



**INTERNATIONAL
BUDDHIST
FILM FESTIVAL
2015 BAY AREA**

APRIL 10-16

CO-PRESENTED BY
**BUDDHIST FILM FOUNDATION
AND CALIFORNIA FILM INSTITUTE**

WELCOME

Welcome to the International Buddhist Film Festival (IBFF) 2015 Bay Area!

Celebrating its 15th year, Buddhist Film Foundation is co-presenting with California Film Institute over a dozen new films from ten countries, each with a wonderful story to tell—great world cinema with a Buddhist touch.

Premieres of dramatic features from Bhutan, Holland, and Thailand, along with documentaries from Canada, Korea, China, Finland, Ireland, Myanmar, Holland, and the US, present an extraordinary diversity of Buddhist cultures, traditions, personalities and practices today. A very special program of new short works from Myanmar suggests a vibrant cinema community in the making, and the On Meditation shorts screening throughout the festival offer an intimate look at the place of practice in everyday life with some very special individuals.

And filmmakers from China, Holland, Finland, and across the US will be on hand to introduce and discuss their films. Other special guests include poet Jane Hirshfield, filmmaker Ellen Bruno, and dharma teacher/musician/author extraordinaire Wes Nisker.

This is also the 10th anniversary of the first IBFF at the Smith Rafael Film Center (SRFC), in 2005. SRFC is a treasured community and cinema resource for which we are deeply grateful. So please come, engage, and enjoy; tell us what you think.



Gaetano Kazuo Maida
Executive Director

BOS

Buddhist Broadcasting Foundation (BOS) is the independent Buddhist broadcasting unit of the Public Broadcasting System of The Netherlands. IBFF has worked with BOS on programming through the years and we are delighted to include four films in this festival that were produced and broadcast by BOS.

**BARDSONGS
GIVING LIFE TO LIFE
KHANDRO: A WOMAN'S PATH OF PEACE
PAINTING PEACE**

BIA

There have always been multiple approaches in the Buddhist arena, and everything continues to change. IBFF 2015 presents a number of films that touch on Buddhism in the west and particularly in America today.

**AMERICAN RIMPOCHE
DHARMA RISING
EVEN THOUGH THE WHOLE WORLD IS BURNING
GIVING LIFE TO LIFE
KHANDRO: A WOMAN'S PATH OF PEACE
ON MEDITATION
PAINTING PEACE
WHY NOT NOW? WITH ALAN WATTS**



KAZ TANAHASHI, *PAINTING PEACE*



FRI APRIL 10 — 7:00 PM

SAT APRIL 11 — 1:00 PM

EVEN THOUGH THE WHOLE WORLD IS BURNING

Directed by Stefan Schaefer

USA / 2014 / ENGLISH / 85 MIN / DOCUMENTARY

WEST COAST PREMIERE

IN PERSON: *special guest Jane Hirshfield*

US Poet Laureate, long term Buddhist and deep ecologist W.S. Merwin is one of America's truly great poets and translators, winner of two Pulitzer Prizes, with over fifty books published. His life and legacy also include his now over three decade effort to regenerate native plants and palms on a former pineapple plantation on the north shore of the island of Maui in Hawaii. This is an intimate and beautifully filmed portrait of one of our national treasures.

BIA

DHARMA RISING

Directed by David Cherniack

CANADA / 2014 / ENGLISH / 84 MIN / DOCUMENTARY

WORLD PREMIERE

LIVE VIA SKYPE: *Director David Cherniack*

Director David Cherniack (*Heart of Tibet, Retreat*), has taken on the subject of Buddhism in the West, with penetrating filming on location in the US and Europe. An international road trip of sorts featuring Alan Wallace, Bernie Glassman, Jack Kornfield, Matthieu Ricard, Jan Willis, Norman Fischer, Robert Thurman, Stephen Batchelor, Blanche Hartman, Mel Weitsman and others.

BIA



SAT APRIL 11 — 3:30 PM

A GESAR BARD'S TALE

Directed by Donagh Coleman
and Lharigtsso

FINLAND, IRELAND / 2014 / TIBETAN AND MANDARIN WITH ENGLISH
SUBTITLES / 83 MIN / DOCUMENTARY

WEST COAST PREMIERE

IN PERSON: *Director Donagh Coleman*

The Tibetan tale of King Gesar, the world's longest epic, has been passed on orally, generation to generation since at least the 12th century, by reciters known as Gesar bards. Dawa was an illiterate nomad when at age thirteen his life changed through the experience of a series of visions resulting in the gift of telling the Gesar story. He is supported by the government as a guardian of a national cultural heritage, but nothing can protect him from the devastating earthquake that reduces his home town to rubble except perhaps his gift.

SAT APRIL 11 — 6:00 PM

PAINTING PEACE

Directed by Babeth VanLoo

NETHERLANDS / 2014 / ENGLISH, AND JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH
SUBTITLES / 90 MIN / DOCUMENTARY

WORLD PREMIERE

IN PERSON: *Director Babeth VanLoo,*
Cinematographer Ashley James

Eighty-year-old Berkeley-based Kazuaki Tanahashi is a Japanese Zen teacher, translator, artist and activist, known as much for his extraordinary calligraphy works as well as for his masterful translations of the 13th century Zen innovator, Dogen. His activism for peace/demilitarization and a plutonium-free environment regularly takes him around the world. This film travels with him to Europe and Japan and into his home and family with insight and understanding.

BIA

BOS



SAT APRIL 11 — 8:30 PM

HERMITS

Directed by He Shiping, Fu Peng,
and Zhou Chengyu

CHINA / 2014 / ENGLISH, AND CHINESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES /
91 MIN / DOCUMENTARY

WORLD PREMIERE

IN PERSON: *Director Zhou Chengyu*

Twenty five years ago, noted American translator Bill Porter journeyed among the Daoist and Buddhist hermit monks and nuns practicing in caves and huts in the Zhongnan Mountains of China (some of whom we met in *Amongst White Clouds...*) and wrote the classic *Road to Heaven* about them. This beautifully shot new film follows him on his recent return—a total immersion in a hidden world, with insightful conversations with the hermits. Encouraging words, intimate and inspiring; imagine the Sierra dotted with solitary meditators!

SUN APRIL 12 — 12:30 PM

BARDSONGS

Directed by Sander Franken

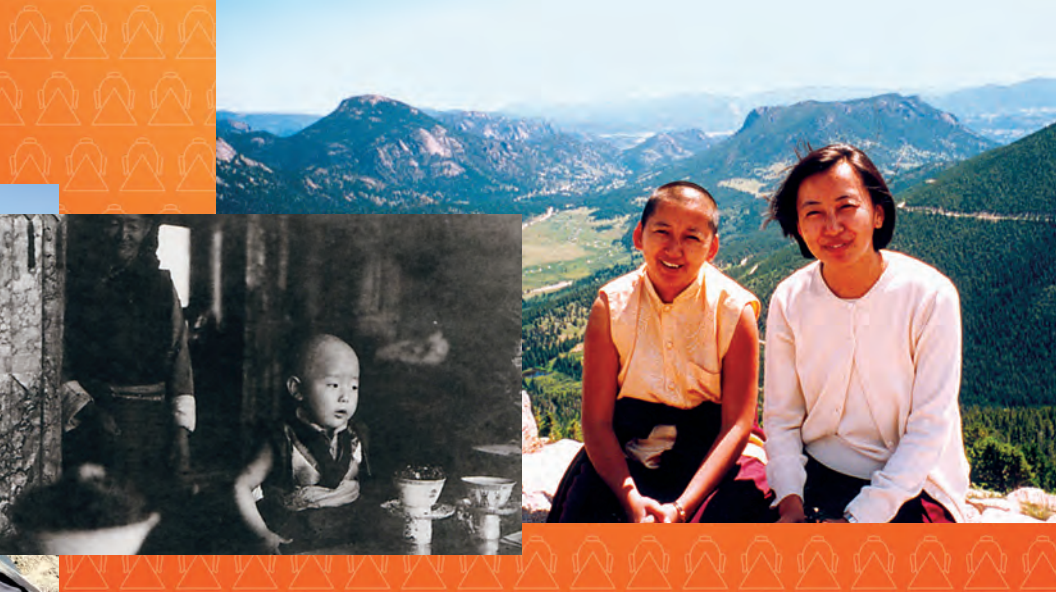
NETHERLANDS / 2010 / ENGLISH / 94 MIN / DRAMA

BAY AREA PREMIERE

LIVE VIA SKYPE: *Director Sander Franken*

In the tradition of the classic *Latcho Drom*, this is a joyous music-based film for all ages, beautifully photographed and recorded: three universal folk tales from different cultures put to music by musical celebrities from those regions and interpreted by local actors who grew up with these tales. The film revels in the similarities among totally different worlds. Filmed on location in Rajasthan, Mali and Ladakh.

BOS



SUN APRIL 12 — 2:30 PM

AMERICAN RIMPOCHE

Directed by Nikki Appino

USA / 2014 / ENGLISH / 60 MIN / DOCUMENTARY

WEST COAST PREMIERE

IN PERSON: *Director Nikki Appino*

Gelek Rinpoche was born in Tibet, trained as a monk and was forced into exile at an early age. He has lived an extraordinary life, now as an American citizen, no longer a monk but a Buddhist teacher and scholar linking the traditional and contemporary for a new generation. His students have included Allen Ginsberg and Philip Glass, who composed the music for this incisive film.

BIA

SCREENING WITH

Khandro: A Woman's Path of Peace

KHANDRO: A WOMAN'S PATH OF PEACE

Directed by Babeth VanLoo

NETHERLANDS / 2014 / ENGLISH / 60 MIN / DOCUMENTARY

USA PREMIERE

IN PERSON: *Director Babeth VanLoo*

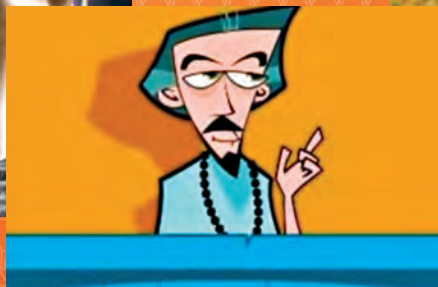
Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche is the eldest daughter of Kyabje Mindrolling Trichen Gyurme Künzang Wangyal, an important Tibetan teacher in the Nyingma school, and is the latest in a unique lineage of female masters known as the Jetsünma line. She teaches all over the world and has her North American base in Virginia. Director Babeth VanLoo (*Meredith Monk: Inner Voice, Painting Peace*) creates an inspiring portrait of this remarkable woman and her American students.

BIA

BOS

SCREENING WITH

American Rinpoche



SUN APRIL 12 — 6:00 PM

GIVING LIFE TO LIFE

Directed by Patrick van Boeckel

NETHERLANDS / 2014 / ENGLISH, AND DUTCH WITH ENGLISH
SUBTITLES / 75 MIN / DOCUMENTARY

WORLD PREMIERE

Zen teacher, activist, anthropologist and author Joan Halifax has come to exemplify many of the developments in Buddhism in America. She is the founder of Upaya Zen Center in Santa Fe, her base from which she travels extensively on teaching and humanitarian trips around the world, and she is a leader in working with people in the final phase of life. Filmed on location in New Mexico, Holland, Nepal and Germany.

SUN APRIL 12 — 8:00 PM

WHY NOT NOW? WITH ALAN WATTS

Directed by Mark Watts

USA / 2015 / ENGLISH / 75 MIN / DOCUMENTARY

WORLD PREMIERE

IN PERSON: *Director Mark Watts*

Alan Watts needs no introduction here; his work and spirit are still felt in the Bay Area where he made his home for the last twenty-three years of his life. Known for his seminal books on Zen Buddhism, he was also a observant participant in the psychedelia and psychology explorations of the 60s; he even had a television show on KQED and a radio show on KPFA. His son Mark Watts has fashioned a unique profile of his father. Screened with *The Animated Alan Watts*: shorts from Matt Stone and Trey Parker (*South Park*), and excerpts from *The Fine Art of Goofing Off*.

BIA

BIA

BOS



MON APRIL 13 — 7:00 PM

ON THE ROAD

Directed by Lee Chang-jae

KOREA / 2013 / KOREAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES / 104 MIN / DOCUMENTARY

USA PREMIERE

LIVE VIA SKYPE: *Director Lee Chang-jae*

Beautifully filmed over a year on location in and around Backheung-am, a thousand year old rural Korean Buddhist nunnery, *On the Road* is a rare and revealing study of monastic life today. Just before her ordainment, one of the novices journeys along with more senior nuns through delightful Korean country landscapes and engages with a range of local characters, all with humor and insight. Fiercely dedicated, passionate, hard working yet prone to mirth, these nuns are sustaining a tradition of obvious vitality.

TUE APRIL 14 — 7:00 PM

PROPHECY

Directed by Zuri Rinpoche

BHUTAN / 2014 / DZONGKHA WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES / 85 MIN / DRAMA

USA PREMIERE

This vibrant dramatic feature was filmed on location in remote Bhutan and tells the story of a *tertön* (one who discovers hidden teachings) in Bhutan, from birth to discovery to surprise. A senior monk makes a connection with a young girl from Thimpu and together they go on a journey of searching and challenge.



A PORTION OF TICKET PROCEEDS WILL BENEFIT
THE YANGON FILM SCHOOL IN MYANMAR.

WED APRIL 15 — 7:00 PM

MYANMAR: NEW VOICES/NEW VISIONS

Robe, directed by Shin Daewe; *A Young Monk's Dream*, directed by Zon Sapal Phyu; *On Holiday*, directed by Shin Daewe; *Share*, directed by Mya Darli Aung; *An Untitled Life*, directed by Shin Daewe; *Falling Blossoms*, directed by Su Su Thaing Win

MYANMAR / 2014 / BURMESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES / 75 MIN / DOCUMENTARY

USA PREMIERE

IN PERSON: *BFF Board Member Ellen Bruno and Myanmar native Kenneth Wong, author and commentator*

Emerging from decades of repression from an authoritarian military regime, Myanmar (Burma) is bursting with new possibilities, new creativity. Noted filmmaker Ellen Bruno (*Satya, Sacrifice, Sky Burial*) recently spent time with young filmmakers there and presents a program of compelling short works that offer a sense of the vitality and perseverance of the people, and the potential of a new and self-aware Myanmar cinema.

THU APRIL 16 — 7:00 PM

THE THREE MARKS OF EXISTENCE

Directed by Gunparawit Phuwadolwisid

THAILAND / 2012 / ENGLISH, AND THAI WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES / 114 MIN / COMEDY

BAY AREA PREMIERE

LIVE VIA SKYPE: *Director Gunparawit Phuwadolwisid*

IN PERSON: *Wes Nisker, dharma teacher/author/performer*

Humor and light-hearted charm join teachings in this find from IBFF 2012 BANGKOK. A young Thai man, M, goes on the classic Buddhist pilgrimage tour in India: Lumbini, the Buddha's birthplace; Bodhi Gaya, where Buddha gained his awakening; Sarnath, the site of the first teachings; and Kushinagar, where the Buddha died. As any good road movie requires, M meets interesting people along the way, and slowly begins to understand the secret of pilgrimage. But beginner's mind is a wild and beautiful thing... Filmed on location in Thailand and India.



**EPISODES SCREENING
WITH SELECTED PROGRAMS
THROUGHOUT IBFF 2015 BAY AREA**

ON MEDITATION

Directed by Rebecca Dreyfus

USA / 2014 / ENGLISH / DOCUMENTARY

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Director Rebecca Dreyfus has assembled a series of wonderful, short, intimate portraits of people who have integrated meditation into their lives. Featuring Peter Matthiessen, Mark Epstein and Arlene Shechet, Giancarlo Esposito, Sharon Salzberg, Congressman Tim Ryan, David Lynch, Venerable Mettayya, and others.



*“Everything has
its own true nature.
It is as it is
right here now...
perfect.”*

— PETER MATTHIESSEN

BIA

BFF is entirely dependent on the generosity of individual donors and foundations; ticket revenues account for just a fraction of the costs of a film festival.

Please consider supporting this work and make a tax-deductible donation today. Thank you!

CHRISTOPHER B. SMITH RAFAEL FILM CENTER

1118 Fourth Street
San Rafael, CA 94901

TICKETS

General: \$12

Seniors (60 and over): \$10

CFI members: \$8

(Please note that Rafael passes and matinee prices are not applicable during the festival.)

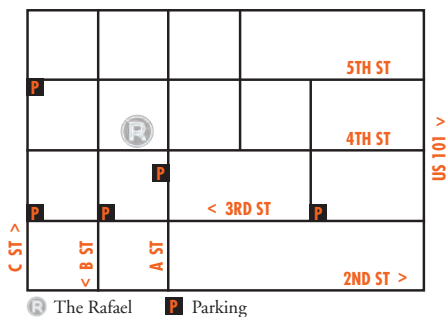
TO PURCHASE TICKETS ONLINE

Click the showtime for the film of your choice at rafaelfilm.cafilm.org

SRFC BOX OFFICE

Mon–Thur: 6:00–9:00 pm / Fri: 4:00–9:00 pm / Sat and Sun: 2:00–9:00 pm

415.454.1222 info-line for showtimes / 415.454.5813 main office



CALIFORNIA FILM INSTITUTE

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The nonprofit California Film Institute celebrates and promotes film as art and education through year-round programming at the nonprofit Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, presentation of the acclaimed Mill Valley Film Festival, and cultivation of the next generation of filmmakers and audiences through CFI Education programs.



BUDDHIST FILM FOUNDATION

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IBFF is a program of the independent nonprofit Buddhist Film Foundation, Inc. (BFF). Founded in 2000, BFF is the world's leading resource for Buddhist cinema. The BFF mission is to utilize this powerful medium to foster wide awareness of and appreciation for compassion, mindfulness, impermanence, and interdependence.

A special thank you to our colleague, Sweeleng Teo, who worked her magic behind the scenes to help obtain films for us from Asia.

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