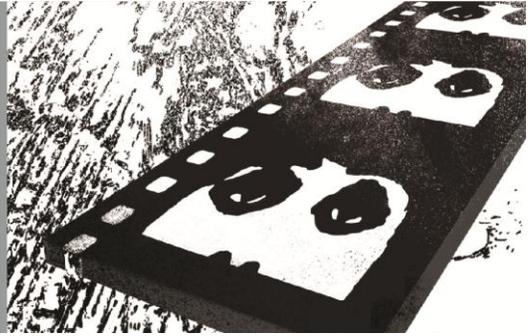


48th Chicago International Film Festival

October 11–25, 2012



Cinema/Chicago and the 48th Chicago International Film Festival

Education Outreach Program Screening: *War Witch*

Director: Kim Nguyen

90 minutes, not rated

In French and Lingala with English subtitles

Please use the below synopsis, study ideas/questions and helpful websites to lead your students in preparation and post-screening discussion. Following the film, students are required to respond to the screening with a one-page essay. Essays (either all or select) must be sent to Cinema/Chicago.*

Synopsis: A remarkable, inspiring story of human resilience, *War Witch* tells the story of Komona, a 14-year-old girl whose life took a drastic, tragic turn when armed rebels stormed her village. Forced to join the rebel army and endure brutal training, Komona learns to survive, and even falls in love. Although she wishes to forget, the now-pregnant Komona realizes she must reconcile herself with her painful past.

Recommended for: history, humanities, world studies, women's studies, film and video students

Appropriate for: mature high school students (this film includes themes of violence)

1. While *War Witch* doesn't take place in a specific African country, the plight of the characters mirrors the conflict that has happened throughout much of the continent. After researching the different conflicts and civil wars taking place in Africa, how are they similar to what you see in the film?
2. Early in the film, Komona is forced to commit a terrible act of violence. What is this violent act, why is she forced to do it, and how do you think it changes her?
3. Komona is taken as child soldier by the rebels. What does the film say about the abduction and use of child soldiers? Research the use of child soldiers throughout Africa. How does what you learned relate to the film?
4. The rebels abuse and disrespect the children they have abducted, yet it is incredibly important that they don't lose any children. Why is it important to them to grow and train their army of child soldiers?
5. Komona's falls in love with Magician. How does their relationship change her?
6. Komona is able to escape the rebels, but later returns to them. Describe Komona the first time she is abducted, then describe Komona the second time she is abducted. How is she different or the same?

7. The film deals with issues of violence and war, but rarely shows the actual violence taking place. Why do you think the filmmaker chose to depict the violence in this way? How does it change your reactions as an audience member?
8. At the end of the film, Komona's future is unclear. What do you think ultimately happens to her?
9. The film uses "magical realism" to tell Komona's story. Research this style and talk about the examples you see throughout the film. How do they influence and enhance the story?
10. Komona is a survivor. How do you relate to her story?

Useful Links and Resources:

Official website for the film (includes trailer): <http://www.rebelle-lefilm.ca/english/>

Information about Cinema/Chicago's Education Outreach Program:

<http://cinemachicago.org/education/>

***Schools who do not send in essay requirement will not be allowed to attend future Education Outreach Screenings.**