

Finding Face

Synopsis

Finding Face details the controversial case of Tat Marina, who was attacked with acid in Cambodia in 1999. At 16, Marina was a rising star in Phnom Penh's karaoke music scene. She was coerced into an abusive relationship with Cambodia's Undersecretary of State, Svay Sitha, and subsequently doused with a liter of nitric acid—allegedly by his wife—that disfigured her face. A decade later, despite the fact that there were multiple witnesses to the crime, no charges have ever been filed in the case.

The film contextualizes acid violence in Cambodia as both a human rights violation and a gender-based form of violence. In it, human rights workers and survivors of acid attacks discuss the many challenges faced by victims, as well as what they see as a culture of impunity surrounding violence against women. They also discuss the rise in acid violence following Marina's attack, a result of the public's awareness that perpetrators are unlikely to face any serious penalties.

Marina, who was granted asylum to enter the U.S., struggles to emerge from a shattered self-image and escape a constant state of fear.

She breaks her long silence with the hope that she can gain some form of justice, if not in the state judicial system then at least in the court of public opinion.