

ScaredSacred, Tom Thomson and James Cross coming week's TV highlights

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B.C. filmmaker Velcrow Ripper's stunning documentary ScaredSacred airs next Wednesday on *Vision* *TV*.

Beginning as a project to deal with millennium doomsday fears, the writer-director spent five years touring sites of human tragedy around the world, but not as a ``tourist of darkness."

Whether it's Bhopal, Sarajevo or Hiroshima, Ripper managed to find a surprising human resilience emerge from all the misery and tragedy. In the Pol Pot killing fields, for example, viewers meet a young Cambodian who has devoted his life to unearthing and defusing the thousands of landmines that still lurk in the countryside. Ripper's optimistic mantra is to ``breathe in suffering, breathe out compassion."

He also visited Manhattan in the wake of 9-11 where he encountered an impromptu gathering of New Yorkers lighting candles and contemplating peace.

Gorgeously photographed, the film resembles the much-honoured 1983 documentary Koyaanisqatsi, Godfrey Reggio's dialogue-free collection of images contrasting nature with our hectic civilization.

ScaredSacred won the special jury prize at the Toronto International Film Festival and has been honoured at festivals around the world. It had a limited theatrical release last month and is currently in wider release. (Wednesday, Oct. 26, Vision)