



TORONTO'S ONLINE FILM MAGAZINE

REVIEW: HOOLIGAN SPARROW

Posted by Katie O'Connor | August 26, 2016 |
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Hooligan Sparrow begins with director, Nanfu Wang being confronted by a group of men who notice her camera. We then are introduced to seeing how she will be hiding her recording equipment underneath her clothing. This begins her journey of observing the life of Ye Haiyan, a.k.a Hooligan Sparrow.


Sparrow is a women's rights and human rights activist in China. The film introduces past forms of her activism using transgressive acts to bring forth pertinent issues in the socio-political structure of China. At one point in her career of activism, she was offering free sex to migrant workers to bring attention to the working conditions of sex workers.

The film is fueled by numerous scandals of government officials and police sexually assaulting young girls. This ignites Sparrow's protest to bring swift punishment upon the perpetrators. This perfectly translates to the grand injustice of government officials getting away with assaulting young girls by claiming they were prostitutes. Through this battle for rights and equality, Sparrow does not back down from the dangers and difficulty of defending the importance of artistic and journalistic freedom.

Throughout the film, the audience is witness to the multiple attempts police and government officials take to "silence"

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Sparrow. Wang captures many of these uncomfortable incidents of intimidation tactics Sparrow faces in response to her acts of protest. This is illustrated through unflinching and raw footage through the lens of Wang's hidden recording devices.

Wang is definitely producing this film to document her experience with the infamous Sparrow. It may appear as though Wang is attempting to incorporate her own experience into the film but she is side-by-side Sparrow through all these circumstances.

Hooligan Sparrow is an immensely powerful film on the side of activism and the push for artistic freedom. Sparrow, along with a human rights lawyer and other women who believe in her cause, aim to resist China's institutional corruption through persistence and the push to uncover the truth and bring justice to the victims. She also wants to expose the corruption and the unlawful acts of these individuals abusing their positions of power.

IS HOOLIGAN SPARROW OPENING WEEKEND WORTHY?

It's a fascinating yet uncomfortable glimpse into the real life struggles female activists in

China face while defending what they believe in.

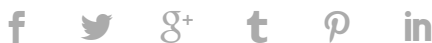
Hooligan Sparrow opens Friday, August 26, 2016 at Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema. Check their [website](#) for more information.

HOOLOGAN SPARROW TRAILER

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