



Sundance Film Festival

WORLD CINEMA

DOCUMENTARY JURY PRIZE



IDFA

Int'l Doc Fest Amsterdam

SILVER WOLF AWARD



CPH:DOX

Copenhagen Int'l Doc Film Fest

AMNESTY AWARD NOMINEE

# ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS

A film by  
Eva Mulvad and Anja Al-Erhayem



“A political documentary with a difference...  
Quietly celebrates its heroine's fierce determination to  
reform her country's attitude toward women.”

-Leslie Felperin, *Variety*



A WOMEN MAKE MOVIES RELEASE

Women Make Movies • 462 Broadway, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor • New York, NY 10013  
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# ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS

## SYNOPSIS



"In September 2005, Afghanistan held its first parliamentary elections in 35 years. Among the candidates for 249 assembly seats was Malalai Joya, a courageous, controversial 27-year-old woman who had ignited outrage among hard-liners when she spoke out against corrupt warlords at the Grand Council of tribal elders in 2003. ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS is a revelatory portrait of this extraordinary freedom fighter and the way she won the hearts of voters, as well as a snapshot of life and politics in war-torn Afghanistan.

Amidst vivid, poetic images of Joya's dusty Farah Province, the film tracks the final weeks of her campaign, when death threats restrict her movements. But the parade of trusting constituents arriving on her doorstep leaves no doubt that

Joya is a popular hero. Among her visitors is a 100-year-old woman who treks two hours to offer loyalty and herbal medicine. King Solomon-style, Joya acts as folk mediator and advocate, adjudicating between a wife and her violent, drug-addicted husband and counseling a family forced to marry off their adolescent daughter to a much older man. Protected by armed guards, Joya heads to poor rural areas to address crowds of women, pledging to be their voice and 'expose the enemies of peace, women, and democracy.' In the presence of her fierce tenacity, we can imagine the future of an enlightened nation."

- Caroline Libresco, *Sundance Film Festival*



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## FESTIVAL SCREENINGS

For the most updated list, visit [www.wmm.com](http://www.wmm.com).

Sundance Film Festival, World Cinema Documentary Jury Prize  
Amsterdam, IDFA International Documentary Festival Amsterdam (IDFA), Silver Wolf Award  
Silverdocs, Sterling Feature Special Jury Mention  
CPH Dox, Copenhagen Int'l Doc Film Festival, Amnesty Award Nominee  
Nestor Almendros Prize, Human Rights Watch F F  
Human Rights Watch Int'l Film Festival  
Newport Beach Film Festival  
Thessaloniki Documentary Festival, Greece  
Toronto, Hot Docs Int. Documentary Festival  
Göteborg Film Festival  
Danish National Museum  
Female Film Festival Malmö  
Helsinki Doc Point Documentary Film Festival  
Mexico City Int'l Contemporary Film Festival  
ZagrebDox, Croatia  
One World Human Rights Film Festival, Czech Republic  
True/False Film Festival  
The Royal Film Commission of Jordan  
Den europeiske dokumentarfilmfestivalen, Norway  
Hong Kong International Film Festival  
Sao Paulo It's All True Int. Documentary FF  
Belfast Film Festival  
Creteil, Festival Films De Femmes  
Istanbul Int. Film Festival  
Seoul Women's Film Festival  
International Female Film Festival Malmö  
München Documentary Festival, Germany  
Amakula Kampala International Film Festival  
Warsawa, Planete Doc Review, Poland  
Jerusalem Int. Film Festival



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# ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS

## CREDITS

Denmark, 2006, 58 Minutes, color

Director  
**Eva Mulvad**

Co-director  
**Anja Al-Erhayem**

Editing  
**Adam Nielsen**

Cinematographer  
**Zillah Bowes**

Sound Technician  
**Mikkel Groos**

Music  
**Thomas Knark, Jesper Skaaning, Anders Remmer**

Producer  
**Helle Faber**

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## DIRECTORS' BIOS



### Eva Mulvad

Danish filmmaker and author Eva Mulvad is a graduate of the National Danish Film School. Director of a number of documentaries, including *The Camp* and *The Last Dance*, Mulvad is the recipient of the WIFT's Golden Mermaid Award and Nordvision's Steen Baadsgaards Pris, awarded to an outstanding young documentary filmmaker.

### Anja Al Erhayem

Anja Al Erhayem is codirector of *Back to Baghdad*, a film about daily life under Saddam Hussein, and the sequel *Dangerous Freedom*, about life just after Hussein. In 2006, Al Erhayem directed and hosted six documentary and travel shows in the Middle East. She is the author of *The Sun Cries Over Baghdad*.



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

### Days of Apprehension Farah, Afghanistan September, 2005

We are among mystics, refugees and neglected animals. It is hot and the people are poor. Every day is full of bargaining and debate. These are days of apprehension and apprehension creates distance. The nights become hostile. People reveal intentions they may or may not have. The enemy is abstract but feels real. The enemy could be every one and no one. Car lights shine on rifles. I yearn to leave this place.

This film was made in spite of this apprehension: Malalai Joya's apprehension for her own life, our apprehension for being in Afghanistan and among people we did not know.

How does the story we choose to tell effect our society, our world? The great "mono-narrative" has to be broadened. The world hungers for more dimensions, more voices so that the we can create our own opinions, our own sense of awareness about what is really happening in the world—especially when it comes to Islam.

This film was made to tell another story from one of the world's most talked-about regions: Afghanistan. The stories we hear are always full of bombs, torture and terrorists, stories full of apprehension that create distance: between "us" and "them".

The world is not about villains who lurk outside awaiting us. The world is more than that-- full of everyday people who fight everyday battles for their and others right to life, dream and happiness. Muslims are not a monolithic villainous entity just like we in the West are not. We can understand each other. There are many who profit from making us think that we can not. But in them we can not believe. They create our apprehension for the world and each other, an apprehension that leads to distance.



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## QUOTES

“A political documentary with a difference...  
Quietly celebrates its heroine's fierce determination to  
reform her country's attitude toward women.”

-Leslie Felperin, *Variety*

“A powerful portrait...  
offers compelling evidence that it takes more than military might and diplomats to  
hold democratic elections in a country where few people know how to read or  
write and many say votes can be bought and sold.”

-Eva Novrup Redvall, *FILM #53*

“Eloquent...Joya is a controversial voice for a nation ruined by war and ruled by  
tradition, and a voice with a desperate urge for change.”

-Göteborg Film Festival

“Carries the magic uplift of classic Hollywood and the considerable bonus of  
authenticity.”

-Rob Nelson, *Village Voice*

“Incredible...a character so compelling you don't want the camera to turn away.”

-Brian Darr, *GreenCine Daily*



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# ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS



ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS

EVA MULVAD (co-director, *Enemies of Happiness*)

Farah, in the southwest of Afghanistan. □ September 2005: These are days of apprehension, and apprehension creates distance. The nights become hostile. People reveal intentions they may or may not have. The enemy is abstract but feels real. The enemy could be everyone and no one. It is all in your head. Car lights shine on rifles. I yearn to leave this place.

The film *Enemies of Happiness* was made in spite of this apprehension: our apprehension for being in Afghanistan and Malalai Joya's (the main character) apprehension for her own life as she was running for parliament. This film was made to tell another story from one of the world's most talked-about regions: Afghanistan. The stories we hear from these war zones are always full of bombs, torture and terrorists. We wanted to tell a story full of hope.

How does the story we choose to tell affect our world? The great "mono-narrative" has to be broadened. We need more dimensions, more voices so that we can create our own opinions, our own sense of awareness about what is really happening in the world —especially when it comes to Islam.

It is not about villains who lurk outside awaiting us. The world is more than that — it is full of everyday people who fight everyday battles for their own and others right to life, dream and be happy. Muslims are not a monolithic villainous entity just like we in the West are not. We can understand each other. There are many who profit from making us think that we cannot. But in them we cannot believe. They create our apprehension for the world and each other, an apprehension that leads to distance.

The greatest risk is to believe in that picture of the world.



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