



# REFUGE IN FILMS FESTIVAL

## 19-21 June BFI-Southbank

### Programme

#### Friday 19 June

##### **17:00 Delegates Centre BFI**

Opening of the film festival with performances by young artists, a photography exhibition and the launching of our new book "Becoming a Londoner". Guests only

#### Saturday 20 June

##### **11:00 - 12:30 BFI Studio**

##### **Back to Bosnia – (UK Premiere)**

Bosnia, USA 2005. Dir Sabina Vajraca. 70min EST. Age 12.

This documentary is about a family who returns to post-war Bosnia, in order to reclaim their stolen property. While there, the family is confronted with the destruction of their city and forced to examine the community they left behind. They stumble upon an exhumation, visit the sites of war crimes, and seek out the remnants of a city they once called their own. The film portrays Sabina Vajraca as she probes into the history of the war and her own family's involvement. Accompanied by a small film crew, she embarks on a path of discovery, guided by the stories of her parents and those they meet along the way.

##### **13:00 NFT2**

##### **Exile: Dreams and Nightmares**

**Materclass with director Mohamed Maklouf.**

Films featured will include *Home in Exile* (2007, 22min), a documentary exploring the experience of Libyan refugees in Europe and the US, and *Who's Afraid of the Censor?*, a look into the world of Egyptian independent cinema (2008, 11min), both produced by **Al Jazeera International**. The session will finish with the independently produced film *The Cage* (2005, 13min) exploring the personal impact of exile.

### **13:30 BFI Studio**

#### **Characters, a Collection of Short Documentaries**

##### **Rootical**

UK 2006 Dir. Nike Hatzidimou 25 min. Film-maker present at screening

This is the story of Charlie Phillips, an Afro Caribbean photographer who documented the social implications of immigration in the 1950's and 1960's in Notting Hill.

Charlie has experienced much ignorance with regards to the importance of his work. The working class seems to be excluded from the art world. In discussion with Benjamin Zephaniah and the curator of the museum of London, they get to the bottom of that issue.

Winner "Best First Film" Portobello Film Festival

##### **The Sea Front**

UK 2006. Dir Anton Califano. 6 min. Film-maker present at screening

Two meditative portraits of contemporary British life at the seaside. Penpa had never seen the sea before coming to the UK as an asylum seeker from Tibet. He was surprised to find that the sea was so salty. Syed, originally from Bangladesh, loves the sea and dreams of owning a boat for him and his family.

##### **Against the light: (UK Premiere)**

UK/Czech Republic. 2007 Dir. Koutaiba Al-Janabi. 15min. Film-maker present at screening

A silent documentary, it is an experimental film, art film about art, presenting its subject with visual tools rather than words. The film shows the work of Mahmoud Sabri, and artist who invented the idea of Quantum Realism, exploring the world as an ongoing process. For Mahmoud Sabri, the future of Art IS Quantum Realism

##### **Immigrant of Expression (UK premiere)**

UK 2009 Dir David Caneva Akle 10 min. Film-maker present at screening

This intimate journey through Diana Garcia's life (a Colombian immigrant in the UK), reveals that work by helping others she can have personal rewards. This new generation of strong and dynamic individuals are more interested in contributing creatively to their community instead of being part of the consumerism of a capital city like London. The film is part of a trilogy where "Strong female immigrant minds" are portrayed to document what happens with minorities and young people in the South of London.

##### **Journey of the Piano Tuner**

UK. Dir. Danny Weinstein. 2007. 7.14min. Film-maker present at screening

An intimate, poetic documentary that tells the dramatic story of Anva Luc and the day that changed his life. Aged eight, Anva was wounded by an unexploded land mine in the North/South Vietnam war. In 1980 he fled his country and landed in Britain as one of the 'Vietnamese Boat People'. The experiences and feelings that Anva had as a child in Vietnam are still very much part of his identity and they have transplanted themselves into a new country and a different culture. Anva's life story is a testament to his resourcefulness, endeavor and resilience.

**15:30 NFT2**

**Made in LA (UK premiere)**

USA 2007. Dir **Almudena Carracedo**. 70min. EST

**Emmy** award-winning feature documentary that follows the remarkable story of three Latina immigrants working in Los Angeles garment sweatshops and their battle to win basic labour protections from a clothing retailer. In intimate, observational style, the film reveals the impact of the struggle on each woman's life as they are gradually transformed by the experience. Compelling, humorous, deeply human, *Made in LA* is a story about immigration, the power of unity, and the courage it takes to find your voice.

**Followed by a discussion with No Sweat activist.**

**Sunday 21 June**

**11:00 BFI Studio-Youth Refuge in Films**

**Houna and Manny (UK Premiere)**

USA 2009. Dir. **Jared Katsiane**. 10 min.

The film recount the day Houna meets Manny, one summer afternoon outside the US immigration Office. It shows the effect that US immigration policies have in the life of two teenagers.

**Bin our World**

UK. 2008. By **Anchor Project Young Film-makers & artist Cyril Lepetit**. 10 min.

Series of self-portraits by young asylum seekers and refugees who meet regularly at the Anchor Project in Brixton. This short film was shot within the walls of the youth project based in Brixton where these young people, who are mainly from Afganistan, Irak, Eritrea and Somalia, meet to socialize. Filming took place over 5 sessions.

**Mix it up Musical Videos**

UK/All over the world. 2008 By **RefugeeYouth filmmakers supported by Grain Media**  
2 min. each film.

These music video are an illustration of our Mix It Up days, where young people from different cultural backgrounds and around the world get together and use their creative and diverse skills to produce amazing events filled with love and friendship.

**My New Life**

UK. 2009 By **Young film-makers from Queens Park Community School**. 5min

A really moving snapshot into the life and thoughts of a young Somali boy when he moved to London.

**13:00 NFT2**

**The Fortress (UK premiere)**

Switzerland 2008. Dir Fernand Melgar 104min.

For the first time, a camera looks into the hidden world of a Swiss reception centre for asylum seekers and immerses us in the daily sorting process of the human diaspora. Awarding it the Golden Leopard, the Locarno festival jury cited 'a remarkably sensitive film exhibiting profound human intelligence. Discreetly and masterfully realised, but never voyeuristic, and with a message that is directly and evocatively conveyed.'

**Guest film brought to Refuge in Films by Refugee Action.**

**13:30 BFI Studio**  
**Landless Part I**

**The Life and other Building Yards**

Italy 2007. Dir Giuseppe Schettino. 37min. (First award in the international Jordan film festival)

A sinti family of Bolzano was used to earn a living playing music, but since Laki, the only violinist of the group, has become an evangelist, it had to stop playing music. Trying to reunite the group, Radames the chief of the family, will experience how much the sinti traditions are changing. The documentary "The life and other building yards" is about conflicts between generations and cultures, between fathers and sons inside an ethnic reality that is disappearing.

**Tebraa**

El Aiuun – Saharawi Reugee Camps. 2007. Zanabu & Zaina Dir. Laura Alvea & Pilar Pinar/ Azuha Sah Dir. Maria Duran y Carmen R. Marzal /Aminethu Haidar Dir. Ana Rosa Diego. 15 min.

Those three films show the reality of the Saharan women. The Saharan people have an admirable capacity for resisting and fighting, but most of all it is their woman who have managed to live, by creating a solid organization beyond and despite their refugee status, in the hammada desert of Algeria.

**Break**

**12:15 BFI Studio**  
**Landless Part II**

**Rightful Place**

Kenya/ USA. 2007. Producers: Hakima Abbas and Yobo Rutin 16min.

Rightful Place tells, through the personal stories of members of the Endorois community, of the impact of displacement on individual, identity and community and of the struggle of the Endorois to reclaim their rightful place.

**Landless Movement of Brazil**

Brazil. 2007. Dir. Edson Costa 28 min. film-maker present at screening.

46% of the land in Brazil belongs to less than 1% of the population. In the past decade, 20 million rural workers have moved to the towns and cities to look for a better life. There are still 12 million rural workers without land. This documentary takes a look at the history of the MST – the Landless Movement of Brazil created 20 years ago to fight for land redistribution. It shows images of an eviction of 700 families from an occupied farm by the army and police.

**15:50 NFT2**

**The Betrayal** (*Nerakhoon*)

USA 2008. Dir. Ellen Kuras & Thavisouk Phrasavath 96min.

During the Vietnam War, the US government waged a secret war in neighbouring Laos. When they withdrew, Laotian supporters of the Americans faced imprisonment or execution. One family, the Phrasavaths, decided to take refuge in America. In Brooklyn they faced another kind of war. Director **Ellen Kuras** (cinematographer of *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*) and co-director **Thavisouk Phrasaveth** (eldest son of the refugee family portrayed) worked for 20 years to create this beautifully realized, complex film, which received an **Oscar** nomination for best documentary feature 2009. (Screening presented in partnership with Refugee Action)

**Sun 21 June followed by a discussion lead by young people from Refugee Youth and Nueva Generacion.**