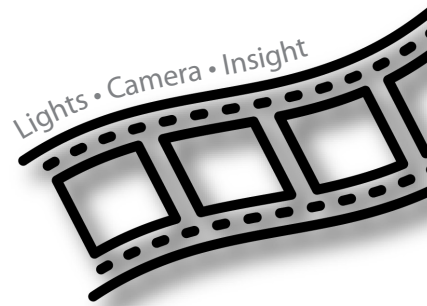
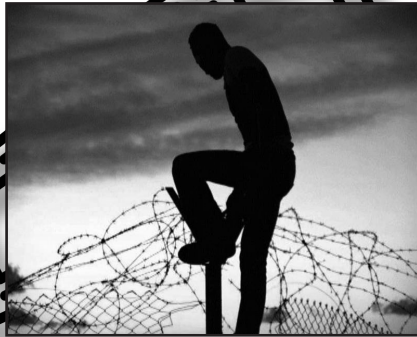




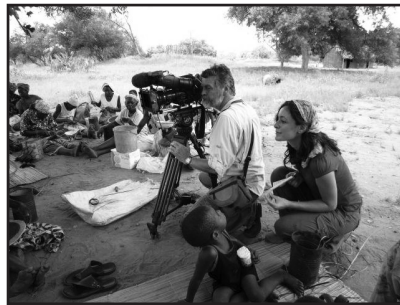
Lights • Camera • Insight



inspiring – or even humorous, engaging films that are also educational.”

To this end there is an amazing programme in store for 2011, with fourteen award-

winning documentaries among the twenty-nine to be screened. *Afghan Star*, for example, follows contestants in the Afghani equivalent of *Pop Idol*, whose participation alone places them at serious risk of Taliban reprisals. “Singing is not a bad thing, but it’s banned by religion,” says one interviewee.



Another believes that one female contestant “deserves to die.”

*Black Wave* tells of the legal battle of the fishermen of Cordova, Alaska, against the Exxon Mobil Corporation, still being waged almost twenty-two years after the catastrophic Exxon Valdez oil spill.

The multi-award-winning *Soundtrack for a Revolution* looks at the American civil rights movement through the powerful music that helped to fuel it.

*Vanishing of the Bees* examines the well documented, yet still inexplicable disappearance of honeybees across the planet – a phenomenon known as Colony Collapse Disorder – and what this could mean for our future.

*Budrus* brings a tale of hope from the Middle East, in which a father and daughter are leading a movement of Palestinians and Israelis from across the political spectrum in order to save their village from destruction by Israel’s Separation Barrier.

As its stirring title indicates, *Force of Nature: The David Suzuki Movie*, is an inspiring profile of the revered Canadian environmentalist, while one of the more

## 20TH ANNUAL WORLD COMMUNITY FILM FESTIVAL SHINING A SPOTLIGHT ON THE BIGGER PICTURE

By David Morrison

On Friday 4th and Saturday 5th February at various venues in Courtenay, a quietly historic event will be taking place. I say ‘quietly’ historic because, regardless of the milestone, it will be business as usual for the dedicated group of people behind the 20th Annual World Community Film Festival. That it is such a significant anniversary will not overly concern the World Community organization beyond the fact that, after two decades, they are still able to continue the work they are so committed to.

“We’re frightfully Canadian, so won’t go over the top in acknowledging ourselves,” laughs Wayne Bradley, one of the film festival’s founders. Joking on perceived stereotypical Canadianisms aside, Bradley’s modest attitude genuinely reflects World Community’s selfless aims. Thinking globally and acting locally, this organization is deeply concerned with the planet’s ills and intent on enlightening as many as possible as to what they are. If in the process their work serves to galvanize people into positive action, then they could not ask for more.

“Our mandate, broadly speaking, is to educate on social justice issues,” states Bradley. “It’s about educating people to take

action on the issues that are of importance to them. We’re trying to get people off their stumps and become involved. In 1996 we got involved in importing Fair Trade coffee from Nicaragua with a group on Salt Spring Island. We’re trying to bring people’s attention to the fact that it matters, that how you spend your money affects people in the rest of the world. It changes the lives of real people when you choose to spend your dollars on a pound of Fair Trade coffee, as opposed to off-the-shelf ‘industrial’ coffee.”

This is precisely the mentality that is applied to the World Community Film Festival. A packed programme of thought-provoking documentaries on a wide range of topics is screened each year, the careful selection frequently presenting difficult subject matter. Yet despite this, as Bradley points out, the overall aim is to motivate rather than dismay, to fire up rather than to beat down.

“We try not to avoid hard issues but we also try not to make people leave depressed,” he says. “We could disempower people if we bludgeon them with this stuff, so we try to find films that contain messages of hope and at the same time educate people as to the severity of various crises facing the world. We try to show films that are uplifting and

continued next page

intriguing documentaries for the 20th Annual World Community Film Festival has to be *Laughology*. A film Bradley describes as “astonishing,” it “attempts to find the reason why we laugh, and especially why we’re wired to laugh together,” taking a scientific approach to the subject and looking at the many health benefits to laughter. It is reasonable to expect a packed house for this one.

The festival will kick off with *Music by Prudence* and *The Top Twins: Untouchable Girls*. The former won the Best Short Documentary Oscar at last year’s Academy Awards and relates the heartrending story of Prudence Mabhena, a richly gifted Zimbabwean singer and composer who was born with arthrogryposis, a debilitating condition severely affecting the joints. Lynda and Jools Topp, meanwhile, are “New Zealand’s favourite singing, dancing and yodelling lesbian twin sisters,” whose inspirational story takes in their fight against discrimination, their activism for various causes from Maori rights to nuclear disarmament, and a whole lot of music.

Besides this cross-section there is plenty more to look forward to from the 2011 programme of an event that is apparently one of a kind.

“The festival itself is completely volunteer, and that makes it pretty unique in the annals of film festivals,” Bradley explains. “When we started in 1990, international development film festivals were funded by CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), but they were cut off the next year, so the upshot of that was that of the five film festivals depending on CIDA funding, four of them disappeared. We realized that if ours was to last we would have to depend on outside funding, so our focus was to try and gain all of our support from our community. The Campbell River, Courtenay & District Labour Council has donated one thousand dollars each year for the entire twenty years, as they see us as an important part of the educational work in the area.”

As to the origins of this vital event, Bradley says: “Our group was originally initiated by CUSO (Canadian University Service Overseas: now CUSO-VSO) in Vancouver. One of the board members there had property on Denman Island and knew some people in the Comox Valley, and he had an interest in trying an international development film festival. So they called a meeting, a few people showed up, and that was the beginning. I missed the first meeting, which is just as well, as I thought a two-day festival was way too ambitious! And in 2010 we were twenty years old... but our twentieth festival is in 2011..? Well, we missed a year. We took a year off as we were having some conflict about whether or not we were just being voyeurs, whether we should be doing more than just watching stories about international development issues around the world. This sort of led us to being more hands-on.”

I do not need to further stress the importance of such a festival. It’s simple: World Community presents films dealing with global social, environmental and economic matters that should concern every single one of us. What we do after we view them is our choice, but to follow the proactive lead of Wayne Bradley and the fine folks of World Community is the best place to start. Great work, guys: I look forward to previewing your 40th Annual Film Festival. ~

*For further information about the work of World Community and their 20th Annual Film Festival, including the full festival programme, schedule, venues, ticket prices and outlets, please visit the World Community website: [www.wcdes.ca](http://www.wcdes.ca)*



Thank you



**The Kiwanis Lighthouse Community Cupboard (KLCC)  
happily distributed over 80 Christmas Hampers  
between Dashwood & Fanny Bay**

**Bowser Legion #211 and Parksville/Qualicum Kiwanis  
extend their thanks to all private donors and families**

**Wildwood Church for space and support  
EyesOnBC and The Beacon Magazine  
All Moonlight Madness Businesses  
Island Arts Expo (Organizers, Artists, Participants)  
Shaw Food Drive**

**BOWSER**

**Tomm’s Food Village ▪ Union Bay Credit Union  
Lighthouse Country Kids Place ▪ Georgia Park Store  
Bowser Elementary School ▪ Bowser Ladies Auxiliary**

**QUALICUM BAY**

**Lighthouse Seniors, OAP 152 ▪ Bow Horne Bay Community Club  
Qualicum Bay Lions Club**

**DEEP BAY**

**Deep Bay Volunteer Fire Department**

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***And Every Volunteer !!!***

**Our Lighthouse Community really comes together!**