



CINEMA FOR PEACE FOUNDATION

HONORARY CHAIRS

Mikhail Gorbachev, Leonardo DiCaprio
Catherine Deneuve (2010)
Mikhail Gorbachev,
Catherine Deneuve (2009)
Nicole Kidman, Christopher Lee,
Susan Sarandon, Anna Netrebko,
Hilary Swank (2008)
Richard Gere, Sharon Stone,
Catherine Deneuve (2007)
Milla Jovovich, Richard Gere (2006)
Susan Sarandon (2005)
Liza Minelli, Christopher Lee,
Sir Peter Ustinov (2004)
Roger Moore (2003)
Catherine Deneuve (2002)

SPEAKERS

Leonardo DiCaprio
Mikhail Gorbachev
Dustin Hoffman
Tim Robbins
Deepak Chopra
Wim Wenders
Bob Geldof
Richard Curtis

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Ele Cakarel
George Clooney
Paulo Coelho
Richard Curtis
Catherine Deneuve
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Joschka Fischer
Ela Gandhi
Katja von Garnier
Sir Bob Geldof
Richard Gere
Andy Harries
Rosilyn Heller
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Milla Jovovich
Garry Kasparov
Nicole Kidman
Sir Ben Kingsley
Vitali Klitschko
Wladimir Klitschko
Cedomir Kolar
Jamie McCaskie
Liza Minelli
Liz Moyn
Luis Moreno-Ocampo
Ennio Morricone
Liam Neeson
Katja Riemann
Tim Robbins
David de Rothschild
Thomas Sabo
Susan Sarandon
Ralf Schmerberg
Alexander Schütz
Gary Smith
Paul Spiegel †
Hilary Swank
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Nobel Peace Prize Laureates
Oscar Arias Sanchez
Jody Williams

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ARTISTS IN BURMA – ZARGANAR & U KYAW THU

Since 1962 Burma is reigned by a military junta which suppresses anybody who has other political views than defined by the government. The governmental military rulers have been trying to stifle the voices and activities of a whole range of people: human rights defenders, independent journalists, members of the Buddhist clergy, humanitarian activists and of numerous artists. Today, countless artists in Burma are imprisoned or prevented from working in their craft, only for opposing the line of the government, for peacefully demonstrating or for engaging in humanitarian activities.

One of them is **ZARGANAR**, Burma's most famous social satirist and activist. A former dentist (hence his stage name Zarganar, "pliers" in Burmese), he became famous in the late 1980s as a stage and TV comedian, especially for his "Beggar" stage shows in which he and his comedic troupe poked fun at the corruption of Burmese military leaders, deteriorating living standards, and the lack of basic freedoms in Burma. In November 2008, a Ragoon court sentenced the prominent comedian, actor and director to 59 years in jail – a sentence later reduced to 35 years – for disbursing relief aid and talking to the international media about his frustrations in assisting victims of Cyclone Nargis. Zarganar was previously detained for a year following the 1988 pro-democracy demonstrations in Burma, and jailed for four years in 1990 – 1994 for making political speeches. Police rearrested Zarganar in September 2007 for publicly supporting the protests by monks, and detained him for 20 days. Zarganar is serving his sentence in a prison in Myitkyina, Kachin State, in northern Burma, known for its bitterly cold winter. His mother Day Kyi Oo died in March 2009, while Zarganar was in prison.

The story of another Burmese actor and director, **KYAW THU** is quite similar. In the 80s and 90s Kyaw Thu was one of the leading men of Burmese cinema. He won two Myanmar Academy Awards and became famous for his awareness movie on HIV/AIDS which was blocked by the censorship board of the government. U Kyaw Thu is known for his social commitment. Together with Zarganar, he took care of the victims of the cyclone Nargis in 2008. He provided free funeral and medical services for the poor and stood up for freedom of speech and democracy by refusing to shoot propaganda films. As a consequence, the government muted him by blocking his Facebook account and arresting him and his wife in the aftermath of the monks' protests in 2007.

The conditions of Burmese prisons are devastating: Prisoners suffer torture and beatings. They receive no or poor medical treatments and are deported to remote areas which are difficult to reach for their families. Until recently, the International Red Cross and other humanitarian help organizations were not allowed to visit the prisons. Zarganar describes his time in prison to Human Rights Watch as follows:

"I was held in the dog cells in solitary confinement for eight days and was not allowed to bathe for three days. I had to relieve myself on a tray. When it became full, I tried to urinate under the door but the dogs tried to bite me."

To change the situation of artists in Burma, international pressure can be extremely effective. It is crucial that the international community uses its influence to support human rights and make calls for the release of wrongfully detained human rights defenders, journalists, and activists. In her video message, Aung San Suu Kyi stresses the influence of the cinema to change the situation of artists in Burma:



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AWARD HONOREES

2010

President of Rwanda Paul Kagame
Laura Waters Hinson for AS WE FORGIVE
CHILDREN OF WAR
FIVE MINUTES OF HEAVEN
THE PICTURE OF THE NAPALM GIRL
THE STONING OF SORAYA M.
TRIAGE
THE WHITE RIBBON
WOMEN IN SHROUD
The International Human Rights Film Award
presented by Amnesty International and the
Human Rights Film Network to
TIBET IN SONG
International Green Film Award
presented by Mikhail Gorbachev and
Leonardo DiCaprio to Joe Berlinger, CRUDE

2009

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MILK
THE HEART OF JENIN
PRAY THE DEVIL BACK TO HELL
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THE DAY AFTER PEACE
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2007

FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
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2006

GOOD NIGHT, AND GOOD LUCK
THE GIRL IN THE CAFÉ
ROAD TO GUANTANAMO

2005

HOTEL RWANDA

2004

COUNTRY OF MY SKULL

2003

NO MAN'S LAND

2002

István Szabó

"We depend on artists, actors, producers, directors, people who are connected with the cinema to reach out to all the people to whom we are not in the position to reach out by making the world not only a bigger place but at the same time a closer community. You will be able to help all those of us who have been deprived of their basic human rights."

By following the call of Aung San Suu Kyi and Cinema for Peace, you can give hope to the people of Burma for a change of their situation. Aung San Suu Kyi herself was imprisoned repeatedly by Burma's military rulers for her charismatic promotion of democracy and human rights in Burma and her leadership of the opposition party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), which won an election landslide in 1990 but was never permitted to assume power. Suu Kyi has been under house arrest for 15 of the past 21 years. She was first arrested by Burma's military government in 1989 and held under house arrest until 1995. She was placed under house arrest a second time in 2000 and released in 2002. The military junta detained her for a third time in 2003 after an attack on her convoy while travelling in the country. Her house arrest order was extended by another year in May 2008, and it was expected to be unlawfully extended again in May 2009. She finally was released in November 2010.

Statement of Aung San Suu Kyi

"We who are working for democracy in Burma are in need of the help and support of the international community. We want to achieve an all inclusive political process that will allow the people of Burma to determine their own destiny. We want all those who wish to join in to be given the opportunity to join in the political process.

Because of the great influence of the cinema we would call upon film celebrities to help us convince the world that there is a genuine need to help the movement for democracy in Burma. In Burma artists are not free. Many of you have heard of our famous comedian Zarganar who is in prison for having engaged in humanitarian activities. This might seem very strange to many people. Why should anybody be penalized for engaging in humanitarian activities? What this demonstrates is the narrowness of the political process, now in effect in Burma. We are not allowed to do what we wish, we are not allowed to help our people, to help our country in the ways that are open to us. We are only allowed to help our own country in ways that the authority decides that are open to us.

Because of that we need the cinema and artists to make the world understand that Burma needs help; that Burma has not begun its democratisation process yet. Although Zarganar is very well known he is not the only artist who has suffered as a result of the narrow choices available to people in Burma. A famous actor, **U Chong Way** who is involved in the movement for democracy was never allowed to engage in any of his cinematic work after he refused to give up his political affiliations. He died several years ago. He died without ever again being able to work as a film actor.

And there is now U Kyaw Thun who is a famous actor in our country and who has doing very very important humanitarian work. He too has been prevented from working in the cinema because he does not talk the official line. Just because we not talk the official line it does not mean that we are not working for the good of our country and this is what we want the world to understand. This is what we would like the Cinema for Peace to help



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the world to understand. In Burma self-sacrifice is an everyday matter for all our people who are in prison.

The very fact that they have chosen to go to prison rather than to give up their beliefs. The right of the people to determine the destiny of their country, means that for them self-sacrifice has become a way of life. We would like people to understand that self-sacrifice is not a waste. They are those who say that self-sacrifice is foolish, it is meaningless, it leads nowhere.

It is through the cinema that we would like to convince the world that it leads somewhere. It leads to a better, happier, safer world for everybody. We depend on artists, actors, producers, directors, people who are connected with the cinema to reach out to all the people to whom we are not in the position to reach out by making the world not only a bigger place but at the same time a closer community you will be able to help all those of us who have been deprived of their basic human rights. I hope that from this day onwards the world will be able to know more about the struggle in Burma through the efforts of the Cinema for Peace. Thank you very much."

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