

Beat: Local

SCIENTOLOGY FILM GOING CLEAR CANCELLED IN THEATER IN FLORIDA BECAUSE PRESSURE

GOING CLEAR SCIENTOLOGY DOCUMENTARY

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USPA NEWS - Alex Gibney's documentary 'Going clear : Scientology and the Prison of Belief' was released in only a few theaters on March 13, 2015 before airing on HBO on March 29, scoring HBO's biggest premiere ever for a documentary. The film is based on a book of the same name written by Lawrence Wright...

Alex Gibney's documentary 'Going clear : Scientology and the Prison of Belief' was released in only a few theaters on March 13, 2015 before airing on HBO on March 29, scoring HBO's biggest premiere ever for a documentary, attracting around 5,5 million viewers. The film is based on a book named 'Going Clear : Scientology, Hollywood and the Prison of Belief' written by Lawrence Wright in 2013. The film premiered at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival and has been nominated for seven Emmy Awards and won three.

Alex Gibney told Reuters that he thinks the film talks about "an important topic. Not only about this church of Scientology, which everybody's fascinated with partially because of the celebrities, but partially because of the way that the church seems to turn people to do things that I think they would normally never do if had they not entered the church."

The documentary was cancelled in a movie theater in Clearwater (Florida) because of pressures coming from the Church. But, residents of Clearwater still will be able to see it. The AMC Woodlands Square 20 in the neighboring town of Oldsmar has agreed to pick up the documentary and play it on behalf of HBO Films.

In most cases, major theater chains won't play a film that is available on other platforms, AMC already made exceptions for some specialty films.

Beginning in the 1970s, the Church of Scientology began establishing a stronghold in Clearwater, a beach city on the west coast of Florida, referring to it as their 'flag Land base'.

SYNOPSIS OF DOCUMENTARY (HBO) :

Gibney profiles eight former members of the Church of Scientology, whose most prominent adherents include A-list Hollywood celebrities, shining a light on how the church cultivates true believers, detailing their experiences and what they are willing to do in the name of religion.

This powerful new film highlights the Church's origins, from its roots in the mind of founder L. Ron Hubbard to its rise in popularity in Hollywood and beyond. The heart of the film is a series of shocking revelations by former insiders, including high-ranking and recognizable members such as acclaimed screenwriter Paul Haggis ('Crash'), as they describe the systematic history of abuse and betrayal by Church official, including the current leadership of the Church.

A provocative tale of ego, exploitation and lust for power.

Alex Gibney said in an interview given to HBO "This idea of the 'prison of belief' is so important - you wall yourself inside of your mind. The film is really about a psychological process that to some extent, all of us undergo when we fall under a powerful political philosophy or a religion that allows us to be blinded to abuses committed in the names of those things. It's a cautionary tale for all of us in that sense."

The film has sold worldwide but the Church of Scientology undertook an intensive campaign to block its release internationally. According to Alex Gibney "Every step of the way, every distributor, every festival has received multiple threatening letters from the Church of Scientology. Some have come very close to buckling".

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