

AN EASY GUIDE TO TAKING A SIMPLE ACT WATCH A MOVIE ABOUT REFUGEES

For most of us, it's very hard to imagine what it's like to flee war and persecution, leave behind your home, your career and friends, and start to rebuild your life in a new country. Films about the refugee experience can help bridge that gap. Whether they're documentaries or dramas, films provide a window into the reality of refugees' lives.

Sysay, a refugee from Eritrea and manager of a project supporting refugees, said, 'Watching a movie about refugees is a Simple Act everyone can do to learn more about the situations refugees flee from and what they go through when they seek asylum. If people don't know what we have suffered and survived, then of course they will have misconceptions. When I talk to British people about my life, what I have been through, then they understand. I think films can play a similar role. They can bring the voices of refugees like me to people that would otherwise not hear us.'

ORGANISE A NIGHT OUT AT THE MOVIES

- During Refugee Week, cinemas including the British Film Institute in London, the Arnolfini and Watershed in Bristol and the Broadway in Nottingham, will be screening films about refugees or the situations they flee from as part of Refugee Week. Check out what's on at your local cinema or visit <http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk/Events/Events+Calendar.htm> to see where screenings are taking place and take some friends along.

CREATE YOUR VERY OWN HOME CINEMA EXPERIENCE

If the prospect of jostling for leg-room at your local cinema doesn't appeal, then why create your very own home cinema night?

- If you're already a film buff that regularly meets up with others to share a movie experience and muse over its underlying themes and socio-historic context, then your task is easy. All you have to do is heckle your fellow film club members about choosing a film about exile or a film by an exiled filmmaker as your film club choice for June. You can select one of our Refugee Action staff picks below, or hunt down something different from the list at www.refugeeweek.org.uk/simple-acts/twenty-acts/watch-a-movie.htm. We'd also love it if you could screen our very own DVD of short films featuring testimonies from the people we work with. The DVD covers issues such as the reasons why people flee, life as an

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asylum seeker, and the experience of young unaccompanied refugees. Email us for a copy at: giving@refugee-action.org.uk.

- If you don't already belong to a film club but want to do something bigger and bolder than watching a DVD on your sofa, then you could always organise a one-off Refugee Week film screening. All you need to do is:

1. Email or call round some friends and let them know that as a supporter of Refugee Action, you'd like them to help celebrate Refugee Week by watching a film about refugees at your place or another local venue. We always find it helps to lure them in with the promise of some fantastic nibbles...

2. Tell them the film you've picked and the time and date you'd like them to come over. Then nip down to your local videoshop or library, log onto lovefilm.com to get your film, or order Refugee Action's new DVD.

3. The night before, get out your pinny out and whip up some snacks. Or if cooking isn't your thing, pop down the shops and forage for something delicious. If you want to show off by doing two Simple Acts for the price of one, you could always cook a dish from another country too and encourage your friends to bring a dish as well. Have a gander at the recipes at www.refugeeweek.org.uk/simple-acts/twenty-acts/cook_a_dish and see what takes your fancy. At the very least, popcorn is a quick and easy treat to lay on.

4. If you have a spare ten minutes before everyone arrives, you may want to give your front room or wherever you're hosting the screening, that Refugee Week wow-factor by putting up a few posters and balloons (we'll pop some in the post to you).

5. Once everyone has assembled on the night, exchanged pleasantries and tussled over the best snacks, it's time to put the film on. Allow some time for a chat about the film afterwards. If you're screening the DVD, we can suggest some questions to kick off the discussion.

6. Make sure you have some booklets on hand for people to take home and read more about refugees and the issues facing them in the UK. Refugee Action can send you a whole goodie bag stuffed full of facts, figures and fun stuff like badges and stickers.

7. We'll also send you some of our new action cards for people to sign and let the Minister for Asylum and Immigration know that they support the UK's tradition of providing sanctuary to people fleeing persecution. Make sure people sign them and give them back to you on the night as once people are back home the card will probably get buried under the mail or sat on by the cat and never quite reach us.

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TELL THE WORLD

- Once you've done this action, don't forget to let everyone know by ticking the 'watch a film about refugees' action off at www.simpleacts.org.uk. If you've organised a film night, make sure you count how many friends attended and tick off the action that many times. With your help, we hope to get thousands of actions done by 2010. Remember small actions x lots of people = big change...

THANKS FOR THAT

- Thanks so much for taking part in the Simple Acts campaign. Refugee Action is really proud of every supporter that takes action to make our communities more welcoming places for refugees. If you have a spare moment to tell us more about what you've done or send us some photos from the event you hosted, Refugee Action would also love to hear from you at giving@refugee-action.org.uk or on 020 7654 7705. The more we know about what've you been up to, the prouder we'll be! And you never know, we may even add your photos to our online gallery of special supporters...

FILMS ABOUT EXILE

- Forced to Flee – Refugee Action's new DVD
- War Child
- Casablanca
- La Ciociara
- Carla's Song
- El Norte
- In this World
- Kandahar
- The Kite Runner
- The Visitor
- Voyage of the Damned
- The Sound of Music
- Dirty Pretty Things
- Code Unknown
- The Edge of Heaven
- Ghosts
- Between the Wars (short film)
- Gas Attack
- Grow Your Own
- Journeyman (short film)
- Last Resort
- Lost Boys of Sudan
- Delbaran

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- Sophie's Choice
- And in selected cinemas in June: La Forteresse, The Betrayal, Fugitive Pieces

FILMS ABOUT SITUATIONS THAT REFUGEES FLEE FROM

- Turtles can fly
- Persepolis
- At Five in the Afternoon
- Journey to the Sun
- Death and the Maiden
- Blackboards
- Osama
- No Man's Land
- Iraq in Fragments
- Taxi to the Dark Side
- Stray Dogs
- Looking For The Sun
- Hotel Rwanda
- Shooting Dogs
- Teza
- Darfur Now
- The Devil Came on Horseback
- The Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo
- Esmá's Secret
- Welcome to Sarajevo
- The Pianist
- Against the Tide
- Death on a Full Moon Day
- Schindler's List
- Waltz with Bashir

FAMOUS EXILED DIRECTORS, WRITERS, ACTORS

- Jackie Chan
- Fritz Lang
- Billy Wilder
- Andrei Tarkovsky
- Maria Von Trapp
- Jules Dassin
- Marlene Dietrich
- Ariel Dorfman
- Jan Tomas Forman
- Victor Hugo
- Milan Kundera
- Peter Lorre



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- Vladimir Nabokov
- Otto Preminger
- Joseph Conrad
- Isabel Allende
- Tom Stoppard
- Luis Bunuel

For other suggestions see:

<http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk/InfoCentre/refugees-in/films/feature-films.htm>

<http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk/InfoCentre/refugees-in/films/documentaries.htm>

<http://www.hrw.org/iff/2008/london/>

<http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk/Resources/Refugee%20Week/Documents/PDF/ICAR%20-%20signpostfilms.pdf>

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