

WITNESSES DISCUSSION GUIDE

Directing

How did the camera affect your emotional and/or intellectual perspective on the situation in various scenes?

Vinko Bresan said: “We tried a different kind of dramaturgic editing, which I call the "editing of emotions." I tried to group the emotions into different parts of the film to get the maximum of emotions from the story.” Discuss how the editing style balanced the emotions of the film

Actors

Did you feel more sympathetically toward certain characters in the film than others? If so, what elements of the filmmakers’ style inspired this sympathy?

The events of the story were retold from the perspectives of various characters, adding new information about the situation with each scenario. Would you have liked to have seen the events through the eyes of one of the film’s characters whose perspective was not represented in the film? Discuss how the film may have been changed had the film been seen through the eyes of these other characters involved.

Witnesses is an interweaving story about the interconnectedness of people within a war torn community. Discuss how the various relationships worked to support and/or destroy a sense of community.

Story

Director Vinko Bresan said: “Whether I'm a Croat or Iraqi or American doesn't really matter. The important thing is whether I am a person of integrity.” According to the film what do you think Bresan feels it means to be a “person of integrity”?

Witnesses was the recipient of the Peace Film Award at the Berlin International Film Festival. Discuss how this film promotes peace.

“There are wars all around the world. I don't think nationality is an issue for the human story in *Witnesses*,” said director Vinko Bresan. Do the themes of conflicting values presented in *Witnesses* , translate to conflicts in your part of the world or conflicts within your own family?