

The Prisoner's Song

"Best Film" at the Spinning Wheel Film Festival, Toronto 2009

The Prisoner's Song, a 20-min documentary directed by Los Angeles filmmaker Michael Singh, was selected Best Film at seventh Spinning Wheel Film Festival that concluded in Toronto on September 27. The Film Festival & Art Expo screened 27 films out of a total of 145 that were considered for inclusion in this year's festival over the course of three days. Notably, Michael Singh received his first break at the inaugural Spinning Wheel in Toronto in 2003.



Retired Colonel Perminder Singh Randhawa serves as a guide to an 80-second audio recording made during WWI by Punjabi farmer Mal Singh, while he was a German prisoner of war. The British Empire recruited soldiers from all across the empire in their fight against Germany and the Mr. Singh found himself captured at the Battle of Flanders in 1915.

In this rare recording made by German scientists studying their multi-ethnic POWs, Singh tells his captors that once upon a time he came from a land "of butter and milk," but now in European hands he is dying of hunger, and yearning for peace and a return to his native land. An insightful commentary by Indian Army veteran Colonel Randhawa points out the irony that the Sikhs, while fighting for their own independence from British oppression, were still willing to aid the British Empire in their European "War for Civilization". Britain's dubious promise to Mal Singh and his family ends this unique and poignant glimpse into the past.



Michael Mohinder Singh. Director *The Prisoner's Song*

© Michael Singh Productions, Inc.

E: turbancowboy@earthlink.net