



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ONE OF THE WORLD'S ONLY FEMALE MUSLIM LEADERS COMMITMENT TO REFORM WITHIN ISLAM, THE NIGHT MINISTER OF SAN FRANCISCO THOSE IN NEED, AND CAMBODIAN-AMERICAN WOMEN RETURN TO THE KILLING FIELDS OF CAMBODIA ARE PART OF THE EVENT ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 23rd AS THE 20th UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION FILM FESTIVAL CONTINUES IN SAN FRANCISCO WITH SCREENINGS AT THE NINTH STREET INDEPENDENT FILM CENTER

AL IMAM (USA)

Despite controversy and threats, Muslim spiritual leader Ani Zonneveld takes a stand for justice through activism and a progressive practice of Islam. Enduring threats, excommunication from family, and opposition from many fellow Muslims, she insists that the Qur'an is a progressive text and believes in an egalitarian view of Islam, working tirelessly at her faith-based activism and music to counter both Islamic extremism and Islamophobia. As one of the world's only female imams (Muslim religious leader) and founder and president of Muslims for Progressive Values, Zonneveld advocates for universal human rights and interfaith initiatives within Islam. Whether leading a coed, inclusive prayer for a small community of like-minded Muslims, singing Islamic prayers in a Jewish temple, encouraging her daughter to think independently, officiating an interfaith marriage, or going head-to-head with opposing views in the media, Zonneveld is committed to reform within Islam. A timely and lyrical portrait, this film gives voice to a Muslim perspective not often heard by the mainstream. With unprecedented access to Zonneveld's daily life, *Al Imam* presents a personal view of her work and beliefs, examining what it means to stand up for what you believe in the face of great resistance. Directed by Omar Al Dakheel. 6:30pm. **Filmmaker Present.**

EVEN IN DARKNESS (USA)

Every night between 10pm and 4am Reverend Lyle Beckman walks the streets of San Francisco. He's the city's Night Minister, the fourth man to hold the job since 1964. In his encounters with the homeless, addicts, sex workers, and those in need, Beckman seeks to comfort rather than convert. The film is a witness to intimate interactions—and a side of the city—that few people ever see. *Even In Darkness* explores questions of

faith, the necessity of interpersonal contact, and the power of empathy. Directed by James Hosking. 7:00pm. **Filmmaker present.**

DAZE OF JUSTICE (*Cambodia/USA*)

Daze of Justice is the intimate story of trailblazing Cambodian-American women who break decades of silence, abandoning the security of their American homes on a journey back into Cambodia's killing fields, only this time not as victims but as witnesses determined to resurrect the memory of their loved ones before the UN Special Tribunal prosecuting the Khmer Rouge. The women must not only find the courage to remember their past, they also face an unexpected and agonizing predicament when they come face to face with Pheng, the son of Kaing Guek Eav (Alias "Duch"), one of Pol Pot's most notorious torturers. And in the process, on the margins of the UN tribunal, the seekers become the source of Justice. Directed by Michael Siv. 7:40pm. Filmmaker present.

MALI BLUES (*Mali*)

The West African country of Mali is considered the birthplace of the blues and jazz, brought later by abducted slaves to America's cotton fields. For centuries music has strengthened Mali's cultural identity, musicians are holding strong positions in society. The film tells the stories of four musicians who don't want to accept radical Islamist tendencies that are bringing hate, distrust and violence—neither in Mali nor in any other place in the world. Directed by Lutz Gregor. 9:00pm.

For the full program, press material, photos and other details visit www.unaff.org

The award winning UNAFF (the United Nations Association Film Festival) held annually in October at Stanford, Palo Alto, East Palo Alto and San Francisco, now in its 20th year has grown to be one of the oldest and most respected documentary film festivals in the United States. UNAFF was originally conceived to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was founded by Stanford educator and film critic Jasmina Bojic.

In 2014 the ICFT (International Council for Film, Television and Audiovisual Communication of UNESCO) presented the UNESCO Fellini Medal to Jasmina Bojic, Founder and Executive Director of UNAFF, in recognition of her exceptional contribution in promoting the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights through the art of documentary film.