

**THE 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**  
**Co-presented by the Film Society of Lincoln Center**  
**June 11 – 24, 2004 at the Walter Reade Theater**

**Program of 27 Films and Videos—including 23 New York Premieres—to Screen**

Graphic photographs from Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison remind us that in the battle for human rights, image is ammunition. The power of the image—and the individuals behind them—resonate in the twenty-seven films and videos featured in the 15th annual Human Rights Watch International Film Festival. All but four of these are New York premieres. Co-presented by Human Rights Watch and the Film Society of Lincoln Center, the festival will run from Friday, June 11 to Thursday, June 24 at the Film Society's Walter Reade Theater.

The festival's special June 10<sup>th</sup> Benefit will feature the New York premiere of Joshua Marston's Sundance Audience Award-winner **MARIA FULL OF GRACE**, the riveting story of a young Colombian woman who is thrust into the dangerous world of international drug trafficking. The gala will also feature the presentation of the HRWIFF's annual **Irene Diamond Lifetime Achievement Award** to Peruvian filmmaker Francisco Lombardi for his lifelong commitment to human rights filmmaking. Lombardi's latest film, **WHAT THE EYE DOESN'T SEE**, a stirring mosaic of fictive stories set against the real-life collapse of President Fujimori's regime, will screen on opening night. The festival's other major honor, the **Nestor Almendros Prize** for courage and commitment in human rights filmmaking, will be given this year to New York filmmakers Zana Briski and Ross Kauffman for **BORN INTO BROTHELS**, a deeply compassionate look at the lives of the children of prostitutes in Calcutta's red light district.

The lives of marginalized youth on American soil—in this instance, juvenile offenders serving brutally long prison sentences—is given unflinching treatment in **JUVIES**, a documentary born out of filmmaker Leslie Neale's experience teaching video at Los Angeles Juvenile Hall. Here in New York City, the Education Video Center (EVC) gives at-risk youth the opportunity to document their daily struggles through access to video cameras, and in **FIGHTING TO LEARN AND LEARNING TO FIGHT**, a number of these compelling youth-produced works will be shown.

The American justice system is the focus of two of the festival's most provocative documentaries: In Katy Chevigny and Kirsten Johnston's **DEADLINE** we are thrust directly into the complex and highly emotional debate around the death penalty, while in **PERSONS OF INTEREST** filmmakers Alison Maclean and Tobias Perse look at the civil rights abuses perpetrated by the U.S. Justice Department on thousands of immigrants of Arab or Muslim background who were detained after the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks.

In a year when events in the Middle East and the war against terror continued to dominate the international media, it was easy to be distracted from the profound human cost of wars fought in other parts of the world. In **LIBERIA: AN UNCIVIL WAR**, director Jonathan Stack journeys to the heart of the decade-long civil battle where thousands died in the last year alone and the U.S. did little to respond to the growing crisis. In **REPATRIATION**, Korean filmmaker Dong-won Kim eloquently explores the tragic separation of his homeland through the story of two North Korean men who served thirty dehumanizing years as political prisoners in the south and are finally free to return home.

The festival ends on a buoyant note with the wonderfully subversive **THE YES MEN**, which follows two merry pranksters-cum-political activists as they impersonate World Trade Organization officials at business conferences around the world.

Other festival highlights include **THE CORPORATION**, which deftly analyzes the very nature of the corporate institution, its impacts on our planet, and what people are doing in response; **SAINTS AND SINNERS**, the emotional journey of a devoutly Catholic gay couple determined to marry in a Catholic church; **ONE SHOT**, a disturbing look at snipers in the Israel Defense Force through their own words; **DISCORDIA**, which charts the turbulent progress of three Montreal campus activists on opposing sides of the Israel/Palestine debate; and **THE KITE**, a touching Lebanese drama about two young lovers separated by politically imposed borders.

## PRESS SCREENING SCHEDULE

- Tues, May 25**            **10:00 am – WHAT THE EYE DOESN'T SEE (149m), Walter Reade Theater**  
**12:45 pm – DEADLINE (90m), Walter Reade Theater**
- Wed, May 26**            **10:00 am – PERSONS OF INTEREST and DOWN THE WIRE (73m), Walter Reade Theater**  
**11:15 am – DISCORDIA (71m), Walter Reade Theater**
- Thurs, May 27**           **3:00 pm – LIBERIA: AN UNCIVIL WAR (90m), Magno Review 2, 729 7<sup>th</sup> Ave (at 49<sup>th</sup>), 2<sup>nd</sup> fl.**
- Fri, May 28**            **10:00 am – REPATRIATION (149m), Walter Reade Theater**  
**12:45 pm – THE KITE (80), Walter Reade Theater**

**RSVP: Anna Lartigau at the Film Society of Lincoln Center at [pressoffice@filmlinc.com](mailto:pressoffice@filmlinc.com) or (212) 875-5281**

**General Information:** Except where otherwise noted, all films are screened at the Lincoln Center's Walter Reade Theater, 165 West 65th St., plaza level. \$10 general admission, \$6 for Film Society members, \$5 for seniors during weekday matinees before 6pm, and \$7 for students with photo ID. Benefit tickets from \$250, seating is limited (to purchase, call Michelle Leisure at (212) 216-1803 or e-mail [leisurm@hrw.org](mailto:leisurm@hrw.org)). The box office is open Mon.-Fri. at 12:30pm to 15 mins. after start of final screening. Sat. & Sun. 30 mins. before start of the first screening until 15 mins. after start of final screening. Cash only. The box office number is (212) 875-5600. Visit [www.filmlinc.com](http://www.filmlinc.com) for online VISA or MASTERCARD ticket purchases (\$1.25 surcharge per ticket). Credit card purchases can also be made at (212) 496-3809; only available for shows up to 7 days in advance of screening date. Customer Service Helpline: 212-875-5367. For more information on the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival please visit: [www.hrw.org/iff](http://www.hrw.org/iff) or [www.filmlinc.com](http://www.filmlinc.com).

**For preview cassettes of featured films, to schedule interviews or for further information, please contact Susan Norget at (212) 431-0090 or at [susan@norget.com](mailto:susan@norget.com) Images can be found at <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2004/press.html>**

## COMPLETE FILM DESCRIPTIONS AND SCHEDULE

**DEADLINE (NY Premiere), Katy Chevigny & Kirsten Johnson, US, 2003, 90m, Doc.** On the eve of his departure from office, Illinois Governor George Ryan—a longtime conservative Republican and supporter of the death penalty—surprised the nation by commuting the sentences of all 167 prisoners on Death Row. *Deadline* brings us directly into the debate and the legal process that is set into motion when a group of Northwestern University journalism students uncover evidence that many people on Illinois' Death Row are innocent, undermining the credibility of the state's entire capital justice system. In the wake of this evidence, Ryan orders special clemency hearings for every prisoner awaiting execution. Using unique access to the hearings, the prisoners, and Governor Ryan, *Deadline* delivers a measured sense of justice for all its subjects and contributes reason and passion to the ongoing debate about whether nations should employ the ultimate punishment and how justly it is administered. *Filmmakers present.* NBC broadcast premiere summer 2004. **Sat June 12: 6:30; Tues June 15: 3; Mon June 21: 8:45**

**DISCORDIA (NY Premiere), Ben Addelman & Samir Mallal, Canada, 2004, 71m, Doc.** At Montreal's Concordia University, an announcement is made that Benjamin Netanyahu, the former prime minister of Israel, will speak, and it has sparked heated debate among the students, some of whom are Pro-Palestine, others Pro-Israel, and still others non-aligned free speech advocates. By the end of the day, the debate has exploded into violent confrontation — and the riot has made international news, from CNN to Al-Jazeera. Charting the turbulent progress of three young campus activists—Samer, the son of Palestinians who lost their ancestral lands in 1967; Noah, the co-president of Hillel, the Jewish students' association co-sponsoring Netanyahu's visit; and Aaron, VP of the student council who identifies strongly as a Jew and has inherited his father's sympathies with the Palestinian cause—this rousing documentary asks what role international politics, religion and culture can and should play in the lives of our college students. *Filmmakers present.* **Sun June 20: 1; Mon June 21: 6:30; Tues June 22: 3:30; Thurs June 24: 4:30**

**GOODBYE HUNGARIA (NY Premiere), Jon Nealon, US/Hungary, 2003, 56m, Doc.** Both political tale and love story, *Goodbye Hungaria* begins in a refugee camp in Hungary, home to hundreds of men, women and children fleeing war and oppression from every corner of the globe. To the refugees, Eastern Hungary is a cold and unwelcoming place; asylum is rarely granted, and there are few opportunities for work. For most, the only way out of this legal limbo is through a thriving underground smuggling ring. Jon Nealon's cinema verité documentary chronicles the lives of Abed Al-Sahli, a Palestinian refugee who acts as advocate and de facto translator for the camp's Arab population, and Charu Newhouse, an American

volunteer. As both Abed and Charu struggle to make life better for the refugees caught in red tape and subject to the vagaries of international politics, their fates become connected. The film traces their unlikely love story from the hopelessness of the camp, to a dramatic arrival in New York City where they come to start a new life, together. *Filmmaker present.*

**Thurs June 17: 3:30; Fri June 18: 9:15; Wed June 23: 9; Thurs June 24: 1:30**

**JUVIES (NY Premiere), Leslie Neale, US, 2004, 66m, Doc.** Four years ago, high school student Duc Ta was arrested for driving a car from which a gun was shot. Although no one was hurt, and Duc was not a member of a gang, had no priors, and was 16 years old, he received a sentence of 35 years to life. From documentarian Leslie Neale (*Road to Return*) comes a riveting look at a world most of us will never see: the world of juvenile offenders who are serving incomprehensibly long prison sentences for crimes they either didn't commit or were only marginally involved in. For two years, Neale taught a video production class at L.A.'s Central Juvenile Hall to 12 juveniles who were being tried as adults. *Juivies* is the product of that class. The film builds a powerful argument, questioning what in our American culture has caused us to demonize our youth and allow the collapse of the juvenile justice system, which has turned its back on its initial mission to protect young people and now sends over 200,000 kids through the adult system each year. *Filmmaker present.*

**Fri June 11: 3:30; Sat June 12: 1:30; Wed June 16: 8:45**

**PERSONS OF INTEREST (NY Premiere), Alison Maclean & Tobias Perse, US, 2003, 63m, Doc.** After the September 11 terrorist attacks, more than 5000 Arab or Muslim immigrants were taken into custody by the U.S. Justice Department and held indefinitely on grounds of national security. Detainees were subject to arbitrary arrest, secret detention, solitary confinement, and deportation. Many were denied legal representation and communication with their families. During a period when the State Department has made every effort to depersonalize these detentions, refusing to reveal the names or even the number of immigrants detained, the voices of those affected—their testimonials and experiences—become our only window into the human costs of post 9/11 immigration policies. *Persons of Interest* presents a series of encounters between former detainees and directors Maclean and Perse in an empty room which serves both visually and symbolically as an interrogation room, home, and prison cell. Through interviews, family photographs, and letters from prison, the directors have fashioned a compelling and poignant film, allowing those affected a chance to tell their own stories. *Filmmakers present.*

**Fri June 11: 6:15; Sun June 13: 1:30; Wed June 16: 1**

**REPATRIATION (NY Premiere), Dong-won Kim, South Korea, 2003, 149m, Doc.** In the spring of 1992, documentary filmmaker Dong-won Kim met Cho Chang-son and Kim Seak-hyoung, two North Koreans arrested by South Korean authorities years before. Convicted of spying for the North, they were incarcerated and spent thirty years as political prisoners. These men, and many others like them, underwent conversion schemes in prison that involved torture: those who renounced their communist beliefs were released from prison early. The others, known as "the unconverted," served their full terms. None could return home to the North, however, until the turn of this century, when tensions between North and South eased significantly. Dong-won Kim followed these men for ten years, documenting how they survived the dehumanizing time spent in prison, and their quest, once released, to finally go home. Winner of the Freedom of Expression Award, Sundance Film Festival 2004. *Filmmaker present.* **Sat June 19: 1; Mon June 21: 1; Tue June 22: 8**

**SAINTS AND SINNERS, Abigail Honor & Yan Vizinberg, US, 2004, 71m, Doc.** Caring more about formalizing their seven-year union within the Catholic tradition than with legal recognition by the state, Edward DeBonis and Vincent Maniscalco pursue their dream of marrying in a Catholic church, despite the expected rejection from the local church hierarchy. Even as previously supportive family members express their reservations about receiving communion from a gay Catholic priest, the men audaciously seek to become the first gay couple to have their wedding announcement published in the Times. *Saints and Sinners* is a timely vision of love and commitment, which demonstrates that the struggle for equal rights is not just about legal benefits, but the aspiration to find acceptance and affirmation, rather than rejection, from one's chosen religion. *Filmmakers and film's subjects present.* Opening at the Quad Cinema through Avatar Films on June 18. **Sat June 12: 9:15; Mon June 14: 1:30**

**WHAT THE EYE DOESN'T SEE (NY Premiere), Francisco J. Lombardi, Peru, 2003, 149m, Drama.** Acclaimed filmmaker Francisco J. Lombardi (*La Boca del Lobo; Tinta Roja; Don't Tell Anyone*) delivers his most ambitious project to date with the political psychodrama *What the Eye Doesn't See*. Set in the final days of Alberto Fujimori's presidency in Peru, the film explores the corruption plaguing many Latin American governments as seen through the eyes of everyday people. The film focuses on the scandal caused by the release of the infamous "Vladi videos"—hidden camera tapes of presidential advisor Vladimiro Montesinos blackmailing high-level government officials—which eventually led to the end of Fujimori's presidency. But rather than recreate true stories, Lombardi uses a colorful array of fictional characters to show the ramifications of dishonest government on individual lives. Six interweaving stories give us a picture of Peru's social reality as its citizens attempt to cope during a critical juncture in their history. *Francisco Lombardi is the recipient of HRWIFF's 2004 Irene Diamond Lifetime Achievement Award.* *Filmmaker present.* **Fri June 11: 8:30**