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1st
CEYLON
INTERNATIONAL
FILM
FESTIVAL
2022
IN SANTA BARBARA

10th, 11th, 12th
June 2022
at the
Lobero Theatre
33 East Canon Perdido Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93103
805.963.0761 • www.lobero.org/

SCHEDULE OF FILMS



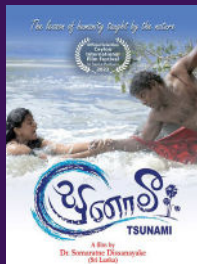
Dark Days of Heaven Friday June 10th / 10:00 am

"Dark Days of Heaven" is an emotional drama that follows the struggle of siblings, two sons and a daughter, as they take care of their injured, elderly mother in a bunker during the Sri Lankan civil war. They must balance their sacred obligation to care for their mother with the demands of their own children amidst the chaos of the war. The bunker turns into a family crucible as the duty to home and society collide. The film explores a very real dilemma that faces all families during times of war. *Sierre International Film Festival, Bolivia, Official Selection Auber International Film Festival, France, Best Original Screenplay International Film Festival of Andaman and Nicobar, India, Best Supporting Actress. Director: Mathi Sutha. Plays with the short film Give it Back. Running time: 1:18.*



In Vino Veritas Friday June 10th / 1:30 pm

CEYIFF's only non-Sri Lankan entry, the Romanian film *"In Vino Veritas"* follows Herve, a wealthy and confident Parisian, who finds himself lost in the middle of a small Romanian village. His imagined return to Paris is beset by unexpected challenges as his path home meanders into a journey that links the people and cultures of France and Romania. *"In Vino Veritas"* is a quirky and moving comedy which observes with tenderness and humor the deep discomfort of Herve's generation ultimately asking the fundamental question, *"what makes life worth living?"*. Audience Award, Grenzland Filmtage Selb (Germany), Jury Special Mention, IPIFF, (Bucharest, Romania) Best French Feature, Indepentarn Film Festival, (France). Director: Sylvestre Bary. Plays with the short film *Earth Is Home, Alone*. Running time: 1:03.



Tsunami (Opening Ceremonies and Panel Discussion) Friday June 10th / 7:00 pm / Film 7:30

CEYIFF's opening night film, *"Tsunami"* is a social drama set during the 2004 tsunami that ravaged Sri Lanka. A two-and-a-half year old Tamil girl, displaced from her parents, is mistakenly adopted by a Sinhalese family after they misidentify her as their lost child. Ten years later, the Tamil family comes to claim her, pitting family against family in a decisive court case. *"Tsunami"* is a parable for the decades-long, grueling conflict between the Tamil and Sinhalese peoples who are ultimately connected through a common humanity. The film is directed by renowned Sri Lankan filmmaker Somaratne Dissayanayake whose film *"Underpants Thief"* also appears at CEYIFF. Director: Somaratne Dissayanayake. Plays with the short film *The End of the World*. Running time: 1:30.



Nobody Knows Saturday June 11th / 10:30 am

A poor, seventeen year old girl goes to prison for stealing coconuts. A world weary but honest cop helps her stand up against this social injustice and the officials and businessmen who govern a corrupt system. At the same time, he must evade the drug dealers who want him dead. As the director states after witnessing the civil turbulence in Sri Lanka, *"So now I am compelled to face the challenge whether I should further be a silent observer of all these or fight back with my creations as a movie maker...after long reflection, now I am determined to take the camera again in order to make my next movie, 'Nobody Knows'."* Director: Bennet Ratnayake. Running time: 2:09.



Ayu Saturday June 11th / 1:30 pm

Nishmi is a pediatrician who wants to become a mother. She decides to surprise her husband after getting pregnant. However, she is seriously injured in a car accident, setting her life on a tragic course of isolation and illness. As her husband becomes emotionally remote, Nishmi longs to be reunited with her friend and former patient, Ayu, and is aided in her quest by a local beach boy. The film stars Sri Lankan screen legend Malini Fonseka, in her 150th film. *Dhaka International Film Festival, Official Selection Asian Film Festival, Barcelona, Official Selection Innovative International Film Festival, Bengaluru, India, Best Asian Cinema Award. Director: Charthra Weeraman. Running time: 1:56.*



SCHEDULE OF FILMS *(continued)*



The Newspaper Saturday June 11th / 4:00 pm

"The Newspaper" is a journalistic thriller based on a true story. A Sinhala man, M.K. Shantha, is accused of carrying out a suicide attack against a military target. The accusation results in the accused and his family being shunned and abused by fellow villagers forcing his brother, Guna, to flee to a rural, uninhabited area. Nine years later, Guna learns of his brother's innocence and, with his only friend, sets out to correct the record but is met with resistance and indifference from the media establishment. *"The Newspaper"* is a timely exploration of the unseen consequences of misinformation. Director: Sarath Kothalawala, Kumara Thirimadura. Plays with the short film *Bless This Home*. Running time: 1:43



Alborada (The Dawning of the Day) Saturday June 11th / 7:30 pm

"Alborada" is an engrossing historical drama focused on acclaimed Chilean poet Pablo Neruda's brief stay in Sri Lanka in 1929. In 2016, the Santa Barbara International Film Festival brought the wildly inventive film *"Neruda"* here (directed by Pablo Llorain and starring Gael Garcia Bernal). *"Alborada"* is a trenchant and timely counterpoint exploring the self-confessed sexual assault of a house maid committed by Neruda in Sri Lanka. The film depicts his internal psychological contradictions and the gender and class structures of the time. Neruda has been the subject of student-led feminist protests in Chile. *'Alborada'* played the 2022 Tokyo International Film Festival and was very favorably reviewed by the Hollywood Reporter. Director: Asoka Handagama. Plays with the short film *Kashmiri Pandits*. Running time: 1:48.



Underpants Thief Sunday, June 12th / 10:30 am

Released in 2018, *"Underpants Thief"* is a groundbreaking film that explores a particular sexual obsession. The film opens with Nayani putting her clothes on a clothes line as Sam, the underpants thief, watches furtively from a distance. The film then follows Sam as his fetish leads him to attempt to buy clothes at a lingerie store and simply touch a female body. As the film unfolds, the psychological scars that Sam nurses are revealed. The film was permitted to screen with an "adults only" certification by the Sri Lankan Public Performance Control Board. Winner, Best Feature Film, Delhi International Film Festival (India) Nominee, Grand Prix, Osaka Asian Film Festival (Japan). Director: Somaratne Dissanayake. Plays with the short film *A Democratic Proposal*. Running time: 1:30.



The Letter Sunday June 12th / 2:00 pm

"The Letter" is a romance underscoring the power of love during the fog of war. In the midst of Sri Lanka's civil war between the minority Tamils and majority Sinhalese, an inexplicable connection between a soldier and a village girl breaks the barriers of language and ethnic differences. After getting injured in combat, Dhanuka, a Sinhalese soldier, ends up in the care of a free-spirited Tamil village girl, Uma. Their unlikely love blossoms as the war encroaches. Dhanuka and Uma are separated but, through a series of letters, come to understand the secrets of their pasts that their love concealed. Director: Isuru Weerasinghe Mudali. Plays with the short film *D.O.T.* Running time: 1:25.



Gharasarapa, (Awards and Closing Ceremonies) Sunday, June 12th / 5:30 pm / Film 6:30

"Gharasarapa" is a supernatural romantic thriller set in Sri Lanka in 1980. A Sinhala boy, Sandaras, and a Tamil girl, Vidya, fall in love at first sight on the way to the church at Gadagama. But, Vidya is possessed by the Kalu Kumaraya/Gharasarpa, the Sri Lankan folklore version of Incubus. Enter Camillus Dabare, a reverend with the solution to Vidya's demonic possession. Director: Jayantha Chandrasiri. Plays with the short film *Mami Wata*. Running time: 1:47.

Location: All screenings at: The Lobero Theatre • 33 East Canon Perdido Street • Santa Barbara, CA 93103 • 805.963.0761 • <https://www.lobero.org/>

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