

# Los Angeles Times

## **TOTAL DENIAL**

Film by Milena Kaneva

### **Southland Theaters**

Mark Olsen, Oct. 26

Readers' rating: Unrated

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An unexpectedly gripping look at the ongoing political and human rights situation in Myanmar/Burma. Bulgarian-born filmmaker Milena Kaneva forges the film with of a rough-hewn urgency, and whatever it may lack in graceful image-making it more than makes up for in emotional immediacy. Burmese activist Ka Hsaw Wa -- who lives as a fugitive outlaw when in his own country -- and his American wife use a semi-obscure law that ironically dates back to Colonial times to initiate a lawsuit in the U.S. court system for abusive activities undertaken on behalf of American businesses operating in Burma.

The cross-cutting between the jungles of Southeast Asia and the courtrooms of California never ceases to startle, and Kaneva cannily uses the lawsuit to give the film a strong spine and sense of drive. Without portraying corporate culture as purposefully evil, Kaneva shines a spotlight on what happens when a willful blind-eye is turned to abuses committed in the name of business. (Not surprisingly, oil is at the root of it all.)

(1:32)