

"My So-Called Enemy" March and April Film Festivals and press...



Building Bridges for Peace 2002
Photo by Heidi Gutman

Dear Friends,

Like most of you, I have been captivated by the news coverage of the dramatic popular uprisings that have taken hold in the Arab world in the past few months. My thoughts and prayers go out to the people of Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia and Yemen who have been peacefully protesting for change--and, for the people of Libya and Bahrain caught in violent conflict. May there be a peaceful transition to the democratic governments the people of each country envision and stability in the entire Middle East.

January and February were special months for "My So-Called Enemy." The year started with two beautiful screenings at the Palm Springs International Film Festival, where I had the privilege of being part of the inaugural filmmaker retreat at the magnificent Annenberg Retreat at Sunnylands with 16 fiction and non-fiction directors from around the globe, making social justice films.

Selling out our Walter Reade and JCC screenings at the New York Jewish Film Festival was also a thrill. And, we were so happy our film was in the inaugural Athena Film Festival at Barnard College, celebrating women and leadership.

March and April Film Festivals

Please join us and tell your friends about our upcoming film festivals. "My So-Called Enemy" was recently invited to two general market film festivals in May. Details to follow in our next newsletter.

Sebastopol Documentary Film Festival (Sonoma County, CA)

Saturday, March 19th at 4:30pm Sebastopol 9 Cinemas
I will be at the Q&A

[Click here](#) for tickets and more information

Cleveland International Film Festival Saturday, March 26th at 7:20 pm Tower City Cinemas

Sunday, March 27th at 4:45 pm Tower City Cinemas
I will be at both Q&As

[Click here](#) for tickets and more information

"My So-Called Enemy" will also be part of the Cleveland International Film Festival's FilmSlam program.

On Monday, March 28th, I will be screening the movie for 4,000 high school students.

Because I am being honored as "[Someone to Watch](#)" in Cleveland, the festival is also presenting my first film, "[The Children of Chabannes](#)," which I made with Dean Wetherell.

Friday, March 25th at 11:30am Tower City Cinemas

Sunday, March 27th at 2:05pm Tower City Cinemas

I will be at both Q&As

[Click here](#) for tickets and more information

<http://www.clevelandfilm.org/festival/films/2011/children-of-chabannes>

Pioneer Valley Jewish Film Festival (Western MA)

Sunday, March 27 at 2:30pm Smith College, Stoddard Hall Northampton

Sunday, March 27 at 6:30pm The Springfield JCC

Melodye Feldman, the Founder of [Building Bridges for Peace](#), will be at both Q&As. Cinematographer [Cynthia Wade](#) will join Melodye at the Smith College screening.

[Click here](#) for tickets and more information

Minneapolis Jewish Film Festival

Sunday, March 27th at 1:00pm Sabes JCC

Tuesday, March 29th at 8:00pm Sabes JCC

[Click here](#) for tickets and more information

NoVa Int'l Jewish Film Festival (Fairfax, VA)

Monday, March 28th at 4:00pm

Sunday, April 3rd at 1:00pm (Special Program with [Seeds of Peace](#))

Rave Motion Pictures Fairfax Corner 14

[Click here](#) for tickets and more information

New Jersey Jewish Film Festival (West Orange, NJ)

Closing Night Film

Sunday, April 3rd at 7:30pm JCC MetroWest Maurice Levin Theater

Director Lisa Gossels and Melodye Feldman, Founder of Building Bridges for Peace, will be at the Q&A

There will be a dessert reception following the Q&A

[Click here](#) for tickets and more information

Hartford Jewish Film Festival (West Hartford)

Monday, April 4th at 7:00pm The Emanuel Synagogue

The screening will be followed by a Reel Talk with Director Lisa Gossels

Free for students

[Click here](#) for tickets and more information

Sarasota Film Festival

In partnership with Through a Women's Eyes/UNIFEM

Sunday, April 10th at 2:00pm

Monday, April 11th at 8:15pm

Regal Cinemas Hollywood 20

Director Lisa Gossels will be at both Q&As

[Tickets](#) will be available for on-line purchase on Friday, March 18th

Community Screenings

One of my greatest joys is being in community with "My So-Called Enemy" and teaching.

February Screenings

Whitman College, Walla Walla, WA

Penn State Harrisburg

Rhinebeck, NY high school (community screening)

March Screenings

Columbia University, NYC "The Documentary Club"

Jewish Museum, NYC High School Film Festival

<http://www.thejewishmuseum.org/HighSchoolFilmFestival>

April Screenings

Union College, Schenectady NY Wednesday evening, April 13th

The New School for Social Research, NYC, Documentary Class Thursday, April 21st

Temple Shir Tikva, Wayland, MA Thursday, April 28th at 7pm

<http://www.shirtikva.org/>

We have more high school, university and local community screenings lined up in the months ahead. If you are interested in organizing a screening, please let me know. Because our model with "My So-Called Enemy" is coalition-building and celebrating multiple voices, when possible, we encourage screenings to be co-hosted by diverse groups. When visiting college campuses, I also teach in classrooms and meet with students and faculty.

Recent Press

"My So-Called Enemy" received some very positive press last month. For those of you who are interested in reading more, I am cutting and pasting some of the reviews at the end of this letter.

Thank you, as always, for your support of "My So-Called Enemy." I look forward to seeing you soon.

Warmest,

Lisa

"My So-Called Enemy": Recent Press

The Tablet: A New Read on Jewish Life

Teenage Wasteland: A new film explores the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from an adolescent angle

By Stephanie Butnick | Feb 17, 2011

As I watched My So-Called Enemy, a documentary that follows six Israeli and Palestinian teenage girls from a peace-building workshop in New Jersey in 2002 and back to the Middle East several years later, I couldn't help but feel uncomfortable at times...

But the beauty of this film is not simply that it looks at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in a new way, it's that it shows how the particularly vulnerable demographic of teenage girls attempts to deal with and understand the "enemy"—in this case, other teenage girls.

Sitting in director Lisa Gossels' apartment a few days after watching the film, I told her about my discomfort—and she didn't seem surprised. The point of the film, which was recently screened at the New York Jewish Film Festival, is to highlight the voices not heard in the news and show the viewer "the realities of life on the ground," she explained. Gossels, a New York-based filmmaker who attended the Building Bridges for Peace program in 2002—a particularly devastating year in Israel—said she was struck by the absence of any semblance of political correctness in the room of 22 girls ages 16 to 19. That they were so brutally honest with each other, she explained, created a depth of communication and allowed for intense, productive discussions. It also makes for a vivid viewing experience, where raw emotions—exhausting frustration, very real anger, and desperate hope—punctuate the budding friendships between the girls...

For Gossels, who won an Emmy in 2001 for her first film, The Children of Chabannes (the story of a French village where 400 Jewish children, including her father and uncle, were saved during the Holocaust), My So-Called Enemy is a coming-of-age story, filmed through the lens of six women "crossing the threshold from adolescence to adulthood." When the girls are revisited in their homes several years later they have each changed in many ways; they have grown up and developed strong identities. Some have entered the Israeli army; some have gone to college; one has chosen to wear the hijab. (The girls remain in touch with Gossels, emailing and calling her regularly). The circumstances in which the girls have grown up are undeniably distinct—they face actual dangers and have fears far beyond the usual adolescent anxieties—but Gossels hopes to convey a more universal message of what young women are able to achieve when equipped with the proper tools and education...

Ultimately, Gossels says she hopes she has created a film that shows the complexity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while depicting "what happens when we create relationships across borders, personal or physical." These relationships, she says, can be the first steps towards solving conflict.

Film Review: My So-Called Enemy (VIDEO)

The Athena Film Festival

By Deborah Barber | February 25, 2011

... One of the ideas expressed in the film and the discussion is that the point of the Building Bridges for Peace program is not for everyone to agree, or for a solution to be found or a fix to be made, but rather to create a safe space for teens to feel and express their thoughts and feelings about the conflict between Israel and Palestine that has shaped their lives. By encouraging their voices to be heard, the program's creators believe, leaders are created.

Since the film's subjects are teenagers, it's no surprise that they go through many changes in those seven years. One young Palestinian woman becomes increasingly committed to her Muslim faith. Another continues to defy stereotypes with tattoos by her favorite Israeli tattoo artist. Two participants—Gal, an Israeli Jew and Razan, a Palestinian Christian—manage to maintain a close friendship, despite not always being able to travel across borders to see each other in person. In a key scene, after a new wall is erected along the West Bank, Razan takes Gal (who has changed out of her army uniform because it upsets her friend) to see it. Together, they write one of their favorite quotes on the gray concrete: "Be the change you wish to see in the world" – Mahatma Gandhi." If indeed, these women are tomorrow's leaders in the Middle East, the future of the area is much brighter.

Penn State Harrisburg News

Director shares challenges, inspirations of filmmaking

March 4, 2011

Filmmaker and director Lisa Gossels had her work cut out for her when she decided to film her second documentary, "My So-Called Enemy," an endeavor that would span eight years.

Gossels shared her challenges and satisfaction in making the film with a Penn State Harrisburg audience on Feb. 25. She spoke about external issues she encountered while making the film – funding and expenses, physical and cultural roadblocks, industry competition – and about production issues – title selection, creating broad appeal, and time. For example, Gossels' production was hampered at times by her inability to travel to locations in Israel or Palestine for filming due to violence...

Unaware of how long the filming would ultimately take, Gossels followed the characters for seven years after the peace program, documenting their developing friendships... But with the film's release, Gossels demonstrated that rising above the challenges is possible. In fact, she said, the difficulties pushed her to work harder. "Working within your limits can elevate your art..."

For the latest news on "My So-Called Enemy"

You can "like" our film on Facebook www.facebook.com/mysocalledenemy

Or consult our website www.mysocalledenemy.com

"MY SO CALLED ENEMY" a good egg production
director/producer **Lisa Gossels** producer **Eden Wurmfeld**
director of photography **Justin Schein** edited by **Lisa Gossels**
David Mehlman Toby Shimin music by **Nathan Larson**

2010 Hamptons International Film Festival

Winner, Jury Prize for Best Conflict & Resolution Film

2010 Starz Denver Film Festival

Winner, Special Jury Prize in Filmmaking

2010 Boston Jewish Film Festival

Winner, Audience Award, Best Feature Documentary Film