

2009 Amnesty International Film Festival

Vancity Theatre, 1181 Seymour Street, Vancouver, Canada

Ticket information below

Thursday, November 12

12 pm (matinee)

Seeking Refuge

Karen Cho / Québec – Canada / 2009 / 70 min

Five asylum seekers set out on the lengthy journey to be accepted as refugees in Canada. Plunging into the experiences, hopes and struggles of asylum seekers looking for protection, *Seeking Refuge* follows newly-arrived claimants awaiting their hearings and captures the lives of those who have been denied asylum and are facing deportation. A moving look at the lives of people who navigate Canada's complex refugee determination system after escaping war, persecution, rape, and political unrest.

3 pm (matinee)

Stolen Childhoods

Len Morris / USA / 2005 / 87 min

This film features stories of child labourers around the world, told in their own words. One boy has been pressed into forced labour on a fishing platform in the Sea of Sumatra, a fifteen-year-old runaway describes being forced into prostitution on the streets of Mexico City, while a nine-year-old girl picks coffee in Kenya to help her family survive. *Stolen Childhoods* provides an understanding of the causes of child labour, what it costs the global community and what it will take to eliminate it.

OPENING GALA

Doors open at 6 pm – all seats \$45

Coureurs de nuit (Night Runners)

Shanouk Newwashish / Canada / 2005 / 3 min / Vancouver premiere

No longer able to hunt their prey like their ancestors, young Wemotaci have become night runners through their deserted village. And can they ever run! They run for fun or just to exhaust themselves, until police go after them.

The Yes Men Fix the World

Andy Bichlbaum and Mike Bonnano / France and USA / 2009 / 87 min / Vancouver premiere

Two gonzo political activists infiltrate the world of big business, pulling off outrageous pranks to highlight how corporate greed is destroying the planet. The Yes Men, Andy Bichlbaum and Mike Bonnano, have an unusual hobby: posing as top executives of corporations they hate. Armed with nothing but thrift-store suits, they lie their way into business conferences and parody their corporate nemeses (including DOW Chemical, Exxon, and Halliburton), investigate free market worship leading corporations and governments to put profits above people, and call for a new way of thinking in the Obama era.

Friday, November 13

12 pm (noon) – double bill (matinee)

Justicia Now!

Martin O'Brien and Robbie Proctor / 2007 / 31 min

This film reveals Chevron Texaco's toxic legacy in the Northern Ecuadorian region of the Amazon rainforest and introduces viewers to a courageous group of people called *Los Afectados* (The Affected Ones) who are seeking justice for sickness and death in the largest environmental class action lawsuit in history. Featuring appearances by Daryl Hannah and Stuart Townsend.

Our Land, My People

Amnesty International / UK / 2009 / 30 min

The Lubicon Cree of northern Alberta tell the story of their long struggle to defend their culture. Three decades of intensive oil and gas development have caused massive environmental destruction, driving this hunting and trapping society into extreme poverty. But Lubicon have never given up hope. They continue to work to preserve their way of life for future generations.

3 pm – double bill (matinee)

Flying On One Engine

Joshua Z. Weinstien / USA and India / 2008 / 51 min / Canadian premiere

Wheelchair bound, without a larynx, and diagnosed with a life-threatening aortic aneurysm, Dr. Sharadkumar Dicksheet lives only so he can travel to India to perform free operations in marathon-like surgery sessions where up to 700 children receive treatment for cleft lips and other deformities. *Flying On One Engine* shows how this quirky, funny, and often difficult character overcomes his own ailments by curing others.

The Italian Doctor

Esben Hansen / Denmark / 2007 / 28 min / Vancouver premiere

The Italian doctor, Alberto Cairo, is a man with a unique mission: to restore the dignity of every exploding mine victim in Afghanistan. Seeing five different governments and surviving two civil wars, Alberto has been head of the Red Cross Orthopaedic Centre in Kabul for the past 15 years. Together with his staff of 150 disabled workers, he has helped more than 50 000 mine victims walk again, and fought a tough struggle to reintegrate them into the war-torn Afghan society.

4:30 pm

Temoin indescribable (Unwanted Witness)

Juan José Lozano / Switzerland / 2008 / 87 min / Vancouver premiere

Hollman Morris is an internationally acclaimed journalist whose weekly television show, *Contravía*, boldly confronts violence ravaging his homeland of Colombia. Though he has won prestigious awards abroad, at home he faces death threats and intimidation – both putting a strain on his family life.

6:30 pm

The Blood of Kouan Kouan

Yorgos Avgeropoulos / Greece / 2008 / 64 min / Canadian premiere

In the virgin tropical forests of the Amazon, the region with the richest biodiversity in the world, an unspeakable crime is being committed against humankind. Texaco is accused of dumping 18.5 billion gallons of toxic oil waste into the Ecuadorian Amazonia. Ancient Indigenous populations are disappearing on a massive scale, as pollution kill animals they hunt and causes illnesses.

8:15 pm

Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai

Lisa Merton and Alan Dater / USA / 2008 / 80 min

Planting trees for fuel, shade, and food is not something anyone would imagine as the first step toward winning the Nobel Peace Prize. Yet with that simple act Wangari Maathai, a woman born in rural Kenya, started down the path that reclaimed her country's land from 100 years of deforestation, provided new sources of food and income to rural communities, gave powerless women a vital political role in their country and helped bring down Kenya's twenty-four-year dictatorship.

10 pm

War Child

C. Karim Chrobog / USA / 2008 / 92 min

"Left home at the age of seven/one year later I'm carryin' an Ak-47." For hip hop artist Emmanuel Jal, a former child soldier in Sudan's brutal civil war, these lyrics are hardly empty posturing. They are the bitter reality of a young man who was "forced to sin" but determined to "never give up and never give in." Today, wounded but hopeful, he fights a new battle: bringing peace to his beloved Sudan and building schools in Africa. This time, his weapon is a microphone.

Saturday, November 14

11 am (matinee)

The Devil's Bargain: A Journey into the Small Arms Trade

Shelley Saywell / Canada / 2008 / 89 min

Small arms are the real weapons of mass destruction, killing more than half a million people a year, spreading like a disease and destabilizing entire regions. From France to South Africa, Bosnia, Moldova, the United States and Canada, *The Devil's Bargain* examines ways in which guns slip from legal to illicit markets. From dealers, to pilots, to end-users, to the victims, we discover a largely unregulated trade in what has become the globalization of death.

1 pm (matinee)

Tapologo

Sally and Gabriela Gutiérrez Dewar / South Africa / 2008 / 88 min / Canadian premiere

In Freedom Park, a squatter settlement in South Africa, a group of HIV-infected former sex-workers, created a network called Tapologo. They learn to be Home Based Carers for their community, transforming degradation into solidarity and squalor into hope. Catholic bishop Kevin Dowling participates in Tapologo, and raises doubts the official doctrine of the Catholic Church regarding AIDS and sexuality.

3 pm (matinee)

A Massacre Foretold

Nick Higgins / UK and Mexico / 2007 / 58 min

On 22 December 1997, forty-five indigenous residents of the small Southern Mexican village of Acteal were attending a prayer meeting in their village church when they were slaughtered by unknown paramilitary forces. They were members of the pacifist group Las Abejas (The Bees), who were supporters of the revolutionary Zapatistas who had renounced violent methods. The investigation into their deaths became suspiciously cold.

4:30 pm

Secretos de lucha (Secrets of the Struggle)

Maiana Bidegain / France / 2007 / 86 min

A young woman travels to Uruguay following her father's steps in search of what happened to her family during dark years of the Uruguayan dictatorship. Through her father's eyes and his seven sisters and brothers' confessions, she tries to understand why they kept their memories silent for so long. She explores their individual struggles through union or legal political actions, or through clandestine activities within an urban guerrilla organization.

6:30 pm

The Judge and the General

Elizabeth Farnsworth and Patricio Lanfranco / Chile and USA / 2008 / 86 min / Canadian premiere

When in 1998 Chilean judge Juan Guzmán was assigned the first criminal cases against the country's ex-dictator, General Augusto Pinochet, no one expected much. Guzmán had supported Pinochet's 1973 coup – waged as an anti-Communist crusade – that left the democratically elected president, Salvador Allende, and thousands of others dead or “disappeared”. filmmakers trace the judge's descent into what he calls “the abyss”, where he uncovers the past – including his own role in the tragedy.

8:30 pm – double bill

El sueño de Eleanor (Eleanor's Dream)

Lluís Danés / Spain / 2008 / 15 min / North American premiere

In a dreamlike atmosphere, over 30 Spanish and Latin American celebrities talk about the state of human rights today, and the achievements and shortcomings of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as it turns 60. The film also pays tribute to Eleanor Roosevelt, advocate of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Sing for Darfur

Johan Kramer / Netherlands / 2008 / 80 min / North American premiere

Sing for Darfur is a feature film that deals with the indifference in our western world towards the ongoing human tragedy in Darfur. The film takes place during one day in Barcelona and follows the lives of 30 people and their connection to each other and a pop concert benefit for Darfur to be held that night. In a world where every 'free' moment is filled by mobile phones, television, emails, ipods, and meetings, there is rarely time to relax, contemplate, think and most important....feel. The director of *Sing for Darfur* hopes it will act as a mirror for the busy people amongst us.

Sunday, November 15

11 am – double bill (matinee)

The Stolen Child

Nial O'Sullivan / Ireland / 2009 / 26 min

The Stolen Child is the story of Palestinian child prisoners, their incredible ordeal and the positive life force that still exists despite terrible obstacles they face. The film examines disturbing and shocking treatment of the weakest and most vulnerable section of Palestinian society. The majority of these children are accused of stone-throwing and yet suffer the full psychological and physical effects of arrest, interrogation and imprisonment.

Remnants of a War

Jawad Metni / Lebanon and USA / 2009 / 76 min / Vancouver premiere

In the 2006 war between Hezbollah and Israel, one million cluster bomb munitions rained down on fields and orchards of South Lebanon. An estimated 35% failed to detonate. One year later, teams of locally recruited and trained de-miners race to clear land before civilians are injured or killed. *Remnants of a War* is an intimate look into the lives of brave Muslims and Christians, Sunnis and Shia, women and men, working to make the land safe again.

1:30 pm (matinee)

Jerusalem Is Proud To Present

Nitzan Giladi / Israel / 2008 / 82 min

In the summer of 2006, for the first time in history Jerusalem was to host World Pride events culminating with a gay pride parade. Planned events stirred turmoil in the politically complex city, with Jewish, Muslim and Christian religious leaders banding together in an uncompromising battle against what they said would "defile the holy city". In the face of violent anti-gay sentiment, activists have to deal with threats to much more than just their right to march.

3:30 pm (matinee)

Burma VJ

Anders Østergaard / Denmark / 2008 / 85 min

Though risking torture and life in jail, courageous young citizens of Burma insist on keeping up the flow of news from their closed country. Armed with small handycams, the Burma VJs stop at nothing to report from the streets of Rangoon. This film offers a unique insight into high-risk journalism and dissidence in a police state, while at the same time providing a thorough documentation of the historical and dramatic days of September 2007, when the Buddhist monks started marching.

5:30 pm

The Reckoning

Pamela Yates / USA / 2009 / 95 min

Late in the 20th century more than 120 countries united to form the International Criminal Court (ICC)—created to prosecute perpetrators of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide. *The Reckoning* follows dynamic ICC Prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo and his team as he issues arrest warrants for Lord's Resistance Army leaders in Uganda, puts Congolese warlords on trial, and charges Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir with genocide in Darfur, challenging the UN Security Council to arrest him.

7:30 pm

Un poquito de tanta verdad (A Little Bit of So Much Truth)

Jill Irene Freidberg / Mexico and USA / 2007 / 93 min

In the summer of 2006 a broad-based, non-violent, popular uprising exploded in the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca. This film captures the unprecedented media phenomenon that emerged when tens of thousands of school teachers, housewives, indigenous communities, health workers, farmers, and students took 14 radio stations and TV station into their hands, using them to organize, mobilize, and defend their grassroots struggle for social, cultural, and economic justice.

9:45 pm – 2008 Gold Audience Award Winner

Triage: Dr. James Orbinski's Humanitarian Dilemma

Patrick Reed / Canada / 2007 / 88 min

Triage is the ultimate humanitarian nightmare. Racing against time with limited resources, relief workers are forced to make split-second decisions. Who gets treatment, food, a place to live? Who is left to die? This film follows Dr. James Orbinski on journeys to lands and people whose life-and-death struggles marked him forever. As *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) President, Orbinski accepted the 1999 Nobel Peace Prize on their behalf. He was a field doctor during the Somali famine and Rwandan genocide.

TICKET INFORMATION

Advance tickets and passes may be purchased at **Tickets Tonight** in person and online. Advance ticket sales end at 11 pm on the day preceding the day of the film. Subject to service charge.

Tickets Tonight Booth

Plaza Level, 200 Burrard Street (at Cordova, in the Tourism Vancouver Tourist Info Centre). Open daily, 10:00 am to 6:00 pm. Online: www.ticketstonight.ca

Will Call

Tickets and Passes purchased through ticketstonight.ca can be picked up at the Will Call Table at Vancity Theatre on the day of the screening. Only the credit card holder may pick up the tickets with valid photo ID. Please arrive 30 minutes in advance of your first screening to allow time to pick up your tickets; you must be seated 5 minutes prior to showtime.

Tickets at the door

Tickets and passes also available at the door, subject to availability. Cash only.

Tickets and passes

General admission **\$9.00**

Matinees, students, seniors, underemployed persons **\$7.00**

Opening Gala: \$45.00 per person

Five-show pass **\$35.00** (\$25 for students, seniors, underemployed persons)

Full festival pass **\$100.00** (\$75 for students, seniors, underemployed persons)

(Passes do not include Opening Gala.)

Theatre address and accessibility

Vancity Theatre at Vancouver International Film Centre

1181 Seymour Street (at Davie)

Accessible Parking: street parking only / entrance: street level ramp

Seating: two to four spaces for wheelchairs (depending on size)

Washrooms: fully accessible

FESTIVAL NOTES

Amnesty International Film Festival

Program subject to change. The Amnesty International Film Festival presents stories and moving images about human rights. Amnesty International does not necessarily hold the opinions expressed in these films. For information or to submit a film for next year contact Don Wright at dwright@amnesty.ca or 604-294-5160. The Amnesty International Film Festival is a charter member of the *Human Rights Film Network*, a cooperating group of more than 30 human rights film festivals around the world.

www.amnestyfilmfest.ca