



Amazing Azerbaijan!

The 2012 Eurovision Song Contest was held in Baku, after a sugary love-song with the unintentionally ironic title “Running Scared” secured the contest for the oil-rich former Soviet Republic Azerbaijan. Never had the contest been held so far east, and this was only the second time it has been hosted by a majority Muslim country. The president declared it a national achievement. It was supposed to be a feel-good moment for the nation, and a chance to show off to the rest of Europe – but the reality was much more complicated. Eurovision claims to exemplify the values of Europe, but Azerbaijan's record on freedom of press and of assembly, transparency, and political prisoners is spotty, to put it mildly. AMAZING AZERBAIJAN! is a tale of two Azerbaijanians: one the wealthy, tolerant, secular democratic republic that the government proudly puts on display for visiting journalists and dignitaries; the other a repressive and corrupt oligarchy with little respect for democracy or human rights. The excitement around Eurovision offers an unorthodox lens through which to examine basic issues of human rights, and a number of activists seized on this, hoping that for a brief moment the world might care about their struggle.

GB 2012, Director: Liz Mermin, 60 min., OmengU, CROW HILL FILMS

Thursday,

Dec. 3rd

06:00 p.m. at

CITY 46

Film screening followed by a **discussion** with **director Liz Mermin** and Donnacha Ó Beacháin (chair, Institute for International Conflict Resolution and Reconstruction, Dublin City University).

Public outreach event of the Innovative Training Network “Caspian”, a grant programme for early-stage researchers, funded by a MSCA grant of the European Union in the context of Horizon 2020 (Grant agreement no: 642709). In cooperation with the Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen.