



Cameras for the Invisible Ones

57 min documentary

Karin Kuiper, widow of the celebrated Dutch author **Karel Glastra van Loon**, travels to the Thai-Burma border to fulfil a wish Karel had before he died — to bring cameras to the forgotten refugees of Burma. The result is an emotional journey that provides a powerful insight into the complex issues facing the Burmese people.

On July 1, 2005, **Karel Glastra van Loon**, one of the Netherlands' most acclaimed authors, died tragically of a brain tumour. Just 42, he was survived by his wife **Karin Kuiper** and their three young children.

Two and a half years earlier, Karel and his young family had spent 3 months in the small frontier town of Mae Sot, on Thailand's western border with Burma, researching what turned out to be, his last novel. '**The Invisible Ones**'. is a poignant and evocative tale that puts a human face on the suffering perpetrated by one of the world's most brutal and repressive regimes – the military dictatorship of Burma.

The novel was the first in a project initiated by the Netherlands Refugee Foundation to link Dutch writers with forgotten refugee groups. And although Karel managed to finish his book before he died, his further plans to help the Burmese who had helped him write his book were left unrealised. The idea was to provide refugees and displaced people with digital cameras for them to tell their own stories – in effect helping 'The Invisible Ones' to make themselves visible.

In March 2008, Karin returns to Mae Sot determined to realise Karel's plan. Along the way she retraces the steps he took researching 'The Invisible Ones'. The film weaves these emotional scenes, together with radio broadcasts recorded by Karel during his stay, and passages from his book, to provide a powerful insight into the complex issues facing the Burmese people.

As Burma's military regime drags the country deeper into crisis, both politically and economically, the fate of its people hangs more than ever in the balance. They have shown by their protests that they want change. Their demonstrations might have been quashed, but thanks to digital cameras and the internet, their plight has caught the attention of the international community and become a cry for help.

The generals who rule Burma have gone to great pains to close off their country from the prying eyes of the world. The challenge now is to give ordinary people the tools with which to make their stories seen and heard.

director Mark Verkerk
writers Mark Verkerk and Karin Kuiper
producer Ton Okkerse

Produced for the Buddhist Broadcasting Foundation and the Netherlands Refugee Foundation



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Karin Kuiper, widow of the celebrated Dutch author **Karel Glastra van Loon**, travels to the Thai-Burma border to continue his work of supporting Burma's forgotten refugees.

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executive producer Pim van Collem
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