



Kansas International Film Festival offers
Jewish flavor

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Cinema lovers in Greater Kansas City do not need to travel to Cannes, Toronto or Jerusalem to attend a first-class film festival. Opportunity knocks starting next weekend when local audiences can find their very own slice of film nirvana in Overland Park at the 11th annual Kansas International Film Festival (KIFF). KIFF will take place Sept. 30-Oct.6 at the Glenwood Arts Theatre located inside the Metcalf South Shopping Center.

This year's festival will premiere more than 50 films over seven days. The lineup contains an eclectic mix of dramatic features and documentaries with many filmmakers in attendance for question-and-answer sessions following the presentation of their films. Three films will have a distinctive Jewish flavor.

“Israel vs. Israel” is a powerful documentary that will stir up discussion and debate. It follows four Israeli peace activists who oppose the military occupation in the West Bank and want more humane treatment for the Palestinians. The protest groups represented in the film are Breaking the Silence, Anarchists Against the Wall, Rabbis for Human Rights and Checkpoint Watch. Filmmaker Terje Carlsson filled the roles of producer, director and cinematographer. He is also credited for the original musical score. The movie brings up the issues of nationalism versus religion and differentiates between the state of Israel and the biblical land of Israel that God promised to the Jewish people in perpetuity. The excellent cinematography takes you to places that you will not see on your tour when visiting from the United States. The hatred is most evident in Hebron where soldiers are constantly demanding that the camera be turned off. The movie is slanted toward those opposing what the government is doing and the extreme security precautions. It pushes for territorial compromise and moral behavior that treats human life as holy. The documentary is partially in Hebrew with English subtitles and has a running time of 58 minutes. It screens on Sunday afternoon, Oct. 2, at 3:45 p.m. and you are encouraged to stick around afterwards to meet Carlsson, who will be in attendance.

My rating 3 1/2 out of 4 stars.