reveals the pivotal role they played in helping the US forces win the Pacific Theater during World War II. The film deftly interweaves archival wartime footage, eloquent Navajo commentary, and intimate scenes shot on location on the Navajo reservation in remote parts of Arizona and New Mexico. Historians estimate that the Code Talkers saved two million lives through their dedication and bravery. Yet their contributions were classified for many years as secret, they were not permitted to discuss their wartime activities, and they were long ineligible for veteran benefits. True Whispers, narrated by noted actor William H. Macy and produced by Hollywood giant and Stanford alumni Gale Anne Hurd, is Valerie Red-Horse's (*Naturally Native*) latest film. (Screening at 8:50 pm)

The fight for equal rights is far from over, and nowhere is this more evident than in small towns in the Deep South. Homosexuals in these communities lack the social outlets of their cosmopolitan brethren. In the face of cruelty, ridicule and violence, they manage to find sanctuary in the only place they are offered within hundreds of miles – gay bars. Deep in the heart of the Bible belt, attacked on all sides by the Christian Coalition, several spirited bar owners have created an oasis for gays to call home. **Small Town Gay Bar** presents an intimate portrait of these establishments and the patrons who inhabit them. Focusing primarily on two bars in small town Mississippi, Rumors and Crossroads, the film introduces us to their proprietors as they struggle to stand their ground in hostile terrain. Jim Bishop (aka Alicia Stone) is the glamorous show director at the bar Rumors by night and a veterinarian receptionist by day. His partner Geoff is the DJ at the club. Lori and her lover Ruby purchased the dilapidated and abandoned Crossroads Bar and converted it into the popular bar Different Seasons. Their dedication and creative spirit have helped the club survive as the only gay destination for the local population. What resonates throughout the film is the gratefulness the patrons feel for these bars. Director Malcolm Ingram (*Drawing Flies, Tail Lights Fade*) deftly balances the joy and pain of this world and crafts a film that will connect with anyone who has ever felt oppressed. (Screening at 10:00 pm)

The United Nations Association Film Festival (UNAFF) was conceived in 1998, the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, at Stanford University by film critic and educator Jasmina Bojic. UNAFF screens documentaries by international filmmakers dealing with topics such as human rights, environmental survival, women's issues, children, refugee protection, homelessness, racism, disease control, universal education, war and peace.

Information about the festival is available on our website at www.unaff.org or by phone at 650-724-5544. For press materials, interviews with filmmakers or festival Founder and Director Jasmina Bojic, **please contact Seema Arora by e-mail at seemaarora@sbcglobal.net or by phone at 510-482-4350**. The main sponsors of the 9th annual UNAFF are the Stanford Film Society and the UNA Midpeninsula Chapter.