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'Inside This Peace' named Best Documentary at California film fest

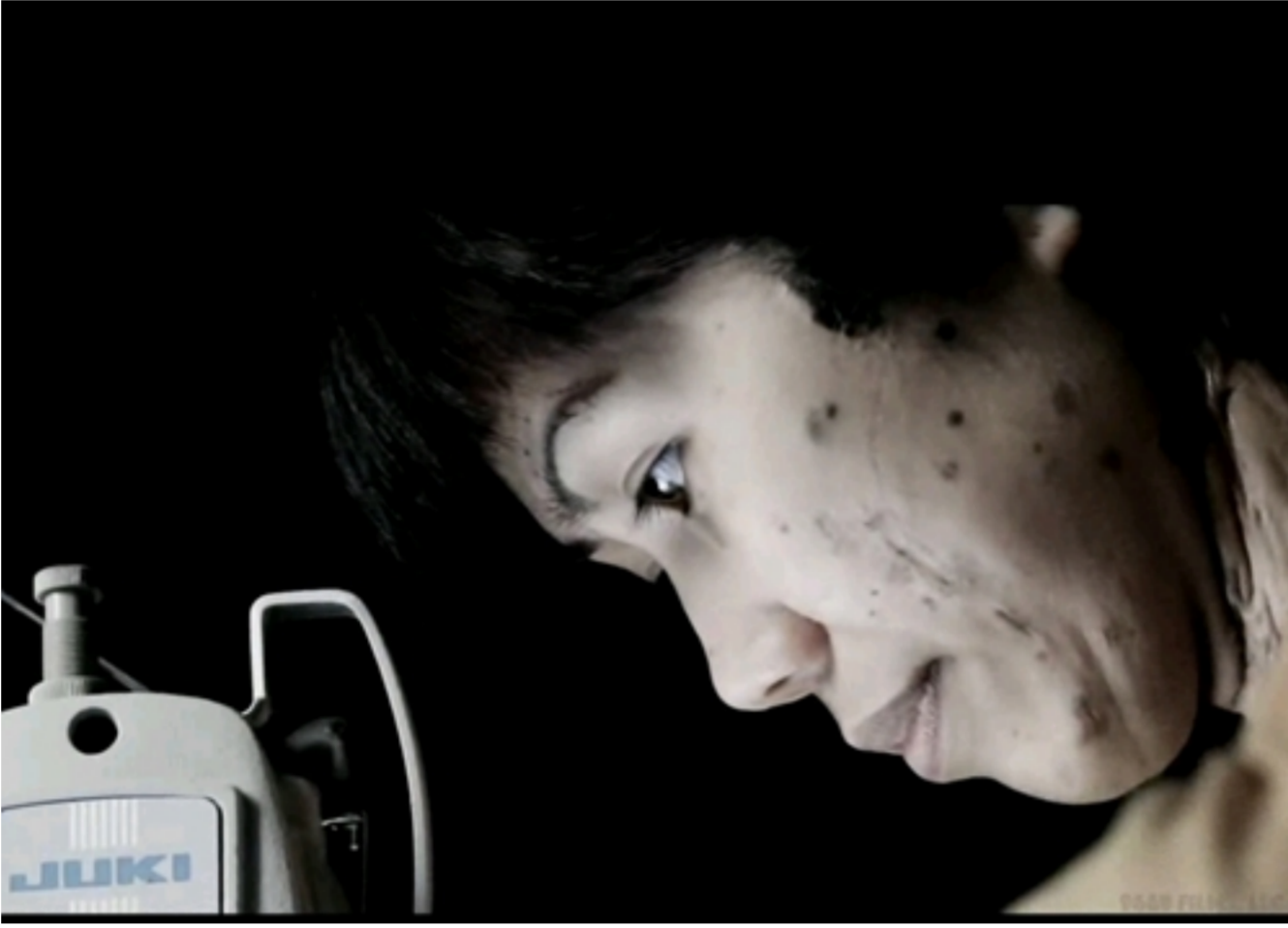
Vietnamese filmmaker Linh Nga's 'Inside This Peace' has won the prize for the Best Feature Documentary at the California Women's Film Festival.

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The documentary is about a forgotten victim of Agent Orange (AO) in Vietnam who is struggling to live in peace. Thoa, the film's subject, has "scary skin with huge black patches, numerous lumps and hair all over her body". The lumps are filled with fluid and cannot be drained. For decades, Thoa's parents have been looking for the Government's help.

"I hope the award will help Thoa and other AO victims in Vietnam have more opportunity to raise their voices," said filmmaker Nga. "I'm living and working in the US and it is not easy for me to make a film about AO victims in peace."

"Sending the documentary to film festivals and winning the award is not only a success for the filmmakers but also for AO victims," Nga said. "I didn't make Inside This Peace for awards but I sent the documentary to film festivals aiming to popularise it. The documentary is recognised officially by American and international professional filmmakers."



A scene from Inside This Peace by filmmaker Linh Nga

Nga met Thoa when she was 13 years old when they performed together in a charity show. While Thoa's appearance scared other children, Nga felt Thoa's suffering. Nga later learned Thoa did not go to school like other children because her mother was afraid that Thoa would be bullied by her classmates.

Thoa's mother taught her to read and write at home. Thoa moved to Hoa Binh Village for AO child patients when she was eight.

'Inside This Peace' was screened on Vimeo On Demand across America for one week around Christmas. It was screened at the Lift Off Global Network Festival and placed second among 115 international films.

The California Women's Film Festival operates as a biannual event for film projects that have a woman in at least one of the key production positions. It has a winter event in January and summer one in July.

'Inside This Peace' is Nga's second film after What's the Good of Being Good? – a short comedy featuring Vietnamese actor Duc Tien and vovinam martial artists.

Before studying filmmaking and sound design in the US, Nga was popular in Vietnamese television for such series as Khoang Cach (Distance); Dom Lua Bien Thuy (Border Flame) and Xuoi Nguoc Duong Tran (In The Shadow of Life).

Nga was the script writer, lead role and co-director for 'In The Shadow of Life', which earned her the TV Best Series award at the National Television Festival in 2003.

Source: VNS/VNA

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