

# 東京 国際 映画祭 1999

1999 Tokyo International Film  
Festival

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Feature of the day

## From the darkside

By Andrew Mitchell  
Staff Writer

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India, Taiwan and Germany clock in at the competition for top honors at the 12th Tokyo International Film Festival with **"Split Wide Open," "Darkness and Light,"** and **"Nightfall."**

Lively, cutting edge and to the point is director Dev Benegal's "Split Wide Open." It is a movie that explores the sexual undercurrents of Bombay, a city Benegal says is much like any other large metropolis in Asia, in the face of unimpeded change toward modernization, globalization and different values and mores.

KP (Rahul Bose) is a poverty-stricken water salesman who meets Didi (Fardida Haider Mulla), a 10-year-old beggar girl, and decides to take on the responsibility of looking after her as he would a little sister.

One day shortly after KP runs into trouble with the local mafia, Didi goes missing and KP is left to wander the streets of Bombay in a frantic attempt at trying to find her.

Assisted by popular TV talk show host Nandita (Laila Rouass), KP scratches the underbelly of a city that, from the movie's perspective at least, is losing all sense of what constitutes right and wrong in society.

It isn't the happiest of tales, but one that bristles with energy thanks to quick, MTV-like filming and a strong cast of actors. Well worth



Scenes from "Split Wide Open," above, and "Darkness and Light."

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watching.

"Darkness and Light" is a pensive effort about a young Taiwanese girl named Kang-yi (Lee Kang-i) who struggles to come of age normally while dealing with her mentally handicapped brother, Ah Xiu (Tsai Ming-shiou), and her blind father at the family's massage business.

Kang-yi falls in love with Ah Ping (Fan Ji-de), a mainland Chinese boy, who works for the local mafia outfit. Another teen who stakes a prior claim to Kang-yi throws a wrench in the works and a rift between mafia cliques is created as a result.

Director Chang Tso-chi's third feature film makes a fairly atypical family look remarkably ordinary, which allows the message of the movie to hit home with great force.

Like its title hints at, "Nightfall" is a dark, depressing flick that is barren of dialect and woefully lacking in spirit. It is a long, sad story of Anton (Wolfgang Michael) and Leni (Verena Jasch), a couple dichotomized by his inability to voice his love for her. They subsequently part ways and head out into the night on separate, desperate journeys.

*Showtimes: "Split Wide Open," Nov. 4 at 11:20 am. "Darkness and Light," Nov. 4 at 7:20 pm. "Nightfall," Nov. 4 at 2:50 pm and Nov. 5 at 7:20 pm.*

Visit the TIFF home page for up-to-date information: <http://www.tokyo-filmfest.or.jp>

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