

WAR DON DON Film Screening

Date: Wednesday March 16, 8-8 PM

Where: Moot Court, McGill University Faculty of Law, 3644 Peel Street

More Info:

Join the HRWG Genocide Awareness and Prevention Portfolio for the screening of a brilliant and challenging documentary that provides a window into a single trial at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, but holds up a mirror to the entire enterprise of international criminal justice.

This film has played at the Human Rights Watch film festival, the Montreal Documentary film festival and now here at the Faculty.

Don't miss it!

Film Synopsis

In the heart of Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, United Nations soldiers guard a heavily fortified building known as the “special court.” Inside, Issa Sesay awaits his trial. Prosecutors say Sesay is a war criminal, guilty of heinous crimes against humanity. His defenders say he is a reluctant fighter who protected civilians and played a crucial role in bringing peace to Sierra Leone. With unprecedented access to prosecutors, defense attorneys, victims, and, from behind bars, Sesay himself, WAR DON DON puts international justice on trial for the world to see — finding that in some cases the past is not just painful, it is also opaque.

Reviews

“War Don Don is one of the most thought-provoking documentaries you will see this year. It tells the story of the trial of accused war criminal, Issa Sesay, a leader of the rebel army in Sierra Leone during the country’s brutal civil war... It’s hard to imagine how Sesay could be a sympathetic character—the fact that he does is not the only surprising thing about this movie, which packs more information in 90 minutes than just about any other film like it.”

— Michael May, Texas Observer

"I highly recommend checking out War Don Don... Rather than pushing a particular narrative, or view of the international justice system, War Don Don allows the individuals at the heart of the trial to speak for themselves... To the film's credit, it doesn't feel forced to answer the questions it raises. War Don Don is a way to start a broader conversation about international justice, not to end one. In sum: go, and take your interns with you!"

— Amanda Taub, Wronging Rights

"The documentary's drama doesn't emerge from whether Sesay will be found guilty; we hear his sentence at the start of the movie and then at intervals throughout, as we watch different people react to the news. The dramatic arc is the change in our own reactions to the verdict.... As Cohen knits together a 360-degree view of Sesay... War Don Don gives us plenty to chew on." Read Entire Article
— Elise Nakhnikian, Slant Magazine

"An extremely well-made documentary... When a prosecutor says he sees pure evil in Sesay's face and Sesay's lawyer says he sees a good man, you want to look into the commander's eyes and see for yourself."
— Wesley Morris, The Boston Globe

"Fascinating and complex... a remarkably sophisticated examination of the machinery of justice."
— The Independent Weekly, Raleigh, NC