

APPEARANCES BY KEN LOACH, EDWARD BURTYNSKY AND OTHERS MARK THE FOURTH HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL AT CINEMATHEQUE ONTARIO

Toronto – Lauded director Ken Loach, Canadian artist Edward Burtynsky and a host of celebrated activists, journalists, critics and broadcasters accompany eight extraordinary films from around the globe in the fourth annual **Human Rights Watch International Film Festival** co-presented by **Cinematheque Ontario** and the **Toronto Committee of Human Rights Watch**. From March 2-8, the series offers audiences a rare opportunity to see critically acclaimed titles including Loach's **THE WIND THAT SHAKES THE BARLEY** (2006), Perry Ogden's **PAVEE LACKEEN**, Ashim Ahluwalia's **JOHN AND JANE** and **MON COLONEL** by Laurent Herbiet, along with four other immensely powerful works. For more information or to purchase tickets, call **416-968-FILM** or visit **cinemathequeontario.ca**.

Palme d'Or winner, **THE WIND THAT SHAKES THE BARLEY** (2006) is Ken Loach's gripping portrayal of the 1920s Irish uprising. Focusing on two brothers whose ideals are violently challenged when they are brought into brutal conflict with British occupying forces, the film examines the human cost of civil war and stars Cillian Murphy. **THE WIND THAT SHAKES THE BARLEY** screens on March 5 as part of *In Conversation with Ken Loach*, in which the director will make a personal appearance to discuss the making of the film, his illustrious career and what inspires his potent work.

Laurent Herbiet's **MON COLONEL** (2006), starring Olivier Gourmet opens the festival. Co-scripted by Costa-Gavras, Herbiet's gripping drama, set during the Algerian war of independence, chronicles the conflicted relationship between a no-nonsense colonel and a young French officer, and questions the rationale for torture and brutal interrogation during wartime. Anna Maria Tremonti, host of "The Current" on CBC Radio One and Julia Hall, Counsel and Senior Researcher in the Europe and Central Asia Division for Human Rights Watch take part in an on-stage discussion following the screening on March 2.

The impoverished life of Ireland's traveller community is revealed in Perry Ogden's award-winning **PAVEE LACKEEN** (2005). Starring non-professional actors, **PAVEE LACKEEN** follows one resilient girl and her proud family, whose way of life is threatened as their community becomes increasingly marginalized. John Doyle, critic for *The Globe and Mail* and author of *A Great Feast of Light - Growing Up Irish in the Television Age*, speaks following the screening of the film on March 4.

Ashim Ahluwalia's disquieting **JOHN AND JANE** (2005) follows six Mumbai-based call centre employees that service customers in America. Powerfully interrogating the nature of individual identity and cultural colonialism while shedding light on the often unseen and very personal repercussions of global commerce, the film closes the festival on March 8.

Acclaimed photographer Edward Burtynsky discusses the issues raised in **SOURCE** (2005) by Martin Maracek and Martin Skalsky, before a screening of this witty documentary. Examining the oil industry's impact on the people and economics of Azerbaijan, **SOURCE** intelligently chronicles the collision of foreign corporate interests and corrupt domestic politics and the resulting human rights abuses. The film screens on March 6 and is a co-presentation with Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival.

Silver Bear winner at The Berlin International Film Festival, Jafar Panahi's **OFFSIDE** (2006) sheds light on issues of gender inequality in Iran. Shot on location in Tehran during a World Cup qualifying match, a group of female soccer fans attempt to sneak into a stadium only to be apprehended by authorities. CBC broadcaster Jian Ghomeshi speaks after the screening of the film on March 6.

Special guest Michelle Shephard of the *Toronto Star* will present Mahamat-Saleh Haroun's **DRY SEASON** (2006). Dealing with the consequences and aftermath of civil war in Chad, this suspenseful tale of lives linked by a bloody and suppressed past sees a young man searching for his father's killer and screens on March 3.

Legendary director Fernando E. Solanas' exhilarating documentary, **THE DIGNITY OF THE NOBODIES** (2005), introduces viewers to a cross section of Argentinean blue collar workers, farmers and indigenous people who have suffered due to inequitable economic policies in the country. Shot over several years, the film reveals the intelligence, courage and perseverance of Argentina's underclass as they struggle to secure their rights. Raul Galvez, Director of the Toronto International Latin American Film Festival will discuss the film following the March 7 screening. **Please note, this screening takes place at the NFB Mediathèque (150 John Street).**

"The powerful films in this year's Human Rights Watch Film Festival compel audiences to consider human rights, as they affect individuals around the world," said Helga Stephenson, Founding Co-Chair, Toronto Committee Human Rights Watch. "The resilience of individuals portrayed in these films and their determination to overcome inequality and challenge abuse reminds us of just how much power we have to do the same."

Human Rights Watch is one of the world's largest research and advocacy organizations. It conducts fact-finding investigations into human rights abuses in more than seventy countries around the world and publishes those findings in hundreds of reports each year. Through reporting and advocacy, Human Rights Watch seeks to shame abusive governments, change policies and practices, and inform the public about important human rights issues. For more information about Human Rights Watch, visit www.hrw.org.

All **Cinematheque Ontario** screenings are held at the Art Gallery of Ontario's Jackman Hall, 317 Dundas St. West (McCaul Street entrance), Toronto, unless otherwise stated. Regular tickets are \$5.90 for members and \$10.14 for non-members. **Limited Runs** and **Special Presentations** are \$7.08 for members and \$11.56 for non-members. **Cinematheque Ontario Lecture Series** tickets are \$9.91 for members and \$15.33 for non-members. Special ticket prices apply for *In Conversation with Ken Loach*, \$20.00 for members and \$25.00 for non-members. Prices do not include GST, building fund fee or service charges. Please visit tiffg.ca for full info on building fees/service charges. Films playing at Cinematheque Ontario that have not been rated by the Ontario Film Review Board are restricted to individuals 18 years of age or older.

The Toronto International Film Festival Group Box Office is located at Manulife Centre, 55 Bloor Street West (Monday to Saturday, 10am – 6pm).

Cinematheque Ontario, a division of the **Toronto International Film Festival Group** (TIFFG) is a year-round screening programme dedicated to presenting transformative world cinema through thoughtfully curated retrospectives, filmmaker monographs, and international programme tours. Cinematheque Ontario presents an ambitious selection of over 400 films annually including acclaimed director's retrospectives, national and regional cinema spotlights, thematic programmes, and exclusive limited runs. Each year nearly 50,000 tickets are sold for a diverse showcase of classic and contemporary Canadian and international cinema, including many new and rare archival prints. For more information visit cinemathequeontario.ca.

Human Rights Watch Toronto Committee is grateful for the support of the Samuel Group of Companies.

Cinematheque Ontario thanks its supporters **Bell, Ontario Media Development Corporation, Canada Council for the Arts, City of Toronto Economic Development Office, Toronto Film School, Ontario Arts Council and Toronto Arts Council.**

–30–

For more information, please contact:

Cinematheque Ontario:
Toronto International Film Festival Group Communications Department
416-934-3200 or proffice@tiffg.ca

Human Rights Watch:
Karin Lippert: 416-966-2711 ext. 235 or 647-281-0730
Gabrielle Free: 416-220-0201