

## **British Documentary**

### **Film screenings 2010 – First edition**

**1. THE YES MEN FIX THE WORLD (2009; 145 min);** *GRIERSON BRITISH DOCUMENTARY AWARDS 2009 – WINNER OF THE MOST ENTERTAINING DOCUMENTARY AWARD; AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL 2009 – WINNER OF “DOC U!” AWARD; BERLIN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL – WINNER OF PANORAMA AUDIENCE AWARD*

“The Yes Men” Andy Bichlbaum and Mike Bonanno decided to fix the world, by doing the morally right thing to do for those who chose to do the financially profitable thing to do.

The film consists of a several pranks on major corporations and governmental agencies that are performed by the two Yes Men revealing that truth is usually shocking, the right is unbelievable and cynicism is refreshing in a two-faces reality, in which some call carbon pollution, some call it life, where yes men call for revolution.

**2. AFGHAN STAR** (2008; 87 min.); *GRIERSON BRITISH DOCUMENTARY AWARDS 2009 – WINNER OF THE BEST DOCUMENTARY ON A CONTEMPORARY ISSUE AWARD; SUNDANCE FESTIVAL 2009 – WINNER Audience Award World Cinema – Documentary; WINNER Directing Award World Cinema – Documentary; NOMINATED Grand Jury Prize World Cinema – Documentary.*

AFGHAN STAR is a TV entertainment show watched by a third of the Afghan people. Participating in a TV singing competition in Afghanistan means dealing with death threats, political issues, religious rules, ethnicity, social approval or disapproval if you are a woman; watching the show means breaking up with sadness, war, recent history and feeling freedom, democracy and joy.

In a country where singing and dancing had been banned for many years, Afghan Star is about the courage of living.

**3. MAN ON WIRE** (2007, 90 min); *GRIERSON BRITISH DOCUMENTARY AWARDS 2009 – UK FILM COUNCIL BEST CINEMA DOCUMENTARY AWARD; Academy Awards, USA - 2009 Won Oscar Best Documentary; American Cinema Editors, USA 2009 Won - Best Edited Documentary; Austin Film Critics Association 2008 - Won Austin Film Critics Award Best Documentary; BAFTA Awards 2009 - Won BAFTA Film Award Outstanding British Film; Boston Society of Film Critics Awards 2008 - Won BSFC Award Best Documentary; British Independent Film Awards - 2008 Won British Independent Film Award Best British Documentary; Broadcast Film Critics Association Awards 2009 - Won Critics Choice Award Best Documentary Feature; Central Ohio Film Critics Association 2009 - Won COFCA Award Best Documentary; Chicago Film Critics Association Awards - 2008 Won CFCA Award Best Documentary; Dallas-Fort Worth Film Critics Association Awards 2008 - Won DFWFCA Award Best Documentary; Directors Guild of America, USA 2009 - Nominated DGA Award Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Documentary; European Film Awards 2008 - Nominated Best Documentary Award; Florida Film Critics Circle Awards 2008 - Won FFCC Award Best Documentary; Gotham Awards 2008 - Nominated Best Documentary ; Independent Spirit Awards 2009 - Won Independent Spirit Award Best Documentary; Irish Film and Television Awards 2009 - Nominated IFTA Award Best International Film; Kansas City Film Critics Circle Awards 2009 - Won KCFCC Award Best Documentary; Karlovy Vary International Film Festival 2008 - Won Best Documentary Over 30 Minutes; Las Vegas Film Critics Society Awards 2008 - Won Sierra Award Best Documentary; London Critics Circle Film Awards 2009 - Nominated ALFS Award British Film of the Year; Los Angeles Film Critics Association Awards 2008 - Won LAFCA Award Best Documentary/Non-Fiction Film; National Board of Review, USA 2008 - Won NBR Award Best Documentary; New York Film Critics Circle Awards 2008 - Won NYFCC Award Best Non-Fiction Film; Online Film Critics Society Awards 2009 - Won OFCS Award Best Documentary; PGA Awards 2009 - Won Motion Picture Producer of the Year Award Documentary Theatrical Motion Pictures; Phoenix Film Critics Society Awards 2008 - Won PFCS Award Best Documentary; Robert Festival 2010 - Nominated Robert Best Non-American Film; San Diego Film Critics Society Awards 2008 - Won SDFCS Award Best Documentary; Satellite Awards 2008 - Won Satellite Award Best Motion Picture, Documentary; Southeastern Film Critics Association Awards 2008 - Won SEFCA Award Best Documentary; Sundance Film Festival 2008 - Won Audience Award World Cinema – Documentary; Grand Jury Prize World Cinema – Documentary; Toronto Film Critics Association Awards 2008 - Won TFCA Award Best Documentary; Washington DC Area Film Critics Association Awards 2008 - Won WAFCA Award Best Documentary*

*Man on Wire* is the dramatic retelling of Philippe Petit's daring, and illegal, scheme to walk the high-wire between New York's twin towers - the artistic crime of the 20th century.

On August 7, 1974, Philippe Petit, a French wire walker, juggler, and street performer days shy of his 25th birthday, spent 45 minutes walking, dancing, kneeling, and lying on a wire he and friends strung between the rooftops of the Twin Towers. The documentary uses contemporary interviews, archival footage, and recreations to tell the story of his previous walks between towers of Notre Dame and of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, his passions and friendships, and the details of the night before the walk: getting cable into the towers, hiding from guards, and mounting the wire. It ends with observations of the profound changes the walk's success brought to Philippe and those closest to him.

**4. ROUGH AUNTIES** (2008; 103 min.); *GRIERSON BRITISH DOCUMENTARY AWARDS 2009 – NOMINEE FOR THE BEST DOCUMENTARY ON A CONTEMPORARY ISSUE AWARD*

Motto: "There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children." - Nelson Mandela

The film talks about a violent society, with one of the world's highest criminality – South Africa; it is about the struggle to overwhelm the malignance of an abusive environment.

Few women are bearing the everyday fight against odds, loss and despair, to bring hope to children that had been raped, assaulted, abandoned.

**5. THE AGE OF STUPID** (2008, 89 min); *BRITISH INDEPENDENT FILM AWARDS 2009 - NOMINEE FOR BEST DOCUMENTARY*

The Age of Stupid is the new film from director Franny Armstrong (*McLibel*) and producer John Battsek (*One Day In September*). Oscar-nominated Pete Postlethwaite stars as a man living alone in the devastated world of 2055, looking at 'old' footage from 2008 and asking why we didn't stop climate change when we had the chance.

**6. THRILLER IN MANILA** (2008, 100 min); *SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2009 - NOMINATED GRAND JURY PRIZE WORLD CINEMA - DOCUMENTARY*

On October 1, 1975, World Heavyweight Boxing Champion Muhammad Ali was in the ring with his arch rival Joe Frazier for the third time. This fight in the Philippines, which has been nicknamed "Thrilla in Manila", is considered one of the most dramatic boxing matches in history

- in the words of the voice-over, "They hated each other." With the help of archive material and eyewitness accounts (including Imelda Marcos), this documentary not only reconstructs the match, but shows us what was happening behind the scenes as well.

**7. GONZO: THE LIFE AND WORK OF DR. HUNTER S. THOMPSON** (2008, 90 min);  
*GRIERSON BRITISH DOCUMENTARY AWARDS 2009 – BEST ARTS DOCUMENTARY;*  
*SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2008 - NOMINATED GRAND JURY PRIZE DOCUMENTARY;*  
*WRITERS GUILD OF AMERICA, USA 2009 - NOMINATED WGA AWARD (SCREEN) BEST DOCUMENTARY SCREENPLAY*

A chronological look at the life and times of Hunter S. Thompson (1937-2005), with commentary by his wives, fellow journalists, elected officials, friends, and others. Key incidents detailed are his run for sheriff of a Colorado county, his book on the Hell's Angels, his writing for "Rolling Stone" about Las Vegas, Jimmy Carter, and George McGovern and his connection to alcohol, drugs and guns. Archival footage of Thompson, Vietnam protests, 60's exuberance, political campaigns and a Hollywood movie provide texture.

**8. IN THE SHADOW OF THE MOON** (2007, 100 min)

*BOULDER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2007 - GRAND PRIZE; FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL 2007 - AUDIENCE AWARD; SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2007 WON AUDIENCE AWARD*

*In the Shadow of the Moon* is an intimate epic, which vividly communicates the daring and the danger, the pride and the passion, of an extraordinary era in history. Between 1968 and 1972, the world watched in awe each time an American spacecraft voyaged to the Moon. Only 12 men walked upon its surface and they remain the only human beings to have stood on another world. *In the Shadow of the Moon* brings together for the first, and very possibly the last time, surviving crew members from every single Apollo mission which flew to the Moon, and allows them to tell their story in their own words. They emerge as surprisingly eloquent, witty, emotional and very human.

**9. BEAUTIFUL YOUNG MINDS** (2007, 90 min.)

Several British teenagers join the competition to qualify for the International Mathematics Olympiad for which they have sacrificed years of study and which represents their only chance

for the professional future they want. This is a documentary about how the great minds of the future work.

### **10. ATOM: THE CLASH OF THE TITANS**

In this documentary, Professor Jim Al-Khalili tells the story of one of the biggest discoveries in the history of the world: that the concrete world is made up of atoms. The film leads from the moment of the discovery of the atom to the development of quantum mechanics, it tackles world-changing discoveries such as radioactivity, the Atom Bomb and the Big Bang, and tries to answer the biggest questions of all - why are we here and how were we made.

In the last part of the documentary, Al-Khalili discovers that there might be parallel universes in which different versions of us exist, and finds out that empty space isn't empty at all, but seething with activity.

### **11. 1983: THE BRINK OF APOCALYPSE** (2007, 75 min.) *GRIERSON FESTIVAL 2008 – HISTORY TODAY CATEGORY AWARD*

November 8th 1983 is now recognized as one of the most dangerous moments in history, when Soviet fingers hovered perilously over the nuclear button.

On this near fateful day, senior figures in the Soviet Union convinced themselves they were about to come under nuclear attack from the West. The vast Soviet nuclear arsenal of missiles, bombers and submarines were put on maximum alert ready to launch a full nuclear retaliatory attack on Western Europe and the US.

Armageddon - the destruction of the world - beckoned. The intelligence communities in the US, Europe and the former USSR have never before admitted to the scale of the crisis.

This programme tells the dramatic story behind this sequence of events.

**12. THE ENGLISH SURGEON** (2007, 94 min), **Directed by Geoffey Smith**

*DIRECTORS GUILD OF AMERICA, USA 2010 - NOMINALIZAT PENTRU AWARD  
OUTSTANDING DIRECTORIAL ACHIEVEMENT IN DOCUMENTARY*

Shot in an Ukrainian hospital, full of desperate patients and makeshift equipment, The “English Surgeon” is an intimate portrait of brain surgeon Henry Marsh as he wrestles with the dilemmas of the doctor-patient relationship.

Henry is one of London's foremost brain surgeons, but despite being a pioneer in his field he stills rides an old pushbike to work and worries himself sick about the damage he can inflict on his patients. Driven by the need to help others where he can, Henry has been going out to Kyiv for over 15 years to help improve upon the medieval brain surgery he witnessed there during his first visit in 1992. Today the patients see him as the great saviour from the West, desperate parents want him to save their child, and his Ukrainian colleague Igor Kurilets sees him as a guru and a benefactor. But for all the direct satisfaction he gets from going, Henry also sees grossly misdiagnosed patients, children who he can't save, and a lack of equipment and trained supporting staff.

---