

**15 June 2009**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Burma VJ**

**Anders Østergaard, Denmark 2009, 85 mins**

**SPECIAL LIVE SATELLITE PREMIERE EVENT**

**8.30 pm, 14 July 2009**

Burma VJ shows in Aberystwyth Arts Centre Cinema on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July, 8.30pm. Vivienne Westwood will introduce the screening via satellite, and Burmese monks in exile will bless the screening. A live Q&A with the director, Anders Østergaard, will follow.

Going beyond the occasional news clip from Burma, the acclaimed filmmaker, Anders Østergaard, brings us close to Burma's *video journalists* who strive to keep the flow of news from their closed country despite the risk of torture and life imprisonment. Armed with small handycams they make their undercover reportages, smuggle the material out of the country, have it broadcast back into Burma via satellite and offered as free usage for international media.

'Joshua', age 27, is one of the undercover VJs, is suddenly thrown into the role as tactical leader of his group of reporters, when Buddhist monks in September 2007 lead a massive uprising. Foreign TV crews are banned from entering the country, so it is left to Joshua and his crew to document the events and establish a lifeline to the surrounding world. It is their footage that keeps the revolution alive on TV screens around the world. The regime quickly understands the power of the camera and the reporters are constantly pursued by government intelligence agents who look at the "media saboteurs" as prime targets.

Amidst marching monks, brutal police agents, and military gunfire, the reporters embark on their dangerous mission, working around the clock to keep the world up to date with events inside their country. Their compulsive instinct to shoot what they witness, rather than any deliberate heroism, turns their lives into that of freedom fighters.

During the turbulent days of September, Joshua finds himself on an emotional rollercoaster between hope and despair, as he frantically tries to keep track of his reporters in the streets while the great uprising unfolds and comes to its tragic end. With Joshua as the psychological lens, the Burmese condition is made tangible to a global audience.

Tickets for this production are £5 (£4) and £4.50 for Cardi Card holders and can be booked by contacting the Arts Centre ticket office on 01970 62 32 32 or online at [www.aber.ac.uk/artscentre](http://www.aber.ac.uk/artscentre)

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Notes to editors:

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Further Aberystwyth Arts Centre press releases can be found at

[www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk/press.shtml](http://www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk/press.shtml).