

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

Wednesday, February 24, 2010

Peace on Earth Film Festival

Peace on Earth Film Festival returns for its second run with 35 documentary, dramatic and animated films. Promoting an agenda of "peace, nonviolence and social justice," local organizer Nick Angotti selects work from Canada, Germany, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, South Korea, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The three-day lineup includes a Filmmakers Panel at noon Saturday, and a Peacemakers Panel at 3:30 p.m. Sunday. Today's 6 p.m. program features Nofre Moya's "La Lluvia" ("The Rain"), a paranoid tale about fear as a marketing tool. Lethal shards of metal -- one bears a Microsoft logo -- fall from the sky, creating consumer demand for a new safety product.

Scott Dikkers' animated "Ape Trouble" depicts an unemployed primate seeking a position. California director and Dumpster-diver Jeremy Seifert meditates on the ethos of waste and food justice in "Dive!" (45 min.). Providing too well for his young family, he puts himself at risk of wasting his bounty.

"Rapping in Tehran" (37 min.), screening at 4:45 p.m. Saturday, reports on the underground hip-hop scene in the capital of Iran. Director Hassan Khademi, a sociology grad student, adds a title explaining it took five months before kids trusted him. Shot in illegal studios and at an outdoor concert, this timely video was completed in October 2009. Raids and arrests drive some rappers to record in Dubai and points west. Others distribute their music via the Internet. Khademi samples revealing verse: "We will drink and will dance for joy until daybreak!" raps one woman. A man proclaims: "The civilization of Iranians is at danger/We are all soldiers ready to serve/I won't let any foreigners talk about us."

Spiky, big hairstyles are more prevalent than slams against Iran's theocrats. Khademi lets viewers draw their own conclusions, but more pointers on local cultural politics would add perspective on this youth scene.

No MPAA rating. Opening today at 6 p.m. and continuing from 10 a.m.-10 p.m. on Saturday, and noon-9 p.m. on Sunday at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington. Free admission.

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