

Vancouver International Film Festival Waking the Green Tiger (G)*** * * * * China Unleashed!

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By Alan Samuel




Today China has become the economic powerhouse of the world. Growth in this fabled land began in earnest during the days of iconic leader Mao Tse Tung. Now one of Chairman Mao's most coveted edicts has come under fire big time. Thanks to Canadian Filmmaker Gary Marcuse we see how an environmental policy ushered in by the Chinese Government almost destroyed the very fabric of a community. Through insightful interviews with Chinese villagers we learn of the impact one of Mao's controversial policies has had on modern day life. Historically back in the 50s and 60s

industrialization was fast-tracked at the expense of protecting the environment. In one instance an entire lake was transformed into a quagmire as peasants and the populace at large was told to throw dirt into the water. Ordinary people adhered fully to this policy as it was ordered from above. Footage of smiling people, young and old, doing this deed shows the immense popularity of the charismatic leader. Today, though, a new generation of Chinese has come to question this flawed policy. Here, in Waking the Green Tiger, we see the seeds of urban people in China have of a new era where preserving China's natural beauty and resources is the number one goal.

What Waking the Green Tiger reveals is the power of the people and the press as concerned citizens rallied to save one community from being flooded by proposed dam development. Up close and personal we see the effect one crusading reporter had when he publicized how the power companies were running roughshod over villages and how they thought they could lie to the people. Fatal mistake as finally a brave legislator saw the writing on the wall, rallied the public, and set forth in motion a new law to protect the environment. Beautiful cinematography showcase the lush regions of the countryside where the battle lines were drawn to stake out claims over this virginal territory. Frank discussions on the case of jobs and progress versus preservation, nature and history are very well presented here during this movie's 78 minute run. Made by Canadians, Waking the Green Tiger is a wonderful look at how a small community can challenge the powers that be and come out on at least an equal footing, if not winning the day.

Showtimes:

Oct. 1, Saturday 1:15 PM Empire Granville Seven Cinemas

Oct. 7, Saturday 9:30 PM Empire Granville Seven

Oct. 11 Tuesday 12:20 PM Empire Granville Seven

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