

Amnesty International Film List



Please note: These films do not represent the views of Amnesty International.

- **Blood Diamond**
Set against the backdrop of civil war and chaos in 1990's Sierra Leone, Blood Diamond is the story of Danny Archer (Leonardo DiCaprio) - an ex mercenary from Zimbabwe - and Solomon Vandy (Djimon Hounsou) - a Mende fisherman. These two men become entangled in a search to recover a rare pink diamond that can transform both their lives. The movie highlights the impact the diamond trade has in funding African conflicts that have caused the death and displacement of millions of people.
- **Catch a Fire**
Catch a fire is an action thriller based around the true story of Patrick Chamusso (Derek Luke), a regular family man who was wrongly accused of carrying out an attack against the apartheid government. Patrick and his family are mistreated and abused by police officer Nic Vos (Tim Robbins). Fueled by the anger at the injustices suffered, Patrick becomes exactly what Vos had initially accused him of being – a terrorist to some, a freedom fighter to others.
- **Dead Man Walking**
Tim Robbins' movie about a convicted murderer on Death Row and the nun who befriends him is based on the true story of Sister Helen Prejean, a remarkable woman who campaigns tirelessly against capital punishment in America. Matthew Poncelet (Sean Penn), a prisoner on death row and Sister Prejean (Susan Sarandon) desperately try to gain a stay of execution. Throughout the movie scenes from the brutal crime gradually reveal the truth about the events that transpired.
- **Ghosts**
Based on the true events that took place on February 5th, 2004 when 23 Chinese illegal immigrants drowned in Morecambe. *Ghosts* tells the story of Ai Qin, a young Chinese girl from Fujian, China. Ai Qin borrows \$25,000 to pay the Snakehead gang to smuggle her into the UK so she can support her son and family back in China. In her search for better paying jobs to repay her debts, she ends up cockling in Morecambe Bay at night.
- **Hotel Rwanda**
Based on a remarkable true story of bravery in the face of terror, Hotel Rwanda tells the tale of one man's efforts to save everyone he could amidst the Rwandan genocide. Paul Rusesabagina (Don Cheadle) is the hotel manager who housed over a thousand Tutsi refugees. The film traces the horrors of the Rwandan genocide where one million people were brutally murdered over a three-month period. The film highlights the world's indifference as the events went almost unnoticed despite high-speed communication and round the clock news.
- **Iraq in Fragments**
Iraq in Fragments is an Oscar-nominated documentary filmed over two years in Iraq by James Longley, a 35-year old American director. The film is split into three separate stories. The first focuses on an 11 year-old Baghdad mechanic from the Sunni-dominated centre whose father disappeared after speaking out against Saddam Hussein. The second follows the uprisings in the Shia-dominated south as they attempt to disrupt and drive out the foreign occupiers, and return Iraq to strict

ancient Muslim law. The final film follows two schoolboys and the impact of the war on their isolated Kurdish region.

- **Last King of Scotland**
Forest Whitaker (who got an Oscar for this role) is the murderous Ugandan dictator Idi Amin who befriends a young Scottish doctor Nicholas Garrigan (James McAvoy). Garrigan is seduced by Amin's charming personality and becomes the dictator's personal physician and closest confidante. Garrigan is at first flattered, but as time goes on he witnesses increasingly unsettling events - kidnappings, assassinations and atrocities in which he himself may be involved.
- **The Life of David Gale**
David Gale (Kevin Spacey) is a dedicated death penalty abolitionist, who in a bizarre twist of fate, finds himself on Death Row for the rape and murder of a fellow activist. Bitsey Bloom (Kate Winslet) is the young journalist who struggles to prove his innocence. What she finds challenges her belief in Gale's guilt and, finally, in the American justice system.
- **Lilya 4-ever**
It is an uncompromisingly bleak, devastatingly powerful study of Lilya (Oksana Akinshina), a poverty-stricken teenage girl abandoned in a crumbling Russian town when her mother leaves. In her wretchedness, Lilya finds a friend in a lonely 11-year-old boy, Volodya (Artyom Bogucharsky), but then precisely duplicates her mother's actions when she meets a smooth-talking young man who says he can take her away promising a paradise of freedom and riches. Lilya becomes an illegal immigrant with an unwatchably horrible fate. Director Lukas Moodysson's dark masterpiece explores the issue of trafficking in human beings and sexual slavery.
- **Rendition**
Gavin Hood's follow up to Tsotsi stars Jake Gyllenhaal as a CIA analyst who witnesses the unorthodox interrogation of a foreign national by the Egyptian secret police. Reese Witherspoon is the American pregnant wife of the Egyptian-born chemical engineer who disappears on a flight from South Africa to Washington and ends up under interrogation.
- **Shooting Dogs**
Set during the 1994 Rwandan genocide when the barbarity was beyond imagination and the UN was watching but seemingly unable to intervene, this movie follows the true-story of a British Catholic priest (John Hurt) and a young English teacher (Hugh Dancy) who make the difficult choice to stay when all other foreigners flee. In the Ecole Technique Officielle, they provide a haven for 2, 500 Rwandans survivors under the protection of the UN Belgian force and under siege from the Hutu militia.
- **Taking Liberties**
The film follows the erosion of civil liberties since Tony Blair came to power. After high-profile incidents such as 9/11 and 7/7 the public has often called for action. Various powers and prohibitions have been smuggled through under the guise of anti-terror legislation, or to reduce public order offences, but what starts out as emergency legislation often remains for years and gives the police and the state massive power to interfere with and curtail our civil liberties.

Other suggestions for prompting discussion include:

- **Ghosts of Cite Soleil – cert 15.**
Documentary filmed in the notorious slums of Port-au-Prince, Haiti.
- **Water – cert. 12a**
This powerful film examines the plight of widows forced into poverty in 1930s India.

- **Born into Brothels**

Winner of the 2003 Academy Award for documentaries, *Born Into Brothels* follows the lives of a group of children in Sonagachi in the red light district in Calcutta.

- **Pavee Lackeen – cert. 15**

Played by a largely non-professional cast of Travellers, this is a funny and moving portrait of a community destined to remain in a trap of poverty, illiteracy and petty crime, engendered by uncaring bureaucracy and social exclusion.

- **The Devil Came on Horseback**

Heartfelt account of one US Marine's experience of the Darfur conflict and his emotional journey from impartial observer to activist.

- **Lost Boys of Sudan**

Emmy-nominated documentary following two Sudanese refugees on an extraordinary journey. Orphaned as young boys in one of Africa's cruellest civil wars, Peter Dut and Santino Chuor survived lion attacks and militia gunfire to reach a refugee camp in Kenya along with thousands of other children, from where they were sent to America. A world away from home, they find themselves confronted with the abundance and alienation of contemporary American suburbia.

See also the multi-award winning

God Grew Tired Of Us: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan

See also:

The archive of Human Rights Watch Film Festivals for additional ideas

<http://www.hrw.org/iff/archive>