

PRESS KIT



Through Women's Eyes

9th Annual Women's International Film Festival

February 1 & 2, 2008

Hollywood 20 | 1993 Main Street | Sarasota, FL

www.ThroughWomensEyes.com

PRESENTED BY



United States
National Committee
Gulf Coast Chapter

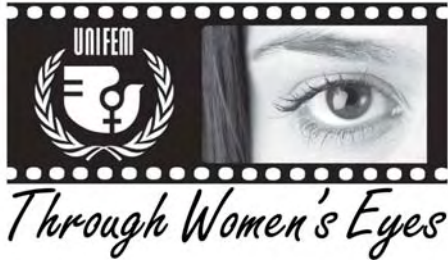
SPONSORED BY

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Event Listing

Through Women's Eyes 9th Annual Women's International Film Festival

Through Women's Eyes showcases 18 documentaries and short films by women filmmakers from around the globe at Hollywood 20, 1993 Main St., Sarasota on February 1 and 2. Presented by Gulf Coast Chapter of US National Committee for UNIFEM. Proceeds benefit UNIFEM's Safe Cities Program to end violence against women and girls in Latin America. Individual film tickets \$10, two-day pass \$70, one-day pass \$40. Complete schedule and ticket information online at www.ThroughWomensEyes.com or by calling 941-284-1027.

Press Passes

Reporters and editors who did not receive film festival press passes via the mail may pick up passes on the day of the screenings at the press table in the Hollywood 20 lobby.

Presented by:



Sponsored by:



PRESS INFORMATION

Press Contact: Jan Holmes

Phone: 941-284-1027

Email: jmhdwh@aol.com

Website: www.ThroughWomensEyes.com

Advance Screenings & Press Interviews

Films are available for advance screening. Festival organizers and filmmakers are available for interviews. Please contact Jan Holmes.

Press Kits, Releases, Listings & Photos Available Online

All Through Women's Eyes event listings and press releases are posted on www.ThroughWomensEyes.com along with .pdf downloads of film festival materials.

Members of the press are encouraged to use any of the photos posted on these websites in coverage of the film festival. The filmmakers have consented to the use of these photos for festival publicity purposes only.

- **BEEN RICH ALL MY LIFE**
www.tootscrackin.com/braml_downloads.htm
- **CRICKETS**
www.junebugfilms.com
- **DERNIER SOUPER (Last Supper)**
www.cinemannie.com/
- **ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS**
www.enemiesofhappiness.com
www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c702.shtml
- **HER VIETNAM**
[web.mac.com/melyssa.payne/iWeb/Site 7/Home.html](http://web.mac.com/melyssa.payne/iWeb/Site%207/Home.html)
- **IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH**
www.redstarproduction.com
- **LA HIJA DEL GENERAL (The General's Daughter)**
www.woodproducciones.com/en/television/generals-daughter
- **A LETTER TO A PRIME MINISTER**
www.alettertotheprimeminister.co.uk/screenings.htm
- **MOTHERLAND AFGHANISTAN**
www.pbs.org/independentlens/motherlandafghanistan/
- **THE OLDEST BASKETBALL TEAM IN THE WORLD**
<http://oldestbasketballteam.com/>
- **SEXY THING**
www.sexything.com.au/sexything.swf
- **SOMEONE TO LOVE**
www.someonetolovemovie.com
- **THE SUGAR BABIES**
www.sirenstudios.net/musings.htm
- **WOMEN BEHIND THE CAMERA**
www.womenbehindthecamera.com
- **THE WOMEN'S KINGDOM**
www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c707.shtml



Through Women's Eyes

9th Annual Women's
International Film Festival

FESTIVAL FILMS AT A GLANCE

- 10 documentaries and 8 short films
- 17 women filmmakers from 8 countries – Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Denmark, India, UK and USA
- 17 hours of viewing
- Stories from 21 countries
- Five award-winning films
 - **BEEN RICH ALL MY LIFE**
 - **ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS**
 - **IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH**
 - **WOMEN BEHIND THE CAMERA**
 - **THE WOMEN'S KINGDOM**
- Sneak Preview Screening to Miami International Film Festival of **THE SUGAR BABIES**
- Post-film discussions by filmmakers and local speakers
- MetLife Filmmakers' Reception on February 1st at 5:00 p.m. at Esca

www.ThroughWomensEyes.com

FESTIVAL PRESENTER

THE GULF COAST CHAPTER of the US National Committee for UNIFEM is an all-volunteer group working to increase local awareness of the situation of women in developing countries and to raise funds for UNIFEM programs. Founded in 1993, it is the largest of the six chapters in the U.S.

www.unifemusagulfcoast.com

THE US NATIONAL COMMITTEE is one of 16 organizations worldwide working to expand support and funding for UNIFEM projects in more than 100 countries. In the past, the US National Committee and its chapters have promoted and raised funds for the UN Trust Fund to Eliminate Violence Against Women, the Women's Centers in Afghanistan and UNIFEM projects in Darfur.

www.unifemusa.org

UNIFEM is the women's fund at the United Nations. Established in 1976, UNIFEM relies on voluntary contributions to provide financial and technical assistance to innovative programs that foster women's empowerment and gender equality.

Placing the advancement of women's human rights at the center of all of its efforts, UNIFEM focuses its activities on reducing women's poverty and exclusion, ending violence against women, reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls, and supporting women's leadership in governance and post-conflict reconstruction.

www.unifem.org



*As a UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador, **Nicole Kidman** visits projects the organization funds to end violence against women. The Academy Award-winning actress is shown here during her trip to Kosovo.*

Festival Proceeds Benefit Safe Cities Program in Latin America

One hundred percent of all net proceeds from the Through Women's Eyes film festival support the UNIFEM Safe Cities Program to end violence against women and girls in urban areas of Bolivia, Peru, Brazil, Colombia, Argentina and Chile.

The money raised from the two-day event – and all major fundraising efforts of the US National Committee and its chapters during 2008 – will help promote public awareness, policy changes and practical solutions to enhance safety and protection for women and girls in Latin America.

The rapid growth of many Latin American cities is fueling an alarming increase in violence against women. According to the Pan American Health Organization, one out of three women is abused in the course of her life. And among women ages 15 to 44, gender-based violence causes more deaths and injuries than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents and war.

Cities safe for women are safe cities for everyone.



Through Women's Eyes

9th Annual Women's
International Film Festival

SCREENING TIMES

Friday, February 1st
10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

- 10:00 a.m. LA HIJA DEL GENERAL
- 11:15 a.m. "Between A Laugh and A Tear"
A collection of narrative shorts
SOMEONE TO LOVE
DERNIER SOUPER
WEDDING DRESS
SEXY THING
YA DEVI...THE GODDESS
CRICKETS
HER VIETNAM
- 1:15 p.m. WOMEN BEHIND THE CAMERA
- 3:15 p.m. IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH
- 5:00 p.m. BEEN RICH ALL MY LIFE
- 7:00 p.m. THE SUGAR BABIES

Saturday, February 2nd
10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

- 10:00 a.m. BEEN RICH ALL MY LIFE
- 11:30 a.m. MOTHERLAND AFGHANISTAN
- 1:45 p.m. THE WOMEN'S KINGDOM
HIDDEN WARRIORS: WOMEN ON
THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL
- 3:45 p.m. ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS
- 5:00 p.m. A LETTER TO A PRIME MINISTER
- 7:30 p.m. FROM FIRE: AN ODYSSEY OF
GLASS
THE OLDEST BASKETBALL TEAM
IN THE WORLD

Schedule subject to change.

FILMS & FILMMAKERS

Friday, February 1st - 10 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

LA HIJA DEL GENERAL (The General's Daughter)

A film by María Elena Wood
2006, Chile, 59 minutes
Spanish, subtitled



The Film – This is the story of Michelle Bachelet and her surprising journey to become the first women president of one of South America's most conservative nations – despite being a socialist, a single mother and an agnostic. As she travels the campaign trail, the personal and political forces motivating this once anonymous doctor and socialist militant are revealed. Through letters written by her late father, a

general in the Chilean Air Force imprisoned after Pinochet seized power in 1973, a portrait of this middle-class Chilean family emerges, one profoundly marked by the collapse of democracy and emblematic of Chile's recent history.

The Director – **María Elena Wood** is a Chilean filmmaker and journalist. She has worked as editor, columnist and adviser in content development for diverse communication media, including programming projects for major Chilean TV broadcasters and pay channels. She served as executive producer of the documentary series "Our Century" and the feature film EL ÚLTIMO GRUMETE DE LA BAQUEDANO.

"BETWEEN A LAUGH AND A TEAR"

An eclectic collection of 7 narrative shorts

SOMEONE TO LOVE

A film by Jill Jaress
2007, USA, 14 minutes
In this romantic comedy, "Snooze You Lose Speed Dating Service" promises that you will meet your soul mate in 55 minutes or...not.

DERNIER SOUPER (Last Supper)

A film by Annie Macdonald
2007, Canada, 4 minutes
French, subtitled
A short tale about love and its worst enemy, doubt.

WEDDING DRESS

A film by Annie Macdonald
2003, Canada, 7 minutes
Defying all expectations, a young African woman honors her ancestral traditions.

SEXY THING

A film by Denie Pentecost
2006, Australia, 14 minutes
This beautifully filmed story about a 12-year-old victim of sexual abuse is original, deeply troubling, but with hope at the end of the darkness.

YA DEVI...THE GODDESS

A film by Amtojh Sandhu
2005, India, 3 minutes
This vibrating, cinematic portrait of the cosmic energy in its feminine form is a tribute to the life force of women.



Camerawomen of Video SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association) are videotaped in Ahmedabad, India as part of Alexis Krasilovsky's world travels in search of female cinematographers for her documentary **WOMEN BEHIND THE CAMERA**.



The pursuit of justice and happiness lies at the heart of Marilyn Maneely's battle to marry the woman she loves **IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH**, a multiple award-winning documentary about same-sex marriage.



Lively and humor-filled, **BEEN RICH ALL MY LIFE** sparkles with the candor of the inspiring, hip-swaying Silver Belles.

CRICKETS

A film by Kari Nevil
2007, USA, 4 minutes
When a man finds himself in an unpredictable location, he questions the woman who greets him there.

HER VIETNAM

A film by Melyssa Payne
2007, USA, 11 minutes
On her last day serving in Vietnam, a U.S. Army nurse faces the ultimate trauma of a raid on the base. The short film is based on a true story.

WOMEN BEHIND THE CAMERA

A film by Alexis Krasilovsky
2007, USA, 90 minutes
English and subtitled

The Film – Who knew that only 4% of cinematographers on the largest budget American films were women? This made-by-women-for-women film, based upon Ms. Krasilovsky's book of the same name, explores the lives of camerawomen in Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Iran, Mexico, Russia, Senegal and other countries – as they compete against all odds for roles in movie-making.

The Director – **Alexis Krasilovsky** is a Professor of Screenwriting and Film Studies at California State University, Northridge. Her feature documentary, **WOMEN BEHIND THE CAMERA**, won the Accolade Competition's Award for Excellence for Contemporary Issues/ Awareness-Raising and the Insight Award for Excellence for Documentary Editing. Her writing and directing credits also include **WHAT MEMPHIS NEEDS**, **EXILE**, **BLOOD**, and **END OF THE ART WORLD**. Her films have aired on PBS and The Learning Channel and screened in museums and festivals here and abroad.

IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH

A film by Pilar Prassas
2007, USA, 61 minutes
Film sponsored by MetLife

The Film – In 2002, seven couples in New Jersey filed a lawsuit in hopes of legalizing same-sex marriage. Marilyn Maneely was a plaintiff in the lawsuit fighting for the right to marry her partner of 14 years, Diane Marini. The two were raising five children from Marilyn's first marriage. Two years later, Marilyn was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease. Shot over a period of five years, the film captures the struggle they and two other same-sex couples waged against the law, convention and deep-set bias to marry the partners they love.

The Director – **Pilar Prassas** is a storyteller with a broadcast journalism background. The building blocks for her career come from her experience as a scriptwriter for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, a producer for WEEI Sports Talk Radio, a feature writer for *Sports Club Magazine* and her current position at Reuters. **IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH** is her first feature-length film.

BEEN RICH ALL MY LIFE

A film by Heather Lyn MacDonald
2007, USA, 80 minutes

The Film – The unlikely troupe of tap-dancing divas are the "Silver Belles," five former showgirls from Harlem's 1930's heyday. Now aged 84 to 96, these sassy ladies don't kick quite as high as they did at the Apollo and the Cotton Club, but they dance to standing ovations in this jazz-filled winner of Best Documentary at Berlin's Black International Cinema and the Women Film Critics Circle Award.

The Director– Heather Lyn MacDonald is the founder of Toots Crackin Productions and director of the award-winning documentaries **BALLOT MEASURE 9**, **KIEV BLUE** and **KITCHEN TALK USSR**. The multi-talented filmmaker is also a producer, screenwriter, photographer and actor.

There will be a repeat screening of this film on Saturday morning.



THE SUGAR BABIES director Amy Seranno has been honored by the City of Miami, named one of 15 top Young Hispanic Leaders in the U.S., profiled in the *Florida Hispanic Yearbook* and appointed President of an Art and Culture Committee by the Spanish Embassy.



Director Sedika Mojadidi knew that medical and social conditions for Afghan women had steadily declined since the 1980s, but she was shocked by what she saw when she began filming **MOTHERLAND AFGHANISTAN** in 2003.



THE WOMEN'S KINGDOM received a silver medal in the documentary category of the 2006 Student Academy Awards and won the Best Editing Award from the San Francisco Women's Film Festival.

Friday Sneak Preview Screening to Miami International Film Festival

THE SUGAR BABIES

A film by Amy Serrano
2007, USA, 99 minutes
English & Spanish, subtitled

The Film – This controversial documentary examines the moral price of sugar – present and past – from the perspective of the conditions surrounding the children of sugar cane cutters of Haitian ancestry in the Dominican Republic, and the continuing denial of their basic human rights. Composed of gripping field testimonies and hidden camera footage obtained during 18 months of documentation, the film features interviews with diplomats and human rights activists and is narrated by award-winning author Edwidge Danticat .

The Director – **Amy Serrano** is an accomplished director and producer whose credits include writing, producing and directing the U.S. co-production for the feature-length film *MOVE! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?*; directing and producing the PBS broadcast "*A Woman's Place: Voices of Contemporary Hispanic-American Women*;" and producing the award-winning *¿ADIOS PATRIA? THE CUBAN EXODUS* narrated by Andy Garcia. She executive produced the PBS broadcast and Emmy-nominated "*Cafe con Leche: Voices of Exiles' Children*" and associate produced the Emmy-nominated *HAVANA: PORTRAIT OF YESTERYEAR* narrated by Gloria Estefan for PBS.

Saturday, February 2nd - 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

MOTHERLAND AFGHANISTAN

A film by Sedika Mojadidi
2006, USA, 74 minutes
English & Dari, subtitled

Film sponsored by Americans for UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund

The Film – Sedika Mojadidi follows her father's return to Afghanistan to battle one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. Dr. Qudrat Mojadidi, an OB/GYN, returns to his homeland to help stem the epidemic fueled by inadequate health care for women. Set against the backdrop of a land in turmoil and transition, this inspiring film reveals the devastating stories behind a reproductive health crisis and provides a rare glimpse into the heart of humanity through the quiet deeds of those who attempt to heal.

The Director – **Sedika Mojadidi** is an Afghan-American filmmaker who has produced television and independent projects including two experimental documentary shorts on Afghanistan, *KABUL, KABUL* and *ZULAIKHA*, distributed by Third World Newsreel. Her work has been broadcast on PBS, The Learning Channel and The Discovery Channel.

THE WOMEN'S KINGDOM

A film by Xiaoli Zhou
2006, China, 22 minutes

Film sponsored by Sarasota-Manatee Chapter of National Organization for Women

The Film – Keepers of the last matriarchal societies in the world, Mosuo women in a remote area of southwest China live beyond the strictures of mainstream Chinese culture. These powerful women control their own finances and do not marry or live with partners; they practice what they call "walking marriage." A man may be invited into a woman's hut to spend a "sweet night," but must leave by daybreak. In recent years, tourism has brought wealth and 21st century conveniences to this remote area, but it has also introduced difficult challenges to this extraordinary culture.

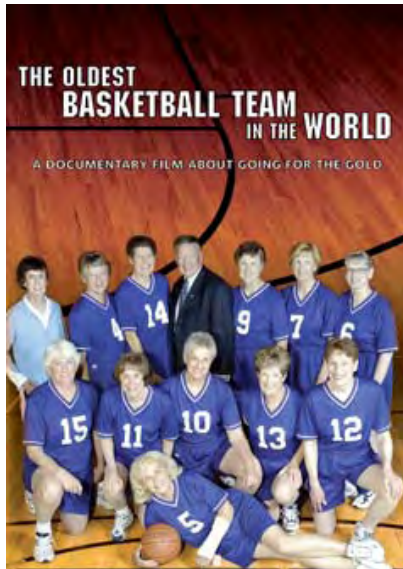
The Director – **Xiaoli Zhou** is an award-winning filmmaker and journalist. A native Chinese, she specializes in international reporting and documentaries about Asian cultures. Ms. Zhou's work has aired on The Discovery Channel, PBS and Al Jazeera International, and her films have screened at various film festivals around the world. Her work has brought honors from the Foreign Press Association, American Women in Radio and Television, Asian American Journalists Association and Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.



Its portrayal of personal courage and the belief that an ordinary person can – and will – make a difference has earned accolades for **ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS** including the Sundance World Cinema Prize –Documentary, the International Doc Fest Amsterdam Silver Wolf Award and the Nestor Almendros Prize from the Human Rights Watch film festival.



Exclusive footage from the besieged city of Falluja creates a moving picture of the terrible impact UK and US foreign policy has had on ordinary Iraqi people in **A LETTER TO A PRIME MINISTER**.



THE OLDEST BASKETBALL TEAM IN THE WORLD met the player qualifications – over age 65 and still breathing – to compete in the first World Masters Games – but they had to prepare to face off against serious competition, including many former Olympians.

HIDDEN WARRIORS: WOMEN ON THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL

A film by Karen Turner
2005, USA, 46 minutes

Film sponsored by Sarasota-Manatee Chapter of National Organization for Women

The Film – They call it the “American War,” and many of these North Vietnamese women were very young when they left their homes to join all-female divisions opposing the U.S. forces. The tradition of the female warrior is part of the history of Vietnam, going as far back as 200 B.C.

The Director – **Karen Turner**, professor of history at the College of the Holy Cross, has published numerous articles on comparative legal history, early Chinese law, women and war, and women veterans in Vietnam. In 2006, Dr. Turner was awarded a Fulbright Scholar grant to pursue her research and work on her next documentary film.

ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS

A film by Eva Mulvad & Co-director Anja Al Erhayem
2006, Denmark, 59 minutes

Farsi & Pasthu, subtitled

The Film – Among the candidates in Afghanistan’s first parliamentary elections in 35 years was Malalai Joya, a courageous 27-year-old woman who ignited outrage among hard-liners when she spoke out against corrupt warlords. The film reveals the extraordinary freedom fighter who won the hearts of voters, as well as a snapshot of life and politics in war-torn Afghanistan.

The Director – **Eva Mulvad** is a Danish author and filmmaker who has directed a number of documentaries, including *THE CAMP* and *THE LAST DANCE*. She is the recipient of the WIFT’s Golden Mermaid Award and Nordvision’s Steen Baadsgaards Pris, awarded to an outstanding young documentary filmmaker.

A LETTER TO A PRIME MINISTER

A film by Julia Guest
2005, UK, 71 minutes

The Film – Intrepid British activist Jo Wilding offers a singular take on the invasion and occupation of Iraq. Narrated as a letter to Tony Blair and using original diary extracts – from her challenging of the legality of the devastating economic sanctions imposed on the country, through to her activities in Baghdad before and during the 2003 Invasion – the film traces the non-violent resistance to US/UK policy in the region.

The Director – **Julia Guest** is a documentary photographer and filmmaker who has been working across the Middle East and in the UK for more than a decade. Her credits include *BAGHDAD STORIES*, a film about young Iraqi journalists establishing a newspaper soon after the 2003 occupation of Baghdad.

FROM FIRE: AN ODYSSEY OF GLASS

A film by Karen Lavender
2007, USA, 12 minutes

A St. Petersburg, Florida artist practices a dangerous glass technique in a largely male-dominated field. Using musical imagery, her art becomes poetry.

THE OLDEST BASKETBALL TEAM IN THE WORLD

A film by Sharon McGowan
2006, Canada, 47 minutes

The Film – The Retreads, whose average age is 72, become the first over-65 team to play in the World Masters Games. Although one team member has an artificial hip and another has had two heart attacks, these women work to win. From the first days of training to the last buzzer, this film rocks.

The Director – **Sharon McGowan** is a director and producer of documentaries, educational films and independent features. The first feature she produced, *THE LOTUS EATERS*, was nominated for 13 Genie Awards. Her comedy feature, *BETTER THAN CHOCOLATE*, was released in the U.S. by Trimark Pictures. Among her many TV production credits is *Society’s Child*, which debuted on the Canadian CBC network and subsequently aired in the U.S. on Lifetime.