

THUS HAVE I SEEN
THIS

Buddhist Film
Festival 2016

17-24 SEPTEMBER

SHAW THEATRES LIDO

Buddhas just proclaim the path
but you're the ones to strive.
Contemplatives who tread the Path
are freed from Mara's bonds.

-Dhammapada Verse 276



Supports the THIS Buddhist Film Festival 2016



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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

A very warm welcome to Thus Have I Seen (THIS) Buddhist Film Festival 2016. We are pleased to present to you the line-up of specially selected films this year.

2016 marks the fourth edition of THIS. While we are still a relatively new kid on the block in the film circuit, we are heartened to see the festival grow in size and depth, and cultivating more awareness among the local Buddhist, and increasing non-Buddhist, community.

This milestone marks another exciting journey to showcase the festival's most comprehensive line-up of films to date from around the world. The selection this year strives to entertain, educate and inspire the audience through a wide array of thought-provoking films with strong content. Through these carefully curated films, we encourage viewers to continue to explore the diverse Buddhist cultures across the world, and to contemplate upon the Buddha's timeless Teachings of Wisdom and Compassion.

We thank our generous sponsors, supporters and well-wishers, who believe in us through the years. We are also extremely grateful for the love and support from the community and film lovers.

The team looks forward to receiving entries for THIS Buddhist Film Festival 2018, as well as your feedback and suggestions on how we can grow from strength to strength. We hope that THIS will be enriching and enlightening for you, as it has been for us.

Teo Puay Kim
Director
Dharma In Action Limited

TICKETING

TICKET PRICE

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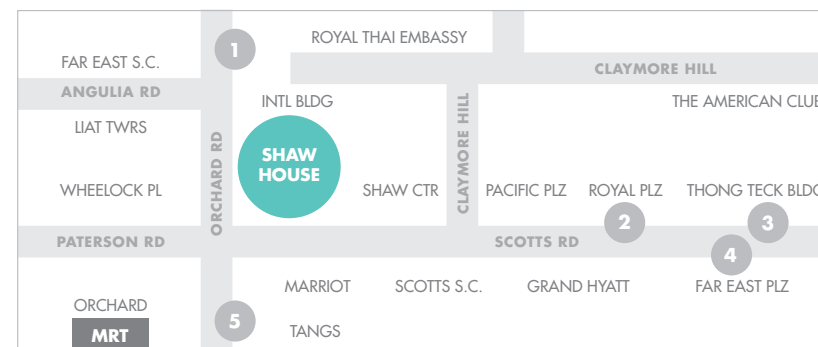
THIS Contact Info

www.thisfilmfest.com
info@thisfilmfest.com
[f THISBFF](https://www.facebook.com/THISBFF)
[YouTube THISBFF](https://www.youtube.com/THISBFF)

Venue

SHAW THEATRES LIDO

350, Orchard Road 5th/6th Floor, Shaw House, Singapore 238868



BY TRAIN

MRT Orchard MRT Station
(North-South Line)
Take Exit A from the station.
Walk via underpass in the direction of Scotts Road. Go up the escalator leading to Shaw House.

BY BUS

- 1 7, 36, 77, 105, 106, 111, 123, 132, 174, 502
- 2 5, 54, 124, 143, 162M, 167, 171, 700A
- 3 105, 132, 190
- 4 5, 54, 105, 124, 132, 143, 162M, 167, 171, 190, 518, 700A
- 5 36, 77, 124, 143, 162M, 167, 171, 174, 190, 518, 700A

OPENING FILM

SAMSARA

Samsara, Sanskrit for “the ever turning wheel of life”, is the point of departure for the filmmakers as they search for the elusive current of interconnection that runs through our lives.

Filmed over a period of almost five years and in 25 countries, *Samsara* transports us to sacred grounds, disaster zones, industrial sites and natural wonders. This non-verbal, non-narrative documentary film explores the wonders of our world from the mundane to the miraculous, looking into the unfathomable reaches of man’s spirituality and the human experience.

Through powerful images photographed entirely in 70mm film, *Samsara* illuminates the links between humanity and the rest of nature, showing how our life cycles mirror the rhythm of the planet.

SAT 17 SEP | 1:00pm / Singapore Premiere
FRI 23 SEP | 7:00pm

Director’s Bio

Ron Fricke is an American film director and cinematographer, specialising in time-lapse photography and large format cinematography. He was the director of photography for *Koyaanisqatsi* (1982) and directed the purely cinematic non-verbal non-narrative feature *Baraka* (1992), in which he designed and used his own 65 mm camera equipment. He also directed the IMAX films *Chronos* (1985) and *Sacred Site* (1986). He was the cinematographer for parts of the film *Star Wars: Episode III – Revenge of the Sith* (2005), in which he was hired to shoot the eruption of Mt. Etna in Sicily for use in scenes of the volcanic planet Mustafar. A sequel to *Baraka*, Fricke conceived *Samara* as a guided meditation on the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.

USA 2013

102 mins

NC16 (Some Nudity)

Director: Ron Fricke



Scan to
watch trailer

Print source:

Magidson Films Inc

310-842-8516

michellep@barakasamsara.com

Festival and Award Highlights:

Official Selection, Toronto International
Film Festival 2011





PATHS OF THE SOUL

Paths of the Soul chronicles an extraordinary journey by Tibetan villagers on a gruelling 2,000 kilometre pilgrimage to the holy capital of Lhasa.



When two inhabitants of a Tibetan mountain village decide to undertake a pilgrimage to the holy city of Lhasa, nine others, including a pregnant woman and a girl, join them. As they stoically endure harsh winter conditions, physical exhaustion and the numerous hazards on the road over months, the film develops into a stirring salute to their spiritual devotion and quiet determination.



This breathtaking road movie is filmed with non-professional actors and a non-scripted narrative, blurring the boundaries between documentary and drama to create a fictionalised account of true events, woven into an absorbing and moving tale.

SAT 17 SEP | 4:00pm* / Singapore Premiere

Director's Bio

Zhang Yang is one of the pioneers of the underground Chinese music video scene and can be ranked among the greatest of the new generation of Chinese filmmakers. After graduating in 1992 from the Central Theatre Academy in Beijing, he directed the well-known play *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. He made his first feature length film, *Spicy Love Soup*, in 1997, and won several prizes with it in China. *Shower* (1999) won an Audience Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam, and *Sunflower* (2005) won him the award for Best Director at the San Sebastián International Film Festival.

Director's Statement

This film tries to look for the energy given by beliefs. It also allows us, non-believers, to think about our own spiritual lives. It reminds us to never lose ourselves. And on the road we started to look for ourselves, for our convictions.

We shot this film from an altitude above 4,000 metres. We were eating and sleeping on the road. We worked literally on the road. We had to live within extreme conditions, and these for us were more complicated than actually doing the film. Because this became our lives.

At the same time this film allowed me to find new cinematographic possibilities. It was a new research and discovery of film language. It's a fresh start. I rediscovered cinema.

CHINA 2015

117 mins

PG

Tibetan with English subtitles

Director: Zhang Yang

*There will be a post-screening discussion with the Director



Scan to watch trailer

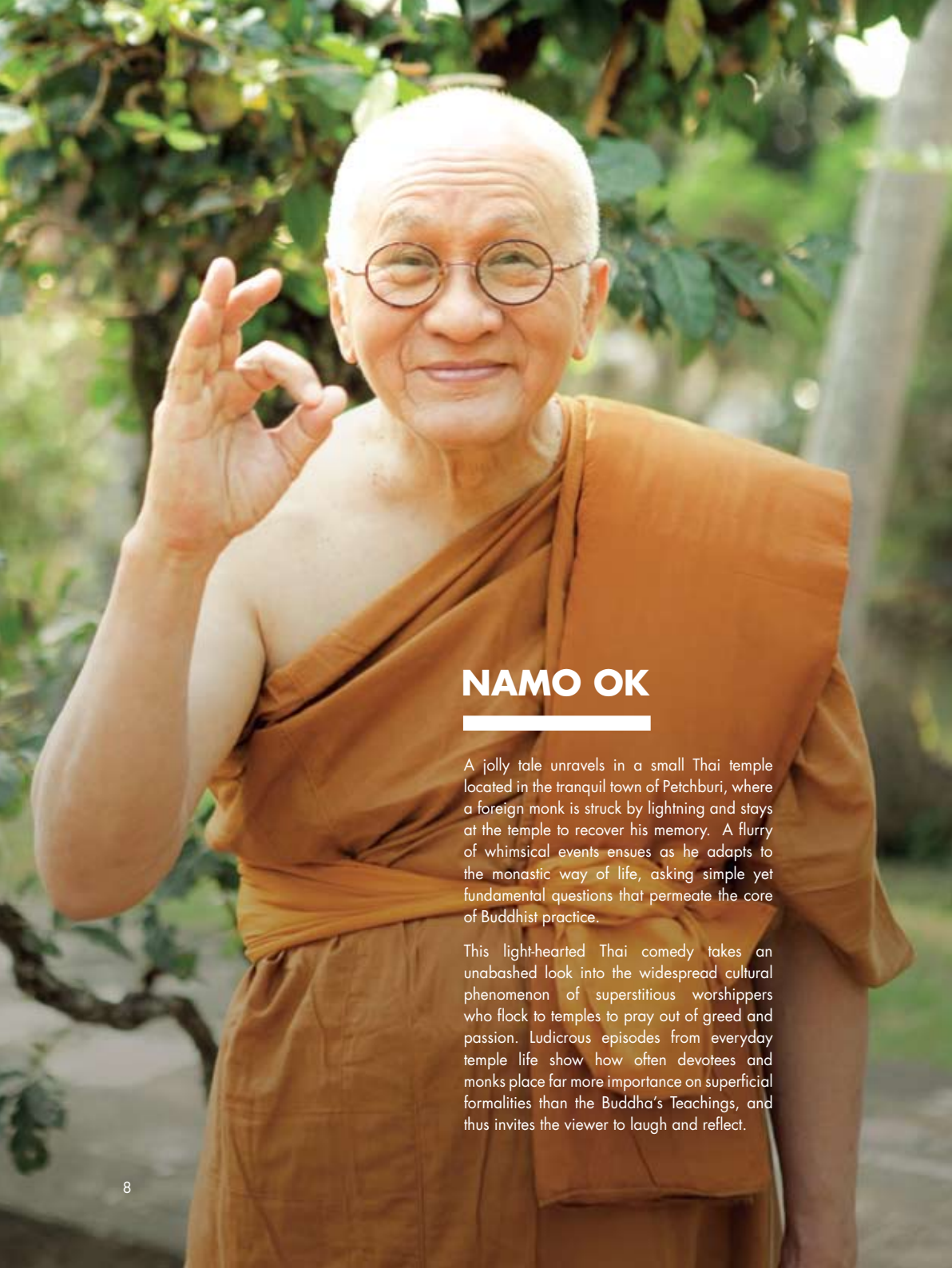
Print source:

Asian Shadows (Anne-Sophie LEHEC)
+33613037833
anne@chineseshadows.com

Festival and Award Highlights:

Official Selection, Toronto International Film Festival 2015

Official Selection, International Film Festival Rotterdam 2016



NAMO OK

A jolly tale unravels in a small Thai temple located in the tranquil town of Petchburi, where a foreign monk is struck by lightning and stays at the temple to recover his memory. A flurry of whimsical events ensues as he adapts to the monastic way of life, asking simple yet fundamental questions that permeate the core of Buddhist practice.

This light-hearted Thai comedy takes an unabashed look into the widespread cultural phenomenon of superstitious worshippers who flock to temples to pray out of greed and passion. Ludicrous episodes from everyday temple life show how often devotees and monks place far more importance on superficial formalities than the Buddha's Teachings, and thus invites the viewer to laugh and reflect.



SAT 17 SEP | 7:00pm / Singapore Premiere

Director's Bio

Titipong Chaisati graduated from the Communication Arts in Motion Picture and Video program at Rangsit University. He started his career as an assistant director for a number of TV series at the former iTV, Thailand's only independent television station back then. He then went on to work on numerous feature films as assistant director and screenplay writer, before directing his debut feature film *Pai in Love: Secret in 2010*. He also wrote for a number of feature films including *Black Night* (2005), *Samchuk* (2009), *Bangrajan 2* (2010), and *Ghost Day* (2012). In 2013, he directed the short film *Sood Rak Plick Lock*, as well as a short advertisement for the National Institute for Emergency Medicine.

THAILAND 2014

100 mins
NC16 (Some mature content)

Thai with English subtitles

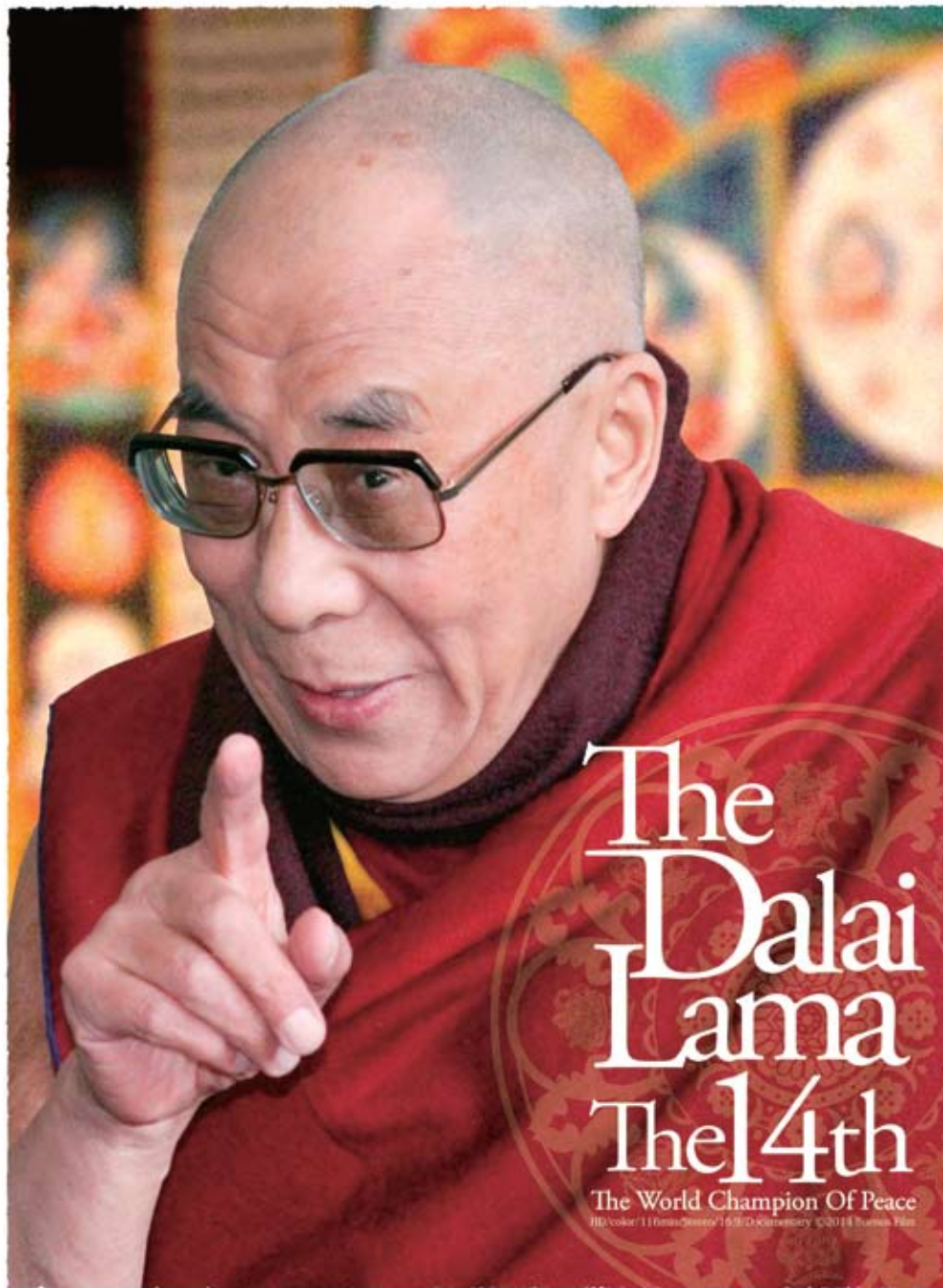
Director: Titipong Chaisati



Scan to
watch trailer

Print source:

Phranakorn Film Co., Ltd. (Pollawat
Thanarungroj)
+(66)81-255-3733
ipr@phranakornfilm.com



THE DALAI LAMA THE 14TH

SUN 18 SEP | 10:30am* / Singapore Premiere

How many people can really say they know the man and not just the religious giant he is?

In this documentary you will meet the Dalai Lama as you have never seen him before. The camera goes into the areas of his life that were only accessible to his staff. What you will see through the camera lens is a person relaxing with his glasses off while sipping tea. You will see a monk reading his prayer books and going over the daily assignments. You will meet the Dalai Lama up close and personal. The documentary reveals the Dalai Lama's agonising and difficult path as well as the essence of the Tibetan issues.

Director's Bio

Fujiro Mitsuishi graduated from Nihon University, majoring in Literature and Science. While he was working as an assistant director in films and TV dramas, he was influenced by outstanding directors such as Ryuchi Hiroki and Tasumi Kumashiro. His fourth directorial work *Ogya* (2002) received the Netpack Award at the Hawaii International Film Festival and his seventh film *Osaka Hamlet* (2008) received special mention at the Tokyo International Film Festival. He writes scripts, novels, poems and stories for manga. *The Dalai Lama the 14th — The World Champion of Peace* is his first documentary film.

Production Note

Photographer Taikan Usui life's work was on capturing the faces of those who contribute to peace in the world. In 2007, Taikan received a request from the Office of the Dalai Lama in Japan for him to video record the Buddhist monk's visit to Japan in November. From then on, Taikan and his son, photographer Kazuyoshi Usui, filmed the Dalai Lama during all his visits to Japan.

Kazuyoshi felt that the people of Japan, who were, in his opinion, materially satisfied but spiritually dissatisfied, would benefit from the Dalai Lama's wisdom. He thus conceived the idea of randomly asking people on the streets to pose questions to the Dalai Lama, who in turn would respond with his answers. A documentary in the video letter format of questions and answers was thus created.

JAPAN 2015

116 mins

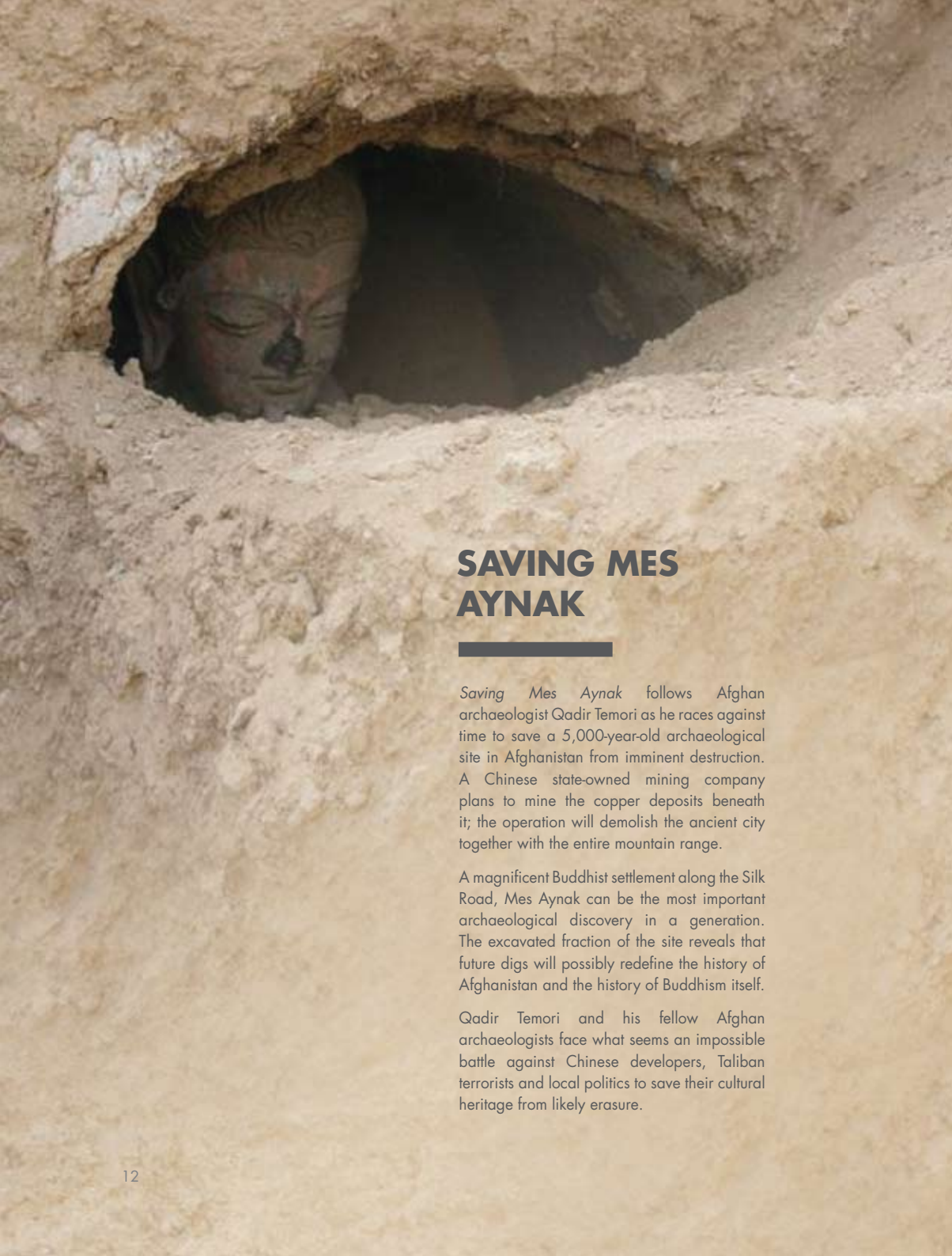
NC16 (Some mature content)

Japanese with English subtitles

Director: Fujiro Mitsuishi

* There will be a post-screening discussion with the Director

Print source:
Gold View Co., Ltd (Kiyo)
+81-3-5347-2501
kiyo@goldview.co.jp



SAVING MES AYNAK

Saving Mes Aynak follows Afghan archaeologist Qadir Temori as he races against time to save a 5,000-year-old archaeological site in Afghanistan from imminent destruction. A Chinese state-owned mining company plans to mine the copper deposits beneath it; the operation will demolish the ancient city together with the entire mountain range.

A magnificent Buddhist settlement along the Silk Road, Mes Aynak can be the most important archaeological discovery in a generation. The excavated fraction of the site reveals that future digs will possibly redefine the history of Afghanistan and the history of Buddhism itself.

Qadir Temori and his fellow Afghan archaeologists face what seems an impossible battle against Chinese developers, Taliban terrorists and local politics to save their cultural heritage from likely erasure.

SUN 18 SEP | 1:00pm / Singapore Premiere

Director's Bio

Brent E. Huffman is an award-winning director, producer and cinematographer of documentaries and television programs. His work ranges from documentaries aired on The Discovery Channel, The National Geographic Channel, NBC, CNN, PBS and Al Jazeera, to Sundance Film Festival premieres, to ethnographic films made for the China Exploration and Research Society. He has also directed, produced, shot, and edited short documentaries for online outlets like The New York Times, TIME, Salon, Huffington Post and PBS Arts.

His documentary works include *Welcome to Warren: Guards and Inmates on Life in Prison* (2004), *The Weight of the World* (2005), *Built in Kabul* (2005), *The Women's Kingdom* (2006), *The Colony* (2010) which was aired on Al Jazeera, and *Syrian Refugees in Jordan* (2012).



USA 2014

60 mins
PG

Afghan with English subtitles

Director: Brent E. Huffman



Scan to
watch trailer

Print source:

Autlook Filmsales GmbH (Youn Ji)
+43-720-346834
youn@autlookfilms.com

Festival and Award Highlights:

Grand Prize, Arkhaia Cultural Heritage
and Archaeology Film Festival, Hilton
Head Island, SC

Best Documentary, Intl One-Hour
Film Competition, Cinemambiente
Environmental Film Festival, Turin, Italy

Best Film & Honorable Mention by
Jury for Inspiration, The Archaeology
Channel International Film & Video
Festival, Eugene, OR

IDFA Honorary Award for 2015 – Brent
Huffman, LAFOR Documentary Film
Award, The International Academic
Forum, Kobe, Japan



ZEN AND WAR

In the beginning of the 20th century, Japan waged a number of wars, which culminated in the Second World War. In 1998, the book *Zen at War* was published in the United States describing in detail how Buddhist monks actively fought in these wars.

A Zen Buddhist woman in Holland was appalled by what she read in the book and wrote letters to Japanese monasteries inquiring how it was possible that Zen Buddhist monks were involved in warfare.

This documentary features, for the first time, Shodo Harada Roshi and other contemporary Zen Buddhist masters attempting to explain why their wartime predecessors became involved in Japanese militarism. *Zen and War* is a powerful reminder and timely warning of how peaceful philosophies can be waylaid by extremist ideologies.



SUN 18 SEP | 1:00pm* / Singapore Premiere

Director's Bio

Alexander Oey works as a documentary filmmaker for several broadcasters in the Netherlands. He has made films about a wide range of subjects such as art, terrorism, economics and social issues. Films that were shown at international festivals include *Hans Joachim Klein, My Life as A Terrorist* (2005), *There's No Authority But Yourself* (2006), *Zen and War* (2009), *Off the Grid* (2011), *The Bollywood Revolution* (2011), *Goldman Sachs and the Destruction of Greece* (2012), and *Pekka* (2014). He frequently contributes to VPRO's Backlight series. His subjects usually cover a wide range of subjects, mainly in the socio-political or anthropological domain.

THE NETHERLANDS 2009

60 mins

PG13 (Some Mature Content)

Japanese and English with English subtitles

Director: Alexander Oey

*There will be a post-screening discussion with a film representative

Print source:

Buddhist Broadcasting Foundation
(Alexander Oey)
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a.oey@upcmail.nl

Director's Statement

When I learnt from my philosopher friend Jan Bor that in the beginning of the 20th century, Buddhist monks in Japan had engaged in war, I asked myself the question that everybody would ask: "How is this possible?" I was confused since the act of compassion is so central to Buddhism.

Jan told me about a woman he knew, Ina Buitendijk, who had been in touch with important Japanese Zen masters. It is not often that these Zen masters react to letters from the outside. But they had sent letters back to Ina to offer their apologies. They felt that they had to address Ina's story of her husband's suffering.

I decided to make a film about this, which I knew would not be an easy task.



JOURNEY FROM ZANSKAR

One of the last places on Earth where the original Tibetan Buddhist way of life still exists, Zanskar's inaccessibility and isolation have protected it from cultural change. Two monks select 17 children aged 4 to 12 who will separate from their families for most of their lives to receive education, so that their cultural heritage will not be lost. With yaks and horses, they embark on an almost impossible ten-day trek through the deep snow of the Himalayas.

With a guest appearance by the Dalai Lama himself, this remarkable journey witnesses the amazing resilience of the people of Zanskar. See them laugh in the face of crushing disappointment; hear the children sing while riding into a dangerous, unknown future.



SUN 18 SEP | 5:00pm* / Singapore Premiere

Director's Bio

Frederick Marx is an internationally acclaimed, Oscar and Emmy nominated producer/director with 35 years in the film business. He was named a Chicago Tribune Artist of the Year for 1994, a 1995 Guggenheim Fellow, and a recipient of a Robert F. Kennedy Special Achievement Award. *Hoop Dreams* (1994) is his first documentary film exploring the welfare of teenage boys.

Along with *Journey from Zanskar*, his interest in foreign cultures is reflected in PBS' international human rights program *Out Of The Silence* (1991) and the widely acclaimed personal essay *Dreams From China* (1989). Marx, a true maverick who dedicated his life to the making and promotion of independent films, continues to provide a voice of artistic and social integrity.

Director's Statement

"How far would you go to save your dying culture?"

"Sometimes you have to give up your kids in order to save them."

It took a long journey to arrive at the simplicity of those two statements, but the film didn't start out with them as the central ideas.

The story of the trek as it appears in the film is our story too. The uncertainties, the cold, the disappointments, the fears – those were ours too. There were times in the two years prior to completion when, overwhelmed with anxiety and stress over how I was going to finish the film, I would drop my head to my desk and weep. The one thing that always pulled me through was the film itself.

USA 2010

90 mins
PG13 (Brief Nudity)

Multiple languages with English subtitles

Director: Frederick Marx

*There will be a post-screening discussion with a film representative



Scan to watch trailer

Print source:

Warrior Films (Frederick Marx)
510-338-6727
frederick@warriorfilms.org

Festival and Award Highlights:

Official Selection, Boulder International Film Festival 2010

Official Selection, Doc Edge Film Festival, Auckland & Wellington, New Zealand, 2010

Official Selection, Ischia International Film Festival, Sicily, Italy, 2010



家在水草丰茂的地方 RIVER ROAD

Two Yugur ethnic minority brothers embark on a road trip across desertified prairies with their camels, passing through the Silk Road to go home to their parents. They trek from their grandfather's home near town to the distant grasslands where their parents have moved to find pastures to herd their sheep. The two boys are confronted with barren landscapes, abandoned villages, and decaying relics. Their journey becomes a search for their identity as Yugurs.

This coming-of-age film offers us an unflinching look at the grisly aftermath when natural resources are continuously exploited. Mourning the succumbing of the Yugur civilisation to environmental degradation and industrialisation, it compels us to think about what we have lost in the pursuit of modernisation.

阿迪克尔和巴特尔是生活在祁连山脚下的裕固族牧民孩子，被父亲送到省城上学。暑期来时却不见家人来接，两兄弟只好独自骑着骆驼横渡沙漠，寻找在草原上放牧的父母亲。一路上映入眼帘的仅是断垣残壁、干枯河床、牧民弃屋，疮痍满目。

影片如一首裕固族凋零的哀歌，为被历史遗忘、被环境污染和逐金洪流淹没的裕固族人哀悼，发人深省。

SUN 18 SEP | 7:30pm

Director's Bio

Li Ruijun was born in Gansu Province, China in 1983. At the age of 14, he studied painting and music. In 2003, he graduated from the Institute of Management of China National Ministry of Radio, Film and Television. For several years he has been working as a TV director. He has directed four films: *The Summer Solstice* (2007), *The Old Donkey* (2010), *Fly with the Crane* (2012) and *River Road* (2014). Showcasing the haunting beauty and the wild abandon of north-western China, his works tend to focus on the relationship between human beings and the land, as well as the rural attitude towards family, life and death in a fast changing China.

关于导演

李睿珺，2003年毕业于山西传媒学院（原广播电视电影管理干部学院），2006年独立执导电影处女作《夏至》，获第九届希腊国际独立电影电影节最佳影片特别奖。第三部作品《告诉他们，我乘白鹤去了》入围2012年第六十九届威尼斯电影节，巴西利亚国际电影节最佳导演。其作品气质上一脉相承，都关照了老人、小孩、大自然以及乡愁的主题。



CHINA 中国 2014

102 mins

PG13

(Coarse Language and Brief Nudity
些许粗俗语言及裸露画面)

Mandarin/Dialect from Gansu
province with English and Chinese
Subtitles

华语和甘肃方言对白附中英文字幕

Director: Li Ruijun

导演：李睿珺



Scan to
watch trailer

Print source:


Laurel Films International (Shirley
HUANG)
+81-426-52-5535
shirleyhuang@laurel-films.com

Festival and Award Highlights:

Official Selection, Singapore Chinese
Film Festival 2016

The SIGNIS Award, Hong Kong
International Film Festival 2015

Best Asian Film, Colombo International
Film Festival 2015



THE MINDFUL REVOLUTION

It sounds like the perfect antidote to our hectic lives: less stress, better concentration, increased productivity. No wonder mindfulness meditation has become an attractive addition to the boardroom agenda for global giants like Google and SAP. Backed up by science, corporate organisations are rapidly turning to mindfulness to help develop their business model.

The Mindful Revolution takes a critical look behind the façade of this global corporate phenomenon to reveal a series of burning ethical issues about the values of our economic system.

Is mindfulness a way for businesses to simply boost their profits and productivity? Or does this revolution offer an opportunity to change the way our businesses operate, creating a more equal and fair society?

Directors' Bio

Samuel Stefan holds a Master of Science in Psychology and has a broad range of filmmaking experience in writing, directing, producing and editing. He lives and works near Berne, Switzerland as an independent filmmaker and a lecturer in psychology. Besides working on documentary projects, he is a freelance director and editor for commercials, image films and TV reality series.

Nick Oakley is a freelance filmmaker and camera operator based in Manchester, UK. He is also studying part-time for an MA in Film & Television at The University of Warwick, UK. Having learnt his trade through working on a number of UK dramas, international documentaries and feature films, Nick's passion is for developing independent documentary ideas which explore the boundaries between authenticity and performance.

MON 19 SEP | 7:15pm / Singapore Premiere

Director's Statement

In 2009, I came across the mindfulness method developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn. I found this immediately appealing because it offered an opportunity to explore meditation without prescription or dogma. As a psychologist, I am aware of the well-documented empirical effects of mindfulness-based meditation in dealing with stress and psychological disorders.

But the hype around mindfulness in the business world poses some questions for me. How is a mindful life possible in an economic world ruled by inequality and competition? Could mindfulness meditation inadvertently perpetuate this state of being, by creating a sense of harmony within the confines of the system in which it operates?

It is with these questions in mind that I investigated behind the scenes of the global phenomenon of mindfulness.

Samuel Stefan

SWITZERLAND 2015

58 mins
PG

Multiple languages with
English subtitles

Directors: Samuel Stefan
& Nick Oakley



Scan to
watch trailer

Print source:

Lomotion AG (Anias Hergarten)
+41-31-388-00-89
info@lomotion.ch

Festival and Award Highlights:

Official Selection - Visions du Réel
International DOC Outlook Market 2015

Official Selection - Gasparilla
International Film Festival 2016



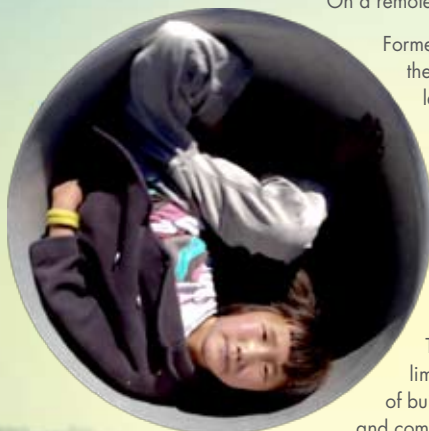
TASHI AND THE MONK

On a remote mountaintop a brave social experiment is taking place.

Former Buddhist monk Lobsang Phuntsok was trained under the guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In 2006, he left a life as a spiritual teacher in the United States to return to the Himalayan foothills near Bhutan, where he creates a unique community rescuing orphaned and neglected children.

Five-year-old Tashi is the newest arrival. Her mother recently passed away and she was abandoned by her alcoholic father. Wild and troubled, Tashi is struggling to find her place amongst her 84 new siblings.

This documentary follows Lobsang as he struggles with limited resources and increasing demands in the process of building the community, capturing a journey of finding love and compassion where there is no hope.



MON 19 SEP | 7:15pm / Singapore Premiere

Directors' Bio

Andrew Hinton began his career in filmmaking working on documentary and drama productions for Pawel Pawlikowski and Marc Isaacs, before moving on to performance films and musical feature documentaries. He lived on an Indian train to document the Jagriti Yatra, a journey around India with 500 young social entrepreneurs; then followed a paperboy in Jamshedpur for a day, creating the short film *Amar* (2011) which won the Vimeo Documentary Award. He also worked with an NGO to make a film about hand washing, *It's In Your Hands* (2011), that went viral on Youtube.

Johnny Burke learned his craft at Cinecontact Productions under the guidance of renowned observational filmmakers such as Sean McAllister and Kim Longinotto. Johnny spent the next ten years editing documentary films for broadcast, including *Boys From Baghdad High* (2007), *The Yes Men Fix the World* (2009). In 2009 he began to broaden his skills into producing, and directed his own short and mid-length films.



Director's Statement

I was originally drawn to India by a bank manager bringing about social change, and then kept being pulled back to that strange, magical and chaotic country by inspirational stories and people.

I first visited Jhamtse Gatsal in April 2012 to shoot a piece for the Thiel Foundation. My three day visit turned into three happy weeks and I left promising to return one day to make a longer film about the community. In October 2013 I went back and was joined by old friend and fellow filmmaker Johnny Burke to document the quietly remarkable lives of Lobsang and the Jhamtse family.

Andrew Hinton

INDIA 2014

40 mins

PG

Hindi, Tibetan, English
with English subtitles

Director: Andrew Hinton
& Johnny Burke



Scan to
watch trailer

Print source:

Pilgrim films (Andrew Hinton)
ah23@mac.com

Festival and Award Highlights

Winner – Best International Short,
Documentary Edge Festival, 2015

Winner – Best Film Mountain Culture,
Vancouver International Mountain Film
Festival, 2015

Winner Best Film Mountain Culture,
Banff Mountain Film Festival, 2014

Winner, Pare Lorentz Award,
International Documentary Association,
2014

HAPPINESS

Peyangki is a dreamy and solitary eight-year-old monk who has never left his Bhutanese village perched high in the Himalayas. At last, electricity is going to arrive in his tiny village, a decade after their ruler opened up Bhutan to television and the internet. He treks for three days to the nearest city in search of a television. But will television bring happiness?

Capturing the majesty of an isolated world on the brink of great change, *Happiness* provides a vivid glimpse into a vanishing way of life. This film is a witness to the moment where an ancient society falls to the seduction of technology, illuminating how complicated and bittersweet the arrival of progress can be.

TUE 20 SEP | 7:15pm / Singapore Premiere

Director's Bio

Thomas Balmès has been working as an independent director, cinematographer and producer of non-fiction films since 1992. His initial projects included studies of filmmakers James Ivory and Michelangelo Antonioni.

His first film, *Bosnia Hotel* (1996), was the story of UN Kenyan peacekeepers in Bosnia. This was followed by *Maharajah Burger*; *Mad Cows*; *Holy Cows*, about the mad cow crisis as seen from the Indian perspective. *The Gospel According to the Papuans* (2000), tracking the conversion to Christianity of a Papuan Chief, was honoured with the Silver Spire Award at the San Francisco International Film Festival. He then directed a sequel in Papua, *Waiting for Jesus* (2000), and captured the stories of infants across the globe in the acclaimed 2010 documentary *Babies*.

FRANCE/FINLAND 2013

80 mins
PG

Bhutanese with English subtitles

Director: Thomas Balmès



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Print source:

The Finnish Film Foundation
(Otto Suuronen)
+358962203019
otto.suuronen@ses.fi

Festival and Award Highlights:

Cinematography Award, World Cinema
Documentary, Sundance Film Festival,
2014

Sheffield Youth Jury Award – Special
Award, Sheffield International
Documentary Award Festival 2014

Official Selection, Thessaloniki
Documentary Festival, 2014

Official Selection, San Francisco
International Film Festival, 2014

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SCHEDULE

DATE & TIME	FILM	DIRECTOR	COUNTRY	YEAR	RUNTIME	RATING
SAT 17 SEP 1:00pm	OPENING FILM: SAMSARA	Ron Fricke	USA	2013	102 mins	NC16
SAT 17 SEP 4:00pm	PATHS OF THE SOUL *	Zhang Yang	China	2015	117 mins	PG
SAT 17 SEP 7:00pm	NAMO OK	Titipong Chaisati	Thailand	2014	100 mins	NC16
SUN 18 SEP 10:30am	THE DALAI LAMA THE 14TH *	Fujiro Mitsuishi	Japan	2015	116 mins	NC16
SUN 18 SEP 1:00pm	SAVING MES AYNAK	Brent E. Huffman	USA	2014	60 mins	PG
	ZEN AND WAR *	Alexander Oey	The Netherlands	2009	60 mins	PG13
SUN 18 SEP 5:00pm	JOURNEY FROM ZANSKAR *	Frederick Marx	USA	2010	90 mins	PG13
SUN 18 SEP 7:30pm	RIVER ROAD 家在水草丰茂的地方	Li Ruijun 李睿珺	China	2014	102 mins	PG13
MON 19 SEP 7:15pm	THE MINDFUL REVOLUTION	Samuel Stefan & Nick Oakley	Switzerland	2015	58 mins	PG
	TASHI AND THE MONK	Andrew Hinton & Johnny Burke	India	2014	40 mins	PG
TUE 20 SEP 7:15pm	HAPPINESS	Thomas Balmès	France/Finland	2013	80 mins	PG
WED 21 SEP 7:15pm	MONK WITH A CAMERA	Guido Santi & Tina Mascara	USA	2015	90 mins	PG
THU 22 SEP 7:15pm	GOLDEN KINGDOM	Brian Perkins	USA	2014	103 mins	PG
FRI 23 SEP 7:00pm	SAMSARA	Ron Fricke	USA	2013	102 mins	NC16
SAT 24 SEP 10:30am	FROM A PIMPLE TO NIRVANA *	Amorn Harinittisuk	Thailand	2014	130 mins	NC16
SAT 24 SEP 1:00pm	WINTER CICADAS 冬蝉	Zhou Hongbo 周洪波	China	2015	86 mins	PG
SAT 24 SEP 3:10pm	CROSSCURRENT 长江图	Yang Chao 杨超	China	2015	116 mins	M18
SAT 24 SEP 5:45pm	CLOSING FILM: HUMAN	Yann Arthus-Bertrand	France	2015	200 mins	M18

FILM CLASSIFICATION

Parental Guidance (PG)
Suitable for all, but parents should guide their young

Parental Guidance 13 (PG13)
Suitable for persons aged 13 and above but parental guidance is advised for children below 13

No Children Under 16 (NC16)
Suitable for persons aged 16 and above

Mature 18 (M18)
Suitable for persons aged 18 and above.

* There will be a post screening discussion

All information is correct at the time of print. For updates, please visit www.thisfilmfest.com

MONK WITH A CAMERA

This feature documentary chronicles the life and spiritual quest of Nicholas "Nicky" Vreeland, grandson of legendary Vogue editor Diana Vreeland. A glamorous social photographer at the age of 30, he walked away from a life of privilege and pleasure to become a monk at the Rato Monastery in India.



A disciple of Khyongla Rato Rinpoche, one of the spiritual teachers of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Nicky's journey from photographer to monk, and most recently, to the abbot of the monastery he helped rebuild, forms the core of the story.

This film is also about the deep bond between a teacher and his disciple, between East and West, and about finding balance in a world of impermanence.

WED 21 SEP | 7:15pm / Singapore Premiere

Directors' Bio

Guido Santi started his career working as an apprentice with Ipotesi Cinema. He wrote and directed *Concertino*, a film about four teenagers living in the suburbs of Rome, for RAI, Italy's national television network. After receiving his Master's degree in Film Production at the University of Southern California, Guido has produced and directed documentaries and TV specials, as well as a feature film.

After studying journalism and photography at the Art Institute in Pittsburgh, **Tina Mascara** graduated from the film programme at the Los Angeles City College, and then wrote, produced and directed two award-winning independent feature films: *Jacklight* (2000) and *Asphalt Stars* (2002). In 2008, Tina and Guido Santi together produced, directed and edited *Chris & Don: A Love Story*, on the life-long relationship between a British writer and American painter.



Directors' Statement

A man who is not afraid of committing to a spiritual path, and in the process finds a greater reason to pursue his work as an artist - this is an original story that can appeal, not only to people interested in religion and photography, but also to an audience who is passionate about stories of exceptional individuals who defy their times.

Nicky's story can help us to better understand ourselves, the time in which we live, and the way we perceive monasticism, specifically life in a Tibetan monastery. It also offers us a historical perspective on Tibetan Buddhism from the point of view of a monk who is deeply engaged in preserving its message and tradition.

USA 2015

90 mins
PG

English with no subtitles

Directors: Guido Santi
& Tina Mascara



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Print source:

Asphalt Stars Productions
Tina Mascara/Guido Santi
+3239511075
tinamascara@sbcglobal.net

GOLDEN KINGDOM

Four orphan boys, all novice monks, live in a Buddhist monastery in the remote mountains of Northeast Myanmar. The head monk departs on a long journey from which he may never return. Once the boys are on their own, magical phenomena begin to occur. Witazara, the eldest, realises he must protect the three other boys, as a series of peculiar events threatens to unravel the fabric of the young monks' reality.

Shot entirely in Myanmar with non-actors, this surreal coming-of-age story unfolds from a forgotten part of the world where there is neither electricity nor telephone. Merged with elements of ethnographic documentary, *Golden Kingdom* opens insights into a previously unseen Myanmar that is transforming by the moment.

Director's Bio

American filmmaker **Brian Perkins** has traveled extensively through the remote parts of Asia and India. After creating a network of relationships in the monasteries and villages of Myanmar – picking up conversational Burmese along the way – he was in a unique position to bring *Golden Kingdom* to audiences.

While a graduate student at UC-Berkeley, Brian received the Eisner Prize in Film and Video, and was recipient of numerous acknowledgements during his studies at New York University. Born in 1980 in Portland, Oregon, USA, Brian currently lives in Berlin and Asia. *Golden Kingdom* is Brian's debut feature film.

THU 22 SEP | 7:15pm / Singapore Premiere

Director's Statement

The origins of *Golden Kingdom* date from my first contact with the Swel Tal monastery in Myanmar. Encountering the young boys there - often orphans - living as monks, I was overwhelmed. I had never met anyone with such radically opened hearts. And these were children, living largely self-sufficient amongst each other (yet still up to the tricks of children), with no possessions, no family present. All of this was set against the compelling backdrop of a nation in radical transformation, convulsion, and often violent self-discovery.

The story at the root of *Golden Kingdom* came to me. I needed to honour the structure and form of their lives, spirit, and Buddhist traditions, and I found in film a willing partner.



USA 2014

103 mins
PG

Burmese with English subtitles

Director: Brian Perkins



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Print source:
WIDE (President: Loic Magneron)
+331-53-54-64-04
Ana Perromat - festivals@
widemanagement.com

Festival and Award Highlights:

Berlinale 2015 - Nominated for the Best
First Feature Award

Febiofest Prague Film Festival 2015

Seoul International Youth Film Festival
2015 - Kid's Eye section

Vancouver International Film Festival
2015 - Cinema of our Time section

Bangkok ASEAN film festival 2015

FROM A PIMPLE TO NIRVANA

Alone in her room, 20-year-old Nuknik wallows in her frustrations with her divorced parents and a failed relationship with her boyfriend. She attempts to commit suicide, but gets distracted by a large pimple on her nose. Being obsessed with how others view her, the discovery of her pimple sets Nuknik on a journey into the imperfections of the world and herself, where she battles with the core of her existence.

With slight horror elements, this experimental film is a mirror for the modern viewer to recognise our restless state of anxiety, the constant preoccupation with our self image, and the vicious cycle of being caught up in our self-absorbed neurosis.

Director's Bio

Prior to being a filmmaker, **Amorn Harinnitisuk** was an avant-garde creative director during his 19 years of TV work. He directed commercials for international advertising agencies Saatchi & Saatchi, and Ogilvy & Mather. After that, he devoted his creative energies to making experimental films such as *Made in Heaven* (2008), and *Sperm Saves the World* (2010) which was in competition at I've Seen Films IFF in Italy and was screened at Gogolfest in Ukraine. He went on to develop feature films, one of which is *Doggod & Full Water* (2011).

SAT 24 SEP | 10.30am* / Singapore Premiere



THAILAND 2014

130 mins

NC16 (Coarse Language)

Thai with English subtitles

Director: Amorn Harinnitisuk

*There will be a post-screening discussion with the Director



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Print source:

A Morning Pictures
Amorn Harinnitisuk
081-1726687
amorn008@gmail.com

Festival and Award Highlights:

El Rey Award for Excellence in Experimental Filmmaking - Barcelona Film Festival 2015

Official Selection - NYC Independent Film Festival 2016

冬蝉 WINTER CICADAS

A young filmmaker returns to China after his brother dies in a fire back home. He travels from the bustling metropolis of Shanghai to a remote monastery on the snowy Tian-Mu Mountain, where he reunites with his mother. His encounters with different people in the monastery become a subtle, intimate and mysterious study on the human condition.

Depicting the revival of life through the metaphor of the winter cicada, this film paints a poignant portrait of family, loss and guilt along with the steady beat of Buddhist chants.

如果你的出生注定是为他人存在，你的生命会背负怎样的沉重？若可以选择，你会何去何从？

得知大哥在一场大火中丧生，陈拓从法国赶回浙江。他追随母亲的足迹，来到了大雪覆盖，天目山顶的禅

寺，和多年未见面的母亲重聚，参加大哥的葬礼。母子之间的爱与恨以及家事的旧日伤痕就此展开。

这是一个身处绝境而欲求解脱的现代故事。



SAT 24 SEP | 1.00pm / Singapore Premiere 新加坡首映

Director's Bio

Zhou Hongbo graduated from the Beijing Film Academy with a master's degree in 1999. His graduation film, *A Fish Who Wants To Fly*, was selected for the 53rd Cannes Film Festival, Cinéfondation category. Since then, Zhou has made several features and documentaries. They were screened at various international film festivals. *Winter Cicadas* is his second feature film. His works focus on the transitions of Chinese urbanisation, exploring not only the physical but also the spiritual change of contemporary China and her people.

关于导演

周洪波，1999年毕业于北京电影学院导演系，获硕士学位，师从郑洞天老师。他的毕业电影《霜天晓角》获选第53届戛纳电影节电影基石单元。此后，他开始拍摄一系列的故事片和纪录片，并在世界各大电影节获得荣誉。他的作品包括《董家渡》、中澳合拍纪录片《白舞裙》，和故事长片《天目》。《冬蝉》是他的第二部故事长片。

CHINA 中国 2015

86 mins
PG

Mandarin with English Subtitles
华语对白附英文字幕

Director: Zhou Hongbo
导演：周洪波

Print source:

Zhou Hongbo
+86-13917382949
daofilm@163.com

Festival and Award Highlights:

Official Selection,
IBFF 2015 Vancouver



长江图 CROSSCURRENT

Crosscurrent follows the winter journey of a small cargo boat sailing up the Yangtze River.

Gao Chun, the young captain, disembarks at every port on his journey in search of love. However, he gradually realises that the women he meets at different ports appear to be the same person, except that they get younger and younger as the ship sails upstream. Bewildered, he sails upriver alone to the snow-capped mountain, where the Yangtze River begins. There, he unveils the mystery of the woman and the secret of the river.

A breathtaking, poetic travelogue up the Yangtze River, *Crosscurrent* captures the stunning landscapes of modern China, together with her melancholic knots of yearning, mourning and the shifting sands of time.

这是一个发生在长江上两个时空交错的魔幻爱情故事。

影片跟随一个诗人船长，沿着长江，逆着时空航行，为追寻一个女人的一生。他从诗集和航线图中疯狂寻找她的踪迹，不顾一切地独自一人逆流而上，直到源头的雪山。在这段航程中，他发现女人跟他处在不同的时空中相向而行，并最终揭开了对方和他自己的过去，和长江的秘密。

SAT 24 SEP | 3:10pm / Singapore Premiere 新加坡首映

Director's Bio

Yang Chao, a graduate of the Directing Department of Beijing Film Academy, is a director and writer who is known for *Run Away* (2001), his debut short film, which won the Film Fund Young Directors Award at the 54th Cannes Film Festival. *Passages* (2004), his writing and directing feature length debut, won the Camera d'Or Special Mention at the 57th Cannes Film Festival and was screened at some other festivals. He also directed *Yulai Little Hero* in 2008.

关于导演

杨超，河南信阳人，1997年毕业于北京电影学院导演系，现为电影导演协会会员，中国戏曲学院导演系影视导演专业教研室主任。2001年凭借《待避》获得戛纳国际电影节电影基石奖及台北电影节国际学生电影银狮奖，2004年凭借《旅程》获得第57届戛纳国际电影节最佳处女作特别奖（金摄影机特别奖），并在2008年执导《雨来》。

CHINA 中国 2015

116 mins

M 18 (Sexual Scenes 性相关画面)

Mandarin with English Subtitles
华语对白附英文字幕

Director: Yang Chao
导演：杨超



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Print source:

International Distribution at Ray Media
(Song Yiran)
0086106008499
yians88@gmail.com

Festival and Award Highlights:

Silver Bear for Outstanding Artistic
Contribution for Cinematography, 66th
Berlin International Film Festival, 2016

Official Selection, The 40th Hong Kong
International Film Festival, 2016





🎬 CLOSING FILM 🎬

HUMAN

Over a span of three years, emotional life stories were collected from more than 2,000 women and men in 60 countries in an attempt to answer the question: What is it that makes us human?

The result is *Human*, a documentary film that weaves together heartfelt testimonies from freedom fighters in Ukraine, farmers in Mali, death row inmates in the United States, and more — on the struggles and triumphs that unite us all: love, death, happiness, homophobia, war, poverty, and the future of our planet.

Through exclusive aerial footage showing our planet Earth at its most sublime, this epic record of our collective human experience allows us to embrace the human condition and redefine the meaning of our existence.



SAT 24 SEP | 5:45pm / Singapore Premiere

Director's Bio

French photographer, filmmaker, journalist and environmentalist, **Yann Arthus-Bertrand** started his career photographing lions in Kenya in the 1980s. In 2006, he started the television documentary series *Vu Du Ciel*, exploring environmental problems, before embarking on his debut feature film, *Home* (2009), about the state of our planet. He directed *Forest* (2001) and *Desertification* (2012) for the United Nations, and co-directed *A Thirsty World* (2012) which narrates the history of water and the water crisis of our century. For Rio + 20, Yann co-directed the film *Planet Ocean* (2012). *Terra* (2015) retells the incredible story of life on Earth. A renowned specialist in aerial photography, Yann is recognised worldwide as one of the most important and respected environmentalists of our time.

Director's Statement

I dreamed of a film in which the power of words would resonate with the beauty of the world. Putting the ills of humanity at the heart of my work - poverty, war, immigration, homophobia - I made certain choices. Committed, political choices. But the subjects talked to me about everything: their difficulty in growing as well as their love and happiness. This richness of the human word lies at the heart of *Human*. This film relates the voices of all the men and women who entrusted me with their stories. And it becomes their messenger.

FRANCE 2015

200 mins
M18 (Some Mature Content)

English and French with
English subtitles

Director: Yann Arthus-Bertrand



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watch trailer

Print source:

The Festival Agency (Sophie Soghomonian)
+33954904863
info@thefestivalagency.com

Festival and Award Highlights:

Exceptional Premiere, United Nations 2015
Official Selection, 72nd Venice Film Festival
Official Selection, The Fête de l'Humanité 2015



《OPENING FILM》

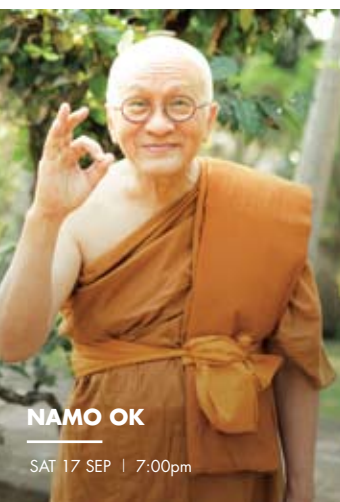
SAMSARA

SAT 17 SEP | 1:00pm
FRI 23 SEP | 7:00pm



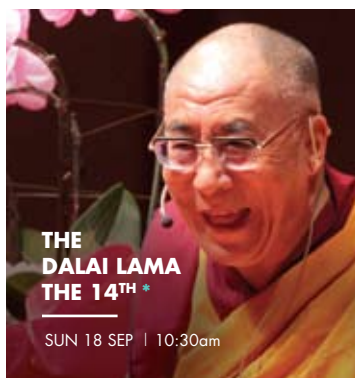
PATHS OF THE SOUL *

SAT 17 SEP | 4:00pm



NAMO OK

SAT 17 SEP | 7:00pm



THE DALAI LAMA THE 14TH *

SUN 18 SEP | 10:30am



SAVING MES AYNAK

SUN 18 SEP | 1:00pm



ZEN AND WAR *

SUN 18 SEP | 1:00pm



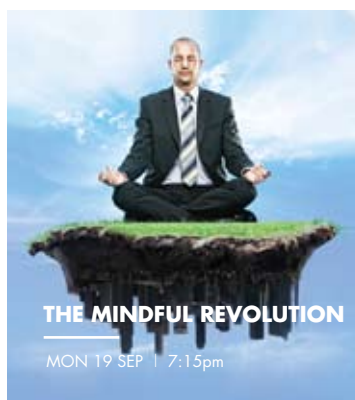
JOURNEY FROM ZANSKAR *

SUN 18 SEP | 5:00pm



家在水草丰茂的地方 RIVER ROAD

SUN 18 SEP | 7:30pm



THE MINDFUL REVOLUTION

MON 19 SEP | 7:15pm



TASHI AND THE MONK

MON 19 SEP | 7:15pm



HAPPINESS

TUE 20 SEP | 7:15pm



MONK WITH A CAMERA

WED 21 SEP
7:15pm



GOLDEN KINGDOM

THU 22 SEP | 7:15pm



FROM A PIMPLE TO NIRVANA *

SAT 24 SEP | 10:30am



冬蝉 WINTER CICADAS

SAT 24 SEP | 1:00pm



长江图 CROSSCURRENT

SAT 24 SEP | 3:10pm



《CLOSING FILM》

HUMAN

SAT 24 SEP | 5:45pm

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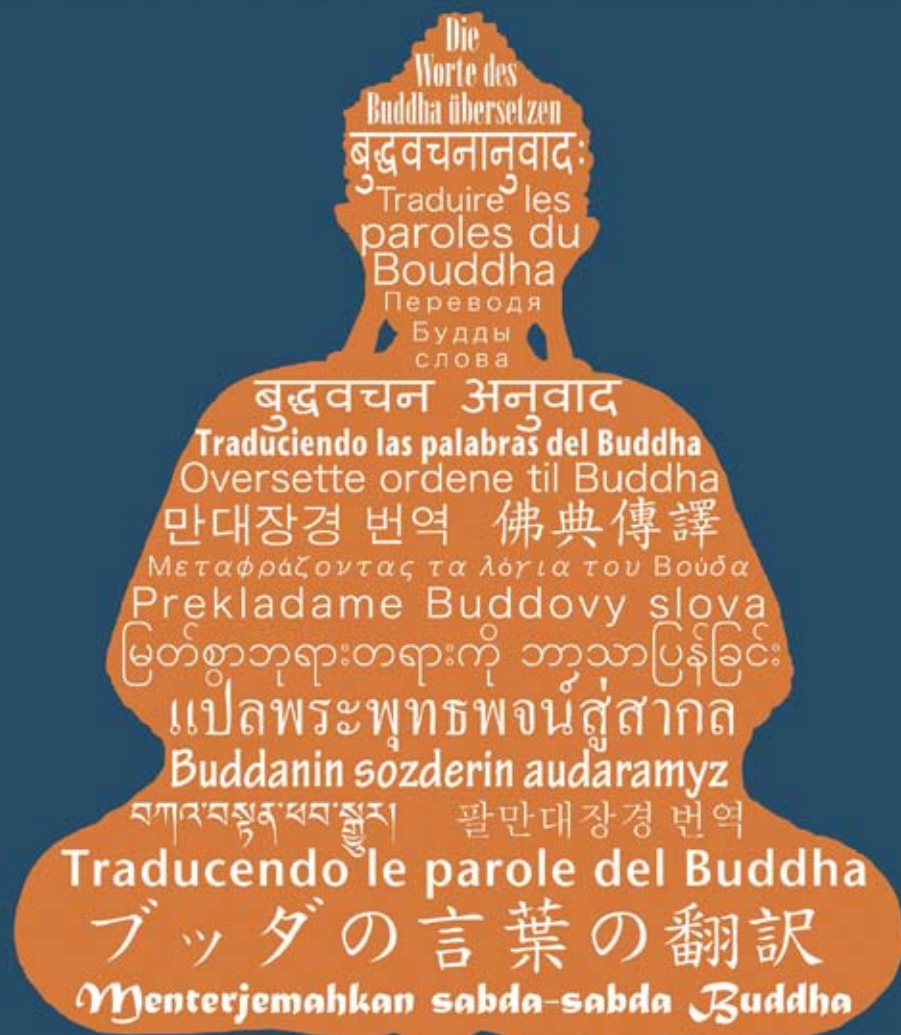
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* There will be a post screening discussion



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ABOUT THE ORGANISER DHARMA IN ACTION

Dharma In Action Limited (DIA) is a Company Limited by Guarantee officially incorporated in Singapore. Our mission is to present cultural and educational programmes rooted in Buddhist values and philosophies to the local community. We aspire to provide a dynamic platform for exchanges of ideas and cultivation of friendship to promote a society of compassion and wisdom.

DIA activities are organised mainly by volunteers from all walks of life and various age groups. The THIS Buddhist Film Festival is our signature biennial event. We are always looking to develop new events and look forward to suggestions from our supporters.



For more information about DIA,
please visit www.dharmainaction.net

THIS BUDDHIST FILM FESTIVAL 2016 ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Chairman: Teo Puay Kim

Vice Chairman: Cell Lim Siew Wee

Advisor: Teo Swee Leng

Marketing Executive: Xu Jingyi

Ticketing Executive: Lim Sin Mian

Film Programming

Chan Boon Kian
Cell Lim Siew Wee
Low Cheng Hyork
Wendy Low
Poh Yong Hui
Renee Tan
Karen Yeh

Marketing

Poh Yong Hui
Elaine Sng

Fundraising

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Dharma In Action would like to express our deepest appreciation towards:

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Filmmakers for their wonderful works

Philip Cheah for his continuous support

Shaw Organisation and Chang Sin Ling for believing in us

Joan Wong (terracreative.net) for her elegant graphic and web design works

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