

NEWS RELEASE

PAKISTAN UNVEILED

GRASS ROOTS OPINIONS ABOUT LIFE & TERRORISM FROM THE STREETS IN PAKISTAN

at The London International Documentary Festival
1st May, British Museum, London

advance interview opportunities and film transcripts available

What do young people in Karachi and Lahore think about terrorism and the West? Are people on the streets in Pakistan standing up to extremist activity? Are extremist views really entrenched on the street and in the schools? Or can we discover a shared humanity and reasons for optimism?

These are just some of the questions that will be addressed in a unique series of films, made in Lahore and Karachi, to be shown at The London International Documentary Festival (LIDF). The views and opinions emerging through these grass-roots documentaries challenge our preconceptions of attitudes in this troubled country.

The programme of 11 films come as the result of a two year collaboration between the LIDF and student film-makers in Karachi. With the support of the British High Commission in Pakistan, LIDF Director Patrick Hazard has personally led and developed a series of documentary workshops entitled '**Filmmaking for Social Change**'.

The objective was to provide local students with the means and expertise to produce documentaries which would bring-to-life the thoughts and realities of the unheard Pakistanis – the quiet majority – and so help engender a greater understanding of a country which is generally only known through lurid newspaper headlines.

The theme for 2010 was 'responses to terrorism'. The films will be premiered on 1st May at The British Museum and students will be present to participate in panel discussions following their films.

Synopsis of Films

Hello!

A film by: Ali Sheikh, Mohib Billoo, Alifa Dairkee

A conversation between a young filmmaker and two friends in India and Britain – the two countries which have had the most dramatic, historic ties with Pakistan. As the conversation progresses, we discover a shared humanity through a simple chat window.

I Witness

A film by: Ali Changezi , Ali Ahad Ullah

The film follows the story of survivors of the 28 December 2009 terrorist tragedy in and focuses on how these people are willing to stand up against extremist activity. Shot on 5 February (Chelum) - a religious holiday marking the 40th day of mourning for the

martyrdom of Imam Hussain (A.S), the film reveals people paying tribute to those who lost their lives / business/ shops and how they return to a normal life.

Paper Bus

A film by: Sehar Palijo, Bilal Latif

A day in the life of a bus driver, whose bus was set on fire during a riot in response to lack of government action to combat terrorism. How does an ordinary man rebuild his life after losing everything?

Untold Revolution

A film by: Prem Lata, Sidra Hamid, Waqas Hussein

This documentary revolves around an art institute, which is owned, run and funded by NAPA (National Academy of Performing Arts) in Karachi. The film explores how creativity, especially music, theatre and dance has flourished and evolved since 9/11.

Equinox

A film by: Zohaib Siddiqui, Ghayas Uddeen, Sarah Masood

Madrasahs (Muslim schools) have, for a long time, been seen as the primary source of extremist activity. 9/11 brought madrasahs into sharp focus resulting in unprecedented cooperation between the West and Pakistan. Although change is slow, the new reforms and streamlined curriculum are steadily reducing the influence of radical thinking in these institutions.

Open The Blindfolds

A film by: Summaiya Hafeez, Talha Ahmed, Ali Ahmed

Following 3 characters at a missionary school where pupils of different faiths study and work together in an environment of peace and harmony.

Waiting on a Thousand Dreams

A film by: Nabihah Khan, Sarah Ismail, Kaysad Kiara

A dialogue between two people, who speak of themselves as Pakistanis struggling to be treated as individuals rather than a number (i.e. 60 people killed in a bomb blast). The older person reminisces about the 'good old days'; the younger person sees hope for himself and others in the youth of the country.

PK786

A film by: Kiran Ahmad, Paiman Hussain, Hafsa Pasha

Following a young man who is about to give up everything he has ever known for what he thinks is a more promising world far from Pakistan. What drives an individual to make such a decision?

Reason To Be

A film by: Awais Ahmad, Huma Akbar, M Kamran

Reason to Be follows an artist who's work has provoked a controversial response from religious leaders in Pakistan, and finds out what drives him to continue in the face of such criticism.

I am Agha

A film by: Atif Ahmad, Kiran Mushtaq, M Umar Saeed

A poignant and touching portrait of a day in the life of a child who lives on the street and survives by collecting rubbish to sell.

Statistics

A film by: Alizeb Raess, Ali Hameed

The film throws the spotlight on the life of an individual who died in a bomb blast at Moon Market, Lahore, on 7 Dec 2009. It shows the after-effects of the blast on his family, deals with his life before the blast and how people around him have suffered since his death.

For Further Information Please Contact:

Interviews and film stills available.

Fiona Hazard

LIDF Press Office

Tel: 07786 435595