

STILL THE DRUMS: A CHOICE BETWEEN LOYALTY & MORALITY

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Talbot Perry Simons as Tom in "Still the Drums".

Taking its title from "The Illusion of War," a poem by Richard Le Gallienne, about our Civil War, "Still the Drums" approaches its explosive subject from a new perspective.

The world premiere of "Still the Drums" opened to a full house on Saturday, August 1st at the Regency Fairfax Cinema in West Hollywood as a feature presentation in the New York International Independent Film and Video Festival - Los Angeles.

After seeing it, I was reminded of the words of Mrs. Myrtle Meadlo, mother of a young GI involved in the infamous 1968 My Lai massacre in which at least 370 Vietnamese villagers, mostly women and children, were killed: "I sent them a good boy and they made him a murderer."

The excesses of war have often been swept aside by arguments of necessity, most recently with regard to the torture of prisoners held at Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib. While Errol Morris's documentary "Standard Operating Procedure" attempted to provide insight into the behavior of those caught up in the latter

scandal, the two lead characters of "Still the Drums" find themselves in an impossible double-bind choice between loyalty and morality, which comes to its shocking conclusion on the day of the commemoration of their childhood friend and marine comrade's funeral.

Talbot Perry Simons, and Richard Fulvio, as Tom and Al, show themselves as actor's actors—their subtle expressions as well as their emotional outbursts tracking the difficulty of confessing their long-held war memories.

The fact that this film was written, directed, produced, and edited by Simons, who also plays the key role should serve as an amazing encouragement to all DIY filmmakers: the realization of an independent feature is more accessible today than ever before. One hopes there will be more unique voices bringing such stories to the screen, and that distribution opportunities will open for "Still the Drums" and others like it. This excellent movie will reach out to a broad public with its story.