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Documentary shines through Rwanda's heart of darkness

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On one level, *Shake Hands With the Devil: The Journey of Roméo Dallaire* is a quiet, modest record of one man's personal odyssey through the heart of darkness.

On another, more important level, it's a passionate, stirring allegory about finding inner peace, as well as an unflinching look at the 1994 genocide in Rwanda in which 800,000 Tutsis and Hutu moderates, including countless women, old men and children, were murdered in little more

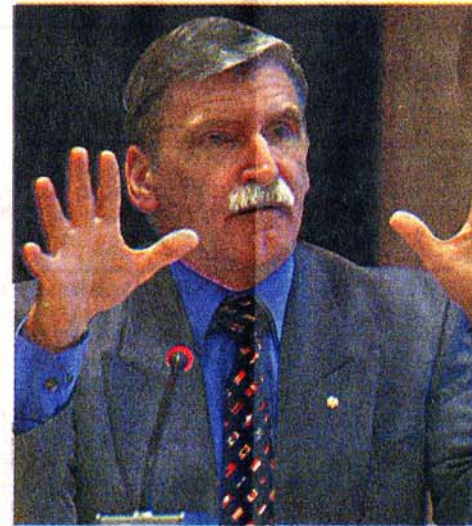
FINE TUNING

than 100 days, many of them hacked to death by machetes.

In early 1994, Canadian Lt.-Gen. Dallaire was appointed commander of a United Nations peacekeeping mission in the tiny Central African republic of Rwanda.

The documentary is neither a straight historical record nor a political tirade. Instead, it is a deeply heartfelt account of one man's return to his past, and a brave attempt to put a logical explanation on illogical, completely inexplicable events.

It opens with Dallaire, still wracked with guilt and suffering the ripple effects of post-traumatic stress disorder and lingering depression, as he returns to Rwanda in April 2004, on the 10th anniversary of the genocide.



Dallaire: inner demons

Dallaire is a reluctant returnee, but he feels obligated to face his inner demons and stand before the people he feels he failed.

Don't let the grim subject matter put you off. In a strange, almost surreal way, *Shake Hands With the Devil* is

genuinely life affirming. Dallaire has a world-weary integrity to him, a spirit and soul and humanity that shine through the darkness, and there are images and moments here that are virtually unforgettable.

The film itself has been directed with great grace, dignity and style by veteran Canadian filmmaker and journalist Peter Raymond, with some of the most haunting and emotionally stirring background music I've ever heard in a documentary. *Shake Hands With the Devil* was screened last week before an appreciative audience at the Sundance Film Festival, and its debut tonight on *The Passionate Eye* is an auspicious occasion, not just the film's world television premiere but also its first opportunity to reach a wide audience. Do give it a try. My guess is you won't regret it. (CBC, RDTV – 9 p.m.)