MINE YOUR OWN BUSINESS

A DOCUMENTARY ABOUT THE DARK SIDE OF ENVIRONMENTALISM

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Documentary Challenges Environ-Activists With Inconvenient Truths

Mine Your Own Business gives environmental movement Michael Moore-like treatment

“Move over, Michael Moore. You have competition in the art of political film-making…[but] instead of advancing the cause of smug liberal hypocrisy, he’s debunking it. —Wall Street Journal Online

Mine Your Own Business is a documentary that will make many comfortable westerners very uncomfortable indeed.

Irish film maker Phelim McAleer reveals the real agenda of many global environmental activists and shows how their campaigns in remote areas are often exaggerated, misleading and motivated by a desire to preserve poverty stricken villages they view as “quaint.”

McAleer, a former Financial Times correspondent in Eastern Europe, starts his journey in Rosia Montana, a Romanian mining village where foreign environmental activists are opposing the construction of a high tech gold mine that many villagers see as their last hope of survival.

McAleer exposes the exaggerations and misleading claims of the foreign environmentalists opposed to the development. They explain how people in the village don’t want prosperity but prefer the simple peasant life where they are “poor but happy.”

McAleer interviews the villagers who tell a very different story as they speak about their desire for development that will bring renewed prosperity to their village and clean up the hundreds of years of environmentally unfriendly mining projects.

“My Own Business is the first documentary to take a hard look at the environmental movement,” said McAleer. “And what we found was not pretty. Activists believe that people in remote areas are ‘poor but happy.’ They think that development will spoil their idyllic rural existence. But I’ve been there, and poverty is neither charming nor quaint, nor is it a lifestyle choice.”

The Sunday Telegraph noted: “Using a style reminiscent of Michael Moore…Mr. McAleer lured environmentalists into making statements that were false or patently ridiculous.”

“This important film will stir debate well beyond the theater,” said Moving Picture Institute Executive Director Robert Pfaltzgraff. “It will transform how many people approach the subject of poverty, development, and environmentalism.”

Mine Your Own Business is written and narrated by Phelim McAleer. Is is co-directed by Phelim McAleer and Ann McElhinney. McElhinney and McAleer also produced the documentary. McAleer and McElhinney, who are married, are fellows of the Moving Picture Institute (MPI), a New York-based non-profit that dedicated to promoting the principles of American liberty, and freedom and prosperity through the medium of film. Before directing and producing Mine Your Own Business, McAleer and McElhinney co-produced The Search for Tristan’s Mum an hour long documentary shot in Indonesia which broadcast on Irish public television in September 2005.

McElhinney was an associate producer and featured in Return to Sender, a documentary broadcast on CBC in Canada in February 2005. McAleer was also co-producer and second unit director on Return to Sender. McElhinney was also an Assistant Producer and researcher on the BBC documentary Romanian Twins broadcast in 2004. Before the Financial Times McAleer was an Ireland correspondent for The Sunday Times (London).

For more information or to schedule an interview with the filmmakers, contact phelim@thempi.org or (202) 997-8896. Website www.mineyourownbusiness.org
Synopsis

A film that takes you to the dark side of the environmental movement.

Short Synopsis:

Mine Your Own Business looks at the dark side of environmentalism. It talks to some of the world’s poorest people about how western environmentalists are campaigning to keep them in poverty because they think their way of life is quaint. It is the first documentary to ask hard questions of the environmental movement.

Long Synopsis:

Mine Your Own Business is a film about a massive human rights abuse. It looks at campaigns against large mining projects by environmentalists in the developing world. However it reveals campaigns of distortion and exaggeration by these environmentalists as they endeavor to stop development in poor countries. Mine Your Own Business reveals the dark side of environmentalism and how it is stopping poor people and communities across the globe from fulfilling their potential.

The film follows journalist Phelim McAleer as he investigates the consequences of environmental movements for poor communities around the world. On his journey he meets George Lucian, a poor unemployed miner from Romania whose community is facing ruin if environmentalists succeed in stopping the development of a large gold mine.

Hundreds of years after we have become rich and comfortable by removing our forests and exploiting our natural resources such as coal, oil, and gold we are now going to the poorest countries on the planet to prevent them from doing what we did and having what we have. We want them to stay as ‘traditional peasants’ forgetting all the while that the poor people desperately want progress and desperately want to enjoy the good, healthy and long life we in the west take for granted.

Mine Your Own Business will make a lot of comfortable western people very uncomfortable indeed. It will show them the consequences of their blind faith in our new religion—the religion of environmentalism.
Phelim McAleer

Phelim McAleer is a Fellow of the Moving Picture Institute, a New York-based non-profit that identifies and nurtures promising filmmakers who are committed to protecting and sustaining a free and prosperous society (www.thempi.org). He is also the joint managing director of New Bera Media, an independent documentary production company. McAleer directed, produced and wrote “Mine Your Own Business” (2006) the world’s first anti-environmentalist documentary. The documentary hacks away at the cozy image of environmentalists as well-meaning, harmless activists. He was also an Associate Producer, second unit director and researcher on the documentary “Return to Sender” which aired on Canada’s CBC in February 2005.

From 2000 to 2003 he was the Romania/Bulgaria Correspondent for the Financial Times. He has also written for The Economist from the region. Previously from 1998 to 2000, he worked for the UK Sunday Times in their Dublin office.

McAleer started his career as a journalist working for a local newspaper in Crossmaglen, Co. Armagh known as Bandit country for the ferocity of the IRA campaign in the area. He then moved to the Irish News in Belfast. At the Irish News, Northern Ireland’s largest selling daily newspaper worked as a journalist covering the Northern Ireland troubles and peace process before becoming night editor.

He devised and co-produced “The Search for Tristan’s Mum” which was broadcast on RTE 1, the Irish State television station, in 2005. It featured the case of Tristan Dowse, who was adopted by an Irish couple at birth and then abandoned in an Indonesian orphanage two years later.

The Search for Tristan’s Mum was selected for and shown at Input 2006, a showcase for the best programs from national public broadcasters from around the world, the programs was selected by fellow industry professionals and showcased at Input 2006 in Taiwan in May.

He has been a regular contributor to RTE and BBC radio and television.
Ann McElhinney

Ann McElhinney is a Fellow of the Moving Picture Institute, a not for profit dedicated to advancing liberty through the medium of film (thempi.org). She is also a journalist, broadcaster and producer and joint managing director of New Bera Media, an independent documentary production company.

Ann McElhinney directed and produced “Mine Your Own Business” (2006). She is a co-producer and presenter of “The Search for Tristan’s Mum” (2005) an hour long documentary for RTE. The documentary featured the case of Tristan Dowse, who was adopted by an Irish couple at birth and then abandoned in an Indonesian orphanage two years later. Tristan’s plight provoked a wave of sympathy and outrage in Ireland and “The Search for Tristan’s Mum” followed journalist Ann McElhinney in a search to find his natural mother in Indonesia.

As a result of McElhinney’s undercover investigations into Tristan’s case where she posed as a woman hoping to adopt she revealed an illegal baby selling ring. Further investigations by the Indonesian police saw the leaders of the ring sentenced to nine and eight years in prison.

“The Search for Tristan’s Mum” was selected by fellow industry professionals from across the globe and showcased at Input 2006 in Taiwan in May 2006.

McElhinney was an Assistant Producer on the BBC Spotlight documentary “Romanian Twins” (2004) and featured in CBC’s “Return to Sender” (2005) as the investigative reporter who discovered the story of Alexandra Austin. McElhinney also worked with CBC as an associate producer and researcher on “Return to Sender”. Previously McElhinney worked as a journalist with the BBC, Irish Times, RTE, Sunday Times and Sunday Tribune. She has regularly contributed reports and analysis for RTE’s Six One News, Morning Ireland and World Report and has been a regular contributor to Orla Barry’s show on Newstalk 106 and Today FM’s The Last Word show.
A New Bera Media Production

In Association with the
Moving Picture Institute

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