

A MATTER OF ACT 2016



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A MATTER OF ACT 2016

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MOVIESTHAT**MATTER** 
FESTIVAL 18-26 MARCH 2016
THE HAGUE

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INSPIRATIONAL

INTRODUCTION



Every year, the films in the *A Matter of ACT* competition, Amnesty International's main programme at the Movies that Matter Festival, end up in the upper regions of the Audience Award at our festival. The documentaries get high scores from the audience, due mostly to the inspirational main characters. These human rights defenders stick their necks out in trying to make the world a better place. They take on the fight, their chins held high, in spite of often hopeless situations. Since 2009, we have been inviting the protagonists of these films to come to The Hague for the *A Matter of ACT* programme, where they strengthen their network and engage in a dialogue with politicians, interest groups and of course the audience.

Unfortunately, nearly every year, some of these human rights defenders are unable to attend. This year, we will have to go without Hooligan Sparrow (pseudonym of Ye Haiyan). Ye champions women's rights in China, applying often confrontational tactics. This has made her an enemy of the state, and she is regularly subjected to brutal interrogations. Her passport was confiscated, preventing her from travelling. All the more reason to offer the film a prominent spot in our programme, and make sure her voice is heard, loud and clear.

Fortunately, many activists will be able to make the trip to The Hague to share their stories. Coming from every corner of the world, their battles vary from one person to the next. For years, William Binney worked for the American intelligence service NSA; now he is dedicated to defending the right to privacy. In her work, Consuelo Morales calls attention to Mexicans who have gone missing, victims of the drug war. Parvez Sharma is gay and Muslim, and recorded his pilgrimage to Mecca on video. Nicole Tung and Janine di Giovanni went to Syria to report on the horrors of the civil war there. When Fadimata 'Disco' Walet Oumar was driven out of her beloved Timbuktu in Mali, her music kept her going. In perilous Chechnya, Oleg Khabibrakhmanov is devoted to protecting human rights. After her husband Raif Badawi was imprisoned for his blogs, Ensaf Haidar from Saudi Arabia continued his work. Eliete Paraguassu from Brazil is devoted to a fishing community that suffers from the activities of a petrochemical factory. Sonita, a young Afghani who dreams of a career as a rapper, escaped forced marriage. Now she fights to help other girls in a similar situation.

We are proud to welcome this colourful and varied group of people to The Hague for the festival. You are cordially invited to come meet them!

Dirk van der Straaten

Artistic Director, Movies that Matter

A BETTER PLACE

FOREWORD



South African jurist Navanethem Pillay was UN High Commissioner for Human Rights between 2008 and 2014. Currently, she is Commissioner of the International Commission Against the Death Penalty. Navanethem Pillay is a guest of honour at the Movies that Matter Festival 2016.

In my time as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, from 2008 to 2014, one of the most pressing issues was living up to the Refugee Convention.

I understood and understand when countries may feel overwhelmed by the influx of refugees. Yet international human rights standards must be observed at all times. These are human beings we are dealing with. They're entitled to fundamental rights and one of them is individual screening to understand their situation. Obviously, what they need is not indefinite detention on 'security grounds', nor denying them the right to a hearing. Neither is it sending them back to where they may fear persecution. And I find it particularly gruesome when in the countries of asylum, minors fall victim to people who exploit and abuse them.

I mention the refugee and asylum issues first, since this is now the topic of so much debate in Western Europe. The world of human rights, evidently, is much wider than this. During my work for the United Nations, an important task was offering assistance, helping to change laws and training the judiciary and law enforcement officials to adopt a human rights-based approach.

Has the world become a better place due to the efforts of the international community? There are few, I suppose, who would subscribe to such a statement without reserve. There are conflicts raging in over a dozen states, with great loss of civilian lives. But if I look at the long-term implications of the work of human rights institutions and organizations, I see some 180 countries that are really trying to keep to their international obligations. We have international tribunals and the International Criminal Court. There are over fifty independent experts appointed by the Human Rights Council. And indeed, we have the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Complicated as human rights issues may be, the agenda for addressing them is really not that hard to see. First, institutions and organizations should go into the field, for workshops, education, helping to understand and improve legislation, to raise awareness. Second, we need to work closely with civil society. And third, we have to spread the messages and information on human rights standards. They are picked up by people all over the world, including on social media. Some of it may just be sound bites, but ever more people understand their rights.

These are functions that, in various ways, are also the remit of the Movies that Matter initiative. I'm looking forward to having a *dernier regard* in The Hague, a second look at all and everyone coming together in an international human rights film festival.

Navanethem Pillay

SONITA ALIZADEH

NOT FOR SALE

Kids in Afghanistan know her songs by heart. Sonita Alizadeh raps about what it feels like when your home country is at war. And about being a girl in a male-dominated culture, where parents think it's 'only natural' to sell you as a child bride to a man you've never seen before. 'Women in Afghanistan just think that's what they're born for.'

BY JONNEKE VAN WIERST

'I saw an Afghan TV-contest where a girl chose to impersonate *me*,' says Sonita Alizadeh. 'She rapped my song "Brides for Sale". It's something I could only dream of a few years ago.' She says this two days after the documentary *Sonita* by Iranian director Rokhsareh Ghaemmaghani won both the Audience Award and the Grand Jury Prize in the category 'World Cinema Documentary' at the prestigious Sundance Film Festival 2016. The film has already had a big impact on Sonita's life.

Sonita Alizadeh was born in the city of Herat,

Afghanistan, the youngest of a family of eight. The city was one of the first to be taken by Taliban forces in 1995. The family faced big difficulties to make ends meet and decided to flee to Iran around the year 2000, after one of Sonita's brothers was shot and wounded by the Taliban. Her father fell ill while the family was in exile and sometime after the US invasion of Afghanistan, he decided he wanted to return to Herat to die. Her mother and some other family members accompanied him.



©Reuters/Toby Melville

SONITA ALIZADEH

(Herat)

Sonita Alizadeh's family fled the Taliban regime in Afghanistan when Sonita was a child. She lived as an illegal refugee in Iran until 2015. With the help of filmmaker Rokhsareh Ghaemmaghami she produced the protest rap video clip 'Brides for Sale' in 2014, based on Sonita's own experiences with the Afghan tradition of selling young girls for marriage. 'Brides for Sale' attracted the attention of the US-based NGO 'Strongheart Group', who offered Sonita a US scholarship.

Sonita and two of her brothers stayed in Iran and lived with their big sister and brother-in-law. Her father died shortly after his return and Sonita was raised by her sister in Iran, while her mother stayed in Afghanistan.

NO RIGHTS

The fact that filmmaker Rokhsareh Ghaemmaghami chose to make a documentary on the Tehran 'Society for Protection of Working and Street Children' changed Sonita's life. In this center, mostly financed by Western organizations, Afghan refugee children are taught to read and write, and receive trauma therapy. The filmmaker wanted to show the way these children survive in Iran, without any rights or protection. She started filming in the summer of 2012. At that time, Sonita and her young niece Fadia were selling fortune cards in the street and doing cleaning jobs to add to the family income. Her brother-in-law was a drug addict, causing the family nothing but trouble. Sonita was just one of the estimated 3 million Afghan refugees living in Iran.

'She was undocumented and illegally staying in the country, like many of them,' explains Ghaemmaghami. 'Afghani refugees have little or no rights and are looked down upon by the average Iranian. They are considered backward and "unhygienic". They are said to steal away jobs and their begging children are chased away from the streets. Until very recently, undocumented children could not enroll in schools in Iran. Luckily the government changed this law in 2015.'

Sonita was a 'closed-up, angry-looking' girl when filmmaker Ghaemmaghami first met her. Her fascination with Sonita only grew when she found out she wrote rap songs, which she shared with other children in the center. She loved Western pop music but found only rap could express her deepest emotion: *anger*. Anger with the way women and girls are treated in traditional Afghan culture: 'Girls, aged ten, even younger, are sold by their families as brides to men old enough to be their father or even grandfather,' says Sonita. 'My mother was very young when she was sold

Child marriage in Afghanistan



Child brides are commonplace in Afghanistan. The Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission states that 60-80 percent of all Afghan marriages are forced and/or underage. Although the legal age for marriage is 16 for girls (18 for men), many younger girls are the victim of arranged marriages. According to Human Rights Watch, honour killings of women or girls who tried to escape domestic violence or a forced marriage are also common. Moreover, 95 per cent of girls and 50 per cent of women in Afghanistan's prisons are jailed for 'moral crimes', such as running away from a forced marriage.

Sources: Human Rights Watch, the Guardian, UNHCR

as a bride to my father. She called him "uncle". He was more than three times her age.' Sonita herself only escaped child marriage at about ten, due to the fact that her father died. 'After that my mother and brothers in Afghanistan sort of forgot about me.'

FURIOUS

Sonita only became the 'lead' in the documentary that now bears her name after she prevented her brother-in-law from selling off his daughter, her young niece Fadia, in exchange for a second-hand car. She hid her niece at Ghaemmaghmi's house. Her furious brother-in-law tried to set Sonita on fire by pouring petrol on her, but she managed to fight him off. The director focused her camera on Sonita after this incident, while the brother-in-law served time in prison for theft.

During the years 2013-2014, Sonita tried to record some of her rap-songs but was faced with an Iranian law forbidding women to sing. She asked Ghaemmaghmi to 'lend her the

camera' and help her produce a video clip. They submitted the clip to an Afghan rap contest about the elections, and Sonita ended up winning the first prize. She then learned that her mother intended to sell her as a bride in order to get nine thousand dollars, needed to buy a bride for one of Sonita's brothers.

'My mother saw no other option than to sell me,' says Sonita. 'I don't blame her. Women in Afghanistan just think that's what they're born for.'

Ghaemmaghmi gave Sonita's mother two thousand dollars. In return, Sonita asked her mother to give her at least six months' time to prove that she can earn money by making music. Sonita and Ghaemmaghmi made the poignant protest-video 'Brides for Sale' and shared it on YouTube. It became a hit inside and outside Afghanistan and attracted the attention of the American Strongheart Group, an NGO which singles out 'exceptional young people from extremely challenging backgrounds' to help them 'rise above



©Sonita

Sonita

Rokhsareh Ghaemmaghmi

(Germany/Iran/Switzerland, 2015, 90 min.)



FILM

circumstance'. Sonita was invited to join their fellowship programme and enrolled in school in the US in early 2015.

The success of the documentary *Sonita* added to the interest in Sonita's activist message worldwide. Her ambition today is to 'study hard and become a lawyer'. She is still learning to speak English and hopes to be able to enter college in one-and-a-half years' time. 'Ultimately I would like to start my own organization in Afghanistan to help end child marriage and forced marriage altogether.' She strongly confirms that she also intends to continue making music: 'I'll be a rapping lawyer! Why not?' ■

If Sonita had a say in things, Michael Jackson would be her father and Rihanna her mother. She captures her dream of being a rapper in her scrapbook. For the time being, her only fans are the other teenage girls in a Tehran shelter. Her family has a different future planned: as a bride she's worth \$9,000. What's more, women aren't allowed to sing in Iran... How can Sonita make her dreams come true? An exciting journey of a young woman finding her own path.

MEET THE TRUE HERO | SCREENINGS

Sat 19 March 17:45 Theater aan het Spui Kz
Q&A with Sonita and director Rokhsareh Ghaemmaghmi. Moderator: Bahram Sadeghi

Sun 20 March 20:00 Theater aan het Spui Gz
Extended Q&A with Sonita and director Rokhsareh Ghaemmaghmi and an expert. Introduction by Dutch Development Minister Lilianne Ploumen

Tue 22 March 21:15 Filmhuis Den Haag 1
Q&A with director Rokhsareh Ghaemmaghmi. Moderator: Chris Keulemans

WILLIAM BINNEY WHISTLEBLOWER FOR PRIVACY

Bill Binney had tried to make the National Security Agency adopt a surveillance programme that respected privacy. After leaving the agency disillusioned, he became a public and vocal critic of his former employer. The math genius says the NSA has a 'data hoarding disorder'. 'We were subverting our democracy. I couldn't be a part of that.'

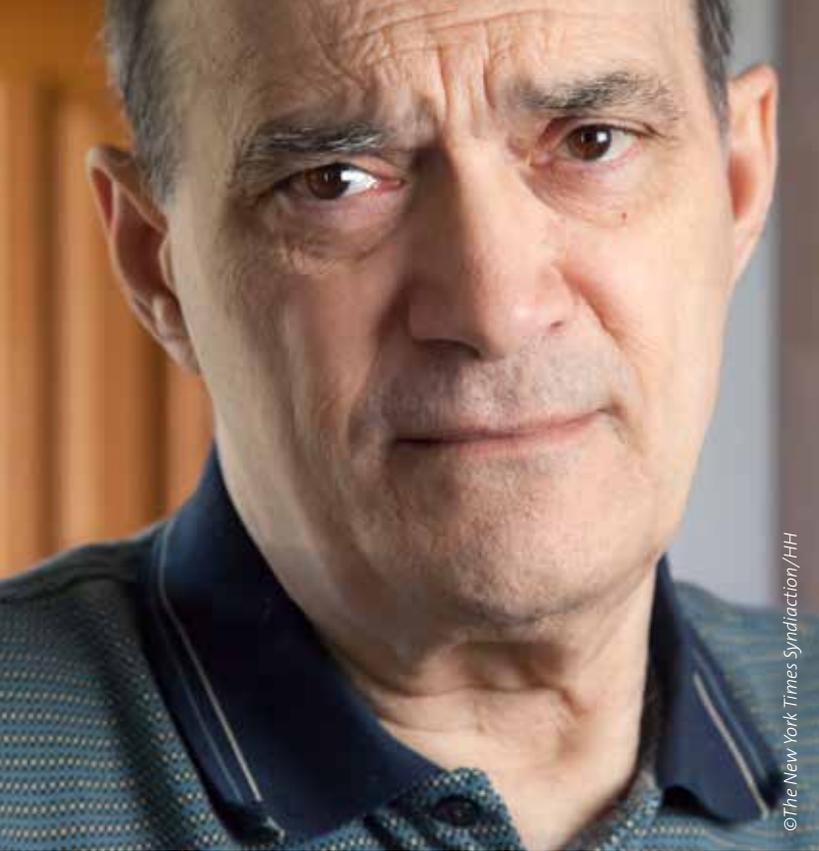
BY PETER TEFFER

You would think that a whistleblower who used to work for the United States' National Security Agency (NSA), would take extra measures to protect his privacy. But William Binney wants everything to be out in the open to avoid raising suspicion.

'If I, for example, used an encrypted phone to talk to you, you would automatically be a target. They would say I am conspiring with you and I do not want to put you in that position,' says Binney in a telephone interview.

Much of his criticism towards the intelligence industry has already been publicized. But the openness has another function. The American already is a target. Binney has been the subject of several investigations by the Federal Bureau of Investigations and in 2007 had his house raided at gunpoint. Openness means building proof in public.

The raid, Binney says, 'showed the extent of corruption' in the American authorities. The affair, and the proliferation of mass surveillance,



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WILLIAM BINNEY

(DuBois 1943)

William Binney has a degree in mathematics. In 1965, he joined the US army in Europe. At the Army Security Agency in Germany he worked as an analyst. He later transferred to the National Security Agency, where he worked for 31 years. There he developed ThinThread, a programme to analyse communications. He resigned after 9/11, disconcerted by the fact that the NSA chose not to implement ThinThread but another programme, which lacked privacy protections. At age 72, he is now retired.

has left Binney so 'disgusted' that he agreed with director Friedrich Moser to tell his story in the documentary *A Good American*.

MATH LOVER

William – or Bill – Binney had been an NSA employee for three decades. In the film, several former co-workers praise his intellect.

'Of all the analysts I ever knew in my entire career, spanning from US air force to my career in NSA, Bill was by far the most astute, the most capable, accurate,' says Kirk Wiebe, retired senior analyst at the NSA. 'He was the person in the agency who knew the most about what we now in the digital age call metadata,' adds Diane Roark, retired senior staffer at the Intelligence Committee of the US House of Representatives. 'The thing that Bill loves most, is math,' she says.

'The beauty of math is that it is an attempt to structure common sense and consistencies in the universe. That's all it is,' Binney says in the documentary, explaining that what he feared most at NSA was 'human inaccuracy'. The film's protagonist says the intelligence agency's

analyses 'needed to be fully automated as much as possible so that the information coming in was untouched by human hands'.

Binney's contribution was a programme called ThinThread, a tool to analyse phone and email communication. What made ThinThread stand out from a competing programme, called Trailblazer, was its care for privacy protection. ThinThread would encrypt data so that only information from people who were actually suspects would be accessible, once a warrant had been granted.

Both programmes aimed at monitoring worldwide communications, and to identify human connections. 'You invade everybody's privacy. That's not compatible with a democracy,' says Binney. 'We have to do something to protect individuals here.' But following the September 11, 2001, attacks on the US, the agency opted to choose Trailblazer instead, and introduce a whole slate of mass surveillance measures.

Binney decided he had to leave the agency. 'My background at the NSA was in watching Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact countries,' he

US violations of privacy



Over the last few years, the existence of vast surveillance programmes led by the US National Security Agency (NSA) have come to light. These programmes spy on most of the world's digital communications and interfere with individuals' right to privacy on a global scale. Information about the reach of the NSA's privacy violations continues to emerge. It was revealed, for example, that companies – including Facebook, Google and Microsoft – were forced to hand over their customers' data under secret orders through the NSA's Prism programme, and that NSA and the UK's secret service hacked into the internal computer network of Gemalto, the largest manufacturer of SIM cards in the world.

Source: Amnesty International



says in the phone interview. 'This was out of the training book of the KGB and the Stasi. We were subverting our democracy. I couldn't be a part of that.'

UNCONSTITUTIONAL

Following his departure, Binney contacted the Department of Defense to tell them that what the NSA had begun doing – warrantless collection of masses of data – was unconstitutional. But when the Department of Defense published its report on the matter, 98 per cent of the content was redacted as classified.

'I tried to work with government institutions, to alert people so they knew what was going on,' says Binney. But his protests with US authorities against the NSA's mass surveillance were fruitless, so Binney started to publicly address the issues. When *The New York Times* published an article in 2005 on the NSA's wiretapping programme, Binney was investigated and interviewed several times by the FBI. On 22 July

2007 the seven-hour raid of his house happened. But because of fabricated evidence, the FBI case against Binney and three former colleagues was dropped.

Through the documentary, Binney wants to let the public know about the constitutional violations of the NSA, he said. He has also appeared in front of the Bundestag, where he told German members of parliament the NSA have a 'totalitarian approach, which hitherto was only seen with dictators'.

Binney now says intelligence agencies have a 'data hoarding disorder', which is distorting our way of life. 'It is getting worse and worse,' the whistleblower says over the phone. For example, online video games are now being used to spy on people. 'In the UK they are talking about requiring Internet service providers to keep a record of what sites you are visiting.' And what to think of the upcoming Internet of Things, which connects all sorts of home appliances to the Internet – a massive spying opportunity.

But the data that are being collected are not



A Good American

Friedrich Moser

(Austria, 2015, 100 min)

FILM



effectively used, says Binney. The terrorists who attacked Paris, Boston and other cities were in databases somewhere. But they weren't detected because spy agencies 'are looking at everyone'. Binney: 'They are trying to get data from four billion people, instead of focusing.'

It is almost like a cycle: after a terrorist attack, agencies acquire the power to amass even more data, but fail to use that power to prevent another attack somewhere, and the cycle begins again. Why don't agencies learn, one might ask. Binney: 'They are doing it for the money and to build their own little empires. ■'

Remarkable documentary about 'good American' William Binney, a former high-ranking NSA analyst. Binney claims that the intelligence programme ThinThread, which he designed, could have prevented the 9/11 attacks. A few weeks before the attacks, the NSA decided to replace ThinThread with another, more lucrative programme. Disappointed by his employer and shocked by the events, Binney resigned and started to speak out. Exciting and entertaining documentary that reveals the dark side of the American security agencies.

MEET THE TRUE HERO | SCREENINGS

Sun 20 March 16:45 Theater aan het Spui Kz
Q&A with William Binney, director Friedrich Moser and an expert. Moderator: Doutje Lettinga

Mon 21 March 14:45 Theater aan het Spui Kz

Tue 22 March 19:00 Filmhuis Den Haag 1
William Binney is one of the guests in the 'Daily Matters' talkshow at 21.00 in Theater aan het Spui foyer

Wed 23 March 21:15 Filmhuis Den Haag 2
Q&A with William Binney

NICOLE TUNG AND JANINE DI GIOVANNI LAST JOURNEY TO SYRIA

The film *7 Days in Syria* follows journalist Janine di Giovanni and photographer Nicole Tung on their trip to the war-torn country in late 2012. It tells compelling stories of everyday Syrians and from the front line, but also a story about journalism and sacrifice. Nicole Tung: 'I hated that I had to leave Syria.'

BY FRÉDERIKE GEERDINK

Suddenly, the atmosphere in the film *7 Days in Syria* gets grim. The crew is filming at a bakery shop, working on a story about the everyday heroes in Aleppo, the people who are holding the city together. The baker is the hero. But outside, where citizens wait in line, the crew is looked upon with suspicion. The journalists and crew get in the car quickly and tell their driver to rush off. 'I understood the tension,' says photographer Nicole Tung, who has been reporting on the Arab Spring since its early

days. 'The Syrian government would attack bread lines, bomb them; one time some seventy people got killed in such a bombing. Foreigners being present makes people in line extra nervous.'

Knowing the country, the conflict, the people, is crucial to work safely in Syria, says Nicole Tung in an interview via Skype. Actually, it is better to say 'was' crucial: *7 Days in Syria* was recorded late 2012, early 2013, mostly in Aleppo. It would be impossible to go to Syria



NICOLE TUNG

(Hong Kong 1986)

Award-winning photographer Nicole Tung majored in journalism and history at the New York University in 2009, and started her career as a photographer in the early days of the Arab Spring. She reported from Egypt and Libya and started covering the Syrian civil war in 2012. She works for *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and other international papers and magazines.

©Antonio Belfo

now, and even then it was already strongly advised against. Tung: 'There were multiple threats. Many small Islamist groups started to cooperate with ISIS. Then there were a lot of smugglers and criminals who would capture foreign journalists and give them to the highest bidder.'

VULTURE

Nicole Tung went anyway, with Janine di Giovanni, a freelance journalist working for *Newsweek*. Di Giovanni had proposed stories to *Newsweek*, but the magazine rejected the offer because they deemed it too dangerous and didn't want to take the responsibility to send any journalist to Syria. Tung explains why she and Di Giovanni (who was busy with a reporting trip to Iran and did not have time for an interview) went in spite of that: 'We were well informed, I had been going to Syria for about a year already and Janine was experienced too. I had spent lengths of time there, I knew where to go and where not to go. I knew commanders in the Free Syrian Army whom I could still trust.'

Tung thinks that even though the film was shot some three years ago, it has a lot of relevance today: 'Now ISIS has taken over the news, ISIS is what it's all about. But it didn't start with ISIS, it started with an uprising against Bashar al-Assad. We should not lose sight of that, we should not lose sight of the suffering of the people who have nothing to do with all this, the carpenters, the bakers.'

In the film, Janine di Giovanni says she feels grateful to be able to write about the war, but adds: 'You often feel like a vulture. That you are there, witnessing people's horrible pain and atrocities and you're just standing there and then of course you're gonna go home. The people you are writing about, are stuck there forever. But if no one is there to tell the story of what's happening, then there is just going to be silence and the pages of history aren't going to be written.'

Nicole Tung definitely recognizes the feeling, but also thinks there's sometimes a wrong perception of a journalist's and photographer's job. She explains: 'We are making a living from



©7 Days in Syria



©7 Days in Syria



© Camera Press Ltd/HH

JANINE DI GIOVANNI

(New Jersey 1961)

Award-winning journalist Janine di Giovanni began her career covering the first Palestinian intifada in the late 1980s and after that reported on the war in Chechnya, the Balkan wars, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt. She is the Middle East editor for *Newsweek*, contributing editor of *Vanity Fair* and has also published in *The New York Times*, *the Guardian* and others. She is an Ochberg Fellow at Columbia University and an Associate Fellow at the Geneva Center for Policy Studies.

people's misery, but we actually spend money to go to all these places because we passionately care. It's not that you get thousands of dollars for a picture, as some people seem to think. If we didn't have these pictures, we wouldn't have an idea of what's going on.'

CAMERA AS WEAPON

One of the most compelling stories told in the film is that of ex-English teacher and now photographer Nour Kelze (pictured on p.16). She had dedicated herself to tell the story of the Syrian civil war, and heartbreakingly explains why she is so determined to do her work on the front line. In the film, she says about carrying a camera: 'I think it's the same as carrying a weapon. You show what is going on and it's the same as fighting on the front line. You know, in the 1980s, we had a lot of trouble with Bashar al-Assad's father, Hafez al-Assad. There were massacres but people didn't know about it. Nobody took a video or a picture. We are making sure that mistake doesn't happen again.'

For Nicole Tung, it's different though. She

doesn't see her camera as a weapon: 'I think it's not the same for a local as it is for a foreigner like me. For Nour, the war is also about her family, her friends, her blood, her country. But then again, it depends on the situation. We spent a week in a hospital in Aleppo, around the clock wounded civilians were brought in. It is so necessary to witness that but at the same time you feel powerless as a journalist. You feel very close to what is happening. I am a journalist, not an activist, but it's a fine line. In such a situation, you know that there is a right and a wrong. Am I not a journalist when I don't believe in objectivity?'

In the film, Tung travels to the front line in Aleppo, but without her travel companion Janine di Giovanni. We see Tung in a car heading for the war front right after Di Giovanni has expressed her thoughts about taking risks. 'I feel responsible,' Di Giovanni says. 'I feel that there are people whose stories need to be told and who are unable to tell them themselves. Although what I would risk before I had my son and what I risk now is very different. It's not the

The civil war in Syria



When the Arab Spring reached Syria in March 2011, thousands of Syrians took to the streets to demand the removal of the regime of president Bashar al-Assad. Within several months, the numbers of protesters grew to hundreds of thousands, mainly in reaction to the increasing brutality of the government's crackdown of the protests. Since then, the situation has culminated into all-out civil war. The growth of Islamic State (IS) in Syria has intensified the human rights crisis. More than 250,000 people have lost their lives in the war and more than 11 million people have fled their homes.

Sources: Amnesty International, BBC



Syrian photographer Nour Kelze
in *7 Days in Syria*

sniping and it's not the shelling that scares me, because quite frankly that's in the hands of the Gods. It's getting kidnapped by some radical group.'

Kidnappings are a recurring theme in *7 Days in Syria*. Just over three weeks before Tung and Di Giovanni went to Syria, the American journalist James Foley was kidnapped, southwest of Aleppo close to Taftanaz on the road to Idlib. It was unclear at the time who kidnapped him or where he was. During the filming, the news came of a team being captured not too far from where Tung and Di Giovanni were – these turned out to be NBC's chief foreign correspondent Richard Engel and his team; they escaped from captivity after five days. Journalist Steven Sotloff was in Aleppo during the filming and talked with the others about their colleagues disappearing and how much they worry about them. Sotloff would be kidnapped in August that year, 2013. Both James Foley and Steven Sotloff didn't survive their captivity by ISIS: Foley was beheaded

in August 2014, Sotloff a few weeks later in September. Janine di Giovanni and Nicole Tung dedicate their film to their colleagues who gave everything.

FROM THE OUTSIDE

Photographer Nour Kelze didn't manage to stick to her vow to never give up sharing the stories of the Syrian civil war: Nicole Tung says she believes she now resides in Istanbul. The parts with Kelze were filmed by another filmmaker, Matthew VanDyke, and Tung is not in touch with Kelze now.

Janine di Giovanni is now reporting on Iran, the country opening up after the nuclear deal with the United States was implemented and the sanctions against the country lifted. By the time we asked her for an interview, she was practically packing her bag to fly to Tehran.

And Nicole Tung? She says: 'I hated it that I had to leave Syria. I really didn't want to go. But also, I was so worried about James Foley. Now, I try to stay in the news loop, I read all the



©7 Days in Syria

7 Days in Syria

Robert Rippberger

(Syria/United States, 2015, 75 min.)

FILM



analyses about Syria, I try to stay in touch with people. But it's hard. One day you talk on Skype, the next day a silence of months starts and you can't get in touch. You don't realize that you may not see people again. It's like you want to go have a beer with a friend but you postpone because you think you'll catch up later, but then, you don't, you can't anymore.'

She hasn't let go of the Syrians though. She follows them with her camera wherever she can, now staying on the Greek island of Lesbos where Syrian refugees arrive from Turkey. 'I have been to Lebanon as well, and I will go there again. I can follow the story from the outside, so that's what I will do.' ■

Harsh and disturbing documentary in which *Newsweek* reporter Janine di Giovanni travels to Syria to witness how citizens live and survive in the war zone. Together with photojournalist Nicole Tung she goes on a seven day tour across the country to show not only the horrors of war, but also the strength and courage of those who face death and destruction every day.

MEET THE TRUE HEROES | SCREENINGS

Sat 19 March 15:00 Theater aan het Spui Kz

Janine di Giovanni is one of the guests in the 'Daily Matters' talkshow at 16:30 in Theater aan het Spui foyer

Sun 20 March 12:00 Filmhuis Den Haag 1

Extended Q&A with Nicole Tung, Janine di Giovanni, director Robert Rippberger and an expert. Moderator: Petra Stienen

Mon 21 March 16:15 Filmhuis Den Haag 1

Tue 22 March 15:15 Filmhuis Den Haag 3

Q&A with Nicole Tung and director Robert Rippberger

Meet Nicole Tung, Filmhuis Den Haag Studio A, 17:00 - 17:30.

ENSAF HAIDAR

FIGHTING FROM ABROAD

Saudi Arabia is the most gender-segregated nation in the world. Although changes are happening, they go hand in hand with setbacks. The documentary *Saudi Arabia: A Wind of Change* gives the country's girl power a surprising voice. For example that of Ensaf Haidar, wife-turned-activist of imprisoned Saudi blogger Raif Badawi. 'Evaluating the country's developments is the task of governments and journalists.'

BY NICOLIEN ZUIJDGEST

She may be one of the world's best-known spouses as 'the wife of the Saudi blogger'. Ensaf Haidar's husband Raif Badawi was arrested in 2012 on charges of 'insulting Islam through electronic channels'. In 2014, then 30-year-old Badawi was sentenced to ten years in prison, one thousand lashes and a fine. His flogging, to be carried out over twenty weeks, is currently postponed due to his poor

health. Ensaf Haidar and their three children now reside in Canada, where they have been granted political asylum.

ENDLESS WAITING

In the documentary *Saudi Arabia: A Wind of Change* Haidar is one of the female voices speaking out. She describes her personal situation as 'endless waiting'. I tell her that I



ENSAF HAIDAR

(Jazan 1975)

Ensaf Haidar and Raif Badawi married in 2002, against the will of Haidar's parents. They have two daughters and a son. In 2006, Badawi created the blog 'Free Saudi Liberals'. He was arrested in 2012 for insulting Islam and was charged with apostasy. After receiving death threats, Haidar fled the country. She and her children were granted political asylum in Canada. Haidar is partly responsible for the great wave of international solidarity for her husband's cause.

respect her strong personality. 'The situation in my country taught me to be strong. I learned this from Raif.' She doesn't miss Saudi Arabia. 'I want to live in a country that accepts me as a human being, and respects my rights. Canada feels like my home country.'

'We miss Raif,' says Haidar. 'Him not being with his family is the most painful.' When Haidar speaks personally about her husband, she speaks in the plural. In Saudi culture, one always views the family and community as a collective. Her children are in their formative stage and need a father's guidance, she says. 'My kids want to do anything a child wants to do with their father: play, fool around, talk. Our house misses him.'

Haidar describes her husband's psychological situation as 'very, very, very bad'. She talks less often and briefer to her husband now. With the new prison regime things get arduous. Haidar: 'Previously Raif could talk about his conditions in prison and the lack of expression. The fact that he doesn't speak about this is a sign that "his file is closed".' Haidar expects a new phase

in the sentence soon, yet she is anxious of the change and its consequences.

GIGGLES

Saudi Arabian politics guarantee to make juicy headlines in the West. Women are prohibited from driving cars and female adult citizens need a male guardian for many legal matters. Although Saudi Arabia has achieved major advances over the past four decades in women's education, only one quarter of the female labour force is employed. By the end of 2015, women were given the right to vote in municipal elections, yet two months later the government ordered that men and women remain separate in local council meetings.

As Raif Badawi tries to change his country from within, the documentary *Saudi Arabia: A Wind of Change* shows how many women – and men – manage to move within the existing limitations and bring changes step by step. The documentary highlights the obstacles for female citizens in daily life and gives inspiring examples of girl power circumventing difficulties.

Women's rights in Saudi Arabia



Despite some improvements in promoting women's rights in Saudi Arabia, particularly through allocating them 30 seats out of 150 in the Shura Council and opening up a number of economic opportunities for them, women and girls are still subject to discrimination in law and practice, in particular through the existing male guardianship system over women. Women have a subordinate status to men under the law, particularly in relation to family matters such as marriage, divorce, child custody and inheritance, and they are inadequately protected against sexual and other violence.

Source: Amnesty International



Hilarious scenes underline the absurdity of the country's gender apartheid. A Saudi female TV talk show host, whose programme is recorded in the United Arab Emirates, uncontrollably giggles on air when a conservative cleric argues that women should not be driving, because when they get a flat tyre, they risk rape by soldiers who step in to help.

When I ask Haidar's opinion about developments in Saudi Arabia, she is extremely careful at first. 'I believe that anybody has the right to express themselves, but they have to respect certain boundaries. I hope someday there will be human freedoms.' Her calculating response seems to be motivated by fear of how her answers can affect her husband's situation. Then she says she doesn't want to change anything in the country, she just wants the release of her spouse.

LEGAL MINOR

Four years ago, Haidar left Saudi Arabia. She doesn't feel in the position to evaluate the

country's developments since then. 'I get my information from the Internet, I am not in touch with Saudi women. People inside are better capable to judge the changes. Don't focus on driving cars, focus on women's rights. The international community and journalists are the ones that should evaluate developments.'

Inside the conservative kingdom the general belief is that men have to protect the honour of women. A woman is seductive by nature, it is said, therefore a society needs gender apartheid to avoid men getting tempted. Haidar stresses that a woman lives her whole life in the shadow of her male guardian. 'A woman should have the same rights as a man. Saudi Arabia is a patriarchal society, a men's world. In my days there were no women's rights in Saudi Arabia. I needed to ask my husband's permission for anything. Whether a woman is 50 or 80, she is *qaasir*, a legal minor. Can you imagine a situation when a husband dies, and a Saudi mother becomes a legal minor to her eldest son of 12?'

A short silence; the spouse that holds a



Saudi Arabia: A Wind of Change

Sylvain Lepetit/Miyuki Droz Aramaki

(France/Saudi Arabia, 2015, 52 min.)



FILM

degree in Islamic teachings reconsiders her words. 'I don't want to say the wrong things, I don't really want to talk about this. I want to emphasize that it is not the law, but traditional habits that dominate the law. In any religion, it is cultural traditions colliding. Morality is the most important factor.'

Haidar expresses a thousand thanks to the international community, organizations and individuals for their continuous pressure for the release of her husband. 'Countries should do their utmost to defend not just the rights of Raif, but anybody's rights. Every person has the right to speak out in a peaceful, civilized way. I have hope. Without hope, I cannot live.'

She says I am welcome to call again if I have further questions. Best not to call on Saturday mornings, though: 'Then I take driving lessons.' 'Congratulations!' I respond, and we burst into laughter. ■

Two filmmakers travel to Saudi Arabia to gain insight into the everyday lives of women there. They talk with Saudi women who apparently do not object their closed life, but also to revolutionary Saudis, such as a female talk show host who presents a successful TV programme from abroad where she takes on Saudi clerics. We meet a brave mother with a love of basketball and a fashion designer who, despite the prohibitions, designs provocative dresses for women.

MEET THE TRUE HERO | SCREENINGS

Sat 19 March 14:30 Filmhuis Den Haag 4

Q&A with Ensaf Haidar and director Miyuki Droz Aramaki. Moderator: Laila al-Zwaini

Mon 21 March 12:30 Filmhuis Den Haag 4

Tue 22 March 21:30 Filmhuis Den Haag 5

Q&A with Ensaf Haidar and director Miyuki Droz Aramaki. Moderator: Lex Bohlmeijer

Wed 23 March 17:30 Filmhuis Den Haag 1

Q&A with Ensaf Haidar and director Miyuki Droz Aramaki.

Meet Ensaf Haidar, Filmhuis Den Haag Studio A, 19:00 - 19:30

YE HAIYAN

FEMINIST HOOLIGAN

‘A good system is achieved by people’s efforts,’ says Ye Haiyan. The activist, also known as Hooligan Sparrow, considers herself one of the people who will have to change China’s system. She stands up for the rights of women and girls in her homeland – despite the consequences for her freedom.

BY EEFJE RAMMELOO

Activist Ye Haiyan is back where she started, at the countryside near Wuhan City. During a telephone interview, Ye, who is permanently under surveillance, says she is rather optimistic about what she has achieved in recent years. ‘Officials treat us differently now. They tend to be softer; they might invite us for a meal or help us start a business. Previously, their rude way of solving human rights problems didn’t get them the results they wanted. It would merely expose the issues to the international community.’

Ye says this right after mentioning there are two men standing next to her to listen in on the call. This isn’t anything she hasn’t experienced before. Threats, interrogations and being followed wherever she goes, are part of her life.

PROSTITUTES’ RIGHTS

When someone told Ye, over ten years ago, that she was a feminist, she could only agree to that. She worked as a teacher, did some marketing for medical products and sold her

YE HAIYAN

(Wuhan 1975)

Ye Haiyan is called 'Hooligan Sparrow' because of her free spirit and frankness. With (semi) nude pictures she asked attention for the plight of underpaid sex workers, and later for the rape of six schoolgirls. She is part of a group of well known activists who are constantly under surveillance. Ye was in prison twice, and was chased out of several towns. Because of the welfare of her teenage daughter, she finally returned to her home village near Wuhan.



©Hooligan Sparrow

family's crop on the online marketplace Tabao. But as a single mother, divorced after the birth of her daughter, she lived together with some prostitutes and saw how they were being used and left behind by men who promised love and got them pregnant. Ye was touched by their hardship.

She became an activist when she set up a website named China Grassroots Women's Rights. As time passed, she focused more and more on prostitutes' rights. In a workshop, Ye taught women about their rights, and on the streets of Wuhan she asked people to sign her proposal to make the 3rd of August China's Sex Workers Day.

One day in 2007, she talked to an NGO leader from Hong Kong and mentioned that she could never work as a prostitute herself. She thought it would hurt her chances of ever remarrying. At that point the NGO leader accused Ye of looking down at sex workers, despite her compassion. It made Ye think about what she had been doing until then, and she decided to offer sexual services herself.

When Ye found out that prostitutes in Bobai, Guangxi province, were paid only 10 yuan (1,50 euro) to satisfy a customer, she decided to go work in the same brothel and make her services free of charge. To raise attention for the underpayment of those prostitutes, she posted her advertisement on the Internet. Her (semi) nude pictures caused a stir in Chinese media. 'In Western countries it might not be such an issue,' she says. 'China is rather conservative. At first it was only a personal matter, but later it became a way to show people couldn't get to me.' It wasn't about seeking attention, Ye claims. That changed when she realized her message was widely spread because of its shocking effect.

Ye received most attention with a campaign she organized on the southern island of Hainan. A school principle had taken six teenagers to a hotel room and raped them in exchange for cell phone money. A banner with which Ye called on the principle to leave the children alone and take a room with her, went viral throughout the country.

Chinese crackdown on women's rights activists



Women's rights activists in China are continually intimidated, harassed and detained. In recent years, Chinese authorities have shut down several women's rights NGOs and imprisoned activists and lawyers as part of a wider crackdown on civil society. One of the victims is leading human rights lawyer Wang Yu, who campaigned against sexual harassment of school girls and defended women's rights activists, including Ye Haiyan. She was detained in July 2015. She is being held at a secret location on suspicion of 'inciting subversion of state power'.

Source: Amnesty International



DAUGHTER

Since then, Ye has lost her roots. Time after time she was chased out of cities as a *persona non grata*. This unstable life was especially hard on her daughter, she says. 'Yaxin is now afraid of strangers and constantly thinks someone is watching us.' Her daughter is the reason things have been quiet around Ye Haiyan for the past year or two. 'I know sacrifices are needed if we want to succeed, but as a mother I have the responsibility to take care of my daughter. I can't give her up.'

Now, Ye has found her roots again in the village her family originates from. Her activism these days merely takes place online. The activists with whom she used to collaborate are at a distance, even though she considers it essential to stay organized. 'I believe society can only change if a group of people have the same ideas.'

A sore spot is the fact that her lawyer Wang Yu has been in prison since the summer of

2015. Wang fought alongside Ye for women's rights. She was arrested in the clampdown on human right lawyers of the renowned Fengrui law firm in Beijing. 'I can't help her. I have told her that our power is weak.' Ye says that she is sad. 'But Wang said she is ready for prison and that she understood the risks of her work.'

Ye finds some consolation in the idea that it wasn't all for nothing. Social awareness has grown these past years. On the Internet, Chinese discuss political issues, and criticizing men who rape is no longer taboo. However, there is still no freedom of speech. Ye hopes that government officials will start communicating more rationally with people whose ideas they don't like, instead of simply arresting anyone, as happened to several feminists around Women's Day 2015.

Ye herself has taken precautionary measures. One of her friends promised to take care of her daughter if something might happen to her. Sometimes she considers fleeing the country;



©Hooligan Sparrow

Hooligan Sparrow

Nanfu Wang

(China/United States, 2016, 84 min.)

FILM



the freedom with which colleagues like Ai Weiwei can work is tempting. But Ye rather stays. 'A good system is achieved by the people's efforts. Another country's system may be better, but its own people achieved it. How could I just go and enjoy their system? Maybe things will improve in some years. If I am somewhere else, I will not see it happen.'

A few hours after the phone conversation, Ye Haiyan sends a text message. She had been summoned to the police station to explain what the interview was about. 'I'm used to it, but I hope you will not get into trouble.' ■

Courageous documentary by young Chinese filmmaker Nanfu Wang. Armed with her camera, she follows a group of activists under the guidance of Ye Haiyan (Hooligan Sparrow) during their protests against impunity surrounding a sex scandal. Her critical attitude makes Sparrow an enemy of the state and the government does everything it can to silence her. Soon the activists aren't safe anywhere and have to deal with interrogations, arrests and police brutality on a daily basis.

MEET THE TRUE HERO | SCREENINGS

Sat 19 March 20:00 Theater aan het Spui Gz
A Matter of ACT Night. Q&A with Nanfu Wang.
Moderator: Simone Weimans

Mon 21 March 17:00 Filmhuis Den Haag 2
Q&A with Nanfu Wang and Teng Biao
Meet Nanfu Wang and Teng Biao, Filmhuis Den Haag Studio A, 19:00 - 19:30

Tue 22 March 17:15 Filmhuis Den Haag 2
Q&A with Nanfu Wang and Teng Biao

Thu 24 March 15:00 Theater aan het Spui Gz

OLEG KHABIBRAKHMANOV CONFRONTING FEAR

In a society overtaken by fear, the Russian NGO Committee for the Prevention of Torture pledges to continue its work in Chechnya ‘whatever happens’. Oleg Khabibrakhmanov is one of the Committee’s specialists on Chechen matters. ‘People who have nothing to lose, are our most reliable partners.’

BY GEERT GROOT KOERKAMP

Two consecutive wars in the nineteen-nineties and the early 21st century reduced Chechen capital Grozny to a pile of rubble. Endless carcasses of destroyed homes bore witness to a bombing campaign on a scale Europe had not seen since World War II. Tens of thousands of civilians lost their lives, but this is only a rough estimate. The actual death toll remains unknown. Scores of people were abducted by federal troops, never to be seen again. Up till this day, relatives continue the search for their loved ones.

In today’s Grozny, virtually nothing reminds of this carnage. Modern skyscrapers, residential blocks, offices and one of Europe’s largest mosques dominate the city center. Luxury shops line Putin Avenue, once called Victory Avenue. A stone’s throw away is the palace of Chechnya’s lone ruler Ramzan Kadyrov, who is now pondering the icing on the cake: a 400 metres tall tower, named after his father Akhmat-Khadzhi. If ever a city has risen from the ashes like a Phoenix, Grozny seems a good candidate.



OLEG KHABIBRAKHMANOV

(Kazan 1978)

After his law studies, Oleg Khabibrakhmanov briefly joined the police force, before devoting himself entirely to human rights work. First as an investigator with the Human Rights Centre in Kazan, of which he was one of the founders in 2001. The centre revealed cases of torture and other abusive behaviour by the police. Khabibrakhmanov joined the Committee Against Torture, which started functioning in 2000. He developed into a specialist on Chechnya and went there in 2009 as a member of the first mobile group.

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GRIM REALITIES

But modern-day Grozny is a facade that hides the grim realities of today's Chechnya. The skyscrapers are largely empty. Fancy shops exist only for the happy few, in an otherwise poor republic where unemployment and corruption are rife. And invisible to the naked eye is an atmosphere of total fear that has permeated this society, something even carefully orchestrated mass meetings in support of Kadyrov cannot hide.

'This is a very typical authoritarian regime,' says human rights activist Oleg Khabibrakhmanov. He has just returned from a month long stay in Chechnya, on a mission for the Committee for the Prevention of Torture, an NGO based in the Russian city Nizhny Novgorod. 'There is an absolute fear of the people to address human rights defenders.'

The NGO, founded in 2000 as Committee Against Torture, investigates reports of torture in Chechnya and several other Russian regions. Last year, the organization was marked a

'foreign agent' by the Russian Ministry of Justice, a move clearly aimed at smearing the group's image, and it was decided to found a new committee under another name. In the meantime, the new organization has also been dubbed 'foreign agent', for allegedly receiving money from abroad. The committee's head, Igor Kalyapin, has pledged the work will continue whatever happens.

Committee members have no permanent presence in Chechnya; the committee works with mobile brigades that visit the Grozny office on a regular basis. Work in Chechnya started in 2009, following the abduction and subsequent murder of Natalya Estemirova, the most outspoken Chechen human rights campaigner.

It has never been easy, admits Khabibrakhmanov. The Grozny office was torched in 2014 and ransacked in June 2015, to the cheers of an amassed crowd. Kadyrov suggested Igor Kalyapin had ties with Islamist rebels who attacked Grozny in 2014. Still, until

Russian laws against NGOs



Since Vladimir Putin's return to the presidency in 2012, Russian NGOs have been under attack in an obvious attempt to silence all criticism of the government. In 2012, parliament passed the 'foreign agents law', which requires all NGOs receiving foreign funding to register as 'an organization performing the functions of a foreign agent'. The 'law on undesirable organizations' states that the Prosecutor General can decide that a certain foreign organization 'poses a threat' to the country's 'constitutional order, defence potential or state security'. Any work with, or assistance to, the organization becomes unlawful and punishable by hefty fines or imprisonment.

Source: Amnesty International



recently, Chechens continued to apply to the committee for help. But over the past one-and-a-half years the mood has changed, says Khabibrakhmanov. People are afraid to contact him and his colleagues. 'There is total fear. The situation deteriorated after the office fire of December 2014, when they also started to pour filth on Igor Kalyapin in the mass media and Kadyrov started to talk about Kalyapin in a very negative way.'

NOTHING TO LOSE

It is a fear that has gradually overtaken Chechen society since the end of the last war and the establishment of Kadyrov's absolute rule. Fear, Khabibrakhmanov knows, makes people vulnerable. 'As a rule, the authorities act against people they know to be afraid,' he says. 'This total fear is killing. But if a person understands he has nothing to lose and is ready to go to the end, the authorities realize they cannot do anything about it. In the film *Chechnya: War Without Trace* there are an old man and his

wife, whose only daughters have disappeared. They simply have nothing to lose. They don't give a damn about all these Kadyrovs and the threats, they are ready to go to the end. People like this are our most reliable partners, our most reliable reporters. Scaring them is useless.'

Fear of what might happen does not deter the members of the anti-torture committee. They do take some safety measures and don't spend nights in Grozny. 'But ensuring your safety on the territory of the Chechen Republic is impossible,' says Khabibrakhmanov. 'Therefore we do not think too much about that. Whatever is destined to happen, will happen. We simply get in the car and go.'

He considers human rights work interesting and rewarding. 'I did not especially strive to be there, but it was necessary to work in Chechnya. It was a difficult situation, help was needed, Natalya Estemirova was killed, we had to go there. So why not me? And once you get involved in the North Caucasus, it's difficult not to continue. There are obligations to be met,



Chechnya: War Without Trace

Manon Loizeau

(France, 2015, 86 min.)



people calling for help, work that needs to be done and brought to a logical end.'

The committee members investigate any reports by citizens about torture, trying to find confirmation. If there is enough evidence, a judicial procedure can be initiated. Khabibrakhmanov: 'We appeal to the law enforcement bodies, we demand a criminal case to be brought to court and those guilty to be held responsible. If we cannot win the case on a national level, we appeal to the European Court of Human Rights.' That is the way Chechen cases usually go, he adds. 'Even when we have all the evidence, when we are convinced human rights were violated and that people were abducted by state officials, we never succeed in achieving an effective investigation in Chechnya. They don't allow that to happen.' ■

A unique and disturbing look at Chechnya's remarkable transformation. This war-torn country was replaced by a brand new state where skyscrapers and luxury malls erased all traces of conflict. Behind the gleaming facade, however, the bereaved live in terror, oppression and uncertainty about the fate of their vanished loved ones. Journalist Manon Loizeau has been reporting on the Chechen conflict for many years. After the war, she returned to a country that she found in a state of 'complete schizophrenia'.

MEET THE TRUE HERO | SCREENINGS

Sun 20 March 14:15 Theater aan het Spui Kz
Q&A with Oleg Khabibrakhmanov and an expert. Moderator: Kysia Hekster

Wed 23 March 21:15 Filmhuis Den Haag 1
Q&A with Oleg Khabibrakhmanov

Fri 25 March 19:00 Theater aan het Spui Gz
Wordt Vervolgd Event. Q&A with Oleg Khabibrakhmanov and an expert. Moderator: Marnix de Bruyne.

CONSUELO MORALES

SEARCHING THE DISAPPEARED

It was Consuelo Morales' religious calling that landed her in the world of human rights. There she discovered that serving God and serving man go extremely well together. For over twenty years, Morales has led the human rights organization Cadhac in the Northern Mexican state of Nuevo León. In recent years, she focused primarily on Mexico's most serious problem in this area, the over 27,000 *desaparecidos* ('missing').

BY CEES ZOOM

'The first disappearances in Nuevo León began in 2006,' Consuelo Morales remembers. During that year, the Mexican president at the time, Calderón, decided to send the army into the streets to do something about the increasing violence between criminal factions. It backfired: the Mexican drug war spiralled completely out of control and cost over one hundred thousand people their lives. Many of the over 27,000 people who disappeared had been arrested by the army or the police. For Cadhac, the human

rights organization that Consuelo Morales, a nun, had founded in 1993, the disappearances became the most significant area of interest.

'In 2009, we had twelve cases, and things really started to skyrocket after that,' Morales says. 'The years 2010 to 2012 were awful. The state had been practically paralysed by the wave of violence, both economically as well as socially. No-one was safe, on the streets or in their homes. The disappearances rose to three hundred cases per year. We had no choice but



© Reuters/Edgard Garrido

CONSUELO MORALES

(Monterrey 1948)

Sister Consuelo Gloria Morales Elizondo is a member of the Congregation of Our Lady, Canons of St. Augustine. For years, she worked with indigenous communities in the state of Veracruz, and with street children. In 1993, she returned to her birthplace, Monterrey, where she set up the first human rights organization in the city, Citizens Supporting Human Rights (Ciudadanos en Apoyo de Derechos Humanos, Cadhac), which she has led since its foundation. In 2015, Morales won the National Award for Human Rights.

to focus on them, since it took years before the authorities were willing to do anything about it at all.'

MILITARY INTERVENTION

The Mexican government emphasises that its efforts reinforce the rule of law. 'Here in Nuevo León, we see how the authorities define this: more military,' Morales says. 'They arrest as many suspects as possible; anyone with a suspicious-looking face is picked up. This often includes poor kids who can't help it that they have a face that the military thinks looks suspicious. This is undermining the rule of law, not respecting it. It's a serious error, particularly because the safety of citizens is not a priority.'

According to Morales, there are many factors that influence 'social harmony' in Mexico. 'When a young boy doesn't have any alternatives, and he can't study because there are no schools, and there is no work that pays a decent salary... This inequality, the poverty, it just helps organized crime to grow. Why doesn't the Mexican government use any

other mechanisms? Why not monitor the bank accounts of criminals? They should have dealt with the economic power of the criminals by seizing their money and assets. This might have happened at the expense of a couple of corrupt politicians, but then we wouldn't have had the bloodshed we are now experiencing.'

The strategy of violence has been proven ineffective, according to Morales. 'One thing that has been proven: every time the military is present, we see an increase in human rights violations. The military and human rights: this is not a good combination.'

BELIEFS

How, as a nun, Consuelo Morales ended up getting involved in this fight for human rights is a long story. When she was studying at a seminary in Cuernavaca, they sent her to a human rights centre to help out. She really didn't like this. 'Even the word "human rights" inspired fear in me, it made me think of murder and torture. Ultimately I discovered what working for human rights meant for me:

The Mexican disappearance epidemic



In Mexico, forced disappearances are such a common occurrence that they have almost become part of ordinary life, according to Amnesty International. At present, the whereabouts of more than 27,000 people remain unknown. In many cases the people reported missing were last seen while being arrested by the police or detained by the military. In the rare occasions when investigations actually take place, Amnesty says, they are little more than a mere formality to pretend something is being done. Many relatives take it upon themselves to search for their loved ones.

Source: Amnesty International



aligning what I think with what I do. I slowly realized that human rights, human dignity, lie at the heart of the Gospel. Human rights are therefore perfect for me; I can do what I believe in in my life.'

Morales accepts the fact that this doesn't happen without risk in Mexico. 'Everything in life comes with risks. It might be better to take risks for our beliefs than for other things.'

Aren't there days that she is afraid? 'Yes, of course. We have had some very difficult years. Our telephones were tapped, the park across the street was always full of police, I was followed whenever I went anywhere. One day, someone had hung four decapitated cats on our door, with the message: "You all are next." At the time, Nuevo León had an extremely conservative government. There had been a prison uprising and we defended the prisoners. They wanted medicine, that was all. We had to turn to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Sometimes it seems laws only exist if they are convenient for the government.

When the government says it will enforce the law but in reality only uses it to its own advantage, chaos ensues.'

RECOGNITION

Late last year, Consuelo Morales won the National Award for Human Rights, personally presented to her by the Mexican president, Peña Nieto. Didn't it feel strange to receive an award from a government that is responsible for such a poor human rights situation? 'We had long discussions about this. Ultimately, we said if even the government is able to acknowledge that our work is important, we will accept the award. It is recognition that the path we have chosen is the right one. Besides, it was a good opportunity to make the tragedies of so many families visible.'

In her acceptance speech, Morales asked the authorities to get more involved. 'To take the fate of the families seriously and not take on the role of defenders of soldiers and marines. Not that they are all bad. When a judgment



Kingdom of Shadows

Bernardo Ruiz

(Mexico/United States, 2015, 73 min.)

FILM



is rendered in a soldier's case, I often think: he carried it out, but the order came from higher up.'

Cadhac's ultimate goal is not for people to end up in prison. 'What we want is an end to the violence, and for the real perpetrators to pay. The soldiers are also victims within their own structure. They are sent out onto the streets to play a role they are not qualified or suitable for. We want the people truly responsible to be held accountable, in the knowledge that there can be no peace as long as there is no truth and no justice.' ■

The stories of an activist, a special agent and a former drugs smuggler blend together in *Kingdom of Shadows*. It creates an intriguing image of the human side of the Mexican drug crisis and shows how it could derail so dramatically. A kaleidoscopic image of the war on drugs. The portraits of three protagonists are intersected by people whose lives are affected daily by the war on drugs.

MEET THE TRUE HERO | SCREENINGS

Sat 19 March 15:00 Filmhuis Den Haag 2
Q&A with Consuelo Morales and director Bernardo Ruiz

Sun 20 March 17:00 Filmhuis Den Haag 2
Q&A with Consuelo Morales and director Bernardo Ruiz.

Meet Consuelo Morales, Filmhuis Den Haag Studio A, 18:45 - 19:15

Mon 21 March 21:00 Theater aan het Spui Gz
Extended Q&A with Consuelo Morales, director Bernardo Ruiz and an expert. Moderator: Katrien Gottlieb

Tue 22 March 15:30 Theater aan het Spui Kz

ELIETE PARAGUASSU FIGHTING A DRAGON

Eliete Paraguassu dedicates her life to the preservation of the traditional *quilombola* fishermen's culture in the Bay of All Saints in Bahia, Brazil. This black culture is threatened in its existence by reckless petrochemical industrial activities in one of Brazil's historical hotspots. 'They have no idea how painful the life of a fisherwoman in the mangrove is. Nobody knows how much pain the destruction of the sandbanks causes our communities.'

BY NOP DUYS

I saw Eliete Paraguassu in full action during the production of the documentary film *No Rio e No Mar!*. It was on Maré, a small island in the Bay of All Saints in the Brazilian north-eastern state of Bahia. That October morning she was presiding over a meeting with a municipal delegation from Salvador on the construction of basic sanitation in her village of Porto dos Cavalos, when she received a phone call from relatives at the other

side of the bay. An explosion had been heard in the neighbouring city. Flames came from a storage tank of the local natural gas station of TransPetro, a subsidiary of Brazil's energy giant Petrobras. Parts of the population were already evacuated because of the risk of a larger explosion.

While rushing towards the city in a motorized canoe, Eliete Paraguassu told us with her



ELIETE PARAGUASSU

(Maré 1979)

Eliete Paraguassu da Conceição lives on the island of Maré in the Bay of All Saints in the Brazilian state of Bahia. Eliete works as a fisherwoman in the bay to support her two children. She is a prominent figure in the struggle to protect the maritime environment and the traditional fishing communities in Bahia against the advancing industrialization of the bay area. Since 2007 she coordinates several local fishing associations and plays an important role in the development of policies towards the black community.

©No Rio e No Mar

characteristic militancy about the regular accidents at the various petrochemical industry sites on the borders of the bay. She described the permanent threat of explosions and the pollution of the local fishing grounds. 'Since about twelve years we feel threatened. Every morning we wake up wondering what kind of surprise will await us today. What explosion will occur, what decree will be issued?'

And it's true. At night, Petrobras' huge petrochemical installation with its million lights appears like a dragon, waiting to usurp the surrounding quietness.

QUILOMBO CULTURE

Eliete is one of the leaders of the local Fisherman's Union in the villages of Porto dos Cavalos, Martelo and Ponta Grossa on the northern side of the island. Their main objective is the protection of the traditional fishing grounds of quilombola communities against the growing presence of the petrochemical industry. In their view, that presence is part of the unbridled and destructive economic policy of

desenvolvimento (development) by the Brazilian authorities.

'It is a perverse system,' Eliete says. 'We are convinced that our culture, the *quilombo* culture, will continue in the traditional way. We know the strength of our culture and our people will carry on. But the petrochemical companies will attempt to disturb us with their installations. They will reduce our quilombos, our fishermen's communities, and destroy our indigenous community. We know the mangrove is full of blood, so to speak, and we will not sit still with our arms crossed! I became politically active because we need to protect this space, which ties us to the ancestral culture of our peoples. We are killed in the name of profit, in the name of money.'

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Activities of the petrochemical industry in the Bay of All Saints date from the nineteen-fifties, when Petrobras discovered oil and gas reserves in the area. In the following decades, several refineries and port facilities were developed,

Pollution in All Saints Bay



Ilha de Maré is home to descendants of runaway slaves. The island is a quilombo, a reserve with a certain degree of self-control. The people who live there (*quilombolas*) are fishermen. The communities are threatened by the activities of Petrobras, a state-controlled company that extracts gas and oil on the island. The profits the company makes through its polluting refining and petrochemical operations hardly benefit the local population. Education and access to health care are insufficient, while the industrial activities are a burden for the local fishermen due to rapidly declining fish stocks and contaminated water resources.

Source: No Rio e No Mar!



such as TransPetro and Braskem, a joint-venture of Brazilian construction firm Odebrecht with Petrobras.

'It hurts me deeply when yet another petrochemical installation or port facility is constructed near fishermen's communities,' says Eliete. 'They destroy thousands and thousands of mangrove areas. And by destroying these mangroves, they destroy us. It's no incident, it's part of structural, unbridled developmental policies by the Brazilian government and industry. It transforms our community: in a disturbed mangrove it's impossible to catch small fish and crabs.'

According to Eliete, existing procedures for environmental and social protection are poorly observed by the companies. This leads to the pollution of the bay with heavy metals and other toxic waste. This, in turn, affects the traditional fishing grounds on the sandbanks and in the mangroves. Eliete, who has two children, found out that her daughter's blood contained traces of heavy metals like lead and quicksilver. She also

feared for her son's health. 'I am standing on the barricades for the lives of my children and their offspring.' Eliete mentions a case in the Bananeira community on the isle of Maré, where a child had died from lead pollution in the port of Aratú, located directly opposite the island.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The presence of big petrochemical industries not only poses a threat to the environment and to physical health, it also impacts the psychological well-being of women in the bay area. Eliete: 'The companies tell us they are operating for our benefit too, but we fear them and their staff. Women who go fishing in the mangroves are raped there by workers of these companies. In our culture it was traditionally normal for a woman to go fishing on her own in the mangroves. The authorities have no idea how these economic activities affect us, they don't know how powerless we feel when there is no help whatsoever for women being attacked. We feel threatened of losing all our rights, all

No Rio e No Mar!

Jan-Willem den Bok/Floor Koomen

(The Netherlands, 2016, 60 min.)



©No Rio e No Mar



our fishing grounds on the sandbanks and in the mangroves. We feel raped.'

Eliete and other members of the regional fishermen's associations are trying for years now to prove misconduct by the petrochemical companies and the disastrous effects of their activities on the traditional way of life of the quilombola communities. They do this together with a Bahia state public prosecutor and several academic experts on environmental issues. Some academics have even called it 'environmental racism'. Their aim is to oblige companies to operate according to environmental laws and licenses. It is not financial compensation Eliete Paraguassu is after. 'Even if they come with thousands of boats loaded with money, it will never cure our pain and that of our relatives. This is all I have on Maré: the mangrove, my parents, my children and my friends. I don't need money to be happy.' ■

The beautiful island of Ilha de Maré in Brasil was once a rare habitat full of life. It is located in a fertile portion of Brasil's All Saints Bay. A nearby river provides the area with fresh water, which has created a unique habitat. Now this little paradise is seriously threatened by the petrochemical industry. Eliete and Nega, two combative women from the fishing community, stand up against the polluting industry and indifferent government authorities. Together with Marcos, counsel for the Fishermen's Union, they take the initiative for a popular protest.

MEET THE TRUE HERO | SCREENINGS

Sun 20 March 10:30 Filmhuis Den Haag 1

Tue 22 March 19:00 Theater aan het Spui Gz
World Premiere. Extended Q&A with Eliete Paraguassu da Conceição, Raimundo Marcos Souza Brandão da Silva and director Floor Koomen

Wed 23 March 15:00 Filmhuis Den Haag 5
 Q&A with Eliete Paraguassu da Conceição and Raimundo Marcos Souza Brandão da Silva

Sat 26 March 12:45 Filmhuis Den Haag 1

PARVEZ SHARMA

BATTLING FOR THE SOUL OF ISLAM

As a gay Muslim, Indian-born filmmaker Parvez Sharma risked his life documenting his pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia. His film *A Sinner in Mecca* is a personal quest to reconcile his faith and his sexuality. 'I'm no longer worrying about whether Islam will accept me. The question is: can I accept Islam?'

BY JEROEN ANSINK

If Saudi authorities had bothered to conduct a simple Google search into Parvez Sharma's background, they would most certainly have refused him entry into the kingdom. As a gay Muslim, the Indian-born filmmaker openly defies the sharia interpretation of homosexuality as an abomination that is punishable by beatings, prison, even death. Moreover, since his 2007 documentary *A Jihad for Love*, in which he states that Islam and homosexuality are compatible, he has widely

been labelled an infidel. Yet when Sharma prepared for the hajj, the annual pilgrimage that adult Muslims should make at least once in their lifetime, he was granted a visa without problem. 'The hajj attracts at least three million believers every year,' Sharma explains from his hometown New York City. 'I guess my application must have slipped through the cracks.'

Armed with an iPhone and a firm belief that God is on his side, Sharma was able to travel



©takepart.com

PARVEZ SHARMA

(New Delhi 1975)

After a childhood in the northern Indian city of Saharanpur, Parvez Sharma studied English literature at the University of Calcutta, Mass Communication in New Delhi, Broadcast Journalism in Cardiff, and Video at the American University in Washington, DC. His film *A Jihad for Love* received the 2009 GLAAD Media Award for Outstanding Documentary. That same year, Sharma was named one of '50 visionaries who are changing your world' by *Utne Reader*. He moved to the United States in 2000, where he became a citizen in 2015.

to Mecca and Medina, the two holiest places in the Muslim faith. The journey resulted in *A Sinner in Mecca*, a documentary that delves into what Sharma calls 'the battle for the soul of Islam'. The movie states that the world's second largest religion is being hijacked by Wahhabism, a doctrine that in Sharma's words is 'regressive, cruel and puritanical'. It explains how for more than two centuries, the ultra-conservative religious leaders have been in a pact of convenience with the more secular (some might even say, hedonistic) royal family, making Saudi Arabia 'the most hypocritical society in the world'. 'It is no coincidence that fifteen of the nineteen 9/11 terrorists were Saudi,' says Sharma. 'The Kingdom has been extremely successful in exporting Wahhabi Islam to all corners of the world.'

SELFIES

While trying to reconcile his faith with his sexuality, Sharma shows a side of the hajj that is not holy at all. In one scene, he talks to a Pakistani man who admits he took part in the

honour killing of his sister-in-law. In another, a husband describes how his wife was groped by other pilgrims after the couple was accidentally separated circling the Kaaba, the building at the centre of Islam's most sacred mosque in Mecca. Sharma also documents how the progressing mass leaves heaps of plastic bags, water bottles, and other trash behind on the street. 'I'm glad they don't allow non-Muslims, so that the Western world cannot see this,' one embarrassed pilgrim remarks.

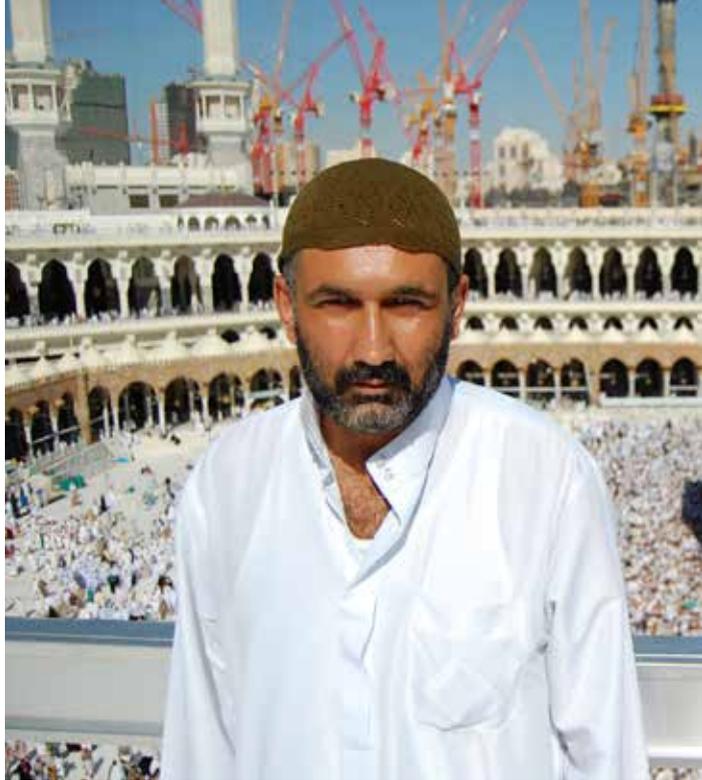
Recording such confessions was not without risks. Filming the hajj is strictly forbidden. 'I felt like I was back in the closet,' says Sharma. 'Not only as a gay Muslim, but also as a filmmaker.' Fortunately for Sharma, the pilgrimage took place in an age where 'nearly everybody has a smart phone'. For the most part, he was able to hide among fellow pilgrims taking selfies, a practice so widespread that the authorities have no choice but to tolerate it. There were moments, though, when his behaviour clearly identified him as a filmmaker. More than once, he attracted the attention of the religious

LGBT rights in Islam



In most traditional interpretations of Islam, homosexuality is considered a sin which should be punishable by law. At present, homosexuality is illegal in 77 countries – among them many countries with a Muslim majority. In six countries, all with a Muslim majority, the death penalty can be imposed on lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people (LGBT): Afghanistan, Mauritania, Sudan, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Under the Sharia law which was implemented in northern Nigeria, the death penalty also can be given. In twenty countries with a Muslim majority, same-sex relationships are not forbidden by law.

Sources: Human Rights Watch, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights



police, who took his phone away to delete the footage. 'At first, I was terrified something really bad would happen to me,' says Sharma. 'But as time progressed, I became more and more fearless. I decided to keep filming, at any cost.'

REDEMPTION AND REFORM

After his pilgrimage, Sharma is no longer struggling with the question whether Islam will accept him. 'The question is if I am able to accept Islam,' he says in the film. 'I can, but only on my own terms: as a religion of inclusion, redemption and reform, which is urgently overdue.'

His conclusion is not shared by everyone. At a screening in London, Sharma was followed outside by angry Saudi women who kept harassing him on the street. He regularly receives death threats. 'It's a heavy burden to carry, but I'm trying to ignore it. I hope that people will understand that my film is not anti-Islam. It's anti-Saudi Arabia.'

The backlash has not stopped him from

worshipping in public. Every Friday, Sharma goes to his mosque in New York, which, ironically, is funded and built with Saudi money. So far, his visits have been without incident. 'Nobody has confronted me yet. However, if I would be recognized, I would tell them that this is a matter between God and me. I'm not going to deny being a gay Muslim, although I won't make a big hoo-ha about it, either.'

Nor does Sharma flaunt his activism. The film is 'deliberately' personal, driven in part by the desire to make peace with the memory of his mother, a poet who never hid her disappointment about his sexuality. She died of cancer when he was 21. 'I'm a filmmaker who also fights for a cause. But I'm not one for protesting in the street. My work itself is evidence of my activism.'

For this reason, the film does not offer concrete solutions or a specific path forward. 'Many people in the West believe that sexuality should be out in the open. They put a lot of emphasis on labels like LGBT, perhaps too much



© A Sinner in Mecca

A Sinner in Mecca

Parvez Sharma

(India/Saudi Arabia/United States, 2015, 79 min.)

FILM



so. I don't think that these neat little boxes easily translate to other realities. If there is going to be a gay rights movement of any kind in the Middle East, it has to be compatible with their own culture. It won't be for us to decide.'

Even on those terms, true reform will be an uphill battle, says Sharma. 'I don't think it is going to happen in my lifetime. The roots of Wahhabism are very deep. And as long as the holiest places of Islam are on Saudi soil, there is nothing you can do about that.' ■

Filmmaker Parvez Sharma is both a devout Muslim and gay. Can his religion accept him? Sharma searches for answers during a pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia, where homosexuals can be sentenced to death. Sharma's journey is also one of introspection: a long-postponed examination of his relationship with his mother in India, who gave him his faith but disapproved of his sexuality. A unique account of the bizarre world of pilgrimage.

MEET THE TRUE HERO | SCREENINGS

Sat 19 March 17:45 Filmhuis Den Haag 5
Q&A with Parvez Sharma. Moderator: Laila al-Zwaini

Sun 20 March 12:30 Filmhuis Den Haag 5
Extended Q&A with Parvez Sharma and an expert.

Mon 21 March 14:30 Filmhuis Den Haag 4

Mon 21 March 19:30 Theater aan het Spui Kz
Parvez Sharma is one of the guests in the 'Daily Matters' talkshow at 21:00 in Theater aan het Spui foyer

Tue 22 March 14:45 Filmhuis Den Haag 1

FADIMATA WALET OUMAR

NOTHING WITHOUT MUSIC

When Muslim extremists took over the north of Mali, they forbade music. For four years Timbuktu was silenced, as musicians were prosecuted for plying their trade. Many sought refuge abroad, among them singer Fadimata Walet Oumar. But even in exile in Burkina Faso the leader of the band Tartit continued to support the Tuareg women and children in the refugee camps with music and education. 'To us, music is therapy.'

BY FEMKE VAN ZEIJL

The first time she was forced into exile from Mali, her country of birth, she had discovered the consolation the music of your own cultural tradition can bring. In 1992, musician and singer Fadimata Walet Oumar had fled the violence between Tuareg rebels and the Malian army. In exile, Oumar and other refugees from

around Timbuktu founded the band Tartit, which played traditional Tuareg music. 'We wanted to save our culture that was about to disappear,' she says. Not only did they make music, they also helped women find ways to make a living and children to get an education. No wonder then that in her more recent, second



© They Will Have to Kill Us First

FADIMATA WALET OUMAR

(Gargando 1962)

Fadimata 'Disco' Walet Oumar was born in a small town west of Timbuktu. Her father was a veterinarian who moved around for work, so she lived in various places in the Timbuktu region. From an early age she loved music and dancing. Oumar is leader of the Tuareg band Tartit (Unity), which toured in Africa, Europe and North America, thus getting the world acquainted with this traditional music. She is a founding member and president of the Tartit'n'Chetma Association that supports the development of Tuareg women and children.

exile, Oumar again focused on how to support the many Malian women who had ended up in refugee camps in Burkina Faso.

LIFE TURNED SILENT

Early 2012, Tuareg rebels once again started fighting for an independent homeland for their people. The resulting violence caused many to flee northern Mali. By April the rebel groups were in control of the region. The insurgency, however, was gradually hijacked by Islamist groups, who had initially just supported the rebels but now took over the rule of the besieged cities. Under the sharia they introduced, music was considered haram and musicians and singers were prosecuted. The north of Mali, a country where music is an integral part of everyday life, turned silent.

The film *They Will Have to Kill Us First* follows several Malian musicians displaced or in exile, among whom Fadimata Walet Oumar. She and her extended family of seventeen had found refuge in neighbouring Burkina Faso, near its capital Ouagadougou. Though she wasn't living

in a refugee camp, every morning Oumar would go to the one in Ouagadougou as a volunteer to meet the women and discuss their problems. She would advise them not to lose hope, and sometimes they would sing together, she says: 'To us, music is therapy.' She also organized income-generating activities for the women and classes for the children.

Her focus on women comes from the conviction that they are the centre of the family, in wartime even more so than in peace. They are the ones who take care of the children. 'The woman is the central pole of the tent. If she falls, the entire tent will cave in,' she quotes a Tuareg saying.

Her husband is a politician who at some point joined the Tuareg rebellion, although Oumar did not support the separatist cause. The Tuareg, she thinks, are not ready for independence; moreover she believes in a united Mali. She however stays away from politics, which she describes as 'men who do whatever they want, and lie about it afterwards'. That is why her activism is at the grassroots level, she explains:

Mali: attack on music and culture



When the city of Timbuktu in northern Mali fell under Islamist control in April 2012, the militant jihadists practically shut down the city and imposed sharia law. Music was banned, all traditional folklore and ceremonies were declared blasphemous and musicians were persecuted. Large parts of the World Heritage Site of Timbuktu were destroyed, as the shrines were 'idolatry', which the jihadists considered a sin. From January 2013, French and Malian troops recaptured control over the region. Although a ceasefire is in place since early 2015, the situation in northern Mali remains volatile.

Sources: *They Will Have to Kill Us First*, BBC



'If you are not close to the powers that be, you have to stick to your personal connections. I am proud we did it ourselves.'

HIGHLY VOLATILE

The situation in northern Mali degenerated so much that the government asked foreign forces for help with chasing the Islamists out of the country. In early 2013 those combined military troops managed to take back the territory under Islamist control, and later that year the Tuareg rebels signed a peace treaty with the Malian government. But the area remains highly volatile. There are sporadic terrorist attacks, and despite several ceasefire agreements there is still fighting between the Tuareg rebels and the Malian army.

Oumar and her family spent three years in exile before they felt it was safe enough to return to Mali. The first time she went back, it was to perform at the first public concert in Timbuktu since the Islamists had taken over the city three years earlier and banned all forms of music.

They Will Have to Kill Us First shows how the

people of Timbuktu gathered to listen to Oumar's band Tartit and the famous desert blues diva Khaira Arby. 'We were the first musicians who dared to perform, and people called us brave,' remembers Oumar. To her, it was only logical, as she also says in the film. For the music in Mali to stop, they will have to kill the musicians first: 'As long as I'm alive, I will play.'

PEACE AND UNITY

Even now, Oumar's family has not gone back to live in Timbuktu. They are staying in the capital Bamako instead, because the insecurity back home is still too big. In the south, however, some Malians view the Tuareg with suspicion. They see all members of the traditionally nomad group as rebels and the cause of Mali's problems, Oumar explains. That is why the songs she now composes are about peace and unity: 'We want to pass the message that the Tuareg are not the enemy. We are, and always have been, like brothers and sisters in this country. Only together can we solve our problems.'



©They Will Have to Kill Us First

They Will Have to Kill Us First: Malian Music in Exile

Johanna Schwartz

(United Kingdom, 2015, 100 min.)

FILM



She believes music can play a role in this, and cites as an example the work of the Tartit'n'Chetma Association, an advocacy and empowerment NGO that she co-founded and is the president of. The association came into existence to safeguard a disappearing traditional music, but has broadened its activities to supporting and empowering Tuareg women and children. At the moment, Tartit'n'Chetma is helping the internally displaced people in the south of Mali, while in the north it is rebuilding the desert school for nomadic children that got destroyed in the war. 'It was music that made this work for my people possible,' says Oumar. 'Without music, there is nothing.' ■

Music is one of the most important forms of communication for the people of Mali. But music was banned when jihad forces took control of the northern part of the country in 2012, forcing musicians to flee. Despite the precariousness of their situation, the musicians struggle to keep playing their music. Will they be able to return to their beloved Timbuktu to play their instruments again? Poignant report of their struggle to keep music alive in their country.

MEET THE TRUE HERO | SCREENINGS

Sat 19 March 14:30 Filmhuis Den Haag 5

Q&A with Fadimata 'Disco' Walet Oumar + expert

Mon 21 March 10:00 Filmhuis Den Haag 4

Mon 21 March 21:15 Theater aan het Spui Kz

Q&A with Fadimata 'Disco' Walet Oumar and director Johanna Schwartz. Moderator: Dore van Duivenbode

Wed 23 March 16:45 Theater aan het Spui Gz

Extended Q&A with Fadimata 'Disco' Walet Oumar, director Johanna Schwartz and Bill Shipsey.

MOVIES THAT MATTER



Founded in 2006, Movies that Matter has created a unique organization that serves as an international platform for films dealing with human rights and social justice, and for their makers. We believe that the film camera is a powerful weapon against social indifference. Film is an excellent way to stir debate and promote human rights education.

Therefore, Movies that Matter film screenings would not be complete without an expansion programme, in the form of discussions, debates, talk shows, introductions, speeches and Q&A sessions, to further explore the subject matter of the films shown on the big screen. Human rights defenders, filmmakers, experts, politicians, journalists and representatives of social organizations jointly analyse the situations in which human rights are at stake in order to put things in perspective.

Every year in March, the Movies that Matter Festival comes to The Hague. The 2016 edition, from 18 to 26 March, will feature around seventy fiction films and documentaries on human rights, peace and freedom. As part of the Movies that Matter on Tour, sixteen film theatres take turns to present a monthly film followed by a debate. Movies that Matter also offers education programmes for elementary and secondary schools as well as for higher education.

Furthermore, Movies that Matter supports screenings of human rights films in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. As an international expertise centre, Movies that Matter provides information about human rights films to organizations both in the Netherlands and abroad.

A MATTER OF ACT

A Matter of ACT, Amnesty International's main programme at the Movies that Matter Festival, is entirely dedicated to the work of human rights defenders. Ten impressive documentaries show how they campaign for justice and human rights, often paying a high price for their work.

All the human rights defenders portrayed in the films and the filmmakers are invited to the festival as special guests. The activists will meet people and organizations that are relevant to their work, including members of Dutch Parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and representatives from NGOs. Both the activists and the filmmakers will attend screenings of their films and participate in debates, interviews and audience discussions. Guest of honour in 2016 will be Navanethem Pillay, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

For the full programme of the Movies that Matter Festival 2016, see www.moviesthatmatter.nl.

AWARDS & TICKETS

A MATTER OF ACT AWARD CEREMONY

Date: Wednesday 23 March 2016, Time: 20:15

Location: Theater aan het Spui, Kz

Presented by Dirk van der Straaten, Artistic Director Movies that Matter

Screening: Sneak Preview

On this festive evening, a jury chaired by Lilian Gonçalves-Ho Kang You will present the *A Matter of ACT* Awards: the Golden Butterflies. The first Golden Butterfly goes to the most inspiring activist portrayed in the films and his or her special contribution to the field of human rights. The second Golden Butterfly goes to the director of the best film in the programme. After the award ceremony there will be special sneak preview of a film shown in the 2017 edition of *A Matter of ACT*.

THE GOLDEN BUTTERFLY NOMINEES 2016 ARE:

Sonita Alizadeh (Afghanistan) in *Sonita*

William Binney (United States) in *A Good American*

Janine di Giovanni and **Nicole Tung** (United States) in *7 Days in Syria*

Ensaf Haidar (Saudi Arabia) in *Saudi Arabia: A Wind of Change*

Ye Haiyan (China) in *Hooligan Sparrow*

Oleg Khabibrakhmanov (Russia) in *Chechnya: War Without Trace*

Consuelo Morales (Mexico) in *Kingdom of Shadows*

Eliete Paraguassu (Brazil) in *No Rio e No Mar!*

Parvez Sharma (India) in *A Sinner in Mecca*

Fadimata Walet Oumar (Mali) in *They Will Have to Kill Us First*

TICKET SALES

The ticket offices at Filmhuis Den Haag and Theater aan het Spui open on 3 March. You can buy tickets online at www.moviesthatmatter.nl.

There you will receive an E-ticket which you can print out and bring to the theatre. When you use a discount card, you need to show this at the entrance. You can make reservations by telephone at Filmhuis Den Haag: (070) 365 60 30. Tickets have to be collected at the festival ticket office no later than 45 minutes before the programme starts.

PRICES

Normal € 10,00

Reduced fee (a.o. students, CJP) € 8,00

Multiple ticket for 6 films € 45,00

A Matter of ACT Night 19 March € 10,00

Party Saturday 26 March € 10,00

JURY

A MATTER
OF ACT 2016



President of the Jury

LILIAN GONÇALVES- HO KANG YOU

Lilian Gonçalves-Ho Kang You was born in Paramaribo (Suriname). After studying Law in Leiden, she returned to Suriname and started a law firm with her husband Kenneth Gonçalves. After the 1980 coup, they both became outspoken critics of the government. In 1982, her husband was a victim of the 'December murders', whereupon she fled to the Netherlands. Mrs. Gonçalves now works to bring the perpetrators of the December murders to justice.

Currently, she is a member of the Dutch Council of States. Among her additional functions, she is Chair of the Foundation for Legal Cooperation Suriname-Netherlands, which she founded. Between 2001 and 2005 she was Chair of the Dutch section of Amnesty International.



Member of the Jury

PATRICK REED

Patrick Reed is an award-winning director, writer and producer. Many of Reed's films explore human rights issues, following compelling characters as they struggle with the past and present. Among his films are *Triage*, *Tsepong: A Clinic Called Hope*, and *Fight Like Soldiers Die Like Children*, which follows General Roméo Dallaire on his mission to end the use of child soldiers. Patrick's award-winning documentary *Guantanamo's Child: Omar Khadr* premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival 2015. The film tells the story of Guantanamo Bay detainee Omar Khadr and captures his first few days of freedom after he was suddenly released from prison in May 2015.



Member of the Jury

DARIA BUKVIĆ

Daria Bukvić is a theatre director. As the daughter of a Bosnian Islamic mother and a Croatian Roman Catholic father, her family fled the Yugoslavian war when she was three years old. She grew up in the Netherlands. Bukvić's work is characterized by often humorous reflections on social issues, such as radicalization, emancipation and the plight of refugees. In 2014, her play *Nobody Home* was sold out throughout the Netherlands and was selected as one of the eleven best theatre productions of the year. Starting in 2017, Daria Bukvić begins a trajectory for the development of talented directors at the Dutch National Theatre.



Member of the Jury

MALEK SHAFI'I

Malek Shafi'i is a founder and director of the Afghanistan Human Rights Film Festival and BASA (Afghanistan Cinema Club). He is also a filmmaker and a writer. He studied cinema and sociology, and made about 35 documentaries and short films. Some of them won international film awards from different international film festivals. He likes to create projects and make films based on his own experience and life. As director of BASA, Shafi'i supports independent filmmakers in his home country of Afghanistan. He also worked as a senior advisor for the Radio Television of Afghanistan.



Member of the Jury

MARYAM AL-KHAWAJA

Maryam al-Khawaja was born in exile in Syria. Her father, Bahraini human rights activist Abdulhadi al-Khawaja, had been banned from Bahrain since the eighties. When Maryam was two, the family got political asylum in Denmark. In 2001, they returned to Bahrain. Maryam graduated from Bahrain University and joined the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights in 2010. She took part in the first demonstrations for democratic reform in February 2011. As the government repression increased, she was chosen to represent the protest movement from the outside. Her base is Denmark. In 2015, she won the *A Matter of ACT* Human Rights Award.

A MATTER OF ACT LAUREATES

Since 2009, each year the *A Matter of ACT* programme at the Movies that Matter Festival celebrates human rights defenders. These are the *A Matter of ACT* Laureates so far:

2009

Wangari Maathai (Kenya) / Etweda Cooper (Liberia) / Hollman Morris (Colombia) / Emmanuel Jal (Sudan) / Khin Maung Win (Myanmar)

2010

Alberto Acre (Spain) / Ngawang Choephel (Tibet) / Las Damas de Blanco (Cuba) / Nasseria Dutour (Algeria) / Gustav Hofer and Luca Ragazzi (Italy) / Rebiya Kadeer (Autonomous Xinjiang Region, China) / Somaly Mam (Cambodia) / Shadi Sadr (Iran) / Mandira Sharma (Nepal) / The Yes Men (United States)

2011

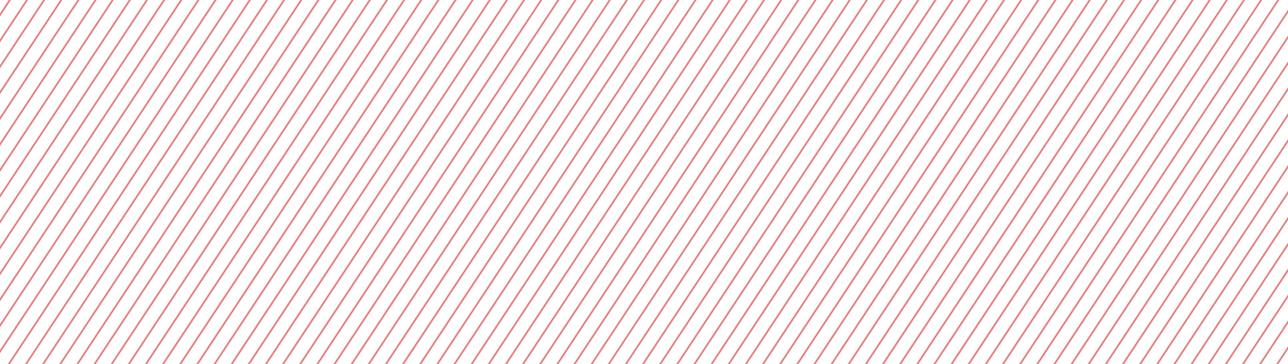
Marco Arana Zegarra (Peru) / Yamileth del Carmen Chavarría (Nicaragua) / Fatou Mandiang Diatta (Senegal) / Chris Mburu (Kenya) / Ayed Morrar (Occupied Palestinian Territories) / Suciwati Munir (Indonesia) / Andrei Nekrasov (Russia) / Alice Nkom (Cameroon) / Palagummi Sainath (India) / Aung San Suu Kyi (Myanmar)

2012

Geronimo Arevalos (Paraguay) / Emad Burnat (Occupied Palestinian Territories) / Oleg Kashin (Russia) / Mnikelo Ndabankulu (South Africa) / Gene Sharp (United States) / Sasha Volgina (Russia) / Lilia Weslaty (Tunisia) / Sonali Samarasinghe Wickrematunge (Sri Lanka) / Sergey Yenin (Belarus) / Ai Weiwei (China)

2013

Robi Damelin (Israel) / Shin Dong-hyuk (North Korea) / Victor Erofeyev (Russia) / Aminatou Haidar (Western Sahara) / Sergio Haro (Mexico) / Frank Mugisha (Uganda) / Salma (India) / Yoani Sánchez (Cuba) / Tep Vanny (Cambodia) / Zhou Shuguang (China)



2014

Ala'a Basatneh (Syria) / Eufrosina Cruz Mendoza (Mexico) / Meron Estefanos (Eritrea) / Ahmed Hassan (Egypt) / Pussy Riot (Russia) / Agripina Perea (Colombia) / Andrei Sannikov (Belarus) / Jeremy Scahill (United States) / Inna Shevchenko (Ukraine) / Yves Yomb (Cameroon)

2015

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