

Den Norske Fredsfilmprisen

The Norwegian Peace Film Award

The Norwegian Peace Film Award (NoPFA) is given to a film spotlighting direct, structural or cultural violence, and which in a creative way contributes to the prevention or reduction of violence and war. Tromsø International Film Festival (TIFF), together with Centre for Peace Studies (CPS) at the University of Tromsø, and the Student Network for Peace (SNF), have established this prize because of the power in film and storytelling. We believe that films that focus on oppression and abuses of power can make a difference.

It has been an honor for the three of us; Efrat Ben-Ze'ev (anthropologist), Hisham Zaman (film director) and Unni A. B. Sørensen (student in the Master's program in Peace and Conflict Transformation), to be in the jury of the NoPFA. We have learnt a great deal both from the films that we watched and from one another. The dominant topics of many of this year's films dealt with the harsh conditions humans endure in this very moment, the difficulties of reconciliation and coming to terms with amnesty and past conflicts, with issues pertaining to the link between crime, revenge, punishment and possible redemption. We live in a world ravaged by war and injustice.

One of our prime considerations in choosing the winner of NoPFA has been to support films that highlight forgotten, silenced and marginalized lives. Under the current globalization processes, those films receive little exposure. As we hope to encourage the making of more such films, we have chosen to give the NoPFA to the film that we found most unique and revealing in its approach. As the choice was not an easy one, we decided to give special mentions to two films, before announcing the winner.

We would like to mention the film *The Band's Visit*, for the way it shows how within the miniature setting, people overcome political animosity. It is a humoristic story, which manages to portray how a warm relationship develops between a group of Egyptian band players and Israelis living far from the center of life. Despite the conflictive background, humanism is what prevails throughout the film.

Our second special mention goes to the film *What Remains of Us*. It is a courageous attempt to give a voice to the Tibetan people, oppressed under the current regime, closed off from the rest of the world. It brings the non-violent message of the Dalai Lama both to the isolated Tibetans as well as to the film's audience.

Finally, we have decided to give the NoPFA to the film *Little Moth*, directed by Peng Tao. The film combines what may seem like a documentary style with a fictional story. It is minimalist and unpolished. Its rough style with natural images fits well with the story it tells of children being sold for begging. The film holds a universal message dealing with the vulnerability of the weakest segments of society—children, those crippled, the poor, easily become victims. By the distance created to observe the characters, we can both empathize with them as well as retain a freedom of thought and deliberation. In that sense it is a film that, on the one hand is simple and naïve, and on the other hand, complicated and intellectually challenging. The final picture of the film, of a crippled helpless girl sitting, abandoned on a highway, is a picture that, we believe, should stay in the heart and mind of every one of us.