



9TH UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION FILM FESTIVAL  
OCTOBER 25-29, STANFORD UNIVERSITY  
WWW.UNAFF.ORG  
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*Opening Night Films Question Communism, Nuclear Prowess, Inner City  
Violence and the Challenges faced by the United Nations*

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

Wednesday, October 25, 2006

Stanford University (Cubberley Auditorium/School of Education)

The Festival opens on Wednesday, October 25 with a reception at 5:30 pm followed by an evening of compelling and insightful films from around the world. Academy Award nominated filmmaker Shui-Bo Wang begins a weekend of film-dialogue when his thought provoking documentary **They Chose China** opens the 9<sup>th</sup> United Nations Association Film Festival which plays at Stanford University from Wednesday, October 25 to Sunday, October 29.

In **They Chose China** Shui-Bo Wang (*Sunrise over Tiananmen Square, Swing in Beijing*) tells the controversial story of American POWs who, at the end of the Korean War in the late fifties, refused repatriation to the US and decided to stay in China. Using rare archival footage, excerpts from American and Chinese TV programs, as well as period and contemporary interviews, **They Chose China** chronicles the fascinating history of this group of young Americans who were hailed in China as "peace fighters" and denounced in America as "turncoats" and "traitors". Several of the surviving men and their families, those who remained in China as well as those who eventually returned to the US, recount their unusual experiences and their beliefs then and now. (Screening at 6:45 pm)

Ben Lewis's (*The King of Communism, Art Safari*) film **Blowing Up Paradise** traces the thirty year history of French nuclear testing in Moruroa Atoll in French Polynesia from the sixties to the nineties. The first French atomic tests took place in the Sahara, but when Algeria gained independence, the French needed another test site. They settled on French Polynesia, the Polynesians embraced the tests as their patriotic duty to France. **Blowing Up Paradise** includes footage of the Greenpeace demonstrations, and follows Tahitians as they struggle for independence. Interviews include Pierre Messmer (former French Defence Minister and Prime Minister), Michel Arakino (Tahitian Islander and former

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French army diver), Bruno Tertrais (French nuclear weapons adviser), Charlie Ching (Tahitian independence leader), Anna Horne (Vega crew member), Bunny McDiarmund (Greenpeace activist) and Alex du Prel (Tahitian magazine editor). (Screening at 7:50 pm)

While shooting **Lima's Streets**, the film crew was victim to the physical abuse of Lima's violent gangs. Marcelo Bukin's (*Bread, Angel's Fire*) short documentary **Lima's Streets** depicts the cruel reality of the children living on the streets of Lima/Peru, struggling to survive by means of begging, consuming drugs and stealing. (Screening at 8:55 pm)

**Between Two Stones: Nepal's Decade of Conflict** deals with the impact on communities in rural districts of Nepal caught in the middle of the conflict between Maoist rebels and regime security forces. Since the conflict began in the mid-nineties, an estimated 12,000 people have been killed, 200,000 displaced and about 2 million people are thought to have migrated to India and other countries. The royal coup in early 2005 presented the Maoists with a chance to enter mainstream politics. By September the Maoist leadership announced a unilateral ceasefire which eased the conditions on people living in the contested areas. In November, the Maoists met with politicians in New Delhi and agreed on a peace process that would restore democracy and end rule by the monarchy. Despite peace seeking efforts by the united Maoist front and other political parties, exhibited by extending the ceasefire and by holding one of the largest pro-democracy rallies ever held in Kathmandu in early December, King Gyanendra failed to respond. The Maoists ended their ceasefire in early 2006 in response to King Gyanendra's failure to reciprocate. (Screening at 9:15 pm)

**The Peacekeepers** follows the determined and often desperate maneuvers to avert another Rwandan disaster, this time in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Paul Cowan got unprecedented access to the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping to make this film. Focusing on the UN peacekeeping mission, the film goes between the UN headquarters in New York and the events in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In the background, often impinging on peacekeeping decisions, are the painful memory of Rwanda, the worsening crisis in Iraq, global terrorism and American hegemony in world affairs. (Screening at 9:45 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](http://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](mailto:seemaarora@sbcglobal.net) or by phone at 510-482-4350**. The main sponsors of the 9<sup>th</sup> annual UNAFF are the Stanford Film Society and the UNA Midpeninsula Chapter.