

Reporters investigating drug lords in Mexico and Pol Pot atrocities in Cambodia to receive prestigious journalism award

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Two Mexican reporters who have investigated violent drug cartels and a Cambodian journalist who uncovered secrets of the Pol Pot regime will receive the 2011 Knight International Journalism Awards, the International Center for Journalists (ICFJ) announced.

Rocio Idalia Gallegos Rodriguez and **Sandra Rodriguez Nieto** are fearless investigative reporters in what may be the most dangerous city in the world. Despite tremendous risks, they have probed the drug wars that are wreaking havoc in Ciudad Juarez and other places along the U.S.-Mexican border.

"While others are silenced by threats and attacks, these women have stood up to the most feared and ruthless cartels imaginable to inform citizens and improve their community," said John S. and James L. Knight Foundation's Jose Zamora, who made the announcement at the Newseum.

Cambodian journalist **Thet Sambath** took a decade to produce arguably the most important documentary about the Khmer Rouge. As a child, he lost his parents and his brother, who were killed by the brutal Pol Pot regime. He made it his mission to find out why this genocide took place. He tracked down and won the confidence of the No. 2 man in the Khmer Rouge, Nuon Chea, who granted Sambath scores of interviews.

Working with British filmmaker Rob Lemkin, Sambath turned the interviews into the award-winning "Enemies of the People" documentary, which was short-listed for an Oscar this year. The film will be used as evidence in the forthcoming trial of Nuon Chea. This year's winners will be honored at ICFJ's Awards Dinner in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 1.

"These extraordinary journalists dare to tell stories that few have the courage to address," said ICFJ President Joyce Barnathan. "Because of them, we have an essential understanding of the tragedies faced by citizens in Mexico and Cambodia."

Seasoned journalists and Knight International Journalism Fellows nominated the candidates. Members of the jury included **Jacqueline Barnathan**, executive editor at CBS Newspath; **Michelle Betz**, a senior radio and television journalist and a former Knight Fellow; Ernesto Clavijo, news director of Univision in Washington; **Craig Duff**, director of multimedia for Time.com and former Knight Fellow; **Calvin Sims**, program officer at the Ford Foundation and former *New York Times* correspondent in Latin

America and Asia; ICFJ Director **John Towriss**, executive vice president of TMG Strategies; and ICFJ's **Barnathan**.

The International Center for Journalists, a non-profit, professional organization, promotes quality journalism worldwide in the belief that independent, vigorous media are crucial in improving the human condition. For 27 years, ICFJ has worked directly with more than 65,000 journalists from 180 countries. ICFJ offers hands-on training workshops, seminars, fellowships and international exchanges to journalists and media managers around the globe. For more information, visit www.icfj.org.

Knight Foundation supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. We believe that democracy thrives when people and communities are informed and engaged. For more, visit www.knightfoundation.org.