The Independent Critic - "Rigoberta Menchu: Daughter of the Maya" Releases on International Peace Day

FEATURING
Rigoberta Menchu, Giacomo Buonafina
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY
Dawn Engle
MPAA RATING
NR
RUNNING TIME
61 Mins.
DISTRIBUTED BY
Gravitas
PeaceJam Website

The latest film in PeaceJam's Nobel Legacy Film Series, Rigoberta Menchu: Daughter of the Maya will be released worldwide on September 21, 2016 as part of the International Day of Peace.

The film is the story of Rigoberta Menchu, a poor girl born in a remote mountainous region of Guatemala torn apart by civil war and her determination to gain justice for her people. Written and directed by Dawn Engle, the film picked up the Humanitarian Award and Best Director prizes at the Modcon London Film Festival and continues PeaceJam's history of producing mighty fine feature-length documentaries about Nobel Peace Prize winners with previous films based upon Adolfo Perez Esquivel, Desmond Tutu, Oscar Arias and the Dalai Lama so far.

PeaceJam Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit organization with United Nations NGO status. With a 20 year history of empowering young leaders committed to positive change in themselves, their communities, and the world, PeaceJam has a wide variety of programmatic offers including this remarkable film series.

Rigoberta Menchu: Daughter of the Maya tells an intelligent and involving story about a woman who is likely one of the lesser known Nobel Peace Prize recipients. Both tragic and triumphant, Rigoberta Menchu: Daughter of the Maya is wisely directed by Engle in a way that doesn't hesitate to tell the darkest aspects of the story yet also balances that with the hope and inspiration planted by Menchu.

In most ways, the film is a rather straightforward documentary weaving together interviews, archival footage, clips and informational pieces. Yet, unlike many documentaries, this film is nicely paced and assembled in a way that the material never feels dry and it's easy to become completely absorbed in the just over one hour film.

Menchu's story largely takes pace during the Guatemalan civil war. Her entire family brutally slaughtered, she somehow survived an attack in her home village when the vast majority were killed. Working with a church organization, she turned her tragedy into a 10-year exile raising support for her people while staying away from Guatemala. She educated the UN about the atrocities that had occurred. The end
results of her work are astounding, a more than worthy Nobel Peace Prize recipient whose story deserves to share the limelight with the prize's more visible recipients.

For more information on the film, visit the PeaceJam website and watch for it when it is released on September 21st.

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