

Antigonish International Film Festival 2007 (November 17)

The Amasong Chorus: Singing Out

55 min, 2002 Director: Jay Rosenstein



Meet Kristina Boerger of Champaign, Illinois. Her struggles as a lesbian activist and musician led her to form the award-winning Amasong Chorus, a Lesbian/ Feminist choir dedicated to the pursuit of choral excellence within an atmosphere that celebrates all forms of women's devotion to their communities. Singing beautiful arrangements of folkloric music from around the world, Amasong Chorus members explore their personal needs for expression and mutual support. This music-filled documentary has been shown to acclaim at major film festivals in Turin Italy, Sydney Australia, and San Francisco. Enjoy!

Betrayed

56 min, 2004 Director: Elaine Briere Although Canada is surrounded by three oceans, there is not a single deep-sea ship flying the Canadian flag today. Sixty years ago, Canada had the fourth-largest merchant fleet in the world. Canadian ships brought vital supplies to Allied Forces in Europe during World War II. The men sailing those ships were war heroes who suffered terrible losses. Their union, the Canadian Seaman's Union (CSU) brought the eight-hour day, sick leave and pay increases to an industry known for low wages and brutal working conditions. After the war, the Liberal government began to privatize the merchant fleet, the CSU strongly opposed the sell-off. The federal government and the ship-owners initiated a campaign to discredit the CSU by branding them as Communists. It was a time of fear and betrayal. This film traces the history of Canadian shipping from the international strike of 1949 to the globalization of coastal shipping in Australia by Canada Steamship Lines---owned by the family of [former] Prime Minister Paul Martin. Briere is the Award -winning director of *Bitter Paradise: The Sell-out of East Timor*.

Blossoms of Fire, Mexico

74 min, 2000 Directors: Maureen Gosling & Ellen Osborne

The legendary Zapotec women of southern Oaxaca, Mexico have been described as "guardians of men, distributors of food." Artist Frida Kahlo celebrated their beauty and intelligence. Blossoms of Fire shows them in all their brightly coloured, opinionated glory as they run their own businesses, embroider their signature fiery blossoms on clothing and comment with angry humour on articles in the foreign press that inaccurately depict them as a promiscuous matriarchy. A history of resisting aggressors has resulted in fierce independence and progressive politics. Their acceptance of alternative gender roles is an example of refusing to conform to a macho cultural standard. Fiestas are celebrations which build community. *Award for Excellence, American Anthropological Association; Best of Festival, Sunnyside of the Art and Culture Doc Film Market, Marseilles*

Cease! Fire!

49 min., 2003 Director: Saw Eh Doh Wah & Scott O'Brien. Kaw Lah Films (Kaw Lah Films is an indigenous film group from Burma. Karen language with English sub-title).

Saw Eh Doh Wah is Karen from Burma. He was forced to flee into refugee camps in Thailand in 1995 - his status remains the same until today. In the refugee camp, he received photo-journalist training and coordinated a photography project with youth in the camp. In 2003, he and Scott O'Brien formed Kaw Lah Films - a group aimed at producing films for/by Indigenous peoples of Burma - and completed their first film, 'Karen Education Surviving'. Scott O'Brien is a Canadian who has been working with Karen people for 10 years. His background is in Indigenous community-based education and works with a local Karen education organization along the Thai-Burma border.

The Collector of Bedford Street

34 min, 2003 Director: Alice Elliott



Dubbed the "feel good" movie of the year, this Academy Award nominee follows Larry Selman, the filmmaker's 60 year old neighbour. A community activist and fundraiser with developmental disabilities, Larry raises thousands of dollars for charity every year while he lives at the poverty level. Because of Larry's 20 years of service to his neighbourhood, the community created a supplemental need adult trust fund for him. This was the first time that a group, rather than an individual's family, had done so. The film humanizes the story behind the abstract statistics of developmental disability, revealing how a community welcomes and celebrates all of its diverse members. Numerous awards. For home video sales, contact: info@welcomechange.org. A portion of proceeds go to Larry's trust fund.

Dead in the Water

52min, 2006 Director: Neil Docherty

One quarter of the world's population has no access to clean drinking water. Many governments lack either the resources or the will to provide this essential commodity to their citizens. In recent years, a number of powerful companies have spotted this crisis and seen a business opportunity. In thousands of cities and towns throughout the world, often with the involvement of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, these corporations have attempted to privatize the water supply. Dead in the Water investigates the results of these efforts at privatization in several key locations, and chronicles what many see as the first in a wave of battles in the years to come.

The Devil's Miner

82 min, 2005. Filmmakers: Kief Davidson & Richard Ladkani

This is the story of 14-year-old Basilio Vargas and his 12-year-old brother Bernardino, who work in the dangerous Cerro Rico silver mines of Bolivia. Raised without a father and living in extreme poverty, the boys assume many adult responsibilities. The Vargas boys chew coca leaves to stave off hunger and keep their wits about them during their long hours in the mines, where they also present offerings to El Tío, the malevolent spirit of the mines. According to local legend, El Tío is a miner's only hope of salvation in this heavily Catholic region where the people believe that the spirit of God does not exist in the hellish underworld inside the mountain. A

moving portrait of a world where children risk their lives daily in hopes of an eventual better life. *Film Critics Award: Hot Docs Festival; Best Documentary: Chicago Int'l Film Festival.*

The Disenchanted Forest

52 min, 2001 Director: Sarita Siegel. Narrator: Brook Shields



Orangutans, like humans, have "culture." The destruction of orangutan habitat and the illegal pet-trade threaten the lives of orangutans. Dr. Willie Smits, who directs the Wanariset Orangutan Reintroduction Project, and his team rescue hundreds of orangutans. Dr. Smits is committed to preserving orangutan habitat and returning captives back into Bornean rainforest homes. At Wanariset the orphans learn the vital skills they need to survive when they are later released into protected rainforest. Without mothers and more knowledgeable elders, strange 'Lord of the Flies' communities evolve in the forest. Eventually the orangutans learn to sustain themselves independently of human aid. This beautiful film makes us think about the values of culture and nature.

(Appropriate for all ages.) Merit Awards, International Wildlife Film Festival, Missoula; Honorable Mention, Columbus International Film & Video Festival

An Evergreen Island

45 min, 2000 Filmmakers: Fabio Cavadini & Mandy King.

In 1989 the people of the Pacific Island of Bougainville closed one of the world's largest copper mines that was destroying their land. In response, a blockade was imposed around the island. This is a film about a people who survived for 9 years without assistance from the outside world. They built their own schools and colleges, and turned to their traditional bush medicines. Without communications they charged batteries using solar power to run satellite telephones and 2 way radios and they generated their own electricity by harnessing water energy. They even used fermented coconut oil as a substitute for diesel fuel. An inspiring story of courage, creativity and survival.

Favela Rising

80 min, 2005 Filmmakers: Jeff Zimbalist & Matt Mochary

Documents a man and a movement, a city divided and a favela united. A favela is a Brazilian squatter settlement. Haunted by the murders of family and friends, Anderson Sa, a former drug-trafficker, turns to music to rally his community to oppose the violent oppression of the drug armies and corrupt police. Just as Anderson's grassroots Afro Reggae movement is at the height of its success, a tragic accident threatens to silence the movement. Favela Rising celebrates the strength of the human spirit to assert itself in the face of human rights violations, social injustice, and unexpected adversity. Gritty and inspiring. *Numerous awards including: Film of the Year, International Documentary Association; Best Emerging Documentary Filmmaker, Tribeca Film Festival.*

The Fight for True Farming

90 min., 2005 Director: Eve Lamont

In this documentary, crop and animal farmers in Quebec, the Canadian West, the US Northeast and France offer solutions to the social and environmental scourges of factory farming. Driven by the forces of globalization, rampant agribusiness is harming the environment and threatening the survival of farms. The proliferation of GMO crops is a further threat to biodiversity as well as to farmers' autonomy. In Europe as well as North America, a current of resistance, bringing together farmers and consumers, insists that it is possible, indeed imperative, to grow food differently. The Fight for True Farming is a film of grim lucidity but also irrepressible hope.

The Future of Food

88 min, 2004 Director: Deborah K. Garcia

'The Future of Food' offers an in-depth investigation into the disturbing truth behind the unlabeled, patented, genetically engineered foods that have quietly filled U.S. grocery store shelves for the past decade. From Saskatchewan to the fields of Oaxaca, Mexico, this film gives a voice to farmers whose lives and livelihoods have been negatively impacted by this new technology. The health implications, government policies and push towards globalization are all part of the reason many people are alarmed the introduction of genetically altered crops into our food supply. A complex web of market and political forces are changing what we eat. Alternatives such as organic and sustainable agriculture offer real solutions to the farm crisis today

Goose Bay Arts Festival

10 min, 2007 Dir. Peter Murphy

Granito de Arena (Grain of Sand)

60 min, 2004 Filmmaker: Jill Friedberg

For over 20 years, global economic forces have been dismantling public education in Mexico, but always in the constant shadow of popular resistance. 'Granito de Arena' is the story of that resistance - the story of hundreds of thousands of public schoolteachers whose grassroots, non-violent movement took Mexico by surprise, and who have endured brutal repression in their 25-year struggle to defend public education. Interviews with internationally-recognized figures, such as Eduardo Galeano and Maude Barlow, place the Mexican teachers' struggle in a global context, clearly spelling out the relationship between economic globalization and the worldwide public education crisis. Nominee- International Documentary Association's 2005 Pare Lorentz Award

Howard Zinn, You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train

78 min, 2004 Filmmakers: Deb Ellis & Denis Mueller. Narrated by Matt Damon • Featuring music by Pearl Jam, Woody Guthrie & Billy Bragg.

In these turbulent times, Howard Zinn is inspiring a new generation. This acclaimed film looks at the amazing life of the renowned historian, activist and author. Following his early days as a shipyard labour organizer and bombardier in World War II, Zinn became an academic rebel and leader of civil disobedience in a time of institutionalized racism and war. His influential writings shine light on and bring voice to factory workers, immigrant laborers, African-Americans, Native-Americans and the working poor. Featuring rare archival materials, You Can't Be Neutral captures the essence of this extraordinary man who has been a catalyst for progressive change for more than 60 years.

A man You Don't Meet Everyday

30 min, 2007 Director: Peter Murphy

The story of a man from Newfoundland who has kept a musical alive.

Mi'kmaq Family / Migmaoei Otjiosog

33 min, 1995 Director: Catherine Martin

Mi'kmaq filmmaker and mother, Catherine Anne Martin takes a reflective journey into the extended family of Nova Scotian Mi'kmaq society. Members of her community share their stories about the recovery of First Nations values, particularly through the teachings of elders. The wisdom of experience and the collective responsibilities of the Mi'kmaq community play a major role in the way their children are raised. An enlightening and inspiring resource for both First Nations and non-First Nations audiences who are looking for ways to strengthen and explore their own families and traditions.

Money as Debt

47 min., 2004 Director: Paul Grignon

A clear and concise animated explanation of money and how it works in our society and who for. A short history of how lending came into being from ancient times, how banks don't actually lend existing deposits, but materialize money out of thin air. Fascinating for all ages.

Mr. Mergler's Gift

31 min, 2004 Director: Beverly Shaffer



The girl sits at the piano and plays the opening bars of Für Elise. Daniel Mergler has heard the Beethoven bagatelle countless times over the decades, but this is different. He listens with surprise, and delight lights up the old man's eyes. The young pianist is Xin Ben, the 9-year-old daughter of Chinese immigrants. Fate has brought her to Mr Mergler, a music teacher whose career is drawing to a close. 'Mr Mergler's Gift' is the moving account of a student and her mentor, and a lyrical homage to the transcendent power of music. Xin Ben illuminates Mr. Mergler's final months with her youthful talent, and in return he lovingly guides her towards a life in music. Oscar-winning filmmaker Beverly Shaffer crafts a film of elegant simplicity and deep emotion, gracefully documenting a dying man's dedication to his young prodigy.

Reema: There and Back

52 min, 2006 Director: Paul Émile d'Entremont

With a Canadian mother, who until recently was the only family she knew, and an Iraqi father who wants to get to know his daughter after a 16-year absence, young Reema is confronted with difficult questions about her identity. During Reema's two-month visit with her father in Jordan, director Paul Émile d'Entremont adopts the point of view of this sensitive and lively young girl who exhibits all the contradictions typical of someone her age. When Reema returns

home to Nova Scotia after a visit with her father, she realizes that she will always have a double identity, and that it is both a burden and a treasure. In French and English with subtitles.

The Road to Hope: Potters for Peace

23 min, 2004 Director:: Francesca Roveda

"The Road to Hope" documents the tragedy and hope of the people of Nicaragua, from the Contra war and Hurricane Mitch to current economic injustices. Through the images and stories of Nicaraguan potters, this documentary details the training and informational exchange between Nicaraguan potters and the organization Potters for Peace. Potters for Peace has assisted in the design and production of ceramic water filters as well as developing international markets for Nicaraguan pottery. Creative alternatives are improving people's lives. Inspiring!

Rudy Hasse

51 min , 2007 Director: Neal Livingston

Rudy Haase is Black River Productions newest film completed in 2007 after 3 years in the making. It is a biography about Canada's great unknown environmentalist, Rudy Haase, who turns 85 in 2007. Haase's life long work has included many successful campaigns and preservation of wilderness. He was a close colleague of the famous American back-to-the-land gurus, Helen and Scott Nearing. Haase is a colleague and friend of Elizabeth May, leader of the Green Party of Canada, who is shown in the film over a period of 30 years. The film is also a primer on environmentalism.

Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars

80min, 2005 Soda Soap Productions

Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars tells the story of a group of six Sierra Leonean musicians who came together to form a band while living as refugees in the Republic of Guinea. Forced from their homes in Sierra Leone, the members of the band represent the thousands of untold stories that exist amongst the survivors of the Sierra Leonean civil war. [Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars](#) is an inspiring story of survival and rebirth in the wake of the horrors of war and a triumphant testament to the power of music.

Sunset Story

73 min, 2003 Director: Laura Gabbert

'Sunset Story' is a funny and intimate documentary that will make you think differently about growing old. Set against the backdrop of a retirement home in Los Angeles for &free-thinking elderly&, the film follows Irja (81) and Lucille (95), whose feisty engagement with life draws them together inextricably. Irja and Lucille explode familiar stereotypes of doddering &old ladies&. Sharp-witted, up-to-date, and often provocative, the two are not afraid to weigh in with opinions on men, sex, gender roles, and social attitudes toward the elderly. They operate as an odd couple, with Irja the eternal idealist and Lucille, the irreverent skeptic, cracking ironic dry jokes.

Special Jury Award: 2003 Tribeca Film Festival

Street Nurse

45 min, 2002 Director: Shelley Saywell

For years, as one of Toronto's 50 or so street nurses, Cathy Crowe has visited the habitats of the homeless, tending to their blistered feet, infected wounds and often fragile psyches. She

helps find night shelter for them when temperatures reach lethally low levels. That's the silent, unseen, part of what she does. But it is her passionate advocacy on behalf of the homeless that has brought her into the spotlight in Toronto. This sensitive film introduces us to some of the people in our communities we often do not take the time to get to know. A call to action on a critical social issue.

Their Brothers' Keepers: Orphaned by Aids

56 min, 2005 Director: Catherine Mullins



Millions of children in Africa have lost their parents to AIDS. Filmed over a seven-month period, 'Their Brothers' Keepers' goes inside Chazanga Compound, a shantytown in Lusaka, Zambia. The crew focuses on two families headed by children, and their ongoing struggle for food, water, schooling and health care. Local community and aid workers offer support but lack any real resources. Throughout the film, excerpts from speeches by Stephen Lewis fill in the broader social context. Stunning photography and an exquisite musical score contrast sharply with the surreal lives of these heroic children. 'Their Brothers' Keepers' powerfully conveys the sense of hope grounded in the human spirit to survive. Many Awards: Best Social/Political Documentary, Yorkton Film & Video Festival

To Play and To Fight (Tocar Y Luchar)

70 min, 2006 Director: Alberto Arvelo

There is a wonderful renaissance in classical orchestral music today centered in Venezuela, where nearly 250,000 children and youth are participating in the Youth and Children's Orchestra System project. What began as a modest program to expose rural youth to music as a means of personal and social development has become an amazing phenomenon. Teaching musical harmony is also a means of educating people in human harmony, building community and spirit. This inspiring film weaves together impressive performances and interviews with renowned musicians such as Placido Domingo who reflect on the impact of this remarkable social project. Today the program is expanding to include youth with disabilities, including hearing impaired youth. *To Play and To Fight* is an inspirational story of courage, determination, ambition, and love showing us that only those who dream can change the world.

A Tribe of His Own, The Journalism of P. Sainath

50 min, 2001 Director: Joe Moulins



When government propaganda and corporate spin are increasingly presented as fact, *A Tribe of His Own* reminds us what the news media can be. With a groundbreaking series of newspaper articles and a critically acclaimed book, Palagummi Sainath was the first recipient of Amnesty International's Human Rights Journalist of the Year award in 2000. We follow Sainath to the Indian villages he writes about, and explore his contention that "journalism is for people, not

shareholders." Stephen Hume writes, "Mesmerizing...this film delivers powerful insights into the enduring story of human suffering and its shining corollary, imperishable hope." Chris Award, 2002 Columbus Film Festival

Welcome to the Atlantic Canada Straw Bale Builders Community

30 min, 2007 Director: Marley Parker

Welcome to the Atlantic Canada Straw Bale Builders Community is an insightful look at best practices and challenges faced by straw bale builders in Canada's Atlantic region. It addresses issues like driven rain, fire, rodents, and rot while highlighting the importance of community and the environment. It is a unique opportunity for people who are interested in building with straw bales to sit in on intimate conversations with previous builders about their personal experiences with building with straw bales.

Yesterday's News

5min, 2007 Director: Cara Jones

The story of a single mother's choice to bring life into this world, her inner struggle to forgive, and the abundance she experiences from her strong faith. Yesterday's News was written, directed and edited by Antigonish filmmaker Cara Jones, for the 2007 International Documentary Challenge. The challenge was to make a five minute documentary in only five days with the genre revealed to the filmmaker on the first day. Over 95 participants from nine different countries took part in the challenge and Yesterday's News was chosen as one of the top twelve finalists. It later went on to win three awards at HOT DOCS, Canada's largest International documentary festival, for Best use of genre, Best Original Song, and Best Writing for a Documentary. It is now traveling internationally and will be shown this month at Silver Docs in Washington.