

Preview – Just Independent Asian Film Festival



While India is today seen as a vibrant and dynamic world player, mention Cambodia and many of us will still think only of brutality, suffering and war – the infamous ‘Killing Fields.’ The [just Independent Asian Film Festival](#), which begins on 9 July 2014 at the [Scottish Storytelling Centre](#), aims to open our eyes to new aspects of both countries.

Programmed by filmmaker and writer **Ashvin Immanuel Devasundaram** and Cambodian-based arts development worker **Ruta Kuzminskaitė**, the festival look at diverse aspects of life in Asia today. It hopes to introduce audiences to new worlds of cinema and cultures, examining topics as diverse as arranged marriages, organ trafficking and rock n’ roll.

Patrice Leconte’s documentary *Dogera* opens the festival: it weaves ‘an impressionistic, sensorial tapestry of existence in and around early 21st century Cambodia’ and is set to composer **Etienne Perruchon’s** piece *Dogera*. The film will be preceded by a short talk from the festival curators, and the screening begins at 4pm on Wednesday 9th July.

Later on Wednesday, at 7.30pm, **Anand Ghandi’s** *Ship of Theseus* follows the moral journeys of a photographer, a Jain monk and a stockbroker as they each confront questions of identity, justice, beauty, meaning and death in modern Mumbai.

On Thursday 10th July at 4pm, events kick off with *Five Lives*, flash documentary shorts from five emerging filmmakers in Phnom Penh, made under the auspices of Cambodian director **Rithy Pan**.

Bombhunters, showing at 7.30pm on Thursday, explores the

effects of unexploded ordinance on Cambodian people, both in their homeland and in the USA. It is directed by **Skye Fitzgerald**.

just Short Films at 4pm on Friday 11th July showcases the work of emerging Asian filmmakers from all walks of life, crossing boundaries of tradition and modernity. Ancient storytelling finds a new form in these tales of love, passion, faith and hope.

Friday evening's film is ***Love in India: Qaushiq Mukerjee's*** ('Q') documentary explores everything from the Bollywood film industry and the worship of Radha to arranged marriages, domestic violence and lack of sex education. Q says, 'A long time ago in India we understood love.....now we live in confusion, repression and dichotomy.' In this film Indians from various backgrounds talk about how the nation's repressive attitudes have impacted their lives. ***Love in India*** begins at 7.30pm.

Sleepwalking through the Mekong, showing at 4pm on Saturday 12th July, is a documentary following LA-based band **Dengue Fever** on their recent tour to perform 60s and 70s Cambodian rock 'n' roll in the country where it was created, and then almost destroyed by the Khmer Rouge. Director **John Pirozzi** offers a portrait of modern Cambodia as the band travels through Phnom Penh and beyond, crossing a great cultural chasm in the same spirit as Cambodia's original rock pioneers. Featured songs include *March of the Balloon Animals* and *One Thousand Tears of a Tarantula*.

Finally, at 7.30pm on Saturday, **Aamir Bashir's *Harud*** is the story of a family trying to come to terms with the loss of a son, Tauqir, one of the thousands of young men who have disappeared since the onset of the military insurgency in Kashmir. When Tauqir's brother Rafiq finds his camera, it gives him a new way of looking at his community, which seems to be trapped in a constant state of decay and dormancy.

Tickets to each film cost **£5** and are available from the [Scottish Storytelling Centre](#), High Street, Edinburgh (0131 556 9579), on the door (subject to availability) or [online](#).

The main [just Festival](#) begins in Edinburgh on 1st August 2014 and will explore issues of peace, faith, home, freedom and forgiveness through a dynamic and diverse programme of performances, conversations, talks, workshops, films, exhibitions and family events.

<http://www.theedinburghreporter.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/JIAFF-14-Printed-Programme-1.pdf>