

APRIL 15-22, 2016 | FORT COLLINS, COLORADO



HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL



Colorado State University
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Produced by the Department of Communication Studies

Greetings,

We are so excited that you are joining us for our first annual Act Human Rights Film Festival. We believe that the festival will create moments of communication, community, and engagement.

ACT weaves a passion for the arts and humanities with these disciplines' commitments to explore what it means to be human and the rights and responsibilities that humanness entails.

The films you will see enact the entanglement of hope and hurt, possibility and tragedy, freedom and fear. ACT, we believe, is part of these very real, very human entanglements.

Awaken Connect Transform

Beyond the opportunity to watch great cinema, the festival offers a chance to gather together in the hope that communication can build community, and that community offers the grounding for a more humane world. Following each screening, we urge you to talk with audience members, engage the panelists and filmmakers, and take with you the hopefulness and dedication these films embody.

May this experience awaken, connect, and transform us all.

Yours,

Greg Dickinson
Chair, Department of Communication Studies
ACT Producer



FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

Opening Night Reception

Friday, April 15, following the screening of *Burden of Peace*

Lory Student Center West Ballroom

Join filmmaker Joey Boink for a post-film reception held in the Lory Student Center West Ballroom.

Admission included in the film ticket price.

"Face Fighting Human Trafficking" Photo Exhibit

Opening weekend, Lory Student Center Theater

In partnership with local nonprofit A Face to Reframe, this local high school photojournalism project focuses on the community leaders working to prevent human trafficking in Fort Collins.

Call to ACT Nonprofit Fair

Sunday, April 17, 4-6 p.m., Longs Peak Room, 3rd Floor

Meet the nonprofit and student groups whose mission and programming relates to the themes addressed by festival films. Representatives will be onsite and ready to help connect film-goers to additional information, opportunities for action, and organizational involvement at home and beyond.

After Hours at the Downtown Artery

See page 19 for details

Closing Night Reception

Friday, April 22, following the screening of *Something Better to Come*

Lory Student Center Ballroom A

Join us for a celebratory post-film gathering with music by the local band vee device.

Reception held in the Lory Student Center East Ballroom. Admission included in the film ticket price.

FESTIVAL THEMES

Art as Resistance and Cultural Resilience

Films that concern local communities (in such places as Belarus, India, and Iran) using artistic practices to protest repressive/authoritarian regimes, to fight for their rights in the face of sweeping industrial/political change, and to hold on to centuries-old cultural traditions.

Disability Rights as Human Rights

Films that focus on people with physical, sensory, neurological, and/or cognitive impairments and which depart from stereotypical representations; films that frame disability rights as a human rights concern; films that celebrate alternatives to the "able-bodied" experience.

For Democracy, Against Impunity

Films about individual and grassroots efforts to stand up to authoritarian regimes (showcasing demonstrations, protests, etc.).

Hunger, Homelessness, Humanity

Films focusing on displaced communities and impoverished individuals throughout the world (in the Mexican town of San Marcos, in the Swiss city of Lausanne, on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, and on the outskirts of Moscow) living without housing or the ability to daily feed themselves.

Local Filmmakers, Global Issues

Films that demonstrate Coloradans' interest in and movement through the world of human rights issues; films that highlight the talent and tenacity of local artists whose cosmopolitan engagement with global populations is helping to raise the State's profile as a cultural hub.

New Rainbow Nations: GLBTQ in Africa

Films about people's fight for equality in Cameroon and Kenya that examine how the GLBTQ community has been targeted by hate groups and subjected to violence.

Stolen Childhood and Modern-day Slavery

Films concerning global human trafficking and its impact on children and their families; films about young people being forced to marry adults in countries where the legal age for marriage has dropped in recent years.



Burden of Peace

Director: Joey Boink and Sander Wirken
Netherlands/Guatemala / 2015 / 77 minutes
 For Democracy, Against Impunity

After becoming Guatemala's first female Attorney General in 2010, human rights activist Claudia Paz y Paz did the unthinkable, taking on former dictator Efraín Ríos Montt and his Minister of Defense Óscar Viñó in a series of criminal investigations and courtroom hearings that threatened to make her the target of recriminations and reprisals. The documentary follows Paz y Paz from the Prosecutor's office to inner-city ghettos and small villages. Each step of the way, as she and the filmmakers open their hearts to the survivors of the Guatemalan Massacre and to the families of victims, Paz y Paz's resolve to hold government leaders accountable for their actions grows stronger.

Co-director Joey Boink will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A, moderated by CSU professor David Scott Diffrient.

Friday, April 15
Lory Student Center Theater
7:30 p.m.



American Arab

Director: Usama Alshaibi
USA / 2013 / 63 minutes
 Local Filmmakers, Global Issues

Usama Alshaibi, Iraqi-born filmmaker and CSU adjunct professor in film studies, is no stranger to violence, having been subjected to racial epithets and death threats, and having been physically accosted by a group of men in Fairfield, Iowa, in 2010. Rather than dwell on that hate crime, however, the director expands his focus to other individuals who, like himself, live between two cultures. This bracing, ultimately hopeful documentary showcases the diversity of the Arab American experience as well as Alshaibi and others' refusal to be reductively codified or categorized by those for whom cultural ignorance has replaced empathetic understanding.

Director Usama Alshaibi will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by CSU adjunct faculty Elizabeth Sink.

Saturday, April 16
Lory Student Center Theater
4:30 p.m.



Kings of Nowhere

Director: Betzabé García

Mexico / 2015 / 83 minutes

Hunger, Homelessness, Humanity

Only three of the 300 families of San Marcos, Sinaloa, have remained behind since the 2009 flood, and these few townspeople refuse to give in to fear or paranoia. Following their lead, Mexican filmmaker Betzabé García's haunting *Kings of Nowhere* exudes quiet dignity, rejecting many of the conventions of contemporary documentary production in favor of a more powerful, deeply resonant evocation of loneliness, heartbreak, and decay. Neither wholly pessimistic nor naively idealistic, this film and its subjects exist in an in-between space, floating just above the ground in search of a better place and time.

Director Betzabé García will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by CSU professor Antonio Pedros-Gascon.

Saturday, April 16
Lory Student Center Theater
7:30 p.m.



Planet of Snail

Director: Yi Seung-jun

Japan/South Korea / 2012 / 90 minutes

Disability Rights As Human Rights

The toast of film festivals around the world, this South Korean documentary makes a significant break from traditional cinematic representations of people living with disabilities. This intimate, non-condescending look at deafblind individuals who experience the world primarily through touch and smell has garnered attention for its sensitive approach to a largely under-represented community. *Planet of Snail* lavishes attention on individuals who are not helpless recipients of charity. Instead, they are self-determined social actors who participate in the public sphere, communing with other people who are not defined by their physical and/or sensory impairments.

Director Yi Seung-jun will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by CSU professor Hye Seung Chung.

Sunday, April 17
Harmony Library - Poudre River Public Library
2:30 p.m.



Justine

Director: Pratap Rughani

United Kingdom / 2013 / 27 minutes

Disability Rights As Human Rights

Pratap Rughani, equipped with a camera and enormous sensitivity, enters the world of a young woman with severe neurological disabilities. Her story culminates with her birthday party, where the filmmaker captures poignant moments in which communication can only be intuited. Rughani quietly argues for continuing state support, which elapses when Justine turns 18, by meticulously documenting her profound needs.

By Deirdre Boyle (review previously published in Cineaste [Winter 2015], reprinted by permission of the author and the journal).

Sunday, April 17
Lory Student Center Theater
2:30 p.m.



Stories of Our Lives

Director: Jim Chuchu

Kenya/South Africa / 2014 / 60 minutes

New Rainbow Nations: GLBTQ in Africa

As members of the Nest Collective, a Nairobi-based organization that fuses art and activism, director Jim Chuchu and screenwriter Njoki Ngumi initiated this project by gathering audio recordings of Kenya's diverse queer population. Their stories of personal pain and perseverance would eventually serve as source material for the Nest Collective's visually poetic anthology film, *Stories of Our Lives*. Few independent productions are as beautiful and relevant as this motion picture, which has received critical accolades around the world but which has yet to be distributed in Kenya.

Introduction by CSU graduate student and human rights activist Namuyaba Temanju.

Screening follows Justine



Not My Life

Directors: Robert Bilheimer and Richard Young

United States / 2011 / 84 minutes

Stolen Childhood and Modern-day Slavery

Not My Life documents the efforts of several NGOs and nonprofit groups to protect the most vulnerable members of society, taking the viewer to 13 different countries where millions of people have been commodified and funneled into transnational sex tourism industries. Although audiences will doubtless be disturbed by the film's presentation of the facts surrounding human trafficking, they will also find much to be optimistic about, in terms of the great strides that have been made to abolish modern-day slavery.

Introduction by CSU professor Karrin Anderson and post-screening dialogue moderated by CSU professor Martin Carcasson and the Center for Public Deliberation.

Sunday, April 17

Lory Student Center Theater

5:30 p.m.

Post-Screening Discussion

After the film, join students and faculty from CSU's Center for Public Deliberation and undergraduate Communication Studies course Communication and Anti Human Trafficking to explore how citizens can respond to the problem of human trafficking in northern Colorado. The discussion, moderated by Center for Public Deliberation student associates, will include information about the nature of the problem in northern Colorado, possible responses, and organizations that are addressing this issue in our community.



The Shelter

Director: Fernand Melgar

Switzerland / 2014 / 101 minutes

Hunger, Homelessness, Humanity

Having spent several years documenting the European migrant experience, the Swiss filmmaker Fernand Melgar trains his sympathetic gaze toward the growing homeless population in his home city, Lausanne. *The Shelter* is set in a bunker-like facility that serves people lacking employment and fixed housing. This deeply humane exploration of homelessness reveals Melgar's intelligence and social consciousness, but further acknowledges the need for greater awareness of a so-called "local" problem that is truly global in its reach.

Chris Conner, Program Administrator at Denver's Road Home and Chair of the city's Human Rights and Community Partnerships Advisory Board, will discuss the issue of homelessness during a post-screening Q&A, moderated by CSU professor Greg Dickinson.

Monday, April 18
Lyric Cinema Café
4:30 p.m.



I Am Nojoom, Age 10 and Divorced

Director: Khadija Al-Salami

Yemen / 2014 / 96 minutes

Stolen Childhood and Modern-day Slavery

The title character in *I Am Nojoom, Age 10 and Divorced* was only eight when she was forced to marry a 30-year-old man, a fact of life for many adolescent girls in the Republic of Yemen. Director Khadija Al-Salami's moving adaptation of Nojood Ali and Delphine Minoui's international bestseller (published with a slightly different title) brings an autobiographical tale to an even wider audience, and makes an impassioned case for dismantling traditional forms of gender oppression.

Pre-screening introduction and post-screening discussion with CSU professor Mohammed Hirchi.

Monday, April 18
Lyric Cinema Café
7:30 p.m.

FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

Friday 4/15

Burden Of Peace

Guest: Joey Boink, Director

7:30 p.m. LSC Theater

Reception

Follows screening in
LSC West Ballroom

Saturday 4/16

American Arab

Guest: Usama Alshaibi, Director

4:30 p.m. LSC Theater

Kings Of Nowhere

Guest: Betzabé García, Director

7:30 p.m. LSC Theater

Sunday 4/17

Planet Of Snail

Guest: Yi Seung-jun, Director

2 p.m. Harmony Library

Justine (short)

Stories Of Our Lives

2:30 p.m. LSC Theater

Call to ACT: Nonprofit Fair

Longs Peak Room,
LSC, 3rd Floor, 4-6 p.m.

Not My Life

Event: Post-screening
Discussion with the Center
for Public Deliberation

5:30 p.m. LSC Theatre

Monday 4/18

The Shelter

Guests: Chris Conner &

Beth Sowder

4:30 p.m. Lyric

I Am Nojoom, Aged 10 And Divorced

7:30 p.m. Lyric

Tuesday 4/19

Tomorrow We Disappear

*Guests: Alexandra Ruíz &
Kyle Rasmussen*

4:30 p.m. Lyric

Wind On The Moon

Guest: Yi Seung-jun, Director

7:30 p.m. Lyric

Wednesday 4/20

Pine Ridge

Guest: Jamie Folsom

4:30 p.m. Lyric

No Land's Song

*Guests: Sara Najafi,
Film Subject & Ayat Najafi, Dir.*

7:30 p.m. LSC Theater

Thurs 4/21

**Chau, Beyond the Lines
(short) / Dangerous Acts**

Guest: Courtney Marsh, Director

4:30 p.m. Lyric

Born This Way

*Guests: Shaun Kadlec,
co-director, Josh Peterson,
editor, and Cedric Tchante,
film subject.*

7:30 p.m. Lyric

Fri 4/22

Sunrise

4:30 p.m. LSC Theater

Something Better To Come

Guests: Evgeniya Pyatovskaya

7:30 p.m. LSC Theater

Reception w/ vee device

Follows screening in
LSC Ballroom A

 Lory Student Center

 Lyric Cinema Café

 Harmony Library



Tomorrow We Disappear

Director: Jimmy Goldblum

USA/India / 2014 / 85 minutes

Art as Resistance and Cultural Resilience

Local Filmmakers, Global Issues

This breathtaking film transports viewers to New Delhi's Kathputli Colony, a residential and industrial area that has been home to thousands of acrobats, dancers, magicians, puppeteers, snake charmers, and other performers for decades. After real estate developers purchased the colony from the New Delhi government in 2009, bulldozers were readied for the clearing of the land and the imminent displacement of this community. *Tomorrow We Disappear* captures the residents' defiant response, featuring some of the most colorful and inspired street protests ever recorded.

Introduction and post-screening discussion with CSU professor Jeffrey Snodgrass. CSU graduate student Kyle Rasmussen will present clips from Without Color, an in-progress documentary about the hope for societally oppressed widows in India. CSU alumna Alexandra Ruiz will discuss and show clips from Alwadi, a documentary following the Syrian refugee route from Lebanon to Germany.

Tuesday, April 19
Lyric Cinema Café
4:30 p.m.



Wind on the Moon

Director: Yi Seung-jun

South Korea / 2015 / 98 minutes

Disability Rights as Human Rights

Korean filmmaker Yi Seung-jun turns his attention to a 19-year-old deafblind girl named Yeji, who is preparing to begin her first year of study at a school for visually impaired students. *Wind on the Moon* finds magic in the mundane, using a "fly-on-the-wall" approach that highlights the quotidian experiences of someone who negotiates the world on her own terms, albeit through the assistance of a loving, ever-present mother. That parent-child relationship is the heart and soul of this film, demonstrating the importance of familial support in the relative absence of social support.

Director Yi Seung-jun will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A, moderated by CSU graduate student Min Kim.

Tuesday, April 19
Lyric Cinema Café
7:30 p.m.



Pine Ridge

Director: Anna Eborn

Denmark/USA / 2013 / 76 minutes

Hunger, Homelessness, Humanity

Taking its title from the name of an Indian Reservation in South Dakota, Pine Ridge breaks from the long history of earlier representations to showcase the day-to-day setbacks faced by members of an indigenous community that exists largely in the shadows. Eschewing political commentary and sweeping statements about the history of human rights abuses that have been visited upon Indian tribes in the United States, the film nevertheless raises consciousness in a quiet, contemplative way. Swedish-born Eborn does not reduce her subjects to aesthetic "objects," but instead reveals the humanity of people who cope with poverty and unemployment on their own terms.

Introduction and post-screening discussion with Jamie Folsom, former National Director of the Trees, Water, & People nonprofit organization.

Wednesday, April 20

Lyric Cinema Café

4:30 p.m.



No Land's Song

Director: Ayat Najafi

Germany/France/Iran / 2014 / 91 minutes

Art as Resistance and Cultural Resilience

Ayat Najafi's award-winning sophomore feature displays the kind of courage that is needed in order to challenge established gender norms in a country that, since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, has banned women from singing in public. Taking a cue from his sister Sara, an Iranian composer who plans to stage an intercultural concert in Tehran, the director captures a miraculous moment in Iran's recent history. *No Land's Song* documents Sara's nearly three-year process of preparing for that unprecedented concert.

Director Ayat Najafi and singer/social activist Sara Najafi will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A with CSU professor Ryan Olsen.

Wednesday, April 20

Lory Student Center Theater

7:30 p.m.



Chau, Beyond the Lines

Director: Courtney Marsh

Vietnam / 2015 / 34 minutes

Disability Rights as Human Rights

Art as Resistance and Cultural Resilience

Although the Vietnam War is one of the best documented and most frequently dramatized international conflicts of the 20th century, few films have explored the residual effects of the U.S. military's use of Agent Orange during that historical period. Much of this informative, rousing film is spent in the company of Chau, a teenager growing up in the Lang Hoa Binh Peace Camp. Separated from his family, who have been unable to care for him, the wheelchair-bound Chau not only looks after himself, but also pursues his passion for drawing and clothing design, with the goal of becoming an artist one day.

Director Courtney Marsh will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A.

Thursday, April 21
Lyric Cinema Café
4:30 p.m.



Dangerous Acts Starring the Unstable Elements of Belarus

Director: Madeleine Sackler

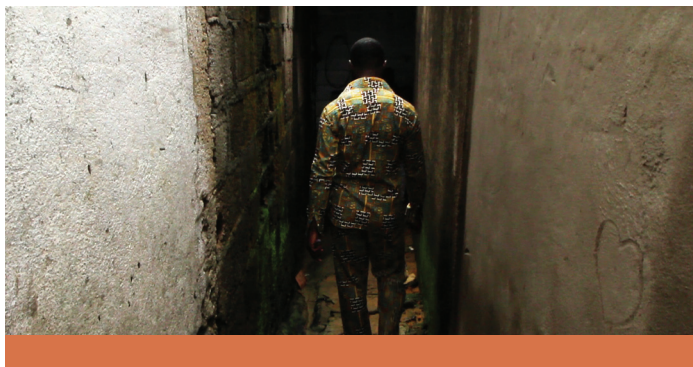
USA/UK/Belarus / 2013 / 76 minutes

Art as Resistance and Cultural Resilience

For Democracy, Against Impunity

As the President of Belarus since 1994, Alexander Lukashenko has earned a reputation for being the last remaining dictator in Europe — an authoritarian leader whose administration has cracked down on dissenters while winning one fraudulent election after another. Operating in the shadows for the past 10 years, the members of one underground troupe — the Belarus Free Theatre (BFT) — have consistently challenged the Lukashenko regime's strict censorship policies, putting their livelihoods (and lives) at risk by staging revolutionary plays for equally courageous audiences in their homeland. Combining interviews with members of the BFT and smuggled footage of their incendiary, subversive stage performances, *Dangerous Acts* highlights the power of art in combatting systems of injustice and repression.

Screening follows Chau, Beyond the Lines



Born This Way

Directors: Shaun Kadlec and Deb Tullmann

USA/Cameroon / 2013 / 82 minutes

New Rainbow Nations: GLBTQ in Africa

Born This Way combines national news coverage, hidden camera footage, and interviews with GLBTQ activists who speak with heartbreaking candor about their plights of fighting homophobia in the Central African country of Cameroon. This intimate documentary follows several young gays and lesbians who long to come out to parents and friends, but are all too aware of the fact that prosecution and imprisonment await those who are too public about their sexual identity. Focusing specifically on Cédric (a young man who draws inspiration from Lady Gaga) and Gertrude (a young woman who struggles to open up about her lesbianism to the Mother Superior who nurtured her throughout her Catholic upbringing), Kadlec and Tullman's film brings to light the social and political challenges of living in a country caught between tradition and modernity.

Co-director Shaun Kadlec, editor Josh Peterson, and subject Cedric Tchante will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by CSU professors Eric Aoki and Mary Vogl.

Thursday, April 21
Lyric Cinema Café
7:30 p.m.



Sunrise

Director: Partho Sen-Gupta

India / 2014 / 85 minutes

Stolen Childhood and Modern-day Slavery

This stylistically audacious neo-noir from Partho Sen-Gupta, one of India's most talented independent filmmakers, has enthralled audiences around the world with its tale of a social services agent from Mumbai who becomes embroiled in a citywide crackdown on human trafficking. Heading up a local police station's Child Protection Unit, Joshi has a personal stake in this social problem, for his own grade-school daughter has been kidnapped, stolen away into the sleazy recesses of the red light district. Forced into a form of sexual slavery, she is an all-too-real reminder that local governments in India have failed to protect the rights and wellbeing of the country's most vulnerable — and frequently exploited — citizens.

Friday, April 22

Lory Student Center Theater

4:30 p.m.



Something Better to Come

Director: Hanna Polak

Poland/Denmark/Russia / 2014 / 110 minutes

Hunger, Homelessness, Humanity

Fifteen miles outside of Moscow is the Svalka, the largest garbage dump in Europe. For years it has been the home to hundreds of impoverished Russians. Oscar-nominated Polish director Hanna Polak's extraordinary documentary explores the lives of homeless people struggling to survive in this landfill area, one that is officially off limits to visitors and run by the state military. Her main subject is Yula, whose coming-of-age story we witness in its entirety, as she ages from a 10-year-old girl playing in the rubble to a 24-year-old woman looking to improve her station in life. In between, the protagonist is forced to grow up too quickly, becoming pregnant as a teenager and seeking refuge from an abusive grandfather who turns his back on her when she is most in need.

Introduction and post-screening discussion with CSU professor Julia Khrebtan-Hoerhager and visiting professor Evgeniya Pyatovskaya.

Friday, April 22

Lory Student Center Theater

7:30 p.m.

AFTER HOURS

ACT Human Rights Film Festival Lounge at the Downtown Artery Cafe

252 Linden Street

Join festival film guests, patrons, and other community members at the Downtown Artery Cafe to further conversations inspired by the festival program. We hope this convergence will help translate energy into ACTion as film goers and festival guests gather to talk, reflect, and build new connections.

Bar specials will be offered to all ACT festival guests, but you must present a ticket stub or festival program to receive discounts and more. See you there!

CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

Help us keep the spirit of ACT alive by joining us on Facebook and Twitter. Let us know what you think of the festival, the films you've watched, and the issues presented throughout the week by posting your comments. You can also subscribe to the ACT email newsletter at www.actfilmfest.org for sneak previews of films coming to the second annual festival, and announcements about volunteer opportunities, special events, and other must-see festival programming. #ACTFilmFest and #TakeACTion

PROGRAM NOTES

Film synopses included in the program were written by ACT Human Rights Film Festival Programming Director Dr. Scott Diffrient, with the exception of the one provided for *Justine*, which is reprinted with permission. The original, longer version of each synopsis can be found at www.actfilmfest.org.



CALL TO **act.**

Inspired by the Call2Action Program launched by the Boulder International Film Festival, the ACT Human Rights Film Festival is committed to helping audiences channel their energies and interests in making a difference in the world.

Nearly every ACT film has been paired with one or more local, national, or international nonprofit organizations whose mission addresses or relates to the issue at hand. Representatives from these nonprofit organizations will be onsite and ready to help connect film-goers to additional information, opportunities for action, and organizational involvement at home and beyond.

The following nonprofit and student organizations are participating in the 2016 ACT Human Rights Film Festival (as of April 6, 2016):

A Face to Reframe

Amnesty International

ASL Club

Campus Feminist Alliance

College of Liberal Arts

Foco Cafe

Friendship Bridge

GLBTQA Resource Center

Global Livingston Institute

Homeless Gear

No More Injustice

Northern Colorado Pride

Peace Corps

Project Homeless Connect

Resources for Disabled Students

The ARC of Larimer County

Trees Water People

SACNAS - Advancing Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science

SAVA

Sustainable Schools International

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

ACT Human Rights Film Festival organizers are deeply grateful to all our university, community, and business partners, sponsors, and donors for their support.

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AWAKEN

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Thank You for attending the ACT Human Rights Film Festival. Mark your calendar for April 2017 when the second annual festival returns to Fort Collins.

A Special Thank You

The ACT Human Rights Film Festival name and brand were conceived and developed by the founding sponsor, One Tribe Creative. Thanks to Paul Jensen and his team for committing its vision, dedication, and excellence in the name of social justice.