

Fort Hood Diaries Project Description

Fort Hood Diaries - A One-Hour Documentary Film Directed by Nancy Schiesari

There are 15,000 licensed tattoo parlors in the United States. River City Tattoos in Killeen, Texas - home to Fort Hood, the largest military base in the free world - is unlike any one of them.

That's because owner/artist Roxanne Willis caters to an exclusive clientele – a steady stream of soldiers bound for Iraq. Young men and women come to shed their uniforms and carve permanence into their transitory flesh - to adorn their limbs, make a statement, ward off evil with fierce engravings or honor a loved one. Some seek grizzlier images, like “meat tags.” A play on traditional “dog tags,” “meat tags” are a morbid marker of name, DOB, and serial



number designed for posthumous identification. Tattooed just under the armpit on the torso, they are strategically located in the place most likely to remain intact - in the event of death by explosion.

Ninety-five percent of the U.S. military sport a tattoo, and for those joining the ranks at Ford Hood, a pilgrimage to the River City Tattoo Parlor is an essential rite of passage. **Fort Hood Diaries** is an intimate, character-driven portrait of war-bound and returning soldiers as they go under the needle, openly professing their patriotism, sharing their secrets, and confessing their fears. These are their stories, each one an evocative, poignant and highly personal look at the human and cultural cost of war.

WATCH THE FILM