

Humanitarian Awards 2025



2025 HUMANITARIAN AWARD WINNERS

The Humanitarian Award honors filmmakers who are **bringing awareness** to issues of Ecological, Political, Social Justice and Equality, Health and Wellness, Animals, Wildlife, Conservation and Spiritual importance and combining that with **quality filmmaking craft**. Congratulations to this year's illustrious winners who are committed to making a difference in the world. To read more about the award [click here](#)



Nothing to See Here: Watts – Michael Soenen





Michael Soenen (USA), *Nothing to See Here: Watts*, Documentary Feature – Backed by **Oscar nominee Todd Lieberman** and **Emmy winner Suzanne Malveaux**, this groundbreaking documentary redefines traditional filmmaking by giving Watts residents the tools to film their own lives. Through years of intimate, self-recorded footage and fearless storytelling, Soenen creates a powerful portrait of a community often misunderstood, revealing humanity, resilience, and connection. More than a documentary, the film became a catalyst for dialogue, bringing together rival gang members, community leaders, and residents in a shared effort toward healing and reconciliation.

****** The resulting conversations helped inspire a **community-led peace movement** that coincided with an approximately **90% reduction** in homicides across Watts, including a year with **zero homicides** in the community's four major housing projects. A powerful testament to the ability of authentic storytelling to bridge divides, foster understanding, and help create lasting social change!



Conquering Skin Cancer – Mike Hill





Mike Hill (Australia), *Conquering Skin Cancer* – Emmy winner Mike Hill delivers a compelling and beautifully crafted documentary featuring Oscar-nominee Hugh Jackman, media icon, Olympian Cate Campbell, Champion Surfer ‘Rabbit’ Bartholomew and more. Through powerful personal stories, expert insight, and deft direction, Hill transforms Australia’s skin cancer crisis into a deeply human exploration of awareness, prevention, and resilience. Balancing emotional storytelling with a vital public health message, the film inspires reflection and action.

***They Fight with Cameras* – Nina Rosenblum and Daniel Allentuck**



Nina Rosenblum and Daniel Allentuck (USA), *They Fight with Cameras* – Oscar-nominated Rosenblum and Allentuck deliver a deeply moving and masterfully crafted documentary narrated by **Emmy-nominee Liev Schreiber**, transforming the photographs, footage, letters, and personal reflections of combat cameraman Walter Rosenblum into a powerful cinematic experience. Through an intimate and empathetic lens, the filmmakers create a haunting portrait of war, humanity, and the responsibility of bearing witness, reminding audiences of the profound cost of conflict and the enduring power of images to inspire understanding and peace.

***Breaking Enigma: A World War II Game Changer* – Tim Gray**





Tim Gray (USA), *Breaking Enigma: A World War II Game Changer* – **Emmy-winner Tim Gray** delivers a masterfully crafted documentary, narrated by **Emmy-winner Keith Morrison**, that brings to life the extraordinary courage, ingenuity, and human stories behind the Allied codebreakers of Bletchley Park. Through compelling storytelling, rare historical insight, and immersive filmmaking, **Gray** transforms a pivotal moment in history into a gripping exploration of innovation, sacrifice, and the individuals whose breakthroughs changed the course of the war and the future of technology. A PBS presentation.

***State Organs* – Raymond Zhang**





Raymond Zhang (Canada), *State Organs* – Peabody-winner Zhang delivers a powerful and deeply disturbing documentary following families desperately searching for loved ones who have mysteriously disappeared. Through intimate testimony, investigative storytelling and a compassionate directorial approach, Zhang reveals their relentless pursuit of truth as they uncover allegations of a state-run organ harvesting operation targeting Falun Gong practitioners. A chilling and courageous film that transforms a global human rights issue into a deeply personal story of loss, resilience, and the enduring search for justice.

***My Neighbor* – Dominic Carola**



Dominic Carola (USA), *My Neighbor* – Award-winning Disney veteran Carola (*Lilo & Stitch*, *The Lion King*, *Mulan*) delivers a beautifully crafted and emotionally resonant short brought to life with

animation by **Justin Farris** (*Brave*, *Incredibles 2*). Through exquisite character design, expressive movement, and masterful storytelling, Carola creates a touching portrait of kindness, connection and caring for others. With entertaining emotional precision, it captivates audiences of all ages, offering children a charming and heartfelt story while giving adults a meaningful reminder of compassion, empathy, and the bonds that unite us.

The Human Side Of Plastic: Babacar Thiaw
Andrew Lynch, Ben Ayers and Rush Sturges



Andrew Lynch, Ben Ayers and Rush Sturges (United Kingdom), *The Human Side of Plastic: Babacar Thiaw* – Through beautiful cinematography and deeply personal storytelling, this inspiring documentary captures Senegalese surfer and activist Babacar Thiaw's fight to protect the ocean he loves. Rooted in family, culture, and a profound connection to the sea, the film reveals how one person's passion can ignite meaningful change. A visually powerful and emotionally resonant reminder of the impact of courage, purpose, and collective responsibility.

***Interwoven* – Dawn Carpenter**