

WHILE THEY WATCHED.

Harness the power of hindsight.

Starring
Ex North Korea Gulag guards, propaganda agents, underground activists, street protesters, academics, human rights workers, leading NGO's and defectors.

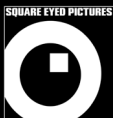
Square Eyed Pictures presents *While They Watched*
in association with Sliced Pictures a film by Jake J. Smith
edited by Neil P. George original music by The Cinematic Orchestra
co-produced by Neil P. George photography by Jake J. Smith & Neil P. George
directed & produced by Jake J. Smith

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Yeonmi Park
Park San Hak
Peter Jung
Joanna Hosaniak
Kim Seong Min

Michael Kirby
Aaron Peterson
Park Sang Bong
Moon Kook Han
Ahn Myeong Chol



Theatrical Trailer
available to view



WHILE THEY WATCHED



PRODUCTION

Year of release: 2015

Length (est.): 90 minutes

Country: United Kingdom

SYNOPSIS (SHORT)

Harness the power of hindsight.

While they Watched is a 90-minute feature documentary about North Korea set in the future, that looks back at the collapse of the Kim dictatorship. The film questions the morality of the current inaction by regional and global powers towards the North Korean dictatorship.

SYNOPSIS (LONG)

Using interviews, archive and observational footage, While They Watched draws on the power of hindsight. After hearing the tragic backstories of defectors who were first-hand witnesses to the brutality of the regime, the film questions the morality of the current inaction by regional and global powers towards the North Korean dictatorship.

Director Jake J. Smith compiles a collection of testimonies from former North Korean gulag soldiers and propaganda agents, ex-leaders of the 'underground railroad' through China, professors of Korean history, hardened activists, NGO leaders, and defectors who risked their lives to tell their stories hoping to free the minds of North Koreans.

Testimonies are given in the past tense from the context of an imaginary future after the collapse of the regime. This gives the interviews a unique quality allowing contributors distance and clarity to better reveal key local and international players in the unfolding disaster, and what nations, institutions and individuals tried in an attempt to change the fate of the country.

The film carefully highlights the activities of certain defectors and activists, revealing underground activities largely unknown to the outside world. Their stories, the direct action many are using to impact the regime, and the threats they face, paint a frightening picture of life in North Korea.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

The message of this film, and the questions it asks will hopefully touch a nerve with audiences. The defectors' lives and stories are sometimes so dreadful it's difficult to accept how this continues to be allowed to occur in the 21st century. We can't choose where we are born. I count myself lucky to be born in a 'free' country and I feel it's the responsibility of free peoples to help those who are powerless to help themselves.

After reading about North Korea in books, the media and from talking to people here in Korea, I knew I wanted to make a film about the country and it's people. During my research deeper questions kept creeping into my mind about our relationship to the stories I was reading. The way I decided to construct this film pushes the boundaries of documentary filmmaking, without diminishing the seriousness and extraordinary courage of the activists and defectors who participate in the film.

The decision to set the film in the future was made to compel viewers to ask themselves what they can do today to relieve the continuing humanitarian catastrophe happening in North Korea. By the end of the film I want the audience to be inspired to help change the present, and create a better future for the North Korean people.

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CONTRIBUTORS

YEONMI PARK

Defector and activist Yeonmi and her family's story of escape over the Tuman River into China after her father was accused of trading with China and sentenced to nine years hard labour, is heart-wrenching. The separation of Yeonmi's sister from her family for seven years after fleeing the regime is an extraordinary story of survival.

ANH MYEONG CHOL

Former North Korean soldier and gulag officer, Anh now works for the NGO NK Watch. Anh has given testimony against his former North Korean bosses, telling of widespread human rights abuses and mass killings. His shocking inside knowledge of the camps is now being used to campaign for the freedom of his people.

MOON KOOK HAN

Former leader of the 'Chinese Underground Railroad', Moon is wanted in China for his part in assisting North Korean refugees to escape to China. He was at the center of the internationally recognized cases the Han-Mi family rescue, Jan Gil Su case, and the dreaded MoFa seven cases.

KIM SEONG MIN

Former North Korean propaganda agent and president of Free North Korea Radio. Kim Seong Min runs a radio station scripting and broadcasting programs to be broadcast into North Korea. North Korea threatened to bomb his radio station and threats on his life are made frequently.

PETER JUNG

Founder of Justice for North Korea (JfNK), Peter Jung is a Christian Pastor who is against the Chinese forcible repatriation policy. He was imprisoned in China for 18 months for rescuing two pregnant refugees. Peter's wife is a North Korean defector and her brother is currently imprisoned in a North Korean labour camp.

JOANNA HOSANIAK

Deputy Director General at the Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights, Hosaniak was born and raised in Poland, which was under control of Communist Russia. Since then Hosaniak has dedicated herself to campaigning to end North Korean human rights abuses.

PARK SANG BONG

Associate Professor of Korean History and German Reunification, Park studied in Germany and has spent many years writing on the subject of German Reunification and the possibility of Korean unification. His writings appear regularly in leading Korean newspapers the Korean Times and the Korean Herald.

AARON PETERSON

Coordinating Manager of NGO Justice for North Korea, Peterson has dedicated his life to human rights causes. He campaigns tirelessly for the rights of North Korean people and is an outspoken critic against China and its inaction on North Korean human rights abuses.

PARK SAN HAK

Dubbed "Enemy 0" by the North Korean regime for his direct action stance against the North. Park is responsible for sending balloons carrying USB sticks, foreign currency and 'revolutionary' information. North Korean agents made an attempt on his life in 2011 in Seoul.

SOKEEL PARK

Director of Research & Strategy for leading NGO LiNK (Liberty in North Korea), Sokeel has worked in the South Korean government, the United Nations, and as a diplomatic consultancy Independent Diplomat. His desire to work for the North Korean people brought him to LiNK, where he now leads all research and strategy work.

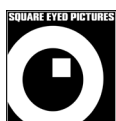


CREDITS

A **SQUARE EYED PICTURES** production in association with **SLICED PICTURES**

WHILE THEY WATCHED

A FILM BY JAKE J. SMITH



Producer/Director	Jake J. Smith
Editor	Neil P. George
Cinematography	Jake J. Smith and Neil P. George
Animation & Graphics	Ximon Gray
Original Music	Oliver Gale, Edwin Todd Mathis, Samuel Bourne, Malcolm Lally
Sound Recording	Hope Kim and Josh Harvey
Executive Producer	Deena Gornick
Executive Producer	Mike Knox
Executive Producer	Gavin Abeyratne
Producer	Jake J. Smith
Co-producer	Neil P. George

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REQUEST A PASSWORD FROM OUR PR TEAM**



BIOGRAPHIES

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER

JAKE J. SMITH



Jake J. Smith graduated from Arts University Bournemouth (BA Film Production, 2013) majoring in Documentary Filmmaking.

Smith began producing/directing his own documentaries with his debut short 'The People's Kitchen' (2013), broadcast on national television in the UK.

Smith is London based. He has produced documentaries in U.K, India, Ghana, and now South Korea with his debut feature film 'While they Watched' (2015) that will be produced through his company Square Eyed Pictures (SQEP).

Smith has previously worked in film marketing and distribution with Revolver and Metrodome on UK and USA feature film productions including 'Sket' (2011), 'Sleeping Beauty' (2011) and Werner Herzog's 'Cave of Forgotten Dreams' (2010).

EDITOR/DP

NEIL P. GEORGE



A graduate of Sussex University (BA Hons Photomedia, 2003) and Ravensbourne with an MA in Broadcast and Film.

George is a producer and director of photography (DP) with over ten years of experience.

George has over 100 television credits to his name as producer, editor or DP. They include 'The Energy Challenge' (2006), 'The IT Crowd' (2007), 'The Credit Crunch' (2008), 'Managing Business in a Downturn' (2009), and many more.

He has also worked on corporate film production with the likes of HSBC, Shell, Chevron, DLA Piper, MW Kellogg, Diageo, Virgin Active, Arup, CITI, and Vodafone.

In 2010 George launched Sliced Pictures that now produces content for Korean television.

SOUND

HOPE KIM

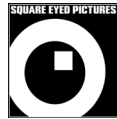


Hope Kim is a Korean-American film editor, writer and sound technician from New York City. Kim began her career as an assistant editor with Rainbow Media, a division under the Cablevision Corp. umbrella. Over time Kim worked her way up to editing programs for the Gameplay HD channel.

Kim has experience in advertising having worked with multinational agency Young & Rubicam where she created and edited reels and worked as a technical specialist on spots for companies including Xerox, Campbell's Soup, Marks & Spencer, Colgate, MetLife, Unicef, Pepperidge Farms and LG.

Since leaving the corporate world Kim has returned to work on independent productions as a sound professional. She has credits on music videos, short films, and a short web series.

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CONTACTS

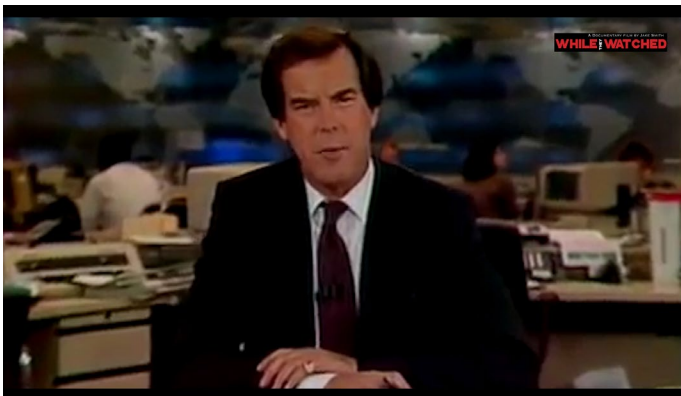
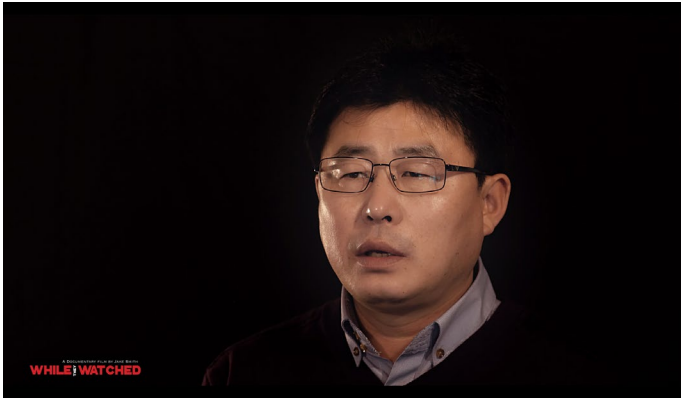
PRESS

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PRODUCTION

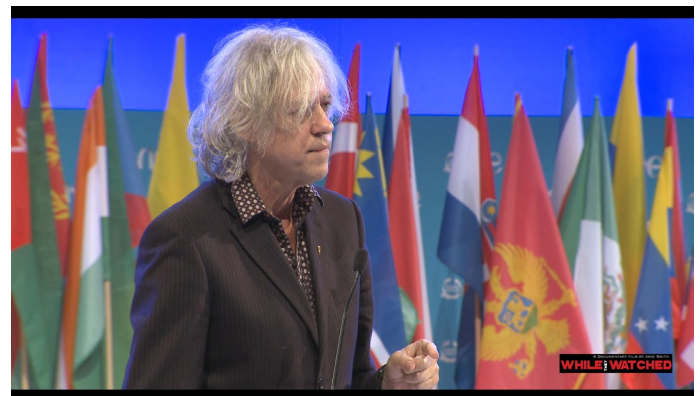
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STILLS



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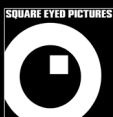
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