



Commendation

Category “Informational films and documentaries”

The Return of the Sex Tourists – The Tsunami, Poverty and Prostitution

a & o buero köln

(45 minutes, German, 2006)

The documentary *The Return of Sex Tourists – The Tsunami, Poverty and Prostitution* is given a “Commending Statement” within the framework of the TOURA D’OR 2006. It was produced by Wolfgang Luck of a & o buero köln and broadcasted by the SWR Broadcasting Corporation.

The Return of Sex Tourists focuses on the worst impacts of tourism, i.e. sex tourism, with Thailand as a case in point. The film features the scene one year after the Tsunami disaster. In a number of personal statements European men confirm their desire for sex with young women. The victims describe their hopeless situation in interviews. The film presents aid projects and illustrates a case of child abuse where the judiciary and the law enforcing authority obviously fail to bring to justice a German with a previous conviction. A brave and at the same time agonizing look at the daily grind of sex tourism with uncompromising descriptions of the practices in the sex industry.

Although alternative positions and constructive examples are largely omitted and potential sex tourists are perhaps encouraged rather than scared off, the investigative documentary may still enhance a change of awareness. The film undoubtedly reveals information that would otherwise only be accessible off the record.

One must be critical of the fact that the film does not take an ethical standpoint but rather pinpoints the statements of the culprits and the victims without passing judgement. Moreover, the film does not give the viewer any possibility to probe into possible fields of action.