



■ A still from the globally acclaimed *Suddenly Last Winter* that looks at the subject of homophobia in Italy

FRAMES OF HUMANITY

GETTING REAL Most of the short films on show at the Open Frames film festival this year have empowering, personal and sometimes painful political narratives

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This year's Open Frame Film Festival centres on peoples' rights. From the resilience of workers fighting a multi-national corporation in *The Last Truck: Closing of a GM Plant*, to *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, about the struggle of Liberian women to change the course of their country's future, or *Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter*, the chronicle of a daughter's relationship with her mother she is losing to Alzheimer's, the documentaries create poignant personal and political contexts to engage with.

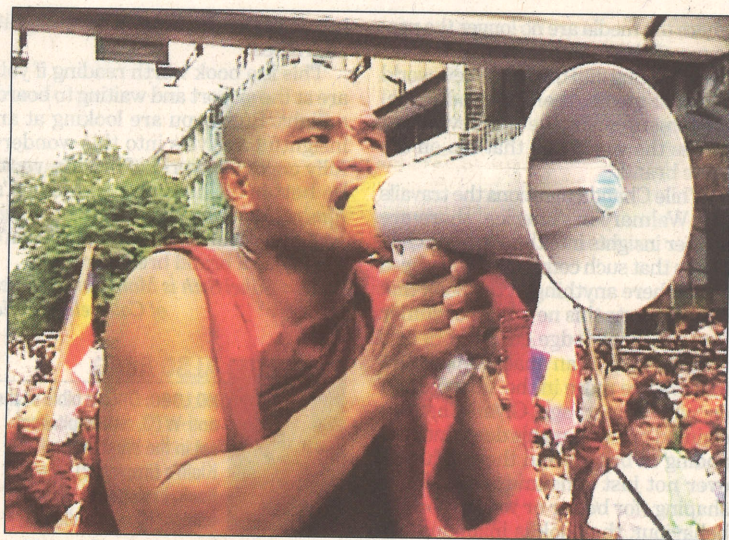
Five of the films featured were nominated for the Oscars. *Rabbits A La Berlin* by Bartek Konopka, *The Last Truck...* by Steven Bognar & Julia Reichert and *Burma VJ* by Anders Ostergaard in 2010 and *Complaints of A Dutiful Daughter* and *Iraq in Fragments*, earlier.

Hosted by the Public Service Broadcasting Trust during September 10-16, the festival will also feature discussions with filmmakers and activists about the issues raised by the films. These include migration, livelihood, violence, globalisation, disability, gender and sexuality.

Bishakha Dutta's *Zinda Laash*, for instance, focuses on the representation of sex workers in Bollywood. "I've put together clips that reinforce stereotypes. The brothel keeper, for instance, is always shown chewing *paan* and the sex worker smoking."

Dutta says a chunk of the audience in this festival comprises filmmakers themselves. "It is interesting to see how peers react to my work. Also, we get to watch some independent films we'd never be able to see."

Nitzan Gilady's *Jerusalem is Proud to be Present* is one such film. In the summer of 2006, Jerusalem witnessed a series of events that culminated in a gay pride parade. Jewish, Muslim and Christian religious leaders ganged



■ Above: *Burma VJ* is about reporters who expose the repressive regime controlling their country; a scene from *Mugabe and The White African* (right)

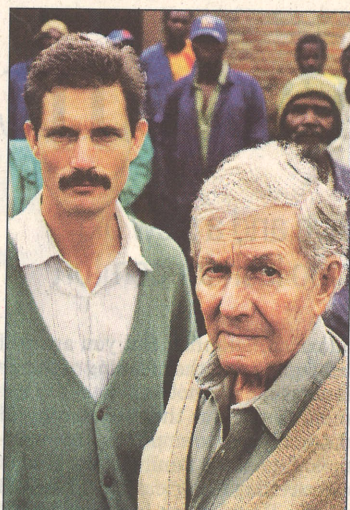
up against what they said would 'defile the holy city'.

In *Mugabe and The White African*, Michael Campbell, a white farmer, challenges Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe's land reform programme in an international court.

With the US troops' pullout from the troubled country on everybody's mind, James Longley's *Iraq in Fragments* could provide viewers with a perspective.

Rabbits A La Berlin is about wild rabbits that lived between the Berlin Walls. For 28 years, the Death Zone was their haven — full of grass, sans predators and with guards protecting them from humans. After the Wall fell down, the rabbits had to learn to live in a free world. In *Burma VJ*, reporters armed with pocket-sized cameras expose the regime controlling their country. In 2007, more than 1,00,000 people took to the streets protesting the dictatorship.

If *Burma VJ* has a political subtext, *Through Our Viewfinder* is the story of a group of Men who have Sex with Men, who come together to learn film-



making. And in *Suddenly Last Winter*, the political straddles the personal. The lives of Gustav and Lucak change with a draft law that unleashes a wave of homophobia in the Italy.

Anywhere in the world, reality bites.

OPEN FRAMES 2010

September 10-16, India Habitat Centre. For details, call the Public Service Broadcasting Trust on: 011-24355941