

Thousand Days and a Dream

P. Baburaj & C. Saratchandran

India

60 mins | 2006 | Malayalam with English subtitles

Category - Triumph of the Will

After opening to great acclaim for bringing jobs and development to rural Kerala, a Coca Cola bottling plant started to cause alarm. Community members began to see a darker side as their water supply started to showing signs of contamination and depletion. Despite ridicule and dismissive attitudes, local citizens have organized and fought to bring their message to the outside world. Directors P. Baburaj and C. Saratchandran follow these groups as they are pitted against politicians, state police and corporations in hope of protecting their lands and children from the dangers introduced by the plant.

Touching upon issues of environmentalism, globalization and grassroots activism, this film is a testament to the perseverance of dedicated individuals attempting to effect change in their community.

Official selection at the Earth Vision International Environmental Film Festival, California, 2007; South Asian International Film Festival (SAIIF), New York, 2007

Assaulted Dream

Uli Stelzner

Guatemala/Germany

83 mins | 2006 | Spanish with English subtitles

Category - Imaginary Homelands

ASIA PREMIERE

Thousands of people leave their impoverished Central American countries to get into the USA. By crossing the northern border of Guatemala into Mexico they're embarking on one of the most dangerous migration routes in the world. In a small border town in the farthest south of Mexico migrants try to jump on a freight train that will carry them to the US border. But hardly anybody manages to make the 5,000 km trip. A moving film about the end and the beginning, the hope and the doom of the *Assaulted Dream*.

Official selection at the International Video and Film Festival Kassel, Germany, 2006; Latin American Film Festival, Toulouse, France, 2007; Documentary Festival, Hamburg, Germany, 2007

China Blue

Micha Peled

China/USA

86 mins | 2005 | Mandarin with English subtitles

Category - Triumph of the Will

INDIA PREMIERE

China Blue is a powerful and poignant journey into the harsh world of sweatshop workers. Shot clandestinely, it is a deep-access account of what both China and the international retailers don't want us to see: how the clothes we buy are actually made.

Following a pair of denim jeans from birth to sale, *China Blue* offers an alarming report on the economic pressures applied by Western companies and the resulting human consequences. The unexpected ending makes the connection between the exploited workers and U.S. consumers even clearer.

Awards:

DOEN/Amnesty International Human Rights award at IDFA, Amsterdam, 2005; Official Selection, Toronto International Film Festival, 2005; Best Documentary, International Independent Film Festival of Mar del Plata, Argentina 2005; Honorable Mention, Vancouver film festival, 2006; nominated for Best Documentary, Hawaii International Film Festival, 2006; Silver Plaque, HUGO Television Awards, Chicago International Film Festival, 2006 Official selection at the One World International Film Festival, Prague, 2006; International Film Festival, Thessaloniki, Greece, 2006; Jerusalem International Film Festival, 2006

Movement (R)evolution Africa

Joan Froch & Alla Kovgan

USA

65 mins | 2007 | English/French/Others & English subtitles

Category - Medium is the Message

ASIA PREMIERE

“Africa” as portrayed by disaster-focused media seems populated by an ill-fated humanity consuming aid and contributing little in return. The film *Movement (R)evolution Africa* is dedicated to all those who look to Africa as a source of heritage and inspiration, and to all those who seek to understand dance in the 21st century, and, most particularly, to the artists of the film who have told and danced their stories for history and for the future.

Awards:

Best Dance Film Award, Cypress International Film Festival, 2007; Nominated for Jury Prize, Dance on Camera Festival, 2007

From Dust

Dhruv Dhawan

Sri Lanka & UAE

56 mins | 2005 | English/Sinhala with English subtitles

Category - Triumph of the Will

Filmed in Sri Lanka *From Dust* is a cinematic exposé that takes an incisive look at the government's response to a natural disaster. Shot in the aftermath of the Asian tsunami this documentary brings us into close contact with three people and questions why survivors in Sri Lanka weren't allowed to rebuild their homes along the coastline. They soon discover the ulterior motives behind the rule against rebuilding. This film reveals life in tents and ulterior motives that are stalling the rebuilding effort in Sri Lanka—and the opportunities that arise in the wake of a natural disaster.

Official selection at the Dubai International Film Festival, 2005; Nominated in the International Documentary Feature Competition, Tribeca Film Festival, 2006; Hotdocs International Showcase, 2006

I Want to be a Pilot

Diego Quemada Diez

Kenya/Mexico/Spain

12 mins | 2006 | English

Category - Triumph of the Will

INDIA PREMIERE

Deep in the slums of East Africa, a twelve-year-old has only one dream: to be able to fly. This moving film is about a poverty stricken boy in one of the poorest parts of Kenya who looks up towards the heavens and dreams of being an airline pilot. Omondi is a young orphan trapped in the East African slum of Kibera. In this dramatic short, the director, Diego Quemada-Diaz, spotlights his wish of piloting the plane that will take him away from his bleak life of poverty.

Awards:

Bermuda Shorts Award, Bermuda International Film Festival, 2007; Best Documentary Short Film, Cleveland International Film Festival, 2007; Audience Award Best Short Film, Heartland Film Festival, 2006; Crystal Heart Award Dramatic Short, 2006; Audience Award Best Short Film, Los Angeles Film Festival, 2006; Kids' Jury Award, Sarasota Film Festival, 2007; Audience Award Best Foreign Short, São Paulo International Film Festival, 2006

Independent Intervention

Tonje Hessen Schei

Iraq/Norway/USA

75 mins | 2006 | English

Category - Medium is the Message

ASIA PREMIERE

Independent Intervention is an award-winning documentary about the US Media coverage of the war in Iraq. Focusing on the human costs of war, it contrasts the mass media's coverage of the invasion of Iraq with independent reports of the brutal realities on the ground. Following a Norwegian filmmaker in the United States who questions how the US media covers the war in Iraq, the film brings awareness to the disparity between the war the American people see through the corporate controlled media and the realities on the ground in Iraq. *Independent Intervention* explores how the growing media democracy movement in the US works to challenge the mass media.

Awards:

Bronze Audience Award, Amnesty International Traveling Film Festival, Vancouver, Canada, 2006; Roy W. Dean Finishing Award, LA, 2005

Official selection at the Moondance International Film Festival. 2006; World Community Film Festival, 2007

It's Always Late for Freedom

Mehrad Oskouei

Iran

53 mins | 2006-7 | Persian with English Subtitles

Category - Triumph of the Will

ASIA PREMIERE

This Iranian film depicts the lives of three teenage boys in the Tehran House of Correction—a juvenile prison. They are the victims of serious social problems like addiction, poverty and divorce, their lives are a fallout of circumstances. In this film, the young men entirely let their guard down and share their hopes, frustrations, confusion and pain. Mehrad Oskouei gains insight into the children's lives, families, and lets the audience see a side of the juvenile delinquents that is normally hidden from the public gaze. Poignant and profound, *It's Always Late for Freedom* tells the story of a lost childhood and a hope for freedom

Awards:

Special Jury Award, Contact International Documentary Film Festival, Ukraine, 2007

Official selection at Thessaloniki International Documentary Film festival, 2007; Vision du Reel, Switzerland, 2007

Kings & Extras

Azza El Hassan

Palestine/Germany

62 mins | 2005 | Arabic with English subtitles

Category - Medium is the Message

INDIA PREMIERE

The official films of the PLO Media Unit were supposed to show a self-determined image of Palestinian reality—and they went missing during the Israeli invasion of Beirut in 1982. In a "road-movie" from Palestine to Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, the director Azza El-Hassan follows the contradicting and confusing clues about the whereabouts of the lost archive. The increasingly absurd search finally leads her to a martyr's graveyard, where the films are said to be buried—but no one really wants to dig over the whole place. The film reflects the situation in the Middle East—a failed revolution, the problematic relationship with the Arab neighbours, and the question of a Palestinian identity today.

Official selection at the Seoul Independent Documentary Film Festival, 2004; Toronto Arab Film Festival, 2006; Palestine Film Festival London, 2006; Houston Palestine Film Festival, 2007

Reinalda Del Carmen, my Mother and Me

Lorena Giachino Torrens

Chile

85 mins | 2006 | Spanish with English subtitles

Category - Vanishing Histories

ASIA PREMIERE

A triangulated story about memory, friendship, motherhood and women, this film is a telling reflection on loss. The director's mother has lost her memory as she has aged. In this documentary the filmmaker tries to recover and rebuild the story of the relationship between her mother, Jacqueline, and Jacqueline's college friend who disappeared during the Chilean dictatorship and repression. By capturing visits to the past and testimonies from the present, the filmmaker tries to reconstruct past events and circumstances under which her mother's friend vanished.

Awards:

Best Documentary, Amazonia Film Festival, Caracas, Venezuela, 2007; Special Mention of Jury, Social Cinema Festival, La Pintana, Chile 2007

Official selection at the Tekfestival, Rome, Italy, 2007

The Halfmoon Files

Philip Scheffner

Germany

87 mins | 2007 | English/German/Hindi/Punjabi/Khas with English subtitles

Category - Vanishing Histories

In 1916, a number of Indian soldiers were drafted to the First World War and taken as prisoners in Germany. 90 years later, Mall Singh's voice is still preserved on an old shellac record in an archive—one amongst hundreds of voices of colonial soldiers. The recordings were produced as the result of a unique alliance between the military, the scientific community and the entertainment industry. In his experimental search *The Halfmoon Files*, Philip Scheffner follows the traces of these voices to the origin of their recording. The spirits and ghostly appearances of Mall Singh and the other prisoners of war at the Halfmoon Camp seem to play with the filmmaker. They pursue him on his path to bring their voices back to their home countries.

Awards:

“Prix Des Mediathe Ques”, Festival International du Documentaire Marseille (FID Marseille 2007) selected for the Berlin Film Festival, 2007; OSIAN's Cinefan Film Festival, Delhi, India 2007

The Hands of Che Guevara

Peter De Kock

The Netherlands

62 mins | 2007 | Spanish with English subtitles

Category - Spotlight Cuba

ASIA PREMIERE

The documentary is a search for the severed and missing hands of Che Guevara. The search reveals a number of remarkable people: men and women who were prepared to risk their lives to recover two hands. Through their testimonies and anecdotes a story unfolds—a tale so bizarre and secret that it was banished to the shadow world of history. By stringing together the small, subjective stories of each person involved, slowly a larger, ‘objective’ history becomes visible. Although some stories have been spectacularly embellished, they form a human memory-chain till the present time.

Official selection at the Sheffield Film Festival, 2006; Exile Film Festival, 2007; Holland Festival, Utrecht, 2006

The Mall on Top of My House

Aditi Chitre

India

5.3mins | 2006 | Animation

Category - Imaginary Homelands

From Aditi Chitre comes an animation film that deals with the issue of rampant land reclamation by flouting the environmental laws—and the consequent displacement of the fishing community. The film narrates the story of a fisherman living in a dark underground tunnel, constantly negotiating with the chaos of traffic, fancy malls and luxury housing built on land that was once his. Reclamation has pushed the sea further away from him and reduced it to a puddle of industrial waste. In the past, he had a home, a family and a sustaining catch from the sea. But today emerging land laws rendered the community homeless overnight. With builders taking ever increasing chunks of the city's open space, where does the fisherman go?

Official selection at: International Short Film Festival, Detmold, Germany, 2007; Prabhat Film Festival, Pune, India, 2007; Open Frame, Delhi, India, 2006

The Women's Kingdom

Xiaoli Zhou

China/USA

22.14 mins | 2005-6 | Mandarin with English subtitles

Category - Gaze Engendered

INDIA PREMIERE

Keepers of one of the last matriarchal societies in the world, Mosuo women live beyond the strictures of mainstream Chinese culture. This short documentary offers a rare glimpse into a society virtually unheard of 10 years ago and now often misrepresented in the media. Mosuo women control their own finances and do not marry or live with partners; they practice what they call "walking marriage." While tourism has brought wealth and 21st century conveniences to this remote area, it has also introduced difficult challenges to the culture—from pollution and the establishment of brothels, to mainstream ideas about women, beauty, and family. This finely wrought documentary is a sensitive portrayal of extraordinary women struggling to hold on to their extraordinary society.

Awards:

Student Oscar (documentary) by the Academy of Television Arts & Science; Best Editing, San Francisco Women's Film Festival

Official selection at the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival; Vancouver Asian Film Festival

You, Waguih

Namir Abdel Messeeh

France

29 mins | 2005 | Arabic with English subtitles

Category - Imaginary Homelands

ASIA PREMIERE

Composed of a series of informal conversations between screenwriter Namir Abdel Messeeh and his reticent, introspective father, Waguih, a reformed Communist and former political prisoner during the early years of the Egyptian Republic, *Toi, Waguih* evokes the theme of parental silence—a silence of personal history borne of unarticulated trauma that has resulted in their own children's sense of disconnected culture and uprooted heritage. Unfolding in fractured conversations, extended silence, and quotidian images (most notably, Waguih's retirement party where his colleagues equally comment on his reticence and fierce intelligence), *Toi, Waguih* is a poignant, all-too-familiar story of diaspora: a rupture in the continuity of ancestral memory, a first-generation cultural estrangement between traditional and assimilated culture, a silence of collective history.

Awards:

8eme Biennale Des Cinemas Arabes a Paris; Prix du fipresci and principle prize of the jury, Festival International D'Oberhausen, 2006; grand prix at Recontres du moyen metrage a brive; prix du victor at Cinecran a Vanes; special jury prize at the Festival du court –metrage en plein air de Grenoble; jury prize at the Festival du film francophone de vaulx en velin Official selection at the International Film Festival of Berlin; Rotterdam; Madrid; New York; Leipzig

With or Without Fidel

Ishmail Blahgrove Jr.

Cubav

59 mins | 2007 | Spanish with English subtitles

Category - Spotlight Cuba

ASIA PREMIERE

With Or Without Fidel is a groundbreaking documentary that features Cuba's leading politicians, intellectuals and dissidents, who debate the future direction of the island's 48 year-old revolution. How do Cubans feel about their own identity and freedom of speech? For the first time, the people of Cuba question the values that western democracy holds sacred and the price Cubans have paid for their independence. Filmed during the most precarious period in Cuba's history, *With or Without Fidel* reveals the aspirations and vulnerabilities of a country on the brink of change.

Official selection at the Portobello Film Festival, 2007

In the Tall Grass

J. Coll Metcalfe

Rwanda

56 mins | 2006 | Kinyarwanpan/English

Category - Triumph of the Will

INDIA PREMIERE

In the Tall Grass tells the story of Rwanda's search for redemption as the country sits down to reckon with the genocide using a network of traditional community courts called *gacaca*. The film follows a genocide survivor named Joanita Mukarusanga through this historic process as she confronts the neighbor she says killed her family and the community that sanctioned their murders. That neighbor, Anastase Butera, admits to witnessing the murders, but denies any further participation. With unprecedented access, *In the Tall Grass* explores universal themes of justice in post-conflict societies and the challenges countries like Rwanda face in attempting the transition from violence to peace.

Awards:

Best Documentary, Andalous Film Festival; Best Documentary, Moondance Film festival; Best Documentary, United Nations Association Film Festival

Official selection at the International Black DocuFest; Big Sky Documentary Film Festival;

Bodrum Film Festival

Pirinop, My First Contact

Maria Correa & Karane Ikpeng

83 mins | 2007 | Portuguese and Ikpeng with English subtitles

Category - Imaginary Homelands

ASIA PREMIERE

What happens when a native tribe is overthrown and then relegated to a 'reservation'? *My First Contact* is the story about a tribe of native Ikpeng Indians in Brazil who were brought to live on a reservation by white men over 40 years ago. The film is a fascinating and painful testament to memory. It captures how the elders in the tribe reenact the "first contact" with the white men for the younger generation, which has no emotional connection to the land the elders yearn for. Through the reenactment, does the younger generation get more involved in the fight to reclaim their birth land?

Best Documentary, Golden Grass Prize at Festival FICA, 2007, Goias, Brazil; Award of the Indigenous Category, 4th Encuentro Hispoamericano de Video Documental Independente Mexico, 2007; Best Opera, 8th International Festival of Cinema and Video at Pueblos Indigenas, Mexico, 2006; Best Documentary, Amazonas Film Festival, 2006; Horizons Prize, 22nd International Documentary Film Festival, Munich, 2007; Rigoberta Menchu Prize at the First People Festival, 2007, Montreal

Official Selection at the International Documentary Film Festival, Amsterdam, 2006

VHS Kahloucha

Nejib Belkadi

Tunisia

80 mins | 2006 | Arabic with English subtitles

Category - Medium is the Message

INDIA PREMIERE

Tunisia is not a country renowned for its film industry. In fact, there is almost no film industry at all. Apparently no one told this to Moncef Kahloucha. A charismatic, impassioned house painter, Kahloucha has always harbored a great love for cinema, especially 1970s cinema. Armed with his VHS Panasonic 3500, Kahloucha has made a battery of homage pieces including *I Had No Money and Now I'm Loaded* and *Misery to Get Rid of the Booze*. Deep in production on his latest feature, *Tarzan of the Arabs*, Kahloucha is endearingly painted in this documentary. Watch as Tunisia's Quentin Tarantino employs the help of local acting talent to stage intense chases, well-choreographed fight sequences and fantastical plotlines, and observe to what lengths Kahloucha will go for the perfect shot. For anyone who has ever dreamed of making a movie, Kahloucha's story is an inspirational revelation.

Official Selection at the Festival De Cannes, 2007; Official Selection & Nominated in Best World Cinema (Documentary), Sundance Film Festival, 2007; Official Selection at FIDMARSEILLE, 2006

The Devil Came on Horseback

Ricki Stern/Anne Sundberg

Sudan

85 mins | 2007 | English

Category - Gaze Engendered

INDIA PREMIERE

The Devil Came on Horseback tells the story of genocide in Darfur through the eyes of Brian Steidle, a former U.S. Marine who lands a job through the Internet as an unarmed military observer taking photographs for the African Union in Darfur. Stark footage of decimated villages and the smoldering remains of people, including children burned alive, make *The Devil Came on Horseback* a challenging film to watch. Steidle's reactions to the genocide are compressed into a compelling, beautifully photographed hour-and-a-half film that captures the Sudan's natural beauty as well as its turmoil. The film tells a horrific tale at a brisk pace; cameras shoot from helicopters, from moving vehicles, and inside people's homes; they hang onto Steidle's and the Janjaweed militia's every move.

Awards:

Seeds of War Award, Full Frame Documentary Festival, 2007; Full Frame/Working Film Award, Full Frame Documentary Festival, 2007; Witness Award, SilverDocs Film Festival, 2007; Lena Sharpe/Women in Cinema: Persistence of vision Award, Seattle International Film festival, 2007; Adrienne Shelly Excellence in film-making Award, Nantucket Film Festival 2007

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Hip-Hop Revolution

Weeam Williams

South Africa

50 mins | 2006 | English

Category - **Medium is the Message**

ASIA PREMIERE

Pumping with the sound of unreleased classics and rare footage of the legendary BASE, the first hip hop club in South Africa, this film explores the 25 year journey of hip hop in South Africa, right from its birth on the Cape Flats through the insurgence of black consciousness and the political uprising in the '80s that disrupted the education of many youths.

Filmmaker Weeam Williams explores the history, culture, and impact of South African hip-hop in the documentary *Hip Hop Revolution*. Interviews explain how the African American art form mirrored African experiences and gave '80s youth a medium to express themselves and incite black pride at a time when it was most needed. It also touches on issues of censorship and the elusive element of hip hop known as knowledge of self, plus socially conscious messages through music.

**Official selection at the Cape Town International World Cinema Festival, 2006;
Silverdocs USA, 2006**

El Charango

Jim Virga

Bolivia

22mins | 2006 | Spanish with English subtitles

Category - **Imaginary Homelands**

INDIA PREMIERE

The short Spanish language documentary *El Charango* explores the relationship between the Bolivian stringed instrument, known as the charango, and Cerro Rico (Rich Mountain), the richest silver deposit the world has ever known. Spanish culture spread into Bolivia during the time of the conquistadors, and the local people became aware of something they had never seen or heard before: a stringed instrument. But, forbidden from playing the Spanish guitar, the miners copied it and created the charango. Even today, nearly 150 years after the end of Spanish rule, the charango continues to be a companion to many. The story of the charango symbolizes the larger struggle for human rights and a quest to keep traditional culture alive among indigenous people, and the people of Potosi in particular.