

INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILMFESTIVAL AMSTERDAM 2001 IN COMPETITION

NOMINATED BEST DOCUMENTARY SWISS FILM PRIZE 2002

J A M E S N A C H T W E Y



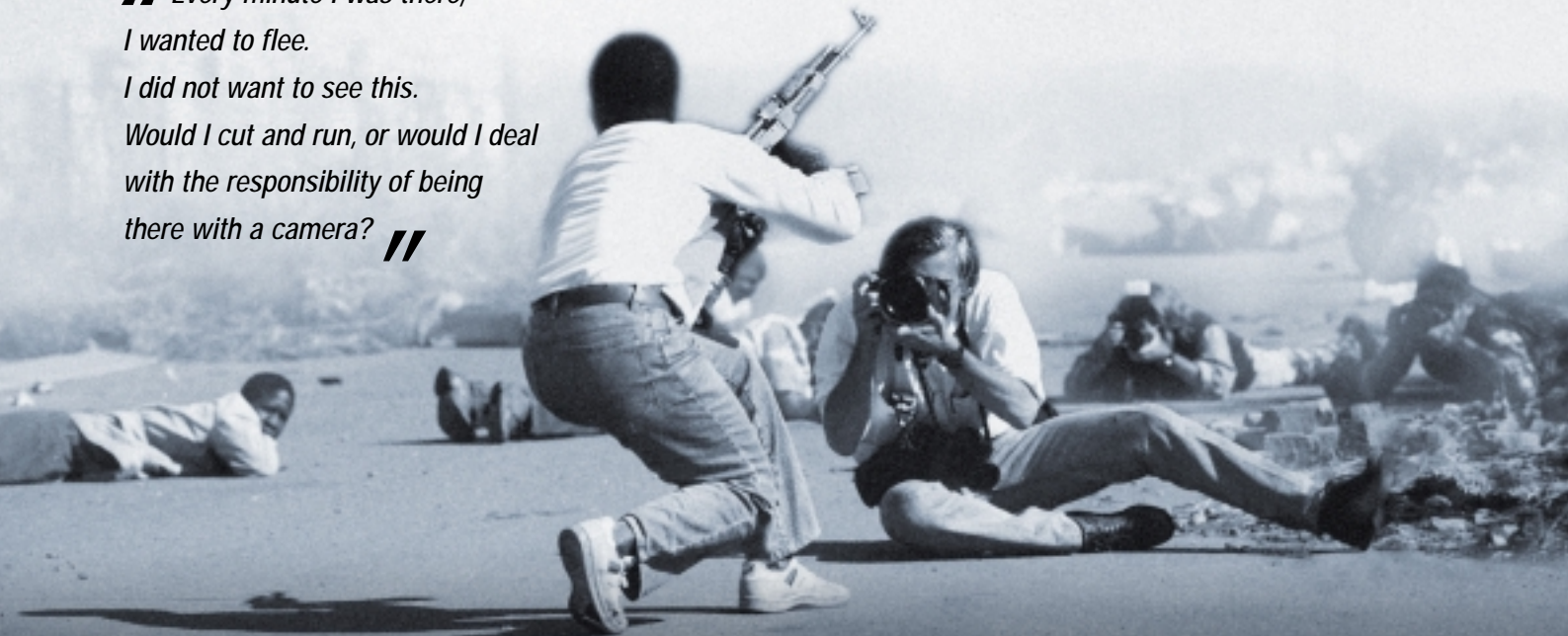
OSCAR NOMINATION 2002  
BEST DOCUMENTARY



# War photographer

A FILM BY CHRISTIAN FREI

// *Every minute I was there,  
I wanted to flee.  
I did not want to see this.  
Would I cut and run, or would I deal  
with the responsibility of being  
there with a camera?* //



CHRISTIAN FREI FILMPRODUCTIONS IN ASSOCIATION WITH SWISS NATIONAL TELEVISION AND SUISSIMAGE PRESENT WAR PHOTOGRAPHER WITH JAMES NACHTWEY  
AND CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR, HANS-HERMANN KLARE, CHRISTIANE BREUSTEDT, DES WRIGHT, DENIS O'NEILL DIGITAL BETACAM CINEMATOGRAPHY PETER INDERGAND SCS PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES NACHTWEY  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/ ASSISTANT EDITOR BARBARA MÜLLER MICROCAM CINEMATOGRAPHY JAMES NACHTWEY MICROCAMS BUILT BY SWISS EFFECTS SOUND FLORIAN EIDENBENZ, INGRID STÄDELI, MARTIN WITZ  
MUSIC BY ELENI KARAINDROU, ARVO PÄRT, DAVID DARLING MUSIC PRODUCER MANFRED EICHER PRODUCED, DIRECTED AND EDITED BY CHRISTIAN FREI **LOOK NOW!**

## Synopsis



In one of the world's countless crisis areas, surrounded by suffering, death, violence and chaos, photographer James Nachtwey searches for the picture he thinks he can publish.

A film about a committed, shy man, who is considered one of the bravest and most important war photographers of our time - but hardly fits the cliché of the hard-boiled war veteran.

## Quotes



*„I don't know what makes him tick to the extend that he ticks.“*

**CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR**  
Chief International Correspondent CNN



*„He needs that kick, that flow of adrenaline and the fear of dying, in order to feel alive. He is at his best in the most extreme situations.“*

**HANS-HERMANN KLARE**  
Foreign Editor STERN Magazine



*„He has his own library of suffering in his head.“*

**CHRISTIANE BREUSTEDT**  
Editor in Chief GEO SAISON Magazine



*„He is always right in the middle of it. He is always part of it. He always has been and he always will be.“*

**DES WRIGHT**  
Cameraman REUTERS



*„The possibility of a normal life, that's the main conflict... and what he's had to sacrifice to live the life that he leads... He has given everything to the job.“*

**DENIS O'NEILL**  
Screenwriter / Jim's best friend

## The Film



A film about the American photographer James Nachtwey, about his motivation, his fears and his daily routine as a war photographer. If we believe Hollywood pictures, war photographers are all hard-boiled and cynical old troopers. How can they think about 'exposure time' in the very moment of dread?

James Nachtwey is no rumbling swaggerer, but an unobtrusive man with gray hair and the deliberation of a lecturer in philosophy. A thoughtful, rather shy person. But many people think of him as the bravest and best war photographer ever. Without a doubt he is the busiest. In the past twenty years he has not missed a single war. And he probably has seen more suffering and dying than anyone else of our time.

After the world-wide success of the documentary „Ricardo, Miriam y Fidel“, Swiss author, director and producer Christian Frei followed James Nachtwey for two years into the wars in Indonesia, Kosovo, Palestine... Christian Frei used special micro-cameras attached to James Nachtwey's photo-camera.

We see a famous photographer looking for the decisive moment. We hear every breath of the photographer. For the first time in the history of movies about photographers, this technique allowed an authentic insight into the work of a concerned photo-journalist.



JAMES NACHTWEY

# war

## photographer

A FILM BY CHRISTIAN FREI



## Protagonists...

**JAMES NACHTWEY**

Photographer

**CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR**

Chief International Correspondent CNN

**HANS-HERMANN KLARE**

Foreign Editor STERN Magazine

**CHRISTIANE BREUSTEDT**

Editor in Chief GEO SAISON Magazine

**DES WRIGHT**

Cameraman REUTERS

**DENIS O'NEILL**

Screenwriter / Jim's best friend

## ...and Locations

„War Photographer“ was shot in **Kosovo**, The Balkans  
(June 1999)

**Jakarta**, Indonesia  
(May/June 1999)

**Ramallah**, Palestine  
(October/November 2000)

**Kawah Ijen**, A Sulfur Mine in East Java, Indonesia  
(October 1999)

and in **New York City**  
and **Hamburg**

# The Crew

Produced, Directed  
and Edited by

**CHRISTIAN FREI**

Photographs by

**JAMES NACHTWEY**

Additional Photographs

Vietnam

**DON McCULLIN**

Vietnam

**HUYNH CONG „NICK“ UT**

South Africa

**JUDA NGWENYA**

South Africa

**DAVID TURNLEY**

Digital Betacam  
Cinematography

**PETER INDERGAND scs**

Microcam  
Cinematography

**JAMES NACHTWEY**

Microcams built by

**SWISS EFFECTS**  
**PATRICK LINDENMAIER**  
**GERALD MÜCKE**  
**WALTER NÄF**

Assistant Director  
Assistant Editor

**BARBARA MÜLLER**

Sound Editing  
Sound Mix

**FLORIAN EIDENBENZ**  
Magnetix Sound Studios Zurich

Music by

**ELENI KARAINDROU**  
**ARVO PÄRT**  
**DAVID DARLING**

Music Producer

**MANFRED EICHER**  
ECM Records München

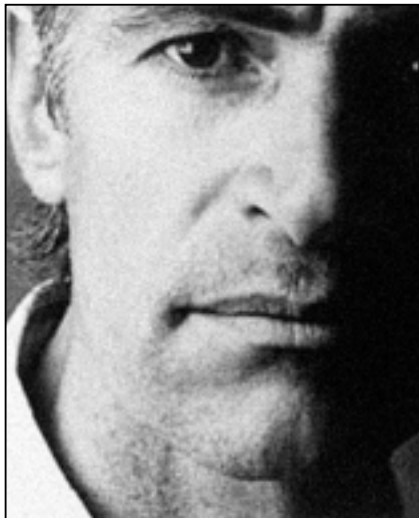
Photo Reproductions  
and Video to Film Transfer

**SWISS EFFECTS**



# James Nachtwey

American, b. 1948



James Nachtwey grew up in Massachusetts and graduated from Dartmouth College, where he studied Art History and Political Science (1966-70). Images from the Vietnam War and the American Civil Rights movement had a powerful effect on him and were instrumental in his decision to become a photographer. He has worked aboard ships in the Merchant Marine, and while teaching himself photography, he was an apprentice news film editor and a truck driver. In 1976 he started work as a newspaper photographer in New Mexico, and in 1980, he moved

to New York to begin a career as a freelance magazine photographer. His first foreign assignment was to cover civil strife in Northern Ireland in 1981 during the IRA hunger strike. Since then, Nachtwey has devoted himself to documenting wars, conflicts and critical social issues. He has worked on extensive photographic essays in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza, Israel, Indonesia, Thailand, India, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, the Philippines, South Korea, Somalia, Sudan, Rwanda, South Africa, Russia, Bosnia, Chechnya, Kosovo, Romania, Brazil and the United States.

Nachtwey has been a contract photographer with Time Magazine since 1984. He was associated with Black Star from 1980 - 1985 and was a member of Magnum from 1986 until 2001. He has had solo exhibitions at the International Center of Photography in New York, the Palazzo Esposizione in Rome, El Circulo de Bellas Artes in Madrid, the Carolinum in Prague, the Hasselblad Center in Sweden, the Canon Gallery and the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam, and the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College, among others.

He has received numerous honours such as the Robert Capa Gold Medal (five times), the World Press Photo Award (twice), Magazine Photographer of the Year (six times), the International Center of Photography Infinity Award (three times), the Leica Award (twice), the Bayeaux Award for War Correspondents (twice), the Alfred Eisenstaedt Award, the Canon Photo essayist Award and the W. Eugene Smith Memorial Grant in Humanistic Photography. He is a fellow of the Royal Photographic Society and has an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from the Massachusetts College of Arts.

# Christian Frei

Swiss, b. 1959



Christian Frei was born in Schönenwerd, Switzerland in 1959. He studied Visual Media at the Department of Journalism and Communication at the University of Fribourg and has been working as an independent director and producer since 1984. He works regularly for Swiss National Television SF DRS. His last documentary „Ricardo, Miriam y Fidel“ has been shown in over 30 Film festivals all over the world.

1981	<b>Die Stellvertreterin</b>	(50')	(Documentary)
1982	<b>Fortfahren (co-director)</b>	(40')	(Documentary)
1984	<b>Der Radwechsel</b>	(24')	(Documentary)
1997	<b>Ricardo, Miriam y Fidel</b>	(90')	(Feature length Documentary)
1998	<b>Ricardo, Miriam und Fidel</b>	(56')	(TV-Documentary)
1998	<b>Kluge Köpfe</b>	(53')	(TV-Documentary)
2000	<b>„Bollywood“ im Alpenrausch</b>	(52')	(TV-Documentary)
2001	<b>War Photographer</b>	(96')	(Feature length Documentary)

*In 1985, shortly before becoming a member of the world famous photo agency Magnum, the then 36 year old James Nachtwey wrote the following text, a credo about the relevance of his work as a war photographer.*

There has always been war. War is raging throughout the world at the present moment. And there is little reason to believe that war will cease to exist in the future. As man has become increasingly civilized, his means of destroying his fellow man have become ever more efficient, cruel and devastating.

Is it possible to put an end to a form of human behavior which has existed throughout history by means of photography? The proportions of that notion seem ridiculously out of balance. Yet, that very idea has motivated me.

## Why photograph war?

By James Nachtwey

For me, the strength of photography lies in its ability to evoke a sense of humanity. If war is an attempt to negate humanity, then photography can be perceived as the opposite of war and if it is used well it can be a powerful ingredient in the antidote to war.

In a way, if an individual assumes the risk of placing himself in the middle of a war in order to communicate to the rest of the world what is happening, he is trying to negotiate for peace. Perhaps that is the reason why those in charge of perpetuating a war do not like to have photographers around.

It has occurred to me that if everyone could be there just once to see for themselves what white phosphorous does to the face of a child or what



unspeakable pain is caused by the impact of a single bullet or how a jagged piece of shrapnel can rip someone's leg off - if everyone could be there to see for themselves the fear and the grief, just one time, then they would understand that nothing is worth letting things get to the point where that happens to even one person, let alone thousands.

But everyone cannot be there, and that is why photographers go there - to show them, to reach out and grab them and make them stop what they are doing and pay attention to what is going on - to create pictures powerful enough to overcome the diluting effects of the mass media and shake people out of their indifference - to protest and by the strength of that protest to make others protest.

The worst thing is to feel that as a photographer I am benefiting from someone else's tragedy. This idea haunts me. It is something I have to reckon with every day because I know that if I ever allow genuine compassion to be overtaken by personal ambition I will have sold my soul. The stakes are simply too high for me to believe otherwise.



I attempt to become as totally responsible to the subject as I possibly can. The act of being an outsider aiming a camera can be a violation of humanity. The only way I can justify my role is to have respect for the other person's predicament. The extent to which I do that is the extent to which I become accepted by the other, and to that extent I can accept myself.

James Nachtwey (1985)

## Contact

### WAR PHOTOGRAPHER

A film by CHRISTIAN FREI  
With JAMES NACHTWEY

Theatrical Version:

35mm - color - 1:1,66 - 96' - DOLBY SR

TV Versions:

Digital Betacam - 4:3 - 96'

Digital Betacam - 16:9 - 96'

Short TV Version:

Digital Betacam - 4:3 - 52'  
(available by March 2002)

Switzerland 2001

English and German spoken

### WORLD RIGHTS

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