

2006 Hiphopbattle.com 6 Days @ Sundance Film Festival Review Part 1

By

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Day 1:

The journey for me as a journalist with Hiphopbattle.com covering the 2006 Sundance Film Festival actually began six weeks ago when we were officially accepted as a credentialed press organization. This was a big accomplishment and high honor for my editor and Hiphopbattle.com founder, David Velo Stewart. Our Web site's origin in 1999 was to focus on covering underground hip-hop artists and indie events like MC Battles in clubs and at large events like Scribble Jam. As Hiphopbattle.com has progressed over the years we have been fortunate to put on our own MC Battles, film these MC Battles and self distribute them on DVD. We have attracted top sponsors like Redbull, Scion, Activision, Seagrams, Coby Electronics, Eidos Interactive, Shark Energy Drink, Lions Gate, MGM, Sony Pictures, etc., to fund and endorse our city versus city MC Battle series. We also became a credentialed Hip-Hop, Media and Hollywood press organization that regularly covers major urban/hip-hop events like the BET Awards or Urban Music Conference; Hollywood Red Carpet film premieres like *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* and *Last Holiday*; major film festivals like the Toronto, AFI and Sundance Film Festivals; high tech events like Digital Hollywood Expo, HD Expo, and CES; major international film festivals like Cannes and the Berlin Black Cinema Festival and major music international events like Popkomm, Germany's MTV Hip-Hop Open and SPLASH, Europe's biggest hip-hop & reggae festival.

We spent our first day in Park City arriving into a freezing and snowing environment. I am from Cali, so any temperature under 50 degrees is freezing to me. Despite the cold weather we had our first Hiphopbattle.com production meeting lining up all the films we had to see, activities we had to film, Red Carpet events we want to attend, filmmakers we need to interview and daily press conferences. The hardest part about covering Sundance is balancing seeing films and attending various events at the festival. You can't just watch films all day and night. So we finalized our plans and looked forward to seeing the few urban/hip-hop film such as Hadji's *Somebodies*, Tanuja Chopra's *Punching At The Sun* and Byron Hurt's *Beyond Beats & Rhymes: A Hip-Hop Head Weighs in on Manhood And Hip-Hop Culture*. But the overall thing we focused on was attending the opening Sundance Press Conference.



Day 2:



We checked in as press at the main Sundance office at the Marriott Hotel. Once we got our badges we headed over to the Hewlet Packard Center on Main Street. This is where it hosted the opening 2006 Sundance Film Festival press conference. Sundance Institute President Robert Redford, Sundance Film Festival Organizer Geoffrey Gilmore and Friends & Money director Nicole Holofcener answered questions from the press. Terence Howard was sitting in a corner behind the stage, but he was not answering any questions. He did look relaxed and proud to be selected as an official juror at this year's festival

Everything was going smooth as can be expected at a normal high profile film festival press conference. I was patiently waiting to ask my question of whether the success of last year's *Hustle & Flow* generating the largest deal at Sundance was a "one-time" fluke or an indication of the independent film market becoming much stronger than it was depicted in the three years leading up to *Hustle & Flow*'s sale. That deep and well thought out question was about to leave my mouth. That was until some brotha from another hip-hop Web site asked Robert Redford a redundant and extremely unnecessary question; about whether the success of last year's *Hustle & Flow* meant Sundance is going to add more hip-hop films to the festival. I am actually repeating the question in the more intelligent and intelligible light than it was presented. The question left Redford speechless and tongue-tied to try and think up answer. Before I could ask Redford my question that would have been more enlightening and answerable the Q&A of the press conference ended. Redford was immediately whisked out of the HP Center. But I managed to interview Geoffrey Gilmore who runs the festival and get him to answer my question in depth. We also made arrangements with Terence Howard to interview him later the ext day for a film he was attending as a juror. Overall we had a good time covering the press conference. I though the Friends with Money director Nicole Holofcener was really nice and overwhelmed with being the lead selection of the Sundance Film Festival. After the press conference we met a New York filmmaker named Saladine on Main Street. We interviewed Saladine as he talked about coming to Sundance to find a distributor for his film. Many filmmakers come to Sundance hoping to strike gold.



Geoffrey Gilmore, Terrence Howard, Robert Redford and Nicole Holofcener
2006 Sundance Film Festival - Opening Day Press Conference
Kimball Art Center - Park City, Utah United States
© Fred Hayes/WireImage.com January 19, 2006 - Image 7106001
WireImage: (212) 686-8900 / st@wireimage.com
Downloaded by robertdick at Sundance Film Festival





Friends with Money Jennifer Aniston, director and co-stars.



Friends with Money co-stars and Jennifer Aniston

The ***Friends With Money*** Premiere at Eccles Theater was absolutely bananas for the press. When you are online press like we are you get placed at the end of the Red Carpet line. But at the end is a mad scramble of media crews trying to be close enough to film the stars before they walk inside. The only real big Hollywood star that was drawing a lot of heat and mad attention was Jennifer Aniston. Every tabloid and magazine that week had cover stories on Jennifer, Brad and Angelina. That soap opera was tailored made for the gossip mill. Anyway, a weird thing happened when Dave was setting up to shoot our Red Carpet footage. Dave had to go leave the Red Carpet area and go assist our staff photographer Kim Sturgis and the beginning of the Red Carpet. What happened next was that Dave ended up getting exclusive footage of Jennifer arriving because the still photographers needed the light from Dave's HD camera to properly shoot Jennifer coming out of her car. The only other thing of note at the premiere was that after the ***Friends With Money*** director finished her opening statement before the film started. Robert Redford had to urge Nicole to go back and thank Jennifer Aniston whom she forgot in her speech. Nicole was a bit nervous, but we definitely recommend seeing ***Friends With Money***.

Friends with Money Premiere Photos:



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Day 3:



Money Train & Rape for Who I Am director Lovinsa Kavuma

Day 3 at Sundance started early as we went to the Racquet Club Theater to see the Shorts Program II. There were six short film programs in this year's Sundance. There were around 7,000 shorts submitted to Sundance and about 10% or 70 were chosen to be in the festival. It is a daunting and almost impossible task to try and see all the shorts at Sundance. So we had to try and get as many in that related to themes and subjects that were of particular interest to this generation of hip-hop heads. We choose Shorts II primarily because it had the powerful South African film *Rape for Who I Am* and Cleveland's *No Umbrella Election Day In the City*. *Rape* was directed by UK based Lovinsa Kavuma and she made her film out of a burning desire to let the whole world know that South African lesbian rape victims were being not just being ignored by the police, but that homophobic crimes were becoming accepted as normal behavior among South African males. Lovinsa tells a haunting tale of hopelessness amongst the lesbian population to get proper justice for their rapes, but also shows a united community determined to keep fighting for their right to live the life they were born to live. It is that resounding spirit that makes *Rape for Who I Am* a must see short film. We interviewed Lovinsa after the Q&A session.

We were equally impressed with Laura Pagin's *No Umbrella* short doc. Laura has made a historic film about the 2004 Presidential election in Cleveland. She had heard rumors that Ohio could be another election debacle like what happened in Florida. Laura managed to be at one of the poorest polling booths on Election Day. Her film documents an elderly and feisty city councilwoman, Ms. Fannie Lewis, as she fight with the city, the mayor, and the city and state election committee to avert an impending disaster at the polls. Fannie cannot do it alone and she tries to stop a bad situation become even worse. *No Umbrella* makes one see that even in America we still deny the poor and minorities the right to vote through ignorance and malice.

SHORTS PROGRAM II

Mind Over Matter

Scott Gerow

U.S.A. , 2005 , 41 Minutes, color

It began as a son's story about his father's obesity, and evolved into a story about both men in a fight for their lives.

No Umbrella--Election Day in the City



Laura Paglin

U.S.A. , 2005 , 26 Minutes, color

A feisty octogenarian, inner-city councilwoman takes on election-day chaos, an unresponsive bureaucracy, and an increasingly agitated electorate.

Range

Bill Basquin

U.S.A. , 2005 , 7 Minutes, b/w

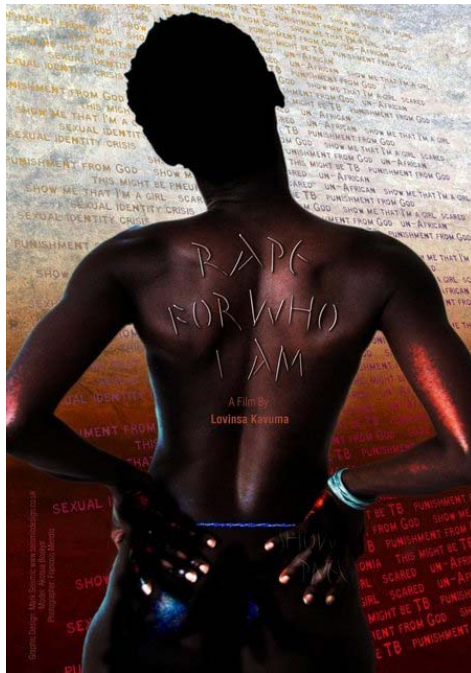
Against a visual tapestry of rural horizons, farm machinery, and newborn lambs, a father discusses his relationship with his farm with his transgendered son.

Rape for Who I Am



Lovinsa Kavuma
South Africa , 2005 , 27 Minutes, color

An insight into the lives of South Africa's black lesbians who were assaulted because of their sexuality.



Rape for Who I Am Poster



Director Lovinsa Kavuma

Undressing My Mother
Ken Wardrop
Ireland , 2004 , 5 Minutes, color

A poignant documentary that explores a woman's unique take on her overweight and aging body.



We interviewed Laura Pagin after the Shorts Program II screening. We then fortunately happen to be able to join the Red Carpet for an official dramatic Sundance selection called *A Guide To Recognizing Your Saints*. We manage to take some pictures and get a brief interview with Terence Howard. The only thing of value I got of talking to Terence was having him admit that he was finally paid his back money and points that he was owed for doing *Hustle & Flow* for scale. There was a lengthy and biting LA Times article that basically accused John Singleton for not sharing the spoils of the \$9 Million sale at last year's Sundance. I confronted John about this at the 2005 Prism Multi-Cultural Awards and he pointedly said that the disgruntled cast, Craig Brewer and Stephanie Allain had gotten paid right before the article broke. We were pressed for time because we had to leave the Racquet Club and make our next Sundance event. It should be noted that Sundance to great lengths to expand the Racquet Club screening room seating capacity. This had to be done in light of the embarrassing spectacle at the 2005 Sundance Racquet Club screening of *Hustle & Flow*. There was so few seats that even cast members of *Hustle & Flow* could not get a seat for their own premiere screening. Sundance made sure that would not happen again at this year's Racquet Club.

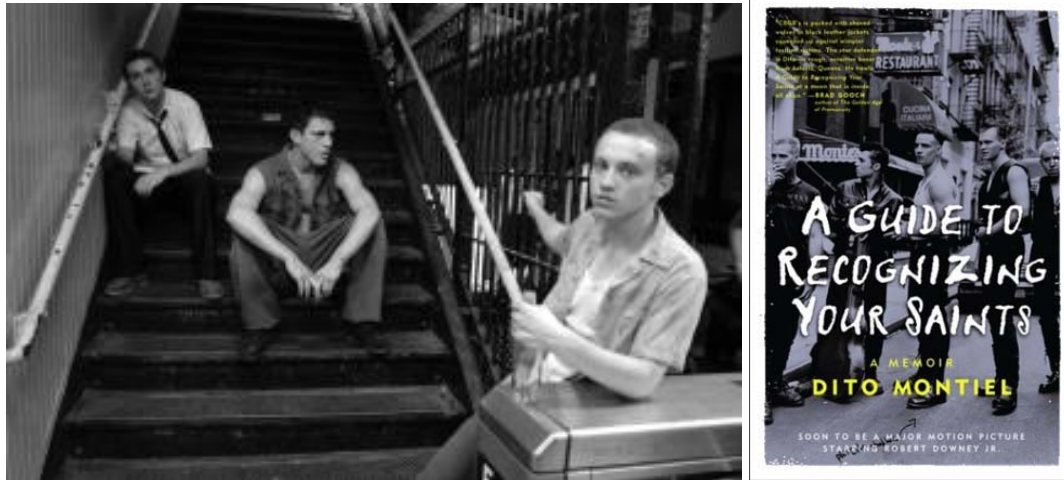


A GUIDE TO RECOGNIZING YOUR SAINTS

U.S.A., 2005, 90 Minutes, color

Director:

Dito Montiel



A Guide to Recognizing Your Saints is based on director Dito Montiel's youth during the mid-eighties in the tough neighborhood of Astoria, Queens. All his old friends have ended up dead, as junkies, or in prison; Dito is the proverbial man who got out. For him, the "saints" are the folks he remembers, the ones he left behind. For better or worse, they made him who he is today. Just the way memories can flood consciousness, Montiel uses the same motif to flood the screen with his stories. The past gets layered upon the present, and the film comes to life. The performances are real because the characters' words are real; they've been said before. The strength of the film isn't looking back through a nostalgic, Vaseline lens; instead, Montiel infuses the memories with both the exhilaration and pain of youth. The outstanding cast members are dedicated to finding every nuance and truth. They capture the frenetic quality of the time, not only in the streets and on the rooftops but also in the bustling family kitchen. Montiel's New York is steamy with humidity, cooking, and adolescent sexuality. *A Guide to Recognizing Your Saints* is an honest account of a bittersweet return to a neighborhood that isn't the same and never will be again.— John Cooper

Screenwriter : Dito Montiel

Executive Producers : Sting, Bobby Sager

Producers : Trudie Styler, Travis Swords, Charlie Corwin, Clara Markowicz

Coproducers : Linda Moran, Rene Bastian

Cinematographer : Eric Gautier

Editors : Christopher Tellefsen, Jake Pushinsky

Composer : Jonathan Elias

Cast : Robert Downey, Jr., Shia La Boeuf, Rosario Dawson, Chazz Palminteri, Dianne Wiest, Channing Tatum

We headed over to the Yarrow Theaters, which are at the apt named Yarrow Hotel. The Yarrow #1 & #2 as well as the Holiday Village behind the Yarrow were all the 2006 Sundance press screenings were being held. All the credited journalists greatly appreciate having the press screenings because it allows one to see several top films back to back. Some journalists would literally watch half of one film and then bounce to another nearby theater to catch the end of a different film. If you have the press kit and do some online research one could possibly get away with writing more film reviews by seeing a lot of half films. We chose to watch whatever film we started watching until the end. We were greatly tempted to break this rule during the screening of the Iraq documentary. I found the non-narrator style of watching random images and storylines of normal Iraq citizens intriguing at first. But as the film kept going on and on without any clear direction or focus my enthusiasm waned as well. I liked the Kurdish parts, but I would not recommend James Longley's film.

IRAQ IN FRAGMENTS

U.S.A., 2005, 94 Minutes, color

Director:

James Longley



Iraq In Fragments

Director James Longley

Even with plentiful news coverage of Iraq, we rarely have an opportunity to hear from ordinary citizens or consider their distinct, complex concerns. A stunning, electric collage of hypnotic sights, evocative sounds, and arresting voices, *Iraq in Fragments* listens to diverse points of view in three Iraqi enclaves. In old Baghdad, buildings burn, U.S. tanks patrol, and an 11-year-old mechanic scurries amid the rubble to please his intimidating boss. His vulnerable narration betrays relentless fear about safety and heartbreaking efforts to support his family, while the men around him angrily indict the Americans. Then, guided by a young leader in Moqtada Sadr's Shiite revolutionary movement, we proceed south, where political arguments ricochet across cafés and meeting halls, and young Shiite men hit the streets to enforce religious laws and stage an anti-U.S. uprising. In the northern Kurdish countryside, where smoke from brick ovens billows ominously, yet gracefully, in the sky, a farmer, grateful to America for eradicating Saddam, ruminates on the future of his family and people. Meanwhile, his teenage son tirelessly tends sheep, intent on fulfilling his dream of becoming a doctor. These indelible, intimate portraits, painted with strikingly beautiful vérité images and poetic visual juxtapositions by filmmaker James Longley, humanize characters and illuminate the textures and tensions of a country wrenched by occupation and pulled in disparate directions by religion and ethnicity.— Caroline Libresco

Executive Producers : James Longley, John Sinno
Cinematographer : James Longley
Editors : Billy McMillin, Fiona Otway, James Longley
Composer/Sound Recordist : James Longley



Punching at the Sun cast at 2006 Sundance Film Festival

We next watched *Punching at the Sun*, which was billed as a hip-hop themed film. But after watching twenty minutes or so I would have to say that the Sundance film guide description of *Punching at the Sun* was done to increase ticket sales. This film is a basic coming-of-age story about a young man that has to deal with the sudden death of his older brother. The hip-hop element is kinda accidental and non-important. There is a South Asian character that is a political rapper and freestyle poet. His rapping skills are lacking and his politics are more “pseudo” angry than really threatening. I guess the hip-hop aspect of the film is how second generation South Asians in New York are assimilating into our urban culture by wearing throwbacks, talking street slang, stealing cars, going to nightclubs and playing basketball. Director Tanuja Chopra could have easily substituted black or Latino youths with his South Asian stars and the film would have ended up the same. The Sundance film guide also refers to *Punching at the Sun* showing discrimination against South Asians after 9/11 and this is lightly touched on, but not in a meaningful way that really affects the plot of the film. Out of all the films we saw at Sundance *Punching at the Sun* was the most over-hyped and the most predictable. *Punching at the Sun* is worth seeing, but it would have been more enjoyable if the hip-hop and 9/11 parts were not emphasized so much in its Sundance film guide write up.

After the *Punching at the Sun* screening we interviewed a fellow journalist from New York who actually knew Tanuja. This reporter gave us some more insights to the film we just watched and the filmmaker. We then went into the lobby of the Yarrow hotel and interviewed LA director and screenwriter named Paula Neiman, who was at Sundance this year promoting a new college age comedy indie she wants to shoot. I told Paula that she needs to see Hadji's *Somebodies* because it was also a urban or multi-racial collegiate buddy film. And we were just about to leave the Yarrow when we just happened to run into Cameron Bailey, the film programmer for the Toronto Film Festival. Cameron is at Sundance not to gloat about how great his festival is becoming and will one day might even top Sundance in importance. No, Cameron is here to discover new filmmakers for Toronto. And there is a lot of talent in Park City.

PUNCHING AT THE SUN

U.S.A., 2005, 86 Minutes, color

Director:

Tanuj Chopra

www.punchingatthesun.com



South Asian immigrant culture, post 9/11 politics, interracial relationships, violent streets, and the American firestorm of hip-hop culture all mix into a fierce concoction in Tanuj Chopra's vibrant and spirited first feature, *Punching at the Sun*. Elmhurst, Queens, is a rough place for Mameet Nayak, a beautiful 17-year-old South Asian immigrant with a passion for basketball and a hair-trigger temper. It gets rougher when his older brother, Sanjay, is gunned down in the family convenience store. The loss leaves Mameet in a complicated state of mourning and adolescent nihilism. His rage and antagonism toward the world make him a magnet for trouble. His friends, Ritesh and Parnay, are hilarious company, though not particularly encouraging in Mameet's attempts to rise above the negative forces in his life. But an adorable neighborhood sneaker salesgirl, Shawni, offers a light of hope in cracking Mameet's self-destructive shell. And inspiring rap performances by the charismatic MC Uncle Sonny conjure Mameet's ability to find a sense of optimism in a violent world that he feels is determined to view him as an outsider. Chopra draws passionate and genuine performances from his talented young cast, led by the gifted Misu Khan. Urgent and contemporary, *Punching at the Sun* sheds light on an American perspective rarely reflected on the screen, and glistens with the freshness and vital energy of a new directorial voice.— Shari Frilot

Screenwriters : Tanuj Chopra, Hart Eddy

Producer : Tanuj Chopra

Coproducers : Dafina Roberts, Josh Bettinger

Cinematographer : Milton Kam

Editor : Joe Murphy

Cast : Misu Khan, Nina Edmonds, Ferdusy Dia, Kazi Rehman, Taran Singh, Hassan El-Gendi



After the *Punching at the Sun* screening we went to the Sundance Filmmaker's Lodge. This place is basically a great warm place to hang out if you are a festival filmmaker or press. There is great food, liquor and lively atmosphere. And it is all free in the lodge. We were having such a good time that we suddenly realized we could also get some great interviews. So we put down the sushi and Swedish meatballs and got right back to work. We luckily ran into Bryon Hurt and got to talk to him in-depth with about his controversial hip-hop documentary called *Beyond Beats & Rhymes: A Hip-Hop Head Weighs in on Manhood And Hip-Hop Culture*. Bryon explained his motivations for doing his film and why he felt it was important that this generation of teen males are negatively influenced by many homophobic and sexist views in hip-hop. After interviewing Bryon we also got his co-producer and editor Sabrina Schmidt Gordon to weigh in her opinions on the film. She also gave us a DVD copy of *Beyond Beats*, so we could see it right away. Bryon's film was not going to be screened until the middle of the week and after we had left Sundance.

We left the Filmmaker Lodge and went back to the Yarrow and saw press screening of a great Mexican immigrant issue film called *La Tragedia de Macario*. This film is brilliantly directed by Pablo Veliz and stays away from a lot of lengthy speeches and political rhetoric about why immigrants have rights or should be allowed to cross the border. No, *La Tragedia de Macario* is a well-thought out and simple film that showcases a pair of young Mexican couples dealing with their basic human needs to survive day by day. And a universal desire to have a better life for themselves and their children. No one could honestly question why the couples in *La Tragedia* would want to come to America and do low paying and menial jobs that the vast majority of Americans refuse to do. What is the true shame is the film's ultimate fate of these couples when they do decide that the husbands will cross to the U.S. In theory the husbands would have started working in the states and then later brought over their wives and children. Such a perfect plan goes way awry and for reasons and forces greater than the sincerity and simplicity of the husbands wanting to take care of their families. The United States and Mexico are locked in a huge struggle over illegal immigration. If our country's Fortune 500 companies were not actively encouraging Mexicans every day to come over here to pick our fruit, mow our lawns, park our cars, raise our kids and work in our restaurants, then we could say we were dealing with an serious immigration problem. But it cannot be our problem when it is highly beneficial for our economy to have illegals working for the lowest wages and no health benefits. We greatly recommend seeing *La Tragedia de Macario*.

BEYOND BEATS AND RHYMES: A HIP-HOP HEAD WEIGHS IN ON MANHOOD IN HIP-HOP CULTURE

U.S.A., 2005, 60 Minutes, color

Director:

Byron Hurt

www.bhurt.com



At its root, hip-hop is a politically charged music born from explosive frustration in the South Bronx, a community cast aside by a power structure that left it impoverished. How did this urgent, political message of hip-hop transform into the gangbanging, drug-lording, misogynistic gangster rap that dominates urban radio today? And how did gangster rap become the predominant voice and model of black masculinity? Filmmaker Byron Hurt addresses these questions in his remarkably insightful and articulate documentary *Beyond Beats and Rhymes*. A former jock and ladies man who loves hip-hop, Hurt embarks on a journey into himself and his community, taking an in-depth look at machismo in rap music. He leaves no stone unturned, speaking with cultural critics, aspiring rappers, black kids on spring break, white suburban youth, music-industry executives, and rap stars like Russell Simmons and Chuck D. Together, the interviews explore how black masculinity came to be popularly defined through the cannibalistic black-on-black animosity and violent, homophobic aggression in contemporary rap music. *Beyond Beats and Rhymes* unveils a reality bordering on the surreal—an Americana that is historically and unconsciously identified with violence, a wounded black community fiercely refusing to admit defeat, and a corporate power structure that has adopted gangster rap as its black face.— Shari Frilot

Screenwriter : Byron Hurt

Executive Producer : Stanley Nelson

Producer : Byron Hurt

Coproducer : Sabrina Schmidt Gordon

Cinematographer : Bill Winters

Editor : Sabrina Schmidt Gordon

LA TRAGEDIA DE MACARIO

U.S.A., 2005, 71 Minutes, color

Director:

Pablo Véliz

www.cineveliz.com



When his native town of Sabinas Hidalgo can no longer provide much more than nightly beans and tortillas, Mexican peasant worker Macario finds himself drawn uncontrollably to thoughts of crossing the border to find work and a more dignified life for his wife. When his struggles worsen, he can no longer wait, so Macario and his best friend set out on the dangerous journey north to Estados Unidos, guided by faith, determination, and a watchful holy eye. But even divine intervention cannot save Macario from the fate implied in the film's title, and tragedy inevitably arrives. First-time filmmaker Pablo Véliz orchestrates the magical realism of *La Tragedia de Macario* with a beautiful eye and ear for the inner lives of the truly desperate, while exploring the spirituality they must survive on in place of real food. Using a stylized narrative score, Véliz penetrates easily into his character's hearts, unleashing an exciting sense of purpose. Along with a talented cast, he creates a film far more accomplished than his youth and modest budget would suggest possible. Inspired in part by the 2003 events in Victoria, Texas—the worst immigrant tragedy in American history—*La Tragedia de Macario* explores the complexities of home, love, and spirit with moving results.— Joseph Beyer

Screenwriter : Pablo Véliz

Executive Producer/Editor : Pablo Véliz

Producer : Jeff Horny

Cinematographer : Brian Gonzalez

Music : Carlos Sanchez

Assistant Directors : Victor Agustin, Milicent Figueroa

Cast : Rogelio Ramos, Milicent Figueroa, Tina Rodriguez, Victor Agustin, Juanita Castro, Allan Horwath

SHORTS PROGRAM IV

Bawke

Hisham Zaman

Norway , 2005 , 15 Minutes, color

A father is forced to choose between two evils to provide for his son's future.

Common Practice

Marcos Efron

U.S.A. , 2005 , 11 Minutes, color

A young boy's unique gift brings his working-class, Latino neighborhood together in unexpected ways.

Dealbreaker

Gwyneth Paltrow, Mary Wigmore

U.S.A. , 2005 , 12 Minutes, color

A down-to-earth New Yorker is finally able to look past superficial flaws when she finds the right man.

The Debt

Levan Koguashvili

U.S.A./Republic of Georgia , 2005 , 15 Minutes, color

Two illegal Georgian immigrants from the former Soviet Union fight for their survival on the streets of Brooklyn, New York.

Momma's Boy

John Bryant

U.S.A. , 2005 , 16 Minutes, color

A young man brings his fiancée home for Thanksgiving dinner and bad things happen.

Redemptitude

David Zellner, Nathan Zellner

U.S.A. , 2005 , 11 Minutes, color

A preacher ventures deep into the Australian Outback to save the soul of a man who has abandoned his faith.

Le Rouge au Sol

Maxime Giroux

Canada , 2005 , 16 Minutes, color

After hitting rock bottom, a man shares his feelings with his mother as they drive to Ikea.



Dealbreaker's Arija Bareikis



Bawke's Broa Rasol & Sedar Ahmad

Day 3 ended with us still freezing as we went to The Holiday Inn to watch the Shorts Program IV. All of the shorts we saw were worth recommending. But if I would have to pick two that stood out the most I would have to say Hisham Zaman's *Bawke* and *Dealbreaker*, which was co-directed and co-written by Gwyneth Paltrow and Mary Wilgmore. *Dealbreaker* is a light, funny and homage to any great Seinfeld episode. The synopsis of *Dealbreaker* is as follows: "Having suffered countless dating disasters, Fran thinks she has finally found her soul mate. Yet, it's funny how quickly Mr. Right can become Mr. Terribly Wrong." Nonetheless, the search for love endures. What I loved about *Dealbreaker* I cannot tell you or even suggest because it would ruin the ending. I can say that we greatly recommend seeing *Dealbreaker*.



Dealbreaker directors Marry Wilgmore & Gwyneth Paltrow



Bawke director Hisham Zaman

Bawke on the other hand is another gritty and raw short about the harsh choices a father must make to give his son a better future than his own. Watching *Bawke* in the comfort of a modern theater makes one reflect would your own father or parents have given you away as a child. We in the states or other rich Western European countries never have to burden ourselves mentally with the thought of having abandoning our children in another country's foster care because the thought of them growing up either illiterate, homeless, hungry or with poor medical care or dying of state sponsored violence is too much to bare. Even though children can face hardships and abuse in even America's foster care system, it would still be better than the chances of surviving adulthood in some Eastern European countries. Hisham Zaman's *Bawke* is a heroic film that we greatly recommend seeing. So Day 3 at Sundance ends and we have three more packed days to cover a lot of events.

Sincerely,

David L Watts a.k.a. Money Train