

DOXA

DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL



MAY 22–31, 2009

FESTIVAL GUIDE

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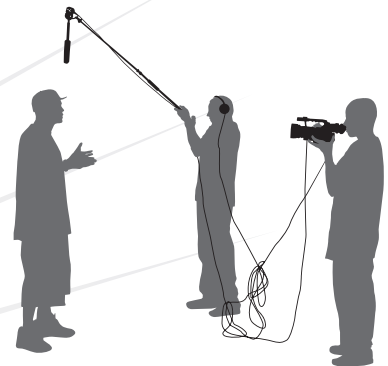
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Front Cover Image from *7915 KM* (page 39) by Nikolaus Geyrhalter

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TICKETS AND GENERAL FESTIVAL INFO

TICKETS

Opening Night Film: \$15

Opening Night Film with Party: \$35*

Single Tickets: \$10

Festival Pass (excludes Opening Night): \$125

(includes \$2 membership)

Membership: \$2

Forums and Richard Fung Installation are free of charge.

* Opening Night Party – May 22, 2009 at 9:30pm

Join us at the Vancouver Art Gallery following the Opening Night Film. Enjoy scrumptious Subeez nibbles with Peller Estate's fine wines or a hand-crafted brew from Storm Brewing — and listen in on the hot tickets buzz — all while supporting DOXA!

MEMBERSHIP

The Documentary Media Society presents films that have not been seen by the BC Film Classification Board. Under BC law, anyone wishing to see these unclassified films must be a member of the Documentary Media Society and 18 years of age or older. When you purchase a membership for \$2, you are entitled to attend any screening in 2009, provided you show your membership card.

The following films have been classified for younger audiences and will therefore not require a membership: *Afghan Girls Can Kick*, *Chasing Wild Horses*, *Inside Hana's Suitcase*, *To the Tar Sands*.

THEATRE PROCEDURES FOR FESTIVAL PASSHOLDERS

Bring your festival pass to Will Call to receive your admittance ticket(s) for the film(s) you wish to see at that venue for that day. Once you have your ticket you may join the ticket holders queue. Passholders must arrive at the venue at least 20 minutes prior to the screening. A festival pass does not guarantee you seating to sold-out shows. Your DOXA festival pass gives you access to all screenings **except Opening Night**. All passes are strictly non-transferable and passholders are required to show ID and valid membership.

ADVANCE TICKETS

Advance tickets are available for purchase until 9pm the day before the screening.

Online at www.doxafestival.ca

Please note: All festival passes and tickets purchased online are subject to processing fees.

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TICKETS AT THE DOOR

Only tickets for day of screening can be purchased at the screening venue. Box Office opens 30 minutes prior to each screening. **Cash only at venues.**

RUSH TICKETS

If a show is sold out, rush tickets may be available at the door. A generous allotment of seats are reserved for passholders. Any unclaimed seats will be released just prior to the screening on a first come, first served basis.

WILL CALL

Tickets and festival passes purchased online can be picked up from Will Call at the festival theatre of your first screening. You must present your confirmation number in order to pick up your tickets.

Will Call opens one hour prior to screening for opening and closing night and 30 minutes prior for all other screenings. Please arrive in advance to allow time to pick up your order (especially for opening night).

VENUES

Empire Granville 7 Theatre [G7]

855 Granville Street (at Robson)

Pacific Cinémathèque [PC]

1131 Howe Street (at Helmcken)

Vancity Theatre [VT]

1181 Seymour Street (at Davie)

Vancouver Art Gallery [opening night party only]

750 Hornby Street entrance (between Georgia & Robson)

ACCESSIBILITY

All theatres are wheelchair accessible with limited spots available.

FESTIVAL INFORMATION

DOXA Office

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Auction runs throughout the festival. Check out **www.doxafestival.ca** for more information.

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THE DOCUMENTARY MEDIA SOCIETY

DOXA is presented by the Documentary Media Society, a Vancouver based non-profit, charitable society (incorporated in 1998) devoted to presenting independent and innovative documentaries to Vancouver audiences. The society exists to educate the public about documentary film as an art form through DOXA — a curated and juried festival comprised of public screenings, workshops, panel discussions and public forums.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Documentary Media Society gratefully acknowledges the generous support of our funders, sponsors and partners.

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GREETINGS FROM OUR FUNDERS



Welcome to the 2009 DOXA Documentary Film Festival.

Our Government recognizes that arts and culture are at the heart of our Canadian identity and that creativity and innovation are vital not only to a robust Canadian culture, but also to our economy. This is why we are proud to invest in festivals and community events like the DOXA Documentary Film Festival that provide opportu-

nities for Canadians to become involved in their communities and to have greater access to arts and heritage. By screening some of the world's best documentary films and enhancing the public's enjoyment of them with workshops, panel discussions, and forums, the Festival contributes to Vancouver's cultural and economic vitality.

On behalf of Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the Government of Canada, I am pleased to support the DOXA Documentary Film Festival. Many thanks to the organizers and other partners and congratulations to all the filmmakers whose works are being screened.

The Honourable James Moore
Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages



The British Columbia Arts Council is delighted to welcome artists and audiences to the expanded 2009 DOXA Documentary Film Festival May 22 – 31, 2009. With an additional four days of festival screenings this year, Vancouver audiences can now enjoy 10 days and nights of DOXA. Giving independent media artists more opportunity to present their work to a wider public is

a hallmark of DOXA and the festival continues to garner respect from documentarians, other media artists and audiences alike for its curatorial approach to programming.

Please allow me to congratulate the Documentary Media Society's Board and staff, the artists whose work will be screened over the next 10 days, DOXA volunteers and supporters for a successful 2009 DOXA!

Sincerely,

Don Shumka
Chair, BC Arts Council



It brings me great pleasure to offer my warmest Greetings on behalf of the City of Vancouver, to everyone attending the DOXA Documentary Film Festival.

Documentary film plays an indispensable role in bringing new issues, concerns and human experiences to public attention. This year's festival, like those that have gone before, brings a remarkable

new series of films, both local and international. Vancouver's film and television production industry is one of the strongest in North America and programs like DOXA offer an important showcase for documentary productions.

Vancouver City Council is pleased to once again be a sponsor of this year's program. Have a great festival.

Yours truly,

Gregor Robertson
Mayor



For nearly a decade, DOXA has distinguished itself as a venue for independent and truly groundbreaking documentaries. As we celebrate our 70th anniversary at the National Film Board of Canada, our commitment to socially engaged filmmaking is as strong as ever.

As Canada's public film producer and distributor, we're happy to once again present the Colin Low Award

for Best Canadian Documentary here at the festival — part of our mission of telling the stories that matter to Canadians and nurturing our country's tremendous filmmaking talent.

We're also thrilled to launch a new online Screening Room at NFB.ca, where you can watch and share over 1000 productions.

Enjoy, and have a great festival!

Tom Perlmutter
Government Film Commissioner and Chairperson of the National Film Board of Canada

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WELCOME FROM DOXA

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

It's my pleasure to welcome you all to the 2009 DOXA Documentary Film Festival. In challenging times it's often the arts that provide a source of comfort and consolation for people and the beauty of documentary film is that it not only entertains, but also has the power to educate, inspire and motivate us to action.

The strength of a film festival is in the programming and the program for 2009 is exceptional. This year's festival is an expanded festival, not only in length but the number of films and screenings as well. Moving from a 6 to a 10 day festival, featuring more than 70 films, was a logical step in DOXA's evolution. DOXA has been blessed with a loyal audience since its inception and that audience has continued to grow every year. It was on the strength of this loyalty and support that our decision for expansion was made. The remarkable growth in recent years in the popularity of documentary film in general also inspired us.

This past year also saw the Documentary Media Society hire its first Executive Director, Joni Cooper. Joni will be, and has been, an instrumental part of the DOXA team and will be an invaluable resource as the festival continues to evolve.

I'd like to acknowledge all the DOXA staff for their dedication and hard work, the DOXA Board and the many dedicated volunteers, and our sponsors, donors and funders. As the old saying goes, without you we're nothing.

Enjoy the festival, and thank you for your support.

Stacy Leblanc, DOXA Board Chair

WELCOME FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am thrilled to welcome you to the 2009 DOXA Documentary Film Festival, my first festival as Executive Director. I was drawn to DOXA because of its mission to ensure that documentaries themselves, the issues and the content, remain the focus. What lured me aboard is the integrity, passion, and commitment the board and staff exuded from the very first meeting. It quickly became clear to me that at DOXA, content truly is king. And this year especially, I think you'll agree.

Partnerships are integral to ensure that content remains front and centre in that they allow us to bring issues and inspiration to diverse communities, more so than any one organization can do working alone. A greater part of DOXA's success lies in the importance and recognition given to partnerships from local community partners, sponsors and donors to national and international organizations. I'd like to thank all of DOXA's partners for joining us to help spread the word. And I'd like to thank the filmmakers and their subjects for bringing us their stories and sharing their experiences.

Words cannot describe the dedication I've witnessed while working at DOXA. My amazing colleagues and hard-working board of directors and committee members relinquish much of their time to further this vital event. And a huge thank you to the many volunteers who ensure the festival runs smoothly. We certainly couldn't do it without you! I have been inspired by my experiences these past few months and I hope you feel inspired by what you see at DOXA 2009. Thank you so much for your interest and support!

Joni Cooper, Executive Director

WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMMING

I'm excited to welcome you to ten days of astonishing, innovative documentary film. This is a year of great change at DOXA: a new Executive Director, new programs and a larger festival.

From the poignant opening film *Inside Hana's Suitcase* by Canadian Larry Weinstein, to the sublime closing film *Act of God* by Canadian Jennifer Baichwal, DOXA is showcasing some of the finest films you'll see anywhere. From music to politics, sports to swingers' clubs, women's rights to the environment, suspense to humour, I'm confident that we have something for everyone at this year's festival.

As DOXA's contribution to closing the filmmaking gender gap, the *Connexions Youth Forum* is being offered to a group of aspiring, young women filmmakers this year. A partnership with the National Film Board, *Connexions* is nurturing the filmmakers of tomorrow. We have also initiated a high school program, *Rated Y for Youth*, bringing students to DOXA as part of their school program. Also new is an enhanced partnership with Planet in Focus International Environmental Film Festival.

My heartfelt thanks to the Screening and Programming Committees, my brilliant colleagues at DOXA, as well as this year's curators, jurors and panelists for their vast contributions. Thank you to the filmmakers for their artistry and commitment. Thank you to those in the films who share their lives with us. Theirs are the moving and inspiring stories that don't make the news. Finally, thank *you* for being here — I hope you enjoy your experience at DOXA.

Kris Anderson, Director of Programming

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AWARDS

DOXA award winners are selected on the basis of three major criteria: success and innovation in the realization of the project's concept; originality and relevance of subject matter and approach; and overall artistic and technical proficiency.

DOXA FEATURE DOCUMENTARY AWARD – JURORS



Betsy Carson is a Vancouver producer with 20 years experience in documentary film and television. She works with directors Nettie Wild, Hugh Brody and Gary Marcuse, and for the last three years has been co-executive producing several feature docs with Mark Achbar. Betsy Carson currently holds the position of Co-Vice Chair of the Documentary Organization of Canada.



Selwyn Jacob joined the National Film Board in 1997 as Cultural Diversity Producer. Based in Vancouver, his most recent productions include Baljit Sangra's *Warrior Boyz*, Kamala Todd's *Indigenous Plant Diva*, *Writing the Land* directed by Kevin Lee Burton, and *River of Life* directed by Werner Walcher. He also produced the Leo Award winning *The Journey of Lesra Martin*, and *Jeni LeGon: Living in a Great Big Way*.



Fiona Tinwei Lam is a Scottish-born, Vancouver-based writer and former lawyer. Her book, *Intimate Distances*, was a finalist for the City of Vancouver Book Award. Twice short-listed for the Event literary non-fiction prize, she is a co-editor of and contributor to *Double Lives: Writing and Mothering*, published in 2008 by McGill-Queen's University Press. Her new collection of poetry, *Enter the Chrysanthemum*, has just been published by Caitlin Press.

DOXA SHORT DOCUMENTARY AWARD – JURORS



Alex Mackenzie has been a media artist for 15 years with a focus on expanded cinema and light projection. He was founder and curator of the Edison Electric Gallery of Moving Images, the Blinding Light!! Cinema and the Vancouver Underground Film Festival. His live media works are presented at festivals throughout Europe and North America. He is currently designing handmade film emulsions and manually-powered projection devices for installation and performance.



Bo Myers is a director working in film and video. Her film *The Indelible Print* was featured at the Commonwealth Games and received an award in Mexico City. *Tiny Bubbles* has screened internationally, including the Melbourne International Film Festival and the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival. A sampling of internationally exhibited commissions includes *Picture@ Platform* and *Blossom*.



Terra Poirier's award-winning films ponder themes of mothering, queerness and mental health, and have screened at festivals around the world. She has taught video production through the Vancouver Queer Film Festival, the Gulf Islands Film & Television School and the Access to Media Education Society. Terra additionally enjoys fighting the power and making buttons, books, prints and other fanciful things.

THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD COLIN LOW AWARD

Prize: Filmmaker Assistance Fund (FAP), technical services (valued at \$3,000)

Named for Colin Low, a tireless innovator and a pioneer of new techniques in filmmaking who has made extraordinary contributions to cinema in Canada and around the world. This award is presented by the NFB to the most innovative Canadian film at DOXA.

JURORS



Glace Lawrence has worked in Toronto and Vancouver's film and television industries since the late 80s. In 1999, her one-hour doc *Coming to Voice* received a Reel Black Award from the Black Film & Video Network. In 2005 Glace developed and produced a one-hour drama with Gerry Atwell for Vision TV entitled *Hotel Babylon*. She currently line produces the HGTV Canada/USA series *The Stagers* for Paperny Films.



Leah Mallen is an established producer of documentary and dramatic films based in Vancouver, BC. Her films have garnered awards at many international festivals including Cannes (*Shoes off!*) and Zurich (*Hammer & Tickle*). She helms the company Twofold Films, and is currently producing a documentary for Knowledge Network called *Desolation/Utopia*. She is also the co-Chair for DOC BC.



Doreen Manuel is of Secwepemc and Ktunuxa ancestry and is a member of the Neskonlith Band in Chase BC. She graduated from the Aboriginal Film & Television program and currently is Program Coordinator in the Indigenous Independent Digital Filmmaking program at Capilano University, as well as Canadian correspondent of Northwest Indian News and owner of Running Wolf Productions.



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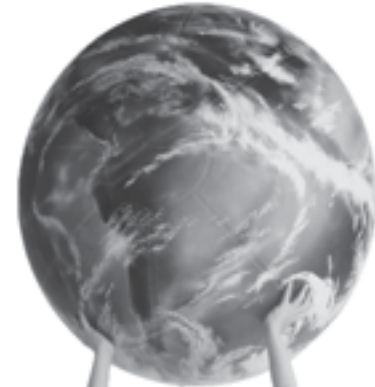


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DOXA YOUTH PROGRAMS

CONNEXIONS YOUTH FORUM

The Documentary Media Society is proud to present the 4th annual Connexions Youth Forum, an educational program designed and dedicated to fostering documentary filmmaking and storytelling skills in youth between 19 and 26 years of age. In partnership with the National Film Board of Canada, Connexions immerses young aspiring documentary filmmakers through workshops, mentoring sessions and attendance at the DOXA Festival.

Each year, the Forum focuses on a demographic that faces barriers and has limited access to documentary filmmaking. This year the emphasis is placed on gender equality. The BC Institute of Film Professionals 2005 report on Women's Labour Issues states "...women film professionals are seriously under-represented in certain occupations, especially at higher levels." To help address the disparity, DOXA put out a call to young women with basic film training, who have a desire to work in the documentary form.

DOXA and the National Film Board are pleased to welcome: Magnal Bansal, Dominique Basi, Genevieve Cloutier, Jessica Gates, Ingrid Nilson and Sarah Wong.

These young women will participate in a 9-day intensive workshop that focuses on the art of storytelling using digital media. The Forum also provides the opportunity for participants to network with each other and experienced filmmakers throughout the week as they create their own documentary project that will screen on the closing night of the DOXA Festival.

CONNEXIONS PARTNER



RATED Y FOR YOUTH

DOXA is pleased to announce Rated Y for Youth (RYY), a new program dedicated to creating enhanced opportunities for high school students (ages 12-18) to participate at the festival. While there has been informal school participation at previous DOXA festivals, Rated Y for Youth formalizes student involvement. This year, we invited more than 50 schools from around the Lower Mainland to attend screenings and participate in post-film discussions. The goal of RYY is to promote media literacy and critical dialogue to a new generation, through non-fiction, media arts. DOXA has selected programs specifically for high school students, giving them an opportunity to attend the festival, view thought-provoking documentaries, and learn to critically analyze the films and the world around them.

RYY films include: *Afghan Girls Can Kick*, *Chasing Wild Horses*, *Inside Hana's Suitcase* and *To The Tar Sands*. All of these films are classified for youth and are also open to the general public (no membership required).

RATED Y FOR YOUTH PARTNERS



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Inside Hana's Suitcase

Larry Weinstein, Canada, 2008, 93 minutes

One day Fumiko Ishioka, the coordinator of the Tokyo Holocaust Education Centre, received a battered suitcase with the name Hana Brady and the word 'Waisenkind' (orphan) painted on the front. She had no idea that this suitcase would set her on a journey that would not only change her life, but also the lives of thousands of children around the world. With the help of her young students (called the Small Wings), Fumiko decided to discover all she could about a little girl named Hana.

Her quest to put a face to a name and an old suitcase took her to the Czech Republic, where Hana was born in 1931, in the small village of Nove Mesto. When the Nazis invaded, Hana's parents were imprisoned and she was sent to a concentration camp in the walled city of Theresienstadt. In secret art classes, held without the permission of the Nazi guards, children like Hana drew what they saw and what they remembered of life before the war. These images, of picnics, swaying trees, and people holding hands, prompted Fumiko to go even further. Her search eventually led to Auschwitz, where Hana's name was marked with a single check mark, meaning she had died at the camp. But just above Hana's name, another name was inscribed: George Brady, who had survived the war. Not only had he survived, he was alive, well, and living in Toronto, with a passel of children and grandchildren of his own. George was Hana's older brother.

Director Larry Weinstein's stunning new documentary brings Hana and George's remarkable story to life using dramatic recreations, family photographs, a gorgeously orchestrated soundtrack, and interviews with the people who knew and loved Hana.

Children in Japan and Toronto, who have been moved by Hana and George's experiences, narrate the film. *Inside Hana's Suitcase* is told with immense grace, but packs a serious emotional punch. Through the small window of one little girl's experience, the impact of the Holocaust hits home. Hana's suitcase has become an enduring symbol of love and courage, and a potent reminder of the need to stand up to intolerance and hatred. Her story, standing in for the many children silenced and lost forever to history, is a poignant lesson from the past to the future. "Somehow the story was meant to be told," says George. We are the better for it.

Second screening of *Inside Hana's Suitcase*:
Monday, May 25, 1:00 pm, Pacific Cinémathèque.

FILMMAKER IN ATTENDANCE AT BOTH SCREENINGS.

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Act of God

Jennifer Baichwal, Canada, 2009, 75 minutes

When writer Paul Auster was 14 years-old, he stood beside his friend Ralph as he was struck and killed by lightning. They were on a Boy Scout hike. "There's something monumental about a lightning bolt coming from the sky, it doesn't feel like an ordinary death, it has something of the divine about it," says Auster.

The human need to make sense of a random and wildly unpredictable universe flows through director Jennifer Baichwal's new documentary *Act of God*. The film explores not only the phenomena of lightning and the experiences of people who lived through being struck (and those who did not), but poses metaphysical questions that have confounded human beings since the beginning of conscious thought.

As one woman unintentionally puns, being struck by lightning is much more than 'a bad shock.' From the advent of human society, it has occupied a symbolic role as a means of transformation and the genesis of all life. In Yoruba beliefs, it is a gift to humankind from the god Shango. To an ex-marine who was declared clinically dead for twenty-eight minutes, after being struck by lightning through the telephone, it was a means of spiritual rebirth. "Lightning and change go hand in hand, and in a single moment I was changed," he says. To others, it is a far less beneficent force. A man who lived through the death of his friend Dino, who was essentially cooked from the inside out, recounts the experience in horrifying detail.

The film features a terrific soundtrack from musician Fred Frith. He wasn't actually struck by lightning, but his neurons make their own electrical storm while he plays guitar. *Act of God* is a mysterious, discursive, and sublimely beautiful meditation on meaning and the lack thereof.

"It changed my whole way of looking at the world," says Paul Auster, who credits his experience as the reason he became a writer. "The mechanics of reality, there's no meaning to this, it's absolutely meaningless, yet this is the way the world works."

FILMMAKER IN ATTENDANCE

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A Dream for Kabul

Philippe Baylaucq, Canada, 2008, 81 minutes

In September 2001, Haruhiro Shiratori lost his son, Atsushi, in the New York City World Trade Center attacks. In the wake of this tragedy, many withdrew into their grief or talked of revenge. But Shiratori wanted to give meaning to his son's death, so he decided to travel from Japan to Afghanistan to connect with ordinary people in an attempt to end the cycle of violence. This idealistic quest, one destined to encounter any number of obstacles, begins with an unusual step: Shiratori decides to learn magic tricks.

With a flourish of the hand, he makes scarves disappear before the amazed eyes of onlookers, whether young or old, Afghan, Japanese, or American. Magic becomes a secret weapon, as Shiratori negotiates his way around the language barrier. Even the saddest child in an Afghanistan hospital bed cracks a smile when he performs his tricks.

Over four years and across three continents, filmmaker Philippe Baylaucq accompanies Shiratori, documenting his quest to build a cultural centre for the children of Kabul. Everywhere he goes, he preaches, persuades, and relentlessly fundraises. Shiratori speaks about the suffering of Afghan children. He remembers his own war-torn childhood in Japan and looking at the children of Kabul, he sees himself, a child in a bombed-out city. The memory still haunts him.

His idea is to build a park, in commemoration of his son, on a hill overlooking Kabul. The plans are drawn up by one of Japan's greatest architects, Kishō Kurokawa, who offers his services for free. They include areas where people can assemble, a school, a water reservoir, and a garden of 911 Sakura cherry trees: a place where the cultures of Japan and Afghanistan can meet.

It's not just love for his lost son that drives Shiratori on, but his hope for the future of humanity and harmony between nations. Certainly, his quest is reminiscent of many Western interventions in Afghanistan, packed with good intentions and booby-trapped at every step. But one thing is certain: the world needs magic more than ever, and Haruhiro Shiratori is fiercely determined to provide it.



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Shooting Women

Alexis Krasilovsky, USA, 2008, 54 minutes

Shooting Women features over fifty women cinematographers and directors from around the world. It was shot over a period of six years by pioneering filmmaker and cinema studies professor Alexis Krasilovsky. And it celebrates the amazing talent and unf inching spirit of image-making women, from the sets of Hollywood and Bollywood to the war zones of Afghanistan.

This internationally-acclaimed documentary, based on Krasilovsky's book 'Women Behind the Camera,' broaches the persistent issues encountered by women in film. From the glass ceiling, sexual harassment, childcare for professional camerawomen around the globe, and working in environments where raising such issues is seen as 'unprofessional.'

Seasoned film professionals tell incredible stories of working under intolerable conditions of harassment, intimidation, and sexual assault. Names of a few well-known men are dropped and some bitter truths are laid on the table. Krasilovsky's ambitious endeavor paints a portrait of a historically male-dominated profession with progress still being made at a snail's pace. While today some may view the film industry as progressive, the boys' club reigns and women are an extremely small minority as cinematographers and directors.

With wide-ranging access and rich diversity, *Shooting Women* offers insight from top directors of photography like Ellen Kuras (*Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*) and Sandi Sissel (*Salaam Bombay!*), as well as Canadian cinematographers Zoe Dirse and Joan Hutton. The film also tells the story of groundbreaking women like African-American Jessie Maple Patton, who sued the American union and networks for the right to work. From historic footage of Mao's travels from China's first camerawoman and secretly filmed beatings of women in Afghanistan, to clips of horror, Hollywood, and experimental films, viewers get a glimpse of how women behind the camera are changing the world of filmmaking.

Followed by a public forum: *Underrepresented – Women Behind the Camera*.

COMMUNITY PARTNER



FORUM: Underrepresented – Women Behind the Camera

In a recent study on women in the British Columbian film industry, statistics showed that women are significantly underrepresented in the positions of writer, director, and director of photography. What are the barriers facing women in filmmaking? This forum puts the issue of gender squarely on the table for discussion with veteran, mid-career, and emerging documentary filmmakers.

MODERATOR

Rina Fraticelli is an independent documentary producer and writer whose credits have garnered multiple awards. As Executive Producer of Studio D, the National Film Board's groundbreaking women's studio, she oversaw the production of numerous landmark films. From 2002 to 2006, she was Executive Producer of the NFB Pacific and Yukon Studio. Fraticelli currently produces *Women in View 2010*, a global multi-disciplinary forum and festival of women in media.

PARTICIPANTS

Karen Cho is a Montreal-based filmmaker interested in documentary and other narrative forms. Karen's films often recount untold histories and explore themes of immigration, activism, identity, and social justice. Karen is interested in using film as a tool for social debate. She has received several awards for her work and her recent film *Seeking Refuge* has its Western Canadian festival premiere at DOXA this year.

Moira Simpson's work as an award-winning freelance director, cinematographer and editor spans thirty years. The subjects of her films range from strife in Kosovo, to youth drug addiction, to aid in Africa. She was recently Director of Photography on *Finding Dawn*, on the epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous women across Canada. As filmmaker in residence with *Fearless City Mobile* and W2, Mo is currently exploring mobile phone video technology.

Kamala Todd is a Métis-Cree/German filmmaker, community planner, and mother, with a Master's degree in urban geography. She was Aboriginal Social Planner for the City of Vancouver for six years. She writes and directs for the APTN children's Cree television series *Nehiyawetan*. Her most recent film, *Indigenous Plant Diva* (NFB), premiered at the Vancouver International Film Festival. Kamala is creator and director of Storyscapes, a multimedia Aboriginal community arts project.

Aerlyn Weissman has worked on films from Hollywood to the Himalayas. As a writer/director she has won two Genie awards and made films on a wide range of topics from forensic archaeology and digital technologies, to censorship and social issues. She recently received a Master's degree in digital media. Whether she is creating data visualizations or shooting historical recreations, her signature approach involves a seamless blend of documentary, digital and dramatic elements.

This forum follows the screening of *Shooting Women*. Forum is free of charge.

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Shots in the Dark

Lina B. Moreco, Canada, 2008, 85 minutes

The incidence of autism in the United States is currently estimated at 1 out of every 150 children. These staggering statistics are made fresh in director Lina B. Moreco's documentary *Shots in the Dark*.

The recommended number of vaccinations for children has doubled in the last quarter century. Beginning at 12 hours of age and continuing throughout early childhood, most kids receive over 48 doses of 14 different vaccines before they reach age 6. Some of these vaccines contain mercury, aluminum, and other assorted neurotoxins. Parents who have experienced the repercussions of vaccinations reveal the true scope of the problem. "I wish I hadn't listened to the doctor, who said you have to vaccinate your child," says the mother of twin boys, one whom developed severe autism after receiving his MMR shot (Measles Mumps Rubella). In addition to the families who have been affected by vaccine injury, pediatricians and researchers offer their own experiences. They reveal that many doctors have little knowledge about the potential side-effects of thimerosal (mercury), lead, and other additives in vaccines.

While the medical profession maintains that more vaccinations equal better public health, the evidence is often sorely lacking. Exposure to mercury and aluminum is still little understood, and the repercussions of injecting extremely young children with intensely toxic materials even less so. It remains to be determined whether the stunning rise in rates of autism, multiple sclerosis, encephalitis, paralysis, and many other neuropathies is directly attributable to increased vaccinations. But what is explicitly clear is that much more research must be undertaken.

Far from rejecting the documented benefits of vaccination, *Shots in the Dark* makes very clear that, in the name of the greater good, great suffering has been inflicted on the most vulnerable members of society. And the film asks the necessary question, at what point is this trade-off unacceptable?

COMMUNITY PARTNER





Robinsons of Mantsinsaari

Victor Asliuk, Belarus, 2008, 56 minutes

Robinsons of Mantsinsaari tells the story of two men, the only people now living on a Russian-controlled island on Lake Ladoga. Although they are the sole inhabitants on the island of Mantsinsaari, neither speaks to the other. One of the men is of Belarusian origin, the other of Finnish origin. Between them, there is a long history.

With stunning cinematography and a dose of humour, the film observes the last two human residents of the island, lingering on nature, the daily routines of the men, and the activities of their animals. In this beautiful natural environment, their irreplaceable animals fulfill the function of friends and family for the men. Although the men don't socialize together, the elder man's dog runs between both homes carrying on his own relationships. Occasionally, the younger of the two men climbs up a hill during the evening to see if the light is still burning at his neighbour's house.

Both residents have lived on the island for over twenty years, without speaking to each other for much of that time. Matti and Klunya are both faithful citizens of their home. As long as they live, their small state will be called 'the inhabited island Mantsinsaari.' This beautifully crafted film provides us with the great assurance that the art of documentary filmmaking is alive and well.

PRECEDED BY:

Ma'rib – Traces of Stones

Rainer Komers, Germany, 2008, 30 minutes

Ma'rib is the second installation in a tetralogy that examines destroyed cities, with each film connected to one of the four elements. *Ma'rib* is 'earth' in the form of sand, soil, and stone. The city is 150 kilometres east of Yemen's capital, where the mountains meet the Rhub al-Khali desert. Four thousand diesel pumps irrigate the oasis and a new power station will supply mass electricity. Without dialogue or narration, the film's stark offering of habits, rhythms, and gestures of a rugged country zigzags between sociological observation and sudden poetry.



Hair India

Raffaele Brunetti and Marco Leopardi, Italy, 2008, 75 minutes

Hair India tells a story about beauty in today's globalized economy. In a village in the Federal state of West Bengal, Gita offers her medium-length hair in the Hindu temple. Her family has no money or jewels but, by cutting her hair off, she earns the respect of the entire village. Her healthy hair is a precious possession. Until recently, hair donated to temples like Gita's was usually swept up and burned or used to stuff mattresses. In today's irony-laden economy, companies like Rome's Great Lengths collect that hair and spin it into hair extension gold.

Great Lengths' extensions are considered to be the 'Rolls Royce' of hair extensions — thanks in no small part to the rows and rows of workers in a Bangalore factory who pick through and process mountains of hair by hand. The extensions are then shipped to Italy for Great Lengths to distribute to beauty salons all over the world. Driving their sales is an international marketing and publicity operation, pushing prices of installed Great Lengths sets into several thousand dollars for the Christina Aguilera and Jessica Simpsons of the world.

Enter Sangeeta, the successful editor for the celebrity gossip magazine 'Hello!', India edition. As part of Mumbai's growing upper-middle class, Sangeeta treats herself to a set of Great Lengths extensions before a television interview, a round of fashion shows, and a few nights out. *Hair India* provides a kaleidoscopic look at today's India and the complex interplay between a rapidly modernizing economy and ancient ideas and traditions.

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The Queen and I

Nahid Persson Sarvestani, Germany/Sweden/Egypt/France/USA, 2008, 89 minutes

In her award-winning documentary *Prostitution Behind the Veil*, Nahid Persson Sarvestani expressed fierce criticism of the position of women in her native country, Iran. This drove the Islamic regime to accuse the leftist documentary-maker of monarchist sympathies. The reality is, however, that Sarvestani was a revolutionary who helped overthrow the monarchy in the 1979 revolution.

In reaction to the reprimands, she decided to make a film about Farah Pahlavi: the last Iranian queen, widow of the Shah of Iran, her adversary who, like herself, lives in exile abroad.

This leads to a fascinating encounter between two women, with clashing political visions, who develop an improbable friendship over two years of filming. During that period, the two confront each other about their pasts, question their former beliefs, and share their grievances.

However, when the queen finds out that Sarvestani was a communist (and hadn't disclosed that), the filming stopped for six months. After Farah sees the trailer and approves, shooting resumes.

Perhaps out of fear that the 70 year-old former queen will refuse further cooperation, Sarvestani doesn't ask confrontational questions about the Shah's heartless regime. She also feels conflicted about her growing affection for a woman whose husband she so vehemently opposed.

In the end, the unusual relationship grows between the two as they realize they have much in common. They are two strong women who have risen above hardships to continue evolving towards a positive future.



Milking the Rhino

David E. Simpson, USA, 2008, 83 minutes

A ferocious kill on the Serengeti... dire warnings about endangered species... These clichés of nature documentaries ignore a key feature of the landscape: villagers just off-camera, who navigate the dangers and costs of living with wildlife on a daily basis. When seen at all, rural Africans are often depicted as the problem; they poach animals and encroach on habitat. They spoil our myth of wild Africa.

Milking the Rhino tells a more nuanced tale of human-wildlife coexistence in post-colonial Africa. The Maasai tribe of Kenya and Namibia's Himba, two of Earth's oldest cattle cultures, are in the midst of upheaval. Emerging from a century of 'white man conservation,' which turned their lands into game reserves and fueled resentment towards wildlife, Himba and Maasai communities are now vying for a piece of the wildlife-tourism pie.

Community-based conservation, which tries to balance the needs of wildlife and people, has been touted by environmentalists as 'win-win.' The reality is more complex. "We never used to benefit from these animals," a Maasai host of a community eco-lodge explains. "Now we milk them like cattle!" His neighbor disagrees: "A rhino means nothing to me! I can't kill it for meat like a cow." And when drought decimates the grass shared by livestock and wildlife, the community's commitment to conservation is sorely tested.

Charting the collision of ancient ways with Western expectations, *Milking the Rhino* tells intimate, hopeful, and heartbreaking stories of people facing deep cultural change.

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Youssou N'Dour: I Bring What I Love

Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi, USA, 2008, 102 minutes

Arguably the most famous African musician of all time, once described by Rolling Stone magazine as 'a singer with a voice so extraordinary the history of Africa seems locked inside it,' Youssou N'Dour bridges two worlds; he is both an international pop star and a West African griot (traditional musical storyteller). Over the past thirty years N'Dour has collaborated with superstars like Bono, Neneh Cherry, and Peter Gabriel, while touring and performing incessantly before millions of passionate fans. An advocate for human rights, the Grammy-winning tenor has become an inspiration for millions.

A devout Sufi Muslim, in 2004 N'Dour released 'Egypt', a deeply personal and religiously expressive album. Through this music, he aimed to promote a more tolerant face of Islam. It was a bold move at a time when so much dialogue in the West about Islam centred on Islamofascism and religious intolerance. At home in Senegal, N'Dour faced a totally different problem. He was criticized for performing and releasing his album during Ramadan and, almost instantly, conservative Senegalese rejected the album. It was denounced as blasphemous; he simply wasn't religious enough. Merchants quickly returned their copies and N'Dour became a centre of controversy. Director Chai Vasarhelyi and her crew follow N'Dour over the course of two years, filming events and concerts in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and America. She tells the story of how an unfappable N'Dour faces these challenges and eventually wins over audiences both at home and abroad.

Youssou N'Dour: I Bring What I Love opens the door to a life that began humbly, out of traditions and the human desire to share one's joy of music, and rose to become one of Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World. N'Dour's unwavering warmth and astonishing talent in concert will be a wonderful surprise for first-time listeners and a great treat for his many fans.

Winner, Special Jury Prize, Middle East International Film Festival

Winner, Audience Award, São Paulo International Film Festival



Nobody's Perfect

Niko von Glasow, Germany, 2008, 84 minutes

Niko von Glasow was exposed to the drug Thalidomide in the womb. As a result he was born with phocomelia, a birth defect in which the bones of the arms and legs are very short or entirely absent. "The first thing people react to when they meet me is how I look," says Niko. "...All my life I've tried not to think about my disability, tried to ignore the truth." Now, instead of hiding, Niko decides to uncover everything and pose naked with eleven other adult Thalidomide survivors, for a photo shoot.

Each person chronicled in *Nobody's Perfect* is uniquely different, and in a series of frank conversations, they talk about growing up in a world that had little use for them. The film deals with the complex aspects of disability; sexuality, family, self-hatred, even thoughts of suicide. But the most interesting aspect of Niko's film is how each person copes with their disability. Blunt humour and honesty helps disperse what one man calls 'the orgy of compassion.'

As the photo shoot draws closer, the participants' nerves begin to show. But when the towels finally drop and the camera begins to roll, something unexpected happens. From the image of one woman leaping naked in midair, to Niko's young son laughing and pointing at his father's penis, the joy and beauty of each individual shines forth. When the photos are displayed in a public exhibition, they provoke surprising reactions. What emerges is a remarkable portrait of the human spirit in all its glorious imperfection.

PRECEDED BY:

Ivan and Lorian

Stefano Cattini, Italy, 11 minutes, 2008

A beautiful portrait of two deaf children in nursery school. Ivan and Lorian communicate with 'child signs', but the nuns want the children to speak. Sweet Ivan loves playing with mischievous Lorian, who roars like a lioness when she is fed up with practicing in front of a mirror.

Sound Shadows

Julie Engaas, Norway, 2008, 7 minutes

'Many people think that I live in darkness, but before my eyes there is nothing. Just air.' An award-winning animated short exploring the perceptions of a blind woman.

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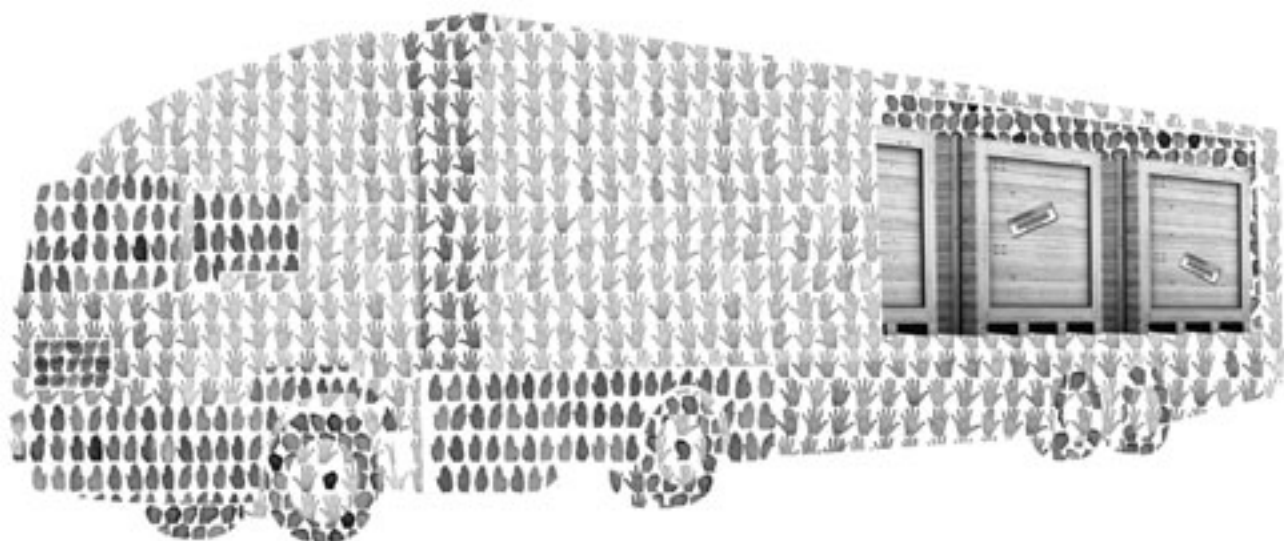


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...And Music

Michel Lam, Canada, 2008, 75 minutes

At the Sacré-Cœur School in Sherbrooke, Quebec, music is not just a subject, it is the only subject. It infuses every aspect of education, from math to physical education. Director Michel Lam's exquisitely made documentary is filled with the gentle rhythms of life in the classroom; you can almost smell the chalk dust hanging in the air. Lam, himself an alumnus of Sacré-Cœur, returns to follow three students over the course of one year.

On the first day of school, the stillness of an empty classroom is broken by the sound of a solitary cello. But as the kids arrive from their summer holidays, the hallways begin to reverberate with sound. While older students are out of practice, kindergarten students are fitted with tiny instruments. Alexis is learning to play the violin and to ride the school bus. Rachel, sporting a mouthful of braces, listens to Shania Twain; she has little use for classical music. Anne-Catherine, between childhood and teenagehood, clings to the solidity of her cello. As the school year moves from fall, to winter, to spring, the kids prepare for the final concert, and the excitement and sadness of the year's end resounds.

Imbued with a warmth that neither sentimentalizes nor belittles its small subjects, *...And Music* is a thoughtful look at how learning an instrument informs every level of education, adding a depth of meaning and possibility.

PRECEDED BY:

The Happiness Project

Christopher Mills, Canada, 2009, 6 minutes

The natural cadence of peoples' speech can sometimes carry beautiful melodies. Charles Spearin, a founding member of the rock collective Broken Social Scene, interviewed his Toronto neighbours looking for those 'accidental' melodies. He then arranged them into songs based loosely on the theme of happiness.



Ex-voto for Three Souls

Diego Rivera Kohn, Canada/Mexico, 2008, 45 minutes

In Mexico, many men and women live within the fragility of a precarious existence, hoping for a miracle to change their destiny. But for miracles to occur, one must stand firm in one's beliefs, despite life's uncertain outcome.

Ex-voto for Three Souls weaves together the stories of three people who share a deep reliance on faith as they wait for a miracle to unfold. Cristian, a young man literally trying to fight his way out of poverty, places every hope in winning a championship title that will establish him as a professional boxer. Meanwhile, eighty year-old María-Teresa searches deep within herself for the faith to enlighten her doctors as they prepare for her surgery to prevent another heart attack. Luis, the fisherman, serenely awaits the end of food shortages and for fish to finally succumb to his net.

With a languid mise-en-scene reminiscent of a Frederick Wiseman film and brilliant transitions that would inspire Errol Morris, *Ex-voto for Three Souls* is documentary making at its best. Director Diego Rivera Kohn sweeps the viewer into the mental states of Cristian, María-Teresa, and Luis: three fighters who never abandon the dreams that keep them alive. In this way, the film reveals the transcendental aim in each person's existence: the capacity to imagine that destiny can change.

FILMMAKER IN ATTENDANCE

PRECEDED BY:

Slaves

Hanna Heilborn & David Aronowitsch, Sweden, 2008, 15 mins

"We were abducted — my mother, father, sister and me. They killed my parents and separated me from my sister," Abouk tells us in a low voice. *Slaves* is an animated film about nine year old Abouk and fifteen year old Machiek who, like thousands of children, were kidnapped by government-sponsored militia in Sudan. Though their horrific experiences are raw, the children have dreams for the future and when asked what they would like to be when they grow up, they reply; 'teacher' and 'doctor'.

Winner, Best Short Documentary, IDFA

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The Art of the Short Documentary

Virtuoso

Terry Stone, Canada, 2007, 9 minutes

Virtuoso explores the mastery of the Theremin through Kamil Nasr, a young Vancouver musician reviving the first electronic instrument.

Presidio Modelo

Pablo Alvarez-Mesa, Canada, 2008, 15 minutes

The walls in the prison crumble, revealing a past that has been covered by layers of thick yellow paint.

Le Parkour

Eric Morrison, Canada, 2008, 8 minutes

Four young men demonstrate the excitement and danger in the exhilarating discipline of Parkour.

Innocence on Ice

Astra Burka, Canada, 2004, 3 minutes

A tribute to the movement and talent of world champion figure skater Petra Burka, using 1960s footage and original music inspired by the performance.

Dexilic

Daniel Plante, Canada, 2009, 5 minutes

An artist with dyslexia explores life through her bold paintings.

The World According to Traudi

Veronique Glorieux & Muriel Beasse, Canada, 2008, 14 minutes

In a small district of Munich a sparky woman runs a small store from another era.

The Real Place

Cam Christiansen, Canada, 2008, 5 minutes

Animator Cam Christiansen gives playwright John Murrell's imagination free rein, suspending the laws of time and space, to create a visual accompaniment to Murrell's flights of fancy.

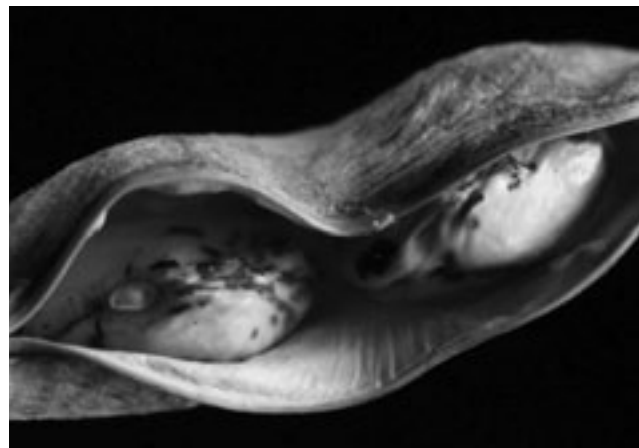
Succo Pomodori

Astra Burka, Canada, 2006, 3 minutes

An operatic homage to the Italian ladies who came to Canada and still perform the tradition of making tomato sauce in the laneways of Little Italy in Toronto.

Followed by a discussion on the art of the short documentary, facilitated by Simon Fraser University film professor Colin Browne.

FILMMAKERS IN ATTENDANCE



PLANET IN FOCUS CO-PRESENTS

Eternal Mash

Catherine Van Campen, Netherlands, 2007, 53 minutes

Master Dutch horticulturist Ruurd Walrecht sorted, protected, and preserved the seeds of rare vegetables on the brink of extinction. One day he stopped, packed his collection, and disappeared somewhere in Sweden, along with his knowledge of these endangered plant species. He has never been heard from again. Lamenting this loss is exceptional panoply of helpers who were part of an enterprise driven by his mission: Reid De Jong, a Dutch version of a rugged individualist; Peter ten Bookum, a former graphic designer living a nomadic existence in the wilderness; Boele Ytsma, still mourning his colleague's departure. Each is as unique as the extraordinary plants and vegetables they so lovingly nurture and cultivate. Beautifully rendered, this cinematic tour-de-force is a celebration of rare authenticity in our world.

PRECEDED BY:

Intestines of the Earth

Olivier Barbier, France, 2006, 13 minutes

Our ecosystem and biodiversity relies heavily on the intestines of the world: worms. The use of pesticides is seriously endangering these vital creatures. Without their constant production and recycling of organic matter there will be severe repercussions on the planet. This surprising short film shows us this mechanism up close and personal.

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Shining Stars

Yael Kipper, Israel, 2008, 61 minutes

preceded by

Maytal

Yael Kipper, Israel, 1997, 50 minutes

On March 4th, 1996, in a crowded shopping district in downtown Tel-Aviv, a suicide bomber detonated a 20-kilogram nail bomb, killing 13 people. A young woman named Maytal was seriously wounded in the attack and her younger brother, Assaf, was killed instantly. Three months later, director Yael Kipper began documenting Maytal's life as she began coping with her new body and her new life. Badly burned, with one leg amputated mid-thigh, the depth of Maytal's trauma manifests itself in her blank, disassociated gaze. As she learns to walk with a prosthesis and frets about the state of her hair, which was mostly burnt off in the attack, images from her past, in the form of family videos and pictures, reveal a very different young woman. Beautiful and carefree, she is almost unrecognizable from the damaged person she has become. Throughout her recovery, Maytal's husband Steve bears the brunt of his wife's inability to engage emotionally. As Maytal begins to recover physically, the slow dissolution of her marriage speaks to her far deeper wounds.

The film's second installment, *Shining Stars*, begins nine years later. Maytal has separated from Steve and is undergoing fertility treatments to have a baby as a single parent. Almost single-minded in her determination, she endures multiple procedures. In doing so, she triggers memories that re-emerge with all their razor-edged pain and grief. As Maytal is forced to come to terms with the impact of her brother's death and her own inability to form a lasting relationship, the repercussions of tragedy are revealed. *Shining Stars* traces the slow movement back to empathy and love, with an astounding level of intimacy. Maytal does not spare herself from her own blunt honesty. Stubborn, harsh, and often not particularly likable, she nevertheless holds the screen through sheer force of personality. What emerges from her journey is a fascinating portrait of a woman who survived horror and somehow remade herself and her life, one slow step at a time.

COMMUNITY PARTNER



The Meaning of Life

Hugh Brody, Canada, 2008, 82 minutes

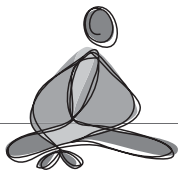
The Meaning of Life takes us into an innovative program for rehabilitating prisoners, a collaboration between the Chehalis Nation of British Columbia and Correctional Service of Canada. Filmed over the course of two years at *Kwikwèxwelhp* (formerly known as the Elbow Lake Correctional Facility), the film exposes a different way to look at the concepts underlying punishment and rehabilitation. It proposes that, by including community in the process, the current prison system can be significantly changed. Director Hugh Brody was granted unparalleled access to prisoners and staff at the facility, as well as to the Chehalis Nation elders who run the program.

Over half of the men at Kwikwèxwelhp are from First Nations backgrounds. The others have agreed to accept Aboriginal spirituality and community as central elements in rehabilitation programs. Most of them are serving life sentences. The men followed in this film have committed murders, armed robberies, and sexual assault. All the inmates are struggling to find meaning in lives that have gone agonizingly, terrifyingly wrong. One of the men asked the central question of the film in his own way: *You commit yourself to death; you've taken away your life by taking a life... where do I go from there?*

In the film, we hear the voices of many who have never been heard, people who have lived in deep silences of the soul. Childhood abuse, experiences at residential schools, the violence of the streets — the men speak openly and intimately about these elements of their lives. They take us on a journey into what it means to be among the most disadvantaged, vulnerable, and violent populations in Canadian society. The pain of some men, when speaking of their childhood, is palpable.

The Meaning of Life asks the difficult question: is there a justice system where we can find forgiveness and redemption?

FILMMAKERS IN ATTENDANCE



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Yodok Stories

Andrzej Fidyk, Norway, 2008, 82 minutes

In North Korea, the human capacity for cruelty has entered bizarre new territory. The Yodok concentration camp houses more than 200,000 men, women and children, who are considered class enemies by the state. Entire families are sent to the camp, if even one member is suspected of seditious activity or thought. George Orwell, at his bleakest, could not have conceived of state-mandated horror on such a gargantuan scale. Director Andrzej Fidyk first came to familiarity with the nature of North Korea while making the documentary *The Parade* (1988). It followed a massive celebration for Kim Jong-il featuring 50,000 children performing in perfect regimented harmony. Fidyk was struck by the scale of this propaganda and by the professionalism of its presentation. He wanted to document what was happening inside this country that has been sealed off from the world for decades.

Together with Jung Sung San, a defector trained in North Korean theatrical style, Fidyk creates a large-scale musical based on the stories of seven people. The musical includes both prisoners and guards from Yodok and the result of their collaboration begs description. Those who suffered torture and who lost their families matter-of-factly relate details of life in the camp. During the play's production, they advise on everything from marching formations to the most efficient means of performing mass executions. The adage that truth is always stranger than fiction doesn't quite do the story justice.

The larger political implications are made clear in the film's final coda. With more than 22 million people slowly starving to death, strangers snatching women and children off the street and eating them is not uncommon. But despite the talk about a united country, South Korea, a modern and affluent nation, doesn't have much interest in helping its northern neighbours: people who have never seen a bank machine or used a credit card. With little more than rhetoric about reunification, the only action South Korean people can take is to float balloons across the border, filled with pamphlets and plastic bags. An utter revelation, *Yodok Stories* must be seen to be believed, but even that proves insufficient in the face of the unimaginable reality of life inside North Korea.

COMMUNITY PARTNER



Soneros: The Sound of the River

Inti Cordera, Mexico, 2007, 76 minutes

This visually and musically uplifting documentary explores the tradition of Mexican country music, called 'Son Jarocho', in the state of Veracruz, Mexico. Along the Tesechoacan River, the sound of 'son' music can be heard from many older musicians — their beautiful songs plucked on battered guitars and carried on the wind as they play alongside the river.

Like so many communities globally, just as traditional music risks disappearance, young people are taking up a cultural revival, learning from the elder musicians while they're still alive. Veracruz is no exception. Both formally and informally, in families and neighbourhoods, young people are getting together to play this music and renew these traditions — singing and dancing at outdoor community parties.

There is also an effort to teach young people to build instruments. This works to preserve the musical wisdom of the aging 'son' musicians who, for decades, have inhabited the banks of the Tesechoacan River. It's inspiring to watch young women and men, some of them children, learn to sing, dance, and play with such dignity and style.

Set to the beautiful soundtrack of the musicians in the film, *Soneros: The Sound of the River* shares the story of how both old and young generations are fighting a battle against modernity, keeping their music, celebrations, and way of life alive. Through the voices of these men, women, children, and the sound of their instruments, we experience the joy of the fandango party.

COMMUNITY PARTNER



FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

FRIDAY MAY 22	7:30 PM	G7	Inside Hana's Suitcase [CANADA]	<i>Opening Night Film</i>	PAGE 17
SATURDAY MAY 23	12:00 PM	PC	A Dream for Kabul [CANADA]		PAGE 20
	12:30 PM	VT	Shooting Women [USA]		PAGE 21
	1:30 PM	VT	Underrepresented: Women Behind the Camera	<i>Public Forum*</i>	PAGE 21
	2:00 PM	PC	Shots in the Dark [CANADA]		PAGE 22
	4:30 PM	PC	Robinsons of Mantsinsaari [BELARUS]		PAGE 23
	4:30 PM	VT	Hair India [ITALY]		PAGE 23
	6:30 PM	VT	The Queen and I [SWEDEN]		PAGE 25
	7:00 PM	PC	Milking the Rhino [USA]		PAGE 25
	9:00 PM	PC	Youssou N'Dour: I Bring What I Love [USA]		PAGE 27
	9:00 PM	VT	Nobody's Perfect [GERMANY]		PAGE 27
SUNDAY MAY 24	12:00 PM	PC	...And Music [CANADA]		PAGE 29
	12:30 PM	VT	Ex-voto for Three Souls [CANADA/MEXICO]		PAGE 29
	2:00 PM	VT	The Art of the Short Documentary		PAGE 31
	2:00 PM	PC	Eternal Mash [NETHERLANDS]		PAGE 31
	4:00 PM	PC	Shining Stars / Maytal [ISRAEL]		PAGE 33
	4:30 PM	VT	The Meaning of Life [CANADA]		PAGE 33
	6:30 PM	PC	Yodok Stories [NORWAY]		PAGE 35
	7:00 PM	VT	Soneros: The Sound of the River [MEXICO]		PAGE 35
	8:30 PM	PC	Forgetting Dad [GERMANY]		PAGE 39
	9:00 PM	VT	7915 KM [AUSTRIA]		PAGE 39
MONDAY MAY 25	1:00 PM	PC	Inside Hana's Suitcase [CANADA]		PAGE 17
	3:30 PM	PC	Tulku [CANADA]		PAGE 41
	6:00 PM	PC	Seeking Refuge [CANADA]		PAGE 41
	7:00 PM	VT	Who The Jew Are You? [CANADA]		PAGE 42
	8:30 PM	PC	Transit Dubai [NETHERLANDS]		PAGE 43
	9:00 PM	VT	Pulling John [USA]		PAGE 43
TUESDAY MAY 26	1:00 PM	PC	Chasing Wild Horses [CANADA]		PAGE 45
	3:30 PM	PC	The Memories of Angels [CANADA]		PAGE 45
	6:30 PM	PC	Waterlife [CANADA]		PAGE 47
	7:00 PM	VT	Word Within the Word [INDIA]		PAGE 47
	9:00 PM	PC	I Want to Grow Old in China [CANADA]		PAGE 49
	9:00 PM	VT	The Dungeon Masters [USA]		PAGE 49

G7 Empire Granville 7 Theatre, 855 Granville Street | **PC** Pacific Cinémathèque, 1131 Howe Street | **VT** Vancity Theatre, 1181 Seymour Street

WEDNESDAY MAY 27	1:00 PM	PC	To The Tar Sands [CANADA]	PAGE 51
	3:00 PM	PC	Here Are The News [CANADA]	PAGE 51
	6:30 PM	PC	Mirage of El Dorado [CANADA]	PAGE 53
	7:00 PM	VT	Necrobusiness [SWEDEN]	PAGE 53
	8:30 PM	PC	The Sixties: From 1969 to 2009 [USA]	PAGE 55
	9:00 PM	VT	The One Percent [USA]	PAGE 55
THURSDAY MAY 28	1:00 PM	PC	Afghan Girls Can Kick [UK / AFGHANISTAN]	PAGE 57
	3:30 PM	PC	The Sweetest Embrace: Return to Afghanistan [CANADA]	PAGE 57
	6:30 PM	VT	Devil's Bargain: A Journey into the Small Arms Trade [CANADA]	PAGE 59
	7:00 PM	PC	In a Dream [USA]	PAGE 59
	9:00 PM	PC	Say My Name [USA/UK]	PAGE 61
	9:00 PM	VT	American Swing [USA]	PAGE 61
FRIDAY MAY 29	1:00 PM	PC	Land of Oil and Water [CANADA]	PAGE 63
	3:30 PM	PC	Where is the Line? <i>Public Forum*</i>	PAGE 63
	6:30 PM	VT	Rough Aunties [SOUTH AFRICA]	PAGE 65
	7:00 PM	PC	The Tree Lover [SWEDEN]	PAGE 65
	9:00 PM	PC	The Garden [USA]	PAGE 67
	9:00 PM	VT	Carmen Meets Borat [NETHERLANDS]	PAGE 67
SATURDAY MAY 30	12:00 PM	VT	Jehad In Motion [CANADA] <i>Installation & Artist Talk*</i>	PAGE 68
	12:30 PM	PC	Upstream Battle [GERMANY]	PAGE 69
	2:00 PM	PC	The Ecology of Films <i>Public Forum*</i>	PAGE 69
	2:30 PM	VT	Welfare [USA]	PAGE 71
	4:00 PM	PC	My Mother's Farm [NORWAY]	PAGE 71
	7:30 PM	G7	Act of God [CANADA] <i>Closing Night Film</i>	PAGE 19
SUNDAY MAY 31	TBA	There will be six repeat screenings of films that sell out during the festival. Check www.doxafestival.ca for the latest updates.		

* Public Forums and Richard Fung Installation are free of charge.

G7 Empire Granville 7 Theatre, 855 Granville Street | **PC** Pacific Cinémathèque, 1131 Howe Street | **VT** Vancity Theatre, 1181 Seymour Street

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Forgetting Dad

Matthew Sweetwood and Rick Minnich, Germany, 2008, 83 minutes

If your father no longer remembers you, does he stop being your father?

In 1990, one week after a seemingly harmless car accident, Richard Minnich, a California data processing executive and father of five, wakes up with total amnesia. He no longer recognizes his wife and children and has great difficulty with the simplest daily tasks. The doctors are baffled, as there is no evidence of brain damage or other physical causes. For the family, the event marks the beginning of a never-ending nightmare. Within a few seconds, the first forty-five years of this man's life are erased forever. From one day to the next, the man they knew as their husband and father had become a stranger.

During the eighteen years since the fateful accident, a new person has developed: from the "Old Richard," as the man calls his former self, emerges "New Richard." He leaves his family and, with a new girlfriend, embarks upon a completely new life far removed from his old existence. Filmmaker Rick Minnich is "Old Richard's" eldest son from his first marriage. Sixteen years after his father's "new start," Rick returns to California with a camera to investigate why his father's memory still hasn't returned.

He makes inquiries into his father's illness and examines the suspicions and rumours that soon arose after the amnesia began. With the help of family members, old Super 8 home movies and a former colleague of Richard's, Rick reconstructs, in detective-story fashion, the period of time before and the years following the accident. Along the way, Rick not only discovers many deep-rooted emotions that were never dealt with, but also uncovers startling facts that shed a very different light on his father's memory loss. Was Richard really struck by a horrible affliction, or was he perhaps trying to escape from a life he could no longer lead?

Winner of the IDFA Special Jury Award



7915 KM

Nikolaus Geyrhalt, Austria, 2008, 105 minutes

The title, '7915 KM', refers to the length of the legendary Paris to Dakar Rally as it was raced in 2007 from Lisbon, Portugal to Dakar, Senegal. This would be the last race through the North African desert due to fears of terrorist attacks. 7915 KM is not about the race, however, but about the places that the race passes through. This road documentary begins where the cars and motorcycles leave their dust clouds behind, with the people who live along the route in Morocco, Mauritania, Mali, and Senegal.

The contrast between the motorized visitors and the local population is striking. The camera encounters men, women, and children who have stories about daily life, their work, happiness, worries and hopes. Meeting them eye to eye, they set the film's pace. We meet a girl and her goat (named Rally) in a small Moroccan village; Saharawi soldiers who have been guarding a stretch of desert for decades, its borders still undefined after the Spanish colonizers withdrew; a Mauritanian caterpillar driver who must feed his family though he reached retirement age years ago; the owner of a movie theatre in Mali who attempts to compete with the booming DVD and internet market by showing 'white porn' from the 70s; and a young Senegalese woman who gives a tour of houses being built by villagers working in Europe.

One local is surprised that the racers trust their navigation systems more than his knowledge of the land. Another local comments 'how rich the whites must be that they can just drive around all day.' Many of the people want to immigrate to Europe, assuming they would have a chance at a better life there. As one person comments, 'Europeans don't have to do anything. They're all rich and just enjoy life.'

The film is worth it for the cinematography alone, which captures such diverse and gorgeous geographies as the Moroccan desert, the deserts of the Saharan Republic, and the lush lands in Senegal.

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Tulku

Gesar Mukpo, Canada, 2009, 75 minutes

In many ways, Gesar Mukpo leads an ordinary life. He's building a career as a filmmaker, he's had trouble in his marriage, and he struggles to pay his bills. But there is more to Gesar's story. Tibetan Buddhists recognize him as a tulku, a reincarnated Buddhist master. Gesar was three when he became one of the first people born in the West recognized as a tulku. His entire life, he's been trying to figure out what that really means. Tibetan teachers, including Gesar's father, Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, began making their way to the West in the 1960s. By the mid-1970s, they began to recognize Western children as tulkus. Suddenly, a system that ensured stable spiritual power and authority in Tibetan society for 800 years was transplanted into a completely different culture. And individual tulkus, like Gesar, were caught in the middle.

In this intensely personal documentary, Gesar sets out to meet other Western tulkus to find out how they reconcile modern and ancient, East and West. Journeying through Canada, the United States, India and Nepal, he encounters four other tulkus who struggle with this profound dilemma. Ashoka channels his efforts into working for human rights in New York. Dylan, whose parents met at a Jimi Hendrix concert, spends half the year in solitary retreat. Wyatt grew up in California and recently moved to India to pursue Tibetan Buddhist studies at a monastery. Meanwhile Reuben, who was born in Amsterdam and spent three years in an Indian monastery, has become cynical about the tulku system and Tibetan Buddhism in general.

Tulku also includes interviews with some of the greatest living Tibetan Buddhist teachers. One of them, the renowned Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, asks if it might be time to abandon the practice of recognizing tulkus. As he gathers impressions from others, Gesar reveals his own poignant story of living in the West with this unique label and legacy, endlessly scrutinized as a supposed special and monumental figure. What does it mean to carry on a role designed for an old world when you're living in a completely new one? How will Gesar and other Western tulkus fulfill their destiny?

FILMMAKER IN ATTENDANCE



Seeking Refuge

Karen Cho, Canada, 2008, 70 minutes

Every year, some 30,000 people come to Canada to apply for refugee status. About 40-45% of those are eventually accepted. *Seeking Refuge* takes us into the lives of five claimants and their support networks.

Though Esly and her common-law husband managed to evade violent gangs in Honduras, they were stopped at the US-Canadian border. Since they could not prove they had been living together for more than a year, he was deported and eventually killed by the men who were threatening them in Honduras. Najia is a human rights activist from Kabul whose parents begged her to flee after two of her colleagues were assassinated. When the death threats spilled over to her father, she came to Canada. Leyla escaped serial rape and other violence at the hands of soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo but cannot produce the exact documents demanded by refugee board members. Fouad is a Palestinian from Lebanon who is running through his limited legal options after his claim is rejected, due in part to bad luck as his brother's nearly identical claim had been accepted by a different board member. On the other end of the process is Kader, a blind man from Algeria who has been living under asylum at his Montreal church for over three years.

Together their stories provide a provocative look into this lengthy, frustratingly bureaucratic process, fraught with political landmines. For the government it has become, to an extent, a numbers game. For the people who come to Canada seeking refugee status, it is usually a matter of life and death.

FILMMAKER IN ATTENDANCE

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Who The Jew Are You?

Alan Goldman, Canada, 2009, 50 minutes

When Alan Goldman's son was born, he was not only faced with the decision of whether to circumcise him but also with the realization that Sacha was not actually Jewish. So begins a journey that asks, 'What does it mean to be Jewish?' Alan's peregrinations take him from Vancouver to Orthodox communities in Crown Heights, New York, where the faithful debate points of scripture. From rapping rabbis to a lesbian couple who wants their adopted Chinese daughter to have a traditional Bat Mitzvah, Judaism means different things to different people. While some people maintain that 'God-optional Judaism' does not exist, others see this as a benefit: 'That's the point of being a Jew, you don't have to believe in God.'

A charming guide, Alan endures everything from dressing up as Santa Claus for his son's Christmas party, to being harangued by his family, even his grandfather, who declares himself an atheist after reading Sam Harris's book *The End of Faith*. 'I no longer believe in God,' he says, 'Poppycock.'

If Alan can figure out Judaism's relevance in his own life, he can pass on this knowledge to help his son find his place in the Jewish world. Eventually, he uncovers a progressive, re-invigorated Judaism that embraces a multiplicity of people. With humour, warmth, and a generous spirit, *Who The Jew Are You?* travels full circle back to the love a father has for his son.

WORLD PREMIERE. FILMMAKER IN ATTENDANCE.

PRECEDED BY:

Mémère Métisse

Janelle Wookey, Canada, 2008, 30 minutes

For over sixty years, Janelle Wookey's grandmother, or Mémère, Cecile St. Amant has been keeping a deep dark secret; she is Métis. A young filmmaker and host of a program on the Aboriginal People's Television Network, Janelle sets out to understand her Mémère's denial. She playfully plots her mission to open her Mémère's eyes to the richness of their heritage and the joy of their culture. Over four months, the mischievous Janelle gave her granny no peace, using the closeness they share to bring her grandmother face to face with her own contradictions.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

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Transit Dubai

Ineke Smits, The Netherlands, 2008, 72 minutes

"There seems to be this attitude inside of Dubai that anything is possible. People come here and it's like the new America... You come here to make your dreams come true."

— Roberto Lopardo, photography teacher

In the heart of the Middle East, a modern city has rapidly become the tourism and high-end real estate development centre of the area. For many, Dubai holds the promise of boundless opportunity and unprecedented economic growth. But no city can exist without a population, and Dubai's population is unique; more than 80% of its inhabitants are temporary immigrants of European, Asian, American as well as Middle Eastern origin.

Whether it be to earn fast money, to spend a life of exclusivity, to labour 7 days a week to support the family home, or to live under liberties afforded by a more modern, morally flexible Middle Eastern city, they all eventually want to go home. Everyone, except for the few locals who have no choice but to watch as their hometown grows into whatever the future may bring. Swedish women explain how their lives have changed since moving to Dubai; they now have time to look after their children since local women clean their houses and there's no financial reason for them to work outside the home. But they aren't necessarily happy.

Western influences have changed the locals too, with things like Bluetooth-enabled flirting penetrating a once-solid sexual divide. Through the eyes of four photography students, we step through the glittering façade of a city that, despite its plush beachfront villas, ultra-luxe retail, and incredible artificial islands, might just be a mirage.



Pulling John

Vassiliki Khonsari & Sevan Matossian, USA, 2008, 73 minutes

A living legend in a sport he helped popularize, John Brzenk is consumed by one question. Brzenk has gone twenty-five years as the undefeated arm-wrestling world champion. Now, at forty, he is torn between retiring while still on top or succumbing to the inevitable should he continue: a loss to a new champion. Having traveled to over one hundred and twenty countries during his legendary twenty-five year career, John has unrelentingly pursued the best competitors the world over. And he's beat them all. One of the most likeable and peaceable men you could meet, John is at a crossroads.

Alexey Voevoda is a twenty-three year old from Sochi, Russia who respects the traditional Soviet traits of discipline and athletic prowess. Educated in the sport of arm-wrestling from a young age, Voevoda was always aware of the Cold War era victories of American John Brzenk. He has dedicated his life to toppling the legend. For Alexey, arm-wrestling is almost a religious experience.

Travis Begent is a twenty-six year old with an undaunted spirit, despite a lifetime of hardship. His father and mentor, 'Big Arm' Boyd passed on only two things to his son: arm-wrestling and the love of arm-wrestling legend John Brzenk. *Pulling John* follows Travis's personal journey as he rises through the ranks towards a battle between two adversaries that stand in his way to greatness: Alexey Voevoda and John Brzenk.

Pulling John, shot over four years, witnesses the mythical world of arm-wrestling where two titans battle it out. The physical training these men undergo is incredible to witness. Shot in Canada, Japan, the US, and the Ukraine, *Pulling John* is a sweat-drenched journey that steers you through the personal stories of three athletes, as well as the tension and suspense of the international competition where they all meet for the first time.

SCREENING PARTNER

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SOLUTIONS ARE IN OUR NATURE



PLANET IN FOCUS CO-PRESENTS

Chasing Wild Horses

Matt Trecartin and Natasha Ryan, Canada, 2008, 50 minutes

Chasing Wild Horses is a beautiful story of reverence and splendour. Roberto Dutesco, New York City's top fashion photographer, works with human beauty every day. Born in Romania and raised in Montreal, his unique artistic eye has brought him fame and recognition throughout the fashion world. Many years ago, he took a small plane to Sable Island, where he found an exceptional environment that changed his perception of beauty and undeniably impacted his art.

On this unique island, the discovery of untamed, long-maned horses running through the dunes was an aesthetic experience like no other for Roberto. He became fixated on the natural beauty of the untouched, wild horses. In *Chasing Wild Horses*, he returns to the island with his camera. And with him, we discover the hidden treasures this country offers. Accessing the island is nearly impossible; very few people are allowed access in order to preserve the island. Through his photos and his New York gallery, Roberto wants to bring support to the various organizations dedicated to preserving the beauty of Sable Island.

Classified for younger audiences. No membership required.

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SOLUTIONS ARE IN OUR NATURE



The Memories of Angels

Luc Bourdon, Canada, 2008, 80 minutes

The city is Montreal. The era is the '50s and '60s. And the film is Luc Bourdon's virtuoso assembly of clips from 120 National Film Board films shot in Montreal. *The Memories of Angels* will charm audiences of all ages. It's a journey in time, a visit to the street corners of Montreal, a tribute to the vitality of the city, and a wonderful cinematic adventure.

Without commentary or ostentation, the film is a history lesson of the last century: the red light district, the eloquent Jean Drapeau, the young Queen Elizabeth greeting the crowd, and Tex Lecor shouting "Aux armes Québécois!" There are kids dreaming of hockey glory, the Jacques-Cartier market bursting with fresh produce, and the department stores downtown teeming with Christmas shoppers.

You may recognize the films that provide these sights: the Jones brothers of *Golden Gloves* by Gilles Groulx, the church from *Les Montréalistes* by Denys Arcand. The superb colour shots of modern buildings are from *Albéo* by Jacques Leduc and Renée Roy. And the gorgeous images of actress Geneviève Bujold from *Le temps des amours* by Hubert Aquin.

Director Luc Bourdon and editor Michel Giroux have assembled a fluid, clear sequences underlining the beauty of the black-and-white images contrasted with colour ones. *The Memories of Angels* showcases the singular beauty of Montreal, its architectural and human wealth, and the grandeur of its setting. Much of it is set to the music of Oscar Peterson, Charles Trenet, Raymond Lévesque, Dominique Michel, Paul Anka, and Willie Lamothe.

As the NFB prepares to celebrate its 70th birthday, *The Memories of Angels* recalls the talent of the filmmakers who trained their cameras and microphones on the world around them, as well as the amazing ability of an artist to model new material from old. Like today's DJs and VJs who energize contemporary music and art, Luc Bourdon draws from the fertile source of great Quebec cinema and recycles the sights and sounds of the past.

The Memories of Angels is poetry, fiction, documentary, and essay rolled into one. It is also a joyous, touching experience and a collective history whose threads dance in one's mind long after the closing credits.

COMMUNITY PARTNER



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WORD WITHIN THE WORD

ESSAY BY DEEPA DHANRAJ

Watching *Word Within the Word* is an invitation to experience Darsan, translated as being in the presence of a saint, deity, or sacred place.

Rajula Shah's film starts with unremarkable images of a 21st century Indian urban landscape: from rain drenched sparrows perched on telephone lines, to rows of ugly plastic water tanks on the terrace of a water-stained apartment building. On the soundtrack we hear the ecstatic poetry of Kabir, the 15th century mystic weaver/poet, sung by the late Pandit Kumar Gandharva. We are gradually drawn into a still meditative space.

Pandit Kumar Gandharva, considered one of the greatest Hindustani classical singers, was diagnosed with tuberculosis at the age of 28 and forbidden to sing again. He traveled to Dewas, Madhya Pradesh (Central India) to convalesce. As he lay on his sickbed, he heard ordinary people pass by: farmers, shepherds, artisans, weavers, and potters singing Kabir in folk style. Disguised, he attended their singing sessions at night to steep himself in their folk musical tradition. When he returned to singing in classical concerts, a startling new sound emerged. It combined the intention of the direct 'singing to God style' of the oral folk tradition with the rigor of classical vocal training. While his rendition of Kabir was readily accessible to audiences across the country on LP records, and now on CDs, it was harder to locate the oral folk tradition sung by thousands of ordinary people across North India and Pakistan. By committing thousands of poems to memory, they sang Kabir as part of their spiritual practice.

For some of us urban, middle-class Indians living in the 21st century, our first exposure to this 15th century mystic/weaver poet was in school during Hindi language class. In classrooms, his poetry is taught as exemplifying the use of metaphor, rhyme, and meter. He composed his poems in popular Hindi rather than Sanskrit, which was the language of upper caste scriptural orthodoxy.

As a poet in the Bhakti (Devotion) tradition, he insisted on simplicity and directness. The metaphors and images he used were all drawn from everyday life. This makes it easy for common people, farmers, artisans, and people of all castes and religions to access profound spiritual truths. Beware of scriptural authority, abstractions, and philosophizing. Trust direct ecstatic experience of the divine. Reject all religious institutions. Interrogate all received wisdom. These were his core teachings. They were often delivered in a provocative style intended to shock and challenge the assumptions of his listeners.

The film travels to Malwa, in search of the oral folk tradition. Rajula engages with a farmer, a fruit seller, a sweet maker, and a rope maker. We see them work, sing, debate, and interpret Kabir's texts. Atypically, Rajula chooses not to contextualize the poor in a socio-political space. She, instead, interacts with them as philosopher poets, embodying Kabir's path of poetry as praxis.

Forgoing the standard interview mode, she seeks neither personal nor sociological information but engages with them as co-seekers, asking for clarity on concepts or offering a story as a parable.

As Rajula wrote to me, "I did not want to look only at the performance aspect, in my wish to enter the space where each sings to her/himself I feel very grateful to have found it with all these people who talked and sang as if I wasn't there and then suddenly stopped and asked, now you sing one too."

"What will happen to your camera once you die? It will roll in the dust!"

In classic Kabir style of using the present moment as a pedagogic opportunity, the fruit seller gives an example of impermanence and asks Rajula, "What will happen to your camera once you die? It will roll in the dust!"

There is neither information on the biographical details of Kabir nor on the history of his time. Neither does Rajula touch on the superficial secular appropriation of his philosophy, which represents him as the best icon of Hindi Muslim syncretism, religious iconoclasm, and anti casteism.

Instead using cinematic means, exquisite visuals of landscapes, the beauty of watching people work and sing, long shots held with slow-paced rhythmic editing, she takes us on an inner journey to give us a taste of his teachings. It is a sensory experience that goes deep.

CURATOR BIOGRAPHY

Deepa Dhanraj has been involved with the women's movement in India since 1980, around the time she started making films. Since, she has directed documentaries that have screened at festivals around the world. Themes have consistently related to women's status, political participation, education, and health. Dhanraj has a special interest in education; she makes films that enable communities to identify barriers faced by first generation learners from marginal communities, especially girls, with a view to enable access to schooling. She has contributed papers to conferences relating to feminist research and teaches video to women activists from Southeast Asia.





Waterlife

Kevin McMahon, Canada, 2009, 109 minutes

From the icy cliffs of Lake Superior to the ornate fountains of Chicago, from the rain-swept streets of Detroit to the sewers of Windsor and beyond, *Waterlife* follows the epic cascade of the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean. The Great Lakes of North America supply twenty percent of the earth's fresh water, with 35 million people drinking this water every day.

With stunning photography, underwater and above, *Waterlife* pays homage to this incredible and complex body of water and the life it contains. We observe as it transforms the societies it passes through and, in turn, is transformed by them.

Yet, beyond this extraordinary beauty, the Great Lakes are in an extreme state of distress. Under assault by a deadly combination of industrial toxins, sewage, invasive species, dropping water levels, and profound human apathy, the lakes verge on irreversible collapse.

Director Kevin McMahon takes viewers on a tour of an incredibly beautiful ecosystem that faces complex challenges, and gives viewers a visceral understanding of the element that is so integral to our lives. Along the way we meet a wide-ranging group of people who are connected to the Great Lakes. These people tell their stories of the region, sharing what is meaningful and necessary about this water from their perspectives. In the end, *Waterlife* has the power to transform how we see water and to inspire us to act before it's too late.

Narrated by The Tragically Hip's Gord Downie, the film is propelled by a soaring soundtrack featuring music by Sam Roberts, Sufjan Stevens, Sigur Rós, Robbie Robertson, and Brian Eno. Filled with fascinating characters and stunning imagery, *Waterlife* is a cinematic epic about the beauty of water and the dangers of taking it for granted.

FILMMAKER IN ATTENDANCE



Word Within the Word

Rajula Shah, India, 2008, 74 minutes

CURATED BY DEEPA DHANRAJ

Word Within the Word is a cinematic coming together of words, memories, and the human landscape through 14th century mystical Bhakti poetry. The film looks at how the Word resonates in and of ordinary lives across centuries. Beginning from a cloudy monsoon morning in the city of Bhopal, it travels to Malwa, Madhya Pradesh (the hub of tribal India), also known as the second home of Pt. Kumar Gandharva, one of the greatest musicians of our time. Here, within the fast-altering fabric of a challenged rural life, we encounter common people. Regardless of age, caste, or gender, they fight hard to earn a daily square meal. And they keep music alive at the bosom of a gnawing fate. As they sing the poetry of Kabir and Gorakhnath they embody, far beyond the scope of any intellectual resolve, a refusal to die and a bid to seize eternity from historic annihilation.

Still highly respected today, the most influential Bhakti poet is Kabir. In his teachings, ideas from Islam and Hinduism flow into one another. He rejected religion centred on formalities. His lore advocates, instead, inner experiences on the road to higher spiritual awareness. It is an unorthodox philosophy, which warns against religious fanaticism and sanctimonious hypocrisy. In modern India, the ancient oral traditions are under threat of falling into oblivion. Bhakti devotees, as a result, feel driven to paraphrase their poetic language and explain its complex meanings.

Word Within the Word is a crucial gateway to the India we are fast forgetting, one that is difficult to classify and categorise but simpler to understand if you hear its people speak. Within this human landscape, one can aspire to face our contemporary dilemmas stemming from learned responses and fragmented dreams.

Winner, Horizons Award, Munich International Documentary Film Festival

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I Want to Grow Old in China

Sameer Farooq and Ursula Engel, Canada, 2008, 50 minutes

Welcome to Park Tuanjiehu in China's capital. Early each morning, it is host to a stunning multimedia spectacle performed by thousands of the city's elderly. From gymnastics to disco-dancing, bird training to singing, together they have a hunger for living. Intimate and character driven, the documentary follows four distinct groups as their lives and rituals unfold each morning.

I Want to Grow Old in China highlights the spontaneity, passion, diligence, and poetry created in the public spaces of Beijing, creating a unique situation where longevity meets performance. This film could not come at a better time as issues of aging populations are at the forefront of international debate. By following the stories of the park's most colourful figures, the film offers an alternative view of growing old.

I Want to Grow Old in China presents an alternative angle on China, enriching our understanding of one of the most discussed countries of the moment. The filmmakers take us deep into a world many of us have not had the chance to experience.

FILMMAKERS IN ATTENDANCE

PRECEDED BY:

Requiem for Mrs. H.

Philipp Hartmann, Germany, 2007, 5 minutes

An old woman has died. Workers move her things out of her apartment and take off the wallpaper. A requiem in super-8 images with the soprano aria of Johannes Brahms' *German Requiem*.

Steel Homes

Eva Weber, Scotland, 2008, 10 minutes

Self-storage units are windows into human histories; the silent cells with their discarded objects and dust-covered furniture are inscribed with past dreams, secret hopes, and lives we cannot let go of. Moving from steel cage to steel cage, we encounter tales of heartbreak, loneliness, and despair as well as stories of liberation, adventure, and leaving the past behind.

SCREENING PARTNER

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The Dungeon Masters

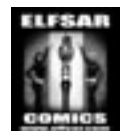
Keven McAlester, USA, 2008, 93 minutes

Inside the beige walls of a Middle-American convention centre, a dream of honour, adventure, and Wagnerian passion burns in the hearts of three different people. Director Keven McAlester (nominated for an Independent Spirit Award for his film on Roky Erikson, *You're Gonna Miss Me*) returns with *The Dungeon Masters*, a journey deep into the world of Dungeons and Dragons.

Scott aspires to greatness, whether it's through a cable access show called *Uncle Drac's Magical Clubhouse* (which is just as awful as it sounds) or his unpublished fantasy novels. Elizabeth, whose persona of a dark elf requires the laborious application of full-body makeup, drifts between bad relationships and dead-end jobs. Richard, reunited with his adoptive son and the gamers he has feuded with for the past twenty years, must reconcile with his own emotional inadequacy. All three are bound up in their raw need for something bigger, something better. Something, conversely enough, more real.

Filmed with extraordinary attention by cinematographer Lee Daniel (*Slacker*), *The Dungeon Masters* is not another gawk at a subculture of freak and geeks, but an honest look at what Pulitzer-prize winner Ernest Becker called the "immortality project." If all of human civilization, from God to LOTR (That's Lord of the Rings, for the uninitiated), is a defense mechanism against death, the need to become part of something heroic is not only normal, but necessary. As Scott says, "A lot of the world is very gray, there's a lot of people out there, but where is the greatness?" The struggle to find happiness and, more importantly, meaning becomes an epic quest all on its own. Richard, leading his gamers into an unknown adventure, describes it as "A solitary imperfection in an otherwise perfect void."

COMMUNITY PARTNER





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To The Tar Sands

Jodie Martinson, Canada, 2008, 61 minutes

To The Tar Sands follows a group of nineteen young environmentalists as they cycle northbound over 1300 kilometres across Alberta's Wild Rose Country to witness the impacts of the tar sands boom. They ask farmers, moms, oil industry workers, an urban planner, the chief of a First Nations community, and others 'How has the tar sands boom affected you?'

The result is a three-week long journey that is both mentally and physically taxing for the scruffy, activist riders. By meeting locals on their own turf and genuinely listening to their stories, the cyclists are forced to weigh the environmental needs of the planet against the economic needs of the residents. As the kilometres click away, the complexity of the issues and the ethical dilemmas surrounding oil extraction become apparent. Eventually, several of the cyclists shift gears and stop advocating for a moratorium on tar sands production. Instead, they begin to seek strategies for an economic future of Alberta that does not exacerbate the planet's climate problems.

To The Tar Sands doesn't shy away from presenting multiple sides of the story, but even as the most rapidly ideological stance begins to waver under the unrelenting work of cycling hundreds of kilometres everyday, the land is changing around them. When the group finally reaches its final destination, the sheer scale of the tar sands development itself is staggering. There must be a better way than turning large stretches of Canada into something that resembles a poisonous moonscape. The environmental costs that currently face Albertans, and by extension most of the world, become indelibly clear. As they grease up their bike chains and realize that even they have oil on their hands, the group should be lauded for taking the long road rather than the easy one.

FILMMAKER IN ATTENDANCE

Classified for younger audiences. No membership required.

COMMUNITY PARTNER



Here Are The News

Cathleen Smith, Canada, 2008, 51 minutes

Here Are The News celebrates the accomplishments of Yukon journalist, Miss Edith Josie. Edith Josie is from the Gwich'in group of Athabasca Indians who range from the Northwest Territories, to the Yukon, to Alaska.

Miss Josie captured the imaginations of people around the globe with her unique approach to writing as a correspondent for the Whitehorse Star in 1953, a job she held for almost 50 years. Starting out not reading or writing in English, her column was syndicated in the Edmonton Journal, the Fairbanks News Miner, and the Indian News in Vancouver. Over the years, Miss Josie put Old Crow on the map by appearing numerous times on Peter Gzowski's CBC Radio show and television programs such as Front Page Challenge. As well, a feature article in Life Magazine gave her worldwide acclaim.

Her passion for education and tradition are themes in her life and in the film, which explores more than just the journalistic activity of this member of the Order of Canada. Miss Josie's outlook on life is continuously shared with others as she demonstrates the value of language, stories, education, and faith. She lives these lessons through her interactions with her community, the public, and her family. She also shows us the unique way of life of the Gwich'in people and how modern development threatens their life necessities.

In Edith Josie's world, she simply reported events as she saw them. But, for outsiders, she opened doors to Old Crow, her tiny village of 300 people, 80 miles north of the Arctic Circle.

FILMMAKER IN ATTENDANCE

PRECEDED BY:

Traditional Trappings

Joel Peter, Canada, 2008, 3 minutes

An elder from Old Crow shares his experience living off the land.

Man Who Always Lives In The Bush

Mary Jane Moses, Canada, 2008, 5 minutes

A tribute to the filmmaker's husband who values life on the land and celebrates Gwich'in traditions and culture.



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CUPE BC salutes the directors, producers, programmers and hosts of the 2009 Doxa Documentary Film Festival.



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—J.S. Woodsworth



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Mirage of El Dorado

Martin Frigon, Canada, 2008, 75 minutes

Mirage of El Dorado leads us into the mountains of northern Chile, where the devastating operations of Canadian mining companies threaten a fragile ecosystem in one of the driest parts of the globe.

This political cowboy flick follows the pitched battle between a farming community in the Huasco valley and Canada's mining giant, Barrick Gold, with its sidekick Noranda (now part of the Swiss corporation Xstrata). It's a battle fought high in the Cordilleran Andes, where farmers and locals fear the ravages of open pit mining operations. Here, a fragile system of glaciers feeds the rivers that flow into the farmlands built out of the advancing Atacama desert.

The camera reveals a Chilean government impotent in the face of unprecedented, potentially devastating mining projects. The film also exposes the Canadian government's hypocrisy towards its own mining companies, which corrupt foreign governments and weaken the environmental assessment process. Pinochet's dictatorship imposed the permissive legislation now enjoyed by Canadian trans-nationals. This same legislation has been carried over by successive transition governments, bowing to the dictates of neo-liberal economics.

With a backdrop of breathtaking images and eloquent testimonials, *Mirage of El Dorado* defies the powers that would have us believe their divine mission is to extract wealth, no matter where it lies, purportedly to save local communities from endemic poverty.

Winner, Grand Prize, Paris International Environmental Film Festival
Winner, Grand Prize, Vina Del Mar International Digital Cinema Festival

FILMMAKER IN ATTENDANCE

SCREENING PARTNER



COMMUNITY PARTNER



Necrobusiness

Fredrik von Krusenstjerna and Richard Solarz, Sweden, 2008, 90 minutes

From the crisp black and white animation of its opening titles, *Necrobusiness* resembles a film noir come to unbelievable life. This is the story of how a funeral director in Lodz, Poland paid off ambulance drivers to supply him with fresh corpses and, thus, more business. It may sound like a tale spun off the pen of Dashiell Hammett or Raymond Chandler, but the reality of the situation would have strained even their darkest imaginings.

Co-directors Fredrik von Krusenstjerna and Richard Solarz lay out the Byzantine complexities of the scam through Monika Sieradzka, an investigative reporter. She begins to follow the story with the trial of Jacek Tomalski. Tomalski, a mortuary worker, was accused of hiring a hitman to kill a local businessman named Witold Skrzydlewski, owner of one of the biggest funeral parlour chains in Lodz. As the evidence builds, it becomes clear that graft, corruption, and a scam to profit from funeral state subsidies was only the beginning of the story. Monika, who is lucky to still be alive at the end of the film, does her utmost to elicit a confession from the man behind it all: Witold Skrzydlewski.

Reeking of bonhomie and guile, Skrzydlewski's combination flower shop/funeral parlour empire was built upon blossoms in the front and coffins in the back. One of the three richest men in the city of Lodz and a pillar of the community, his tentacles of influence were spread wide. At one point, he controlled more than 60% of all funeral business in a city of over one million souls.

Death was a booming business in Lodz. Skrzydlewski's scheme to pay off ambulance drivers and paramedics to supply him with bodies worked like a charm, until the lure of greater profits led his partners to betrayal. While Tomalski was indicted for attempted murder, Skrzydlewski slipped loose and continued business. But the story deepens and darkens even further when it is revealed that Tomalski was merely the tip of the iceberg. The genuinely dead were delivered into the predation of Skrzydlewski's funeral parlours. But many people were also prematurely hastened into the great beyond and into his parlours, with help from paramedics and hospital workers (who were responsible for the deaths of an unknown number of patients). The case is ongoing, with more than fifty murders currently under investigation. The final death count is estimated to be as high as 20,000 people.

THE SIXTIES: FROM 1969 TO 2009

ESSAY BY CORNELIUS MOORE

The candidacy and subsequent election of Barack Obama as the first African American president of the United States is certainly an indicator of how much the country's racial politics have progressed from a few decades ago. (On a personal note, as the child of black parents from the southern state of Virginia, the capitol of the Old Confederacy, I am still amazed by Obama's victory. It was unimaginable just a short time ago.) The Obama campaign was also an opportunity for black media professionals and commentators to voice their perspectives and shed light on their lives to national audiences: something still distressingly uncommon. As I watched the historic inauguration, I was in the process of curating this documentary program, which examines events from forty years ago. That was when movements for social change, many inspired by the black freedom struggle, were reaching revolutionary heights even as they faced institutional intransigence and state repression. The national mainstream broadcast media was one of those lily white institutions, and when it did report on the social movements, the coverage was often distorted.

This created the need for media production to present viewpoints of the racial equality and anti-Vietnam War movements. Newsreel emerged in 1968 to fill this void. It was a network of local film groups in New York, San Francisco, Boston, and a few other places. It became the media arm of 'The Movement'. Two of its first films focused on the fight for racial justice. *Black Panther* (originally entitled *Off the Pig!*) was made in collaboration with the Black Panther Party (BPP) and its young urban leadership. At one point, there were 200 film prints in active circulation across the country, generating awareness about and support for the group's activities. *San Francisco State: On Strike* reports on the six-month student strike to win the country's first ethnic studies department. Neither film pretended to be 'objective' but rather actively engaged with their subjects, made from the 'inside'. The films not only embraced their points of view but also adopted their confrontational style. They were also influenced by both the aesthetics of 'underground', or avant-garde film, and even Cuban *noticieros* (newsreels), most famously directed by Santiago Alvarez.

Black Panther and *San Francisco State: On Strike* are shorts (fourteen and twenty minutes respectively). These were unconventional lengths for theatrical exhibition or broadcast but, undoubtedly, these arenas were never seriously considered by the makers. In fact, they were mainly exhibited at meetings, college auditoriums, community centers, and church basements. They reached their intended audiences, energizing activism and solidarity. They are often rough, accompanied by simple musical soundtracks featuring percussion, songs, and chants, which seemed composed on the spot. Filmmaking was (and still can be) an expensive endeavour, so the films were made with free labour. But, ironically, they were funded by white middle and upper class individuals who dominated the very early Newsreel membership.

There were no foundation, art, public broadcasting, or government grants to fund these radical films. As a combination of government dirty tricks and infiltration fueled internal conflicts and led the BPP

to implode by the 1970s, *Black Panther* is now largely viewed as an historical artifact, trotted out when programs on the 1960s are organized. However, *San Francisco State: On Strike* is sometimes used by ethnic studies departments to inform students about the program's origins and why it is important to maintain.

Pairing *Scarred Justice: The Orangeburg Massacre 1968* with *Black Panther* and *San Francisco State: On Strike* allows viewers to consider how different times produce different types of media and how historical perspective influences the final product. Although all three films deal with the same time period, *Scarred Justice: The Orangeburg Massacre 1968* received funding from the public broadcast entities: the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and the National Black Programming Consortium, which were established in 1979 and 1991 respectively. The film runs a standard broadcast length of 57 minutes and will be shown on PBS in the fall 2009 and distributed to colleges, high schools, and community organizations by California Newsreel. It is clearly sympathetic to the students. As well, one of the producers/directors, Judy Richardson, was on the staff of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in the late 1960s with connections to some of the Movement veterans. But it is also driven by journalistic investigation rather than propaganda. The film allows participants to tell their stories, but rather than rest in the past it encourages the viewers to ask:

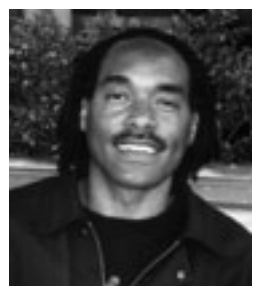
1. What kind of climate allowed the killings to happen?
2. Why are we ignorant about the incidents?
3. How has historical perspective influenced how we view these events today?
4. How does the film contribute to rectifying past wrongs as well as provide some healing for the community?

The last point is particularly important when dealing with the legacy of racial oppression in the US and its contemporary manifestations.

To these ends, *Scarred Justice: The Orangeburg Massacre 1968* was recently screened on the 21st anniversary of the police killings at the site of the assault, South Carolina State University. The enthusiastic audience was 700 strong and included people of different generations and races. An illustration of the transformative power of film in these changing times occurred at the screening. The mayor of Orangeburg, South Carolina, a conservative figure, used the occasion to apologize for the first time for the city's role in violently attacking protestors.

CURATOR BIOGRAPHY

Cornelius Moore is the Co-Director of the 41 year-old San Francisco-based distributor and production company, California Newsreel. His work focuses on the acquisition, promotion, and programming of films on African American life and history as well as films from and about Africa.





THE SIXTIES: FROM 1969 TO 2009

Black Panther

San Francisco Newsreel, USA, 1969, 14 minutes

San Francisco State: On Strike

San Francisco Newsreel, USA, 1969, 20 minutes

Scarred Justice: The Orangeburg Massacre 1968

Bestor Cram and Judy Richardson, USA, 2009, 57 minutes

CURATED BY CORNELIUS MOORE

This program offers perspectives on seminal events in sixties activism for racial justice, from back then to now.

The first two films, *Black Panther* and *San Francisco State: On Strike*, are archival works completed in 1969 by the legendary activist filmmaking group, Newsreel. There were no *auteurs* here, rather they were collectively made in solidarity with the organizations (the Black Panther Party) and struggles (the tumultuous student strike at San Francisco State) highlighted in the films. They are low budget, rough, yet energetic works representative of the turbulent times that produced them. They feature well known figures such as Panther leaders Huey P. Newton, Bobby Seale, and Eldridge Cleaver. You can also catch a glimpse of a very young Danny Glover as a student activist at San Francisco State.

Forty years later, *Scarred Justice: The Orangeburg Massacre 1968* looks back at a little known series of incidents which led to the shooting deaths, by authorities, of three black students during a Civil Rights Movement rally at South Carolina State.

Presenting these three films together allows viewers to consider how different times produce different types of media, the role that the films play at the time of production in supporting activism, and how historical perspective can influence our views of the past.



The One Percent

Jamie Johnson, USA, 2008, 60 minutes

In an earlier film, *Born Rich*, Jamie Johnson profiled several young people born into wealth, who spoke frankly about a 'taboo' subject they'd been scrupulously taught to avoid: their family's money. In his new film, *The One Percent*, he exposes this taboo to deeper scrutiny. The film focuses on the growing wealth gap in America, as seen through the youthful eyes of filmmaker Johnson, a twenty-seven-year-old heir to the Johnson & Johnson pharmaceutical fortune. Utilizing his family's name and connections, Jamie sets his sights on exploring the political, moral, and emotional rationale that enables a tiny percentage of Americans, the one percent, to control nearly half the wealth of the entire United States. Concerned about the widening chasm between the rich and everyone else, Johnson tracks down several icons of capitalism, pressing them to elaborate on their beliefs.

Featuring an all-star cast including a presidential candidate, a Nobel laureate, a photocopying tycoon, an infamous arms merchant, and a wiener empire heir, the story sheds light on the absurd sense of entitlement that drives megalomaniacs to amass their fortunes. The film also gives voice to those born into wealth who question the fairness of a system that benefits them, often with startling repercussions from their families. Throughout the making of the documentary, Jamie's father and his financial advisors pressure the budding filmmaker to stop working on projects that could be damaging to the company that feeds them. A shocking, yet unceremonious, scene reveals that Warren Buffet actually ex-communicated his granddaughter for simply participating in this film. In the end, the Johnson clan is portrayed as quite tolerant of their sometimes naive but well-intentioned filmmaking kin, narrowly averting a 'poor trustafarian' sentiment. One of the funniest moments in the film is when Jamie gets his comeuppance from Milton Freedman for taking a laissez-faire approach to his research and interviews. This film offers a rare and unique glimpse into a part of society that works hard to keep us out.

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Afghan Girls Can Kick

Bahareh Hosseini, UK/Afghanistan, 2007, 50 minutes

Under the Taliban, women's freedom in Afghanistan was almost entirely curbed. For five years, women went through life veiled, usually indoors, excluded from education and, of course, from sports. Now some women are seizing their chance to do what they couldn't before. *Afghan Girls Can Kick* is a portrait of teenage girls breaking stereotypes set by an intensely conservative Afghan society. As players in Afghanistan's first ever women's national football team, these young women are escaping poverty while gaining self-esteem and confidence. For security reasons, no international team has ever played against them in Afghanistan; at a friendly game on Peace Day, NATO's women soldiers are no match for the Afghani team.

When the team is invited to a tournament in Islamabad, it's the first time they will play a game on a real soccer field. The film follows the team's preparations for their first international matches, concentrating on a few players. As a child, Roya had to collect waste paper on the filthy streets of Kabul's slums to provide fuel for her family. Through an Afghan charity, she received an education and found she had a talent for football. She now plays centre-forward for the national women's team. Other members of the team recount their problems with the Taliban and how football helped them see a future in present-day Afghanistan, beset by insecurity and suicide bombings. The film offers a rare insight into the lives of young Afghan women, showing them not as passive victims, but as people striving for a future.

PRECEDED BY:

Journey My Heart

Reil Munro, Canada, 2007, 9 minutes

What begins as a documentary about the rigours of physical training becomes a complex portrait of a Pow Wow jingle dress dancer. Joanne Soldier runs miles and weight-trains in an effort to fulfill a spiritual calling that links her with her elders and the generations to come. Originally from Swan Lake, Soldier reveals the physical commitment and cultural necessity of her art form.

Classified for younger audiences. No membership required.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS



The Sweetest Embrace: Return to Afghanistan

Najeeb Mirza, Canada, 2008, 74 minutes

The only thing I want God to bestow on me is to sit by my parents and smell their scent. – Amir

Soorgul was only ten years old when he said goodbye to his family in the mountains of northeastern Afghanistan. Crossing into Soviet Tajikistan over the turbulent Amu Darya River, he clutched the sides of a wooden gondola as it slowly made its way to the other side. He was supposed to spend a year studying in Tajikistan, but it would take sixteen years and a journey to Canada before he could return to his village.

Soorgul was one of many Afghan children sent to Tajikistan during the Soviet occupation. When the Soviet Union collapsed, civil war broke out on both sides of the border and the children were left stranded. He and a few of his schoolmates were able to leave Tajikistan only after many years, when Canada accepted them as refugees.

In *The Sweetest Embrace*, Soorgul and Amir, two of these forgotten boys of Afghanistan, return to their country in search of their families. We meet Soorgul and Amir in Kabul and join them as they travel north, towards the villages where they last saw their families. After an American military accident leads to riots, it becomes too dangerous to continue in NGO vehicles. They switch to local vans and finally, when rock-strewn roads become completely impassable, finish their journey on foot through some of Afghanistan's highest mountains. But when their paths diverge, their futures become filled with unexpected and unpredictable turns as they seek resolution in their lives.

The Sweetest Embrace tells an intimate story set against one of the world's most harsh yet beautiful landscapes, in a land where life has been shaped by war and hardship but where spirit remains resilient.

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Devil's Bargain: A Journey into the Small Arms Trade

Shelley Saywell, Canada, 2008, 89 minutes

Small weapons like pistols and rifles are the real weapons of mass destruction: each year, they're used to kill some 500,000 people worldwide, including right here in the Lower Mainland. Starting in the gun markets of Somalia, Canadian filmmaker Shelley Saywell takes us to a region where guns are making life a misery of violence and fear. But no guns are made in Somalia. From France to South Africa, from Bosnia to Moldova, the USA and Canada, we travel around the world to examine how the guns slip from legal to illegal markets, via the so-called Grey Zone. *Devil's Bargain* exposes the deepest undercrofts of international weapons trade, including a visit to one of the most sinister trade shows, an American weapons expo. Saywell gets surprising access to everyone from dealers, to pilots, to end-users, to victims, bearing witness to an unregulated trade. Not only are the statistics shocking in this incredibly researched film, but also shocking is how international laws are ignored to maintain this hugely successful business.

When 200,000 AK47s go missing from Bosnia stockpiles and are found on illegal flights to 'who-knows-where,' activists push initiatives to curb the trade at the UN. But the call for a treaty similar to the Land Mines Treaty is blocked.

In the film, we learn that small weapons aren't destroyed after a war, but rather channeled to other areas of conflict, sometimes smuggled in the bodies of animals. We also learn how the weapons trade stands in the way of constructive economic development in third-world countries. Although the West is responsible as long as the US continues to provide Africa with weapons, responsibility also lies with individual men around the world who continue to rape and kill with western weapons. Through interviews, archival footage, and material she shot herself around the world, Saywell makes a passionate plea against the weapons trade.

COMMUNITY PARTNER



PLANET IN FOCUS CO-PRESENTS

In a Dream

Jeremiah Zagar, USA, 2008, 78 minutes

For many artists, their environment is their inspiration. For Isaiah Zagar, a tormented artist, the bohemian neighbourhood of South Philadelphia is his canvas. Over four decades, Zagar has covered more than fifty thousand square feet of Philadelphia with stunning mosaic murals. Vibrant, revealing, pulsating mosaics. They are like spun webs that capture his life in vulnerable detail. At the same time, they subtly allude to the darker corners of an extraordinary imagination.

In a Dream exposes the precarious dependence of a father, husband, and artist to his physical environment. It provides a poignant reminder that the surroundings we weave are a living organism vulnerable to our actions and choices. Chronicling the artist's work and tumultuous relationship with his wife, Julia, the film follows the Zagars as their marriage implodes. Directed by the couple's youngest son, the film mixes old home movies, animated sequences, scenes of Isaiah working, of Julia in agony, and their eldest son Zeke grappling with his own demons. In different hands, this film could have felt like reality television, but the young filmmaker handles the intensely personal subject matter with grace and integrity.

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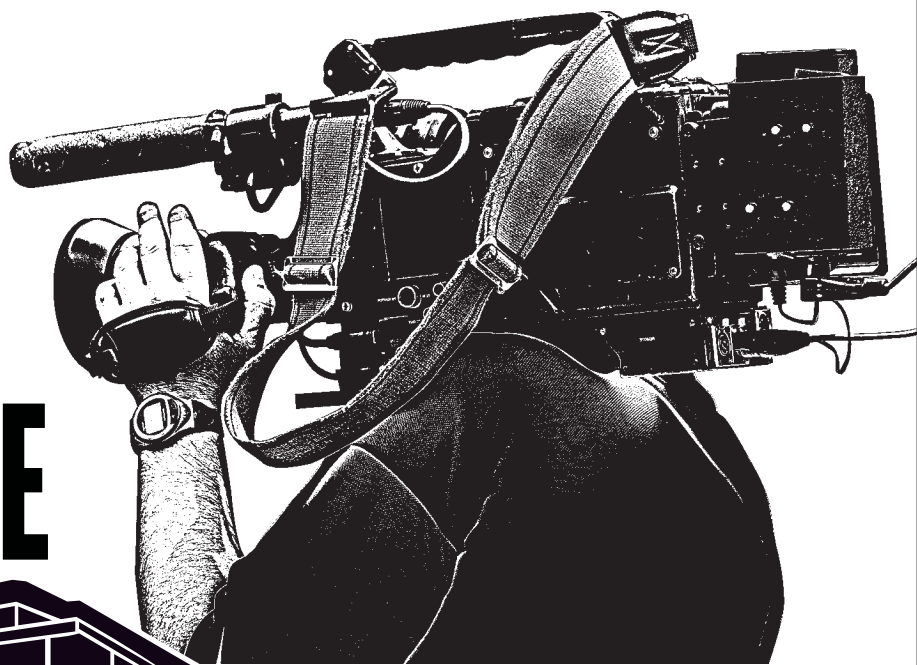


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Say My Name

Nirit Peled, USA / UK, 2009, 73 minutes

In a hip hop and R'n'B world dominated by men and noted for misogyny, the unstoppable female lyricists of *Say My Name* speak candidly about class, race, and gender in pursuing their passions as female emcees. This beat-filled, traveling documentary takes us on a vibrant tour of urban culture and musical movement, from hip hop's birthplace in the Bronx, to grime on London's Eastside, and all points Philly, Detroit, Chicago, Atlanta, and L.A. in between.

Featuring interviews and musical performances from a diverse cast of artists including Remy Ma, Rah Digga, Jean Grae, Erykah Badu, Estelle and newcomers Chocolate Thai, Invincible, and Miz Korona, this powerful and timely documentary delves into the amazing personal stories of these rhyming women. These commanding performers take on the pornographic images of women featured in many music videos and turn those images upside down. As a matter of fact, a debate on that very issue is one of the fascinating clips in the film. These are talented, intelligent, and optimistic women and the reality is that the mainstream gets little exposure to their work. However, *Say My Name* could start to change that reality.

Balancing professional dreams with the stark realities of poor urban communities, race, sexism, and motherhood, the artists featured in *Say My Name* battle for a place in a society and industry that creates few opportunities for women like themselves. From emerging artists filled with new creativity, to true pioneers like MC Lyte, Roxanne Shante, and Monie Love, these women turn adversity into art. Challenging, uplifting and inspiring — this is the future of hip hop.

SCREENING PARTNER



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American Swing

Mathew Kaufman and Jon Hart, USA, 2008, 81 minutes

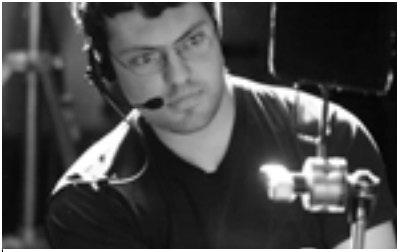
In 1970s New York, it simply didn't get any hotter than Plato's Retreat. Founded by impresario Larry Levenson, the infamous heterosexual swingers club opened its doors in 1977 and launched a most unlikely sexual revolution. It even spawned a disco hit from Joe Thomas who sang "Gettin' hot and bothered/ loosen up your collar/ let's all do the freak/ at Plato's Retreat."

Born and raised in the Bronx, Levenson fell into the swinging lifestyle while working at McDonald's and raising a family. He found his calling selling sex to the suburbs. And soon enough, married couples and singles were commuting from the boroughs to swim, eat, and swing at Plato's. Directors Mathew Kaufman and Jon Hart combine interviews with the some of the club's most loyal and famous patrons (writer Buck Henry, former-mayor Ed Koch). They include jaw-dropping footage, such as scenes of the legendary mattress room, likened by one club-goer to a can of worms. At Plato's, sex came in all shapes and sizes: a veritable cornucopia of concupiscence, with a touch of polyester leisure suit and extra-hold hairspray. The club embodied a type of horny democracy where all bodies were welcome and embraced. But by the mid-80s, the toll wrought by AIDS and the IRS (charges of tax evasion landed Larry in prison) began to take effect. As Levenson's empire crumbled, the club went to greater lengths to maintain its dominance. But while the fesh was willing, the spirit was gone. Plato's closed its doors forever on New Year's Eve, 1985.

The film has the wisdom to simply let the people who were there recall, often in graphic detail, the glory days of glory holes and sexual smorgasbords. (The image of a certain swimming pool may take up residence in your brain and never leave.) But for all the genitals on screen, *American Swing* is possessed of a certain loopy innocence, most of which comes from the people who made the club what it was. An elegiac and loving portrait of a period in American sexual history when anything went, and mom and dad got down and dirty. Vintage raunch at its finest!

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Land of Oil and Water

Warren Cariou and Neil McArthur, Canada, 2008, 44 minutes

Underneath the woods and the muskeg of northern Canada lies roughly two trillion barrels of oil. It is fifteen percent of the world's known reserves and six times more than what's left in Saudi Arabia. *Land of Oil and Water* follows the journey of Warren Cariou, a Métis writer from northern Saskatchewan, who learns that the oil companies from Alberta are expanding into his homeland. Now living in Winnipeg, Cariou talks to people in the area about their hopes and fears about the development. He crosses the border to Alberta to speak with aboriginal communities who have experienced the development. They continue the struggle to preserve their traditional way of life in the midst of the largest and most destructive oil recovery operation the world has ever known.

Cariou records this journey on film so everyone can see the magnitude of the oil sands mines. As a writer, he considers depicting it in a book, but realised it wouldn't have the same impact as a visual depiction of the people and places we see up close in the film.

Cariou also wanted the local Métis and First Nations to tell their own stories about living near this massive development. In his words, "much has been said about the oil sands by outside commentators, scientists, and politicians, but few outsiders have ever taken the time to listen to the people who call this place home." Speaking with intelligence and insight, community members share differing opinions and experiences — some positive, some negative — letting us make our own minds up about the effects of the oil sands.

WORLD PREMIERE. FILMMAKERS IN ATTENDANCE.

PRECEDED BY:

Terra Sacer

Alberto Guevara and Elysee Nouvet, Canada, 2008, 17 minutes

Over 100,000 Nicaraguans suffer ill effects of exposure to the pesticide Nemogon, through their work at banana farms. The film introduces a group of these former plantation workers who are camping out in Managua to draw attention to the health problems they are experiencing. No longer able to work and looking for compensation, the workers feel abandoned by the government as they struggle with disease and unemployment.

FILMMAKERS IN ATTENDANCE

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FORUM: Where is the Line?

Representation, exploitation and ethics in documentary filmmaking

When people think of documentary film ethics, they often think of distorting events, manipulation of images or plagiarizing. But what about issues of exploitation, power and representation? Are there people or situations that others should not film? What is informed consent as it relates to children or people who are impaired, severely ill, traumatized or even dead?

In a world where 'haves' are often fascinated with images of 'have-nots', and where images of war and poverty are everywhere, the creators and consumers of images often forget that the person in a film is a member of someone's family. Appearing in a film can have an impact for years to come. Does the director have a duty of care?

This forum will discuss the subject of power dynamics between filmmaker and film subject and potential repercussions of participating in a documentary film.

MODERATOR

Anita Ho received a PhD in philosophy from the University of Alberta, and is currently Assistant Professor in the Centre for Applied Ethics at the University of British Columbia. Her teaching and research interests include biomedical ethics, research ethics, cross-cultural ethics, and communication ethics.

PARTICIPANTS

Meghna Haldar is an award winning filmmaker based in Vancouver. Her feature documentary *Dirt* screened at DOXA in 2008 and won the Best Documentary Award at Toronto's Female Eye Festival in 2009. She has recently completed a film for Knowledge called *Though the Heavens Fall* and is writing a screenplay set in Bollywood.

Haida Paul has worked in film and television for over 40 years, collaborating with filmmakers from Canada, India, Britain, the US, the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia. She has been a teacher and lecturer at the Directors' Guild of Canada, Cineworks, Simon Fraser University, Emily Carr University, and the University of British Columbia.

Tami Wilson has been active in Vancouver's documentary community for 12 years as a festival programmer and filmmaker. Her most recent project, *FLESH*, explores the gender politics of meat through a cross-section of female perspectives. It premiered at the Vancouver International Film Festival and is now required viewing for Eco-Feminist students throughout North America.

Murray Siple began his film career at Emily Carr and went on to make extreme sports videos including the cult classic *Cascadia* and *The Burning*. In 1996, a serious car accident changed Murray's life forever when he became a quadriplegic. Ten years later, Murray returned to filmmaking, incorporating his passion and distinct viewpoint in the documentary *Carts of Darkness*.

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Rough Aunties

Kim Longinotto, South Africa, 2008, 103 minutes

Fearless, feisty, and resolute. The 'Rough Aunties' are a remarkable group of women unwavering in their stand to protect and care for the abused, neglected, and forgotten children of Durban, South Africa. This latest documentary by celebrated director Kim Longinotto (*Sisters in Law*, *Divorce Iranian Style*) follows the outspoken, multiracial cadre of Thuli, Mildred, Sdudla, Eureka, and Jackie. They wage a daily battle to help the most vulnerable of their communities through their organization, Bobbi Bear.

Jackie, a survivor of abuse, is a white African who grew up in poverty. While working as an AIDS activist, she learned that young children were contracting HIV through rape. Infuriated, she fought to change South African laws that prevented the reporting of rape as a crime. Jackie then founded Bobbi Bear not only to educate women and children about abuse, but also to intervene in the community to protect children.

Thuli, Sdudla, Mildred, and Eureka were all drawn to Jackie and Bobbi Bear out of their desire to make change. Some had experienced abuse; all had experienced hardship and poverty. The women are now community workers, child safety officers, and educators. *Rough Aunties* follows them at home, at work, and in the community, bearing witness to their incredible skill, sensitivity, and tenacity. They demonstrate not only that they are not victims, but that they are role models for us all.

The women share a passion and commitment to make change for the next generation and when we witness them confronting an abuser at home, anything seems possible. Despite the harsh realities of the women's work, the portraits that emerge on screen are filled with grace, wisdom, friendship, and a real sense of humour. Neither politics nor racial divisions stand a chance against the united force of the 'rough aunties.'

Winner, Jury Prize in Documentary, Sundance World Cinema

Winner, Best Feature, Big Sky Documentary Film Festival

COMMUNITY PARTNER



The Tree Lover

Jonas Selberg Augustsén, Sweden, 2008, 76 minutes

In a remote corner of northern Sweden, a trio of young men decide to build a treehouse. Not just any treehouse, but a symbol of a lost Eden, a physical embodiment of the missing connection between people and the natural world. With little more than a few architectural drawings, a tiny maquette, and a whole lot of gumption, Jonas (director), Andreas (sound), and Anders (camera) embark on a journey of personal and cultural discovery. It's very easy to say 'I want to build a tree house,' but the reality of doing it is something else entirely. Jonas discovers this as he is suspended more than fourteen metres in the air, desperately trying to hammer nails into a tin roof. "This is so scary, I could cry," he says. But the constant threat of plummeting to one's death, mosquito hell, and the local police are the very least of their problems. While Jonas agonizes that their project is 'too male' (the only female on site is Maya, Jonas's long-suffering dog), and that no one really understands or cares about the underlying gravity of the project, the hard work of hammering, sawing and building must continue. The all-too brief Swedish summer is hurrying to a close, and the tree house is unfinished.

The Tree Lover is filled with dry humour and a wonderful quixotic spirit that recalls the very best of Thoreau or his Swedish equivalent Eyvind Jonsson (who almost starved to death in a remote cabin in the woods). With a little help from a cultural theorist, a theologian, and a biologist, who collectively explicate the critical place that trees have long occupied in human history, the filmmakers craft a beautifully constructed exploration of the human need for connection and home. Even if that home is in a tree. As Martin Lönnebo, a bishop emeritus explains, the tree is a central image in almost all human mythology and religion. "The further away we get from the forest," he says, "the more we miss it, until we forget what it was that we were missing in the first place." In an increasingly secularized and rootless age, where urban ease has largely replaced real (hard) work, the act of physically building something proves a revelation. The significance of the latin phrase 'hic locus sanctus est' meaning 'this is the place' becomes clear as water when the final product is finally unveiled.

SCREENING PARTNER

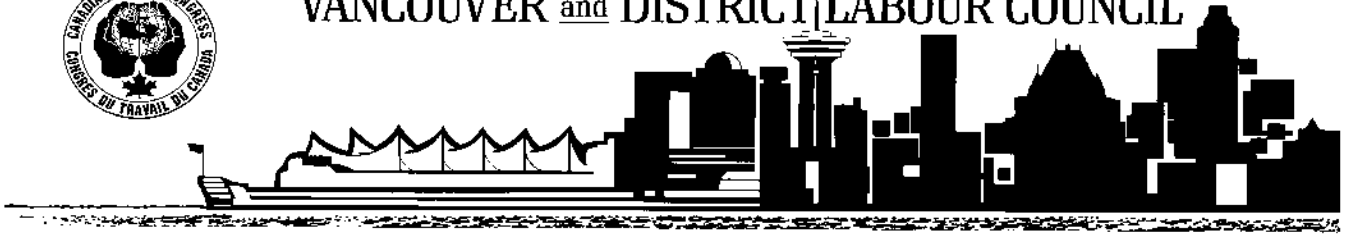


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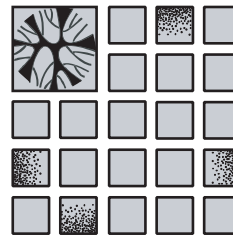
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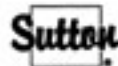
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The Garden

Scott Hamilton Kennedy, USA, 2008, 80 minutes

The fourteen-acre community garden, at 41st and Alameda in South Central Los Angeles, is the largest of its kind in the United States. Started as a form of healing after the devastating L.A. riots in 1992, the South Central Farmers have since created a miracle in one of the country's most blighted neighbourhoods. Growing their own food. Feeding their families. Creating a community. But now, bulldozers are poised to level their fourteen-acre oasis.

The Garden follows the plight of the farmers, from the tilled soil of this urban farm to the polished marble of City Hall. Mostly immigrants from Latin America, from countries where they feared for their lives if they spoke out, we watch them organize, fight back, and demand answers.

Why was the land sold to a wealthy developer for millions less than fair-market value? Why was the transaction done in a closed-door session of the LA City Council? Why has it never been made public? And the powers-that-be have the same response: "The garden is wonderful, but there is nothing more we can do."

If everyone told you nothing more could be done, would you give up?

The Garden has the pulse of verité with the narrative pull of fiction, telling the story of the USA's largest urban farm, backroom deals, land developers, green politics, money, poverty, power, and racial discord. The film explores and exposes the fault lines in American society and raises crucial and challenging questions about liberty, equality, and justice for the poorest and most vulnerable among us.

Academy Award Nominee, Best Documentary Feature

Winner, Sterling Award for US Feature, SILVERDOCS Documentary Festival

COMMUNITY PARTNER



Carmen Meets Borat

Mercedes Stalenhoef, The Netherlands, 2008, 85 minutes

In *Carmen Meets Borat*, director Mercedes Stalenhoef follows the life of 17 year-old Carmen. She lives in a gypsy village in the mountains of Romania, where the men spend their days tying one on and exchanging coarse words in her father's bar. Carmen works daily in her father's business. At home, she watches a Spanish soap opera and dreams of a better life in Spain, where the men are romantic and decent.

Her plan to emigrate falls to pieces when an American film crew descends on her village to shoot *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan*. The villagers cooperate on what they believe is a documentary, however, the film depicts the villagers as primitive caricatures supposedly from Kazakhstan. Carmen's grandfather unknowingly plays the part of a backstreet abortionist and poses for the camera with a welding apparatus. Borat embraces a woman he introduces as his sister and brags about her status as the fourth best whore in Kazakhstan. The villagers don't understand a single word of English and laugh in good faith into the camera.

As soon as they find out that the English director has made fools of them, they are outraged. When the film is released, the world press throws itself on the village. The chaos is made complete when an American lawyer holds out the prospect of a \$30 million insurance claim to the villagers.

He persuades Carmen's father, grandfather, and the mayor to sue Twentieth Century Fox for money that could be used to improve the impoverished village. The film culminates with the three men traveling to meet with the executives at Twentieth Century Fox. Will the village win their case or is this just another westerner exploiting them? Will Borat himself apologize?

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Jehad In Motion

A documentary installation and artist talk with Richard Fung, Canada, 2008

Richard Fung generates ideas for his films from his own diasporic life history. As such, Fung's new documentary, *Jehad in Motion*, is a portrait of Jehad Al-Iweibe, a Palestinian Canadian who lives in Toronto but regularly returns to visit his family in Hebron. Rendering this documentary as an installation, *Jehad in Motion* is a double portrait of the man and the two cities he calls home. As such, it unfolds on two screens.

In Toronto, we walk around Thorncliffe Park where Jehad works providing services in a key neighbourhood for newly arrived immigrants. In Hebron, he takes us to the old market where Palestinians have built a horizontal fence to protect themselves. In Toronto, we watch him cook at a Passover Seder for peace. In Hebron, he celebrates his sister's wedding at a feast for one thousand people. He rejects ethnic and religious nationalisms as a response to racism and oppression and, instead, is committed to the struggle for peace through justice. Moving from place to place, Jehad synthesizes the challenges and possibilities in these two very different but overlapping worlds.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Richard Fung has made the politics of gender, ethnicity, and identity his central focus. His work deals with gay issues, racism, and cultural assertion. Fung brings rich colour to his eloquent narratives; in his use of both personal experience and cultural history, his observations are revelatory. His thoughtful voice instills a sense of wonder in the viewer, as Fung understands the value even of tragic events and experience.

Fung's work has been in exhibitions and festivals worldwide and his works are included in public collections and universities in Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, the UK, and the US. As a writer and critic, Richard Fung has published extensively and his work has been reviewed in numerous publications. Born in Trinidad, Richard Fung is a frequent guest lecturer and currently teaches at the Ontario College of Art and Design in Toronto.

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Continuing Studies



Upstream Battle

Ben Kempas, Germany, 2008, 97 minutes

Since the beginning of time, Pacific salmon have swum up the Klamath River to their spawning grounds. A few generations ago, there were a million salmon per season. Today there are only a few thousand. Four hydroelectric dams in northern California and Oregon have cut off their path and turned the water into a toxic soup. In 2002, as many as 70,000 salmon died from these conditions in one of the worst fish kills in American history. One of the most haunting images in *Upstream Battle* is that of salmon leaping out of the water, only to smack into the dam. Director Ben Kempas tells the remarkable story of the battle over the use of this river, in which average citizens struggle against a multinational corporation that appears as impenetrable as its dams.

One leader of the citizen's crusade is Merv George. He is a member of the Hoopa Valley tribe, whose people have fished the salmon since long before there was a California. George is a witty and charismatic embodiment of both the modern and the traditional. He plays in a rock'n'roll band, but also hunts woodpeckers to make ceremonial objects from their feathers. His wife Wendy equals him in charm, feistiness, and devotion to upholding Hoopa ways. Their tribe has managed to maintain its traditions while so many other pre-colonial people have lost theirs. But the Hoopa culture is largely based around fishing salmon. "If they're sick, we're sick," says George.

This quarrel could easily have been framed as a classic David and Goliath confrontation, but *Upstream Battle* is wonderfully nuanced, acknowledging the complexity of the situation. The other stakeholders in this ecosystem include farmers who rely on the water for irrigation; the neighbouring tribes of Yurok, Karuk and Klamath; and commercial fishermen who catch the salmon at sea. The film manages to humanize those on all sides, including the corporate employees whose own livelihoods are in flux over changing owners.

When the dam license comes up for renewal, George and his allies pursue a once-in-a-lifetime chance to force the new owner, billionaire Warren Buffett, into the largest dam removal project in history. It may seem like an upstream battle, but so are most battles worth fighting.

FILMMAKER IN ATTENDANCE

Followed by a public forum: The Ecology of Films.

FORUM: The Ecology of Films

Today a growing number of documentary films address environmental crises around the globe. At DOXA this year, we have ecological films on the Alberta oil sands, wild horses, wild salmon, seed preservation, community gardens, mining, water, and people's relationship to trees. In this forum, filmmakers and environmentalists will discuss their inspirations, the potential of films making real change, and how filmmakers can increase the impact of their films, while not increasing the environmental impact of filmmaking.

MODERATOR

As Climate Change Director, **Morag Carter** leads the David Suzuki Foundation's efforts to promote effective science-based solutions to climate change and energy issues. She has over 15 years experience in the areas of public health and environmental policy reform. Morag is a strategic leader and manager with significant political experience at the provincial, federal and international levels.

PARTICIPANTS

Warren Cariou grew up in Saskatchewan and has worked as a construction worker, a technical writer, and a political aide. He teaches Aboriginal Literature at the University of Manitoba, where he is Canada Research Chair and Director of the Centre for Creative Writing and Oral Traditions. Cariou is of Métis, German, and Norwegian heritage. His writing explores the relationships between Native and non-Native communities in Western Canada. *Land of Oil and Water* is his first film.

Ben Kempas was born in Stuttgart and studied documentary filmmaking at the University of Television and Film Munich. He directed the feature-length documentaries *To Be a Nation Again* (1999) and *The Loch Long Monster* (2001) for television. *Upstream Battle* (2008) is his theatrical documentary debut.

Jodie Martinson studied filmmaking at the Berkeley Digital Film Institute in California. She has worked in environmental consulting and documentary filmmaking since 2006. *To The Tar Sands* is her first feature-length documentary. It was made from the back of her bicycle and screened to a sold-out crowd at the 2008 Calgary International Film Festival. Martinson's current projects include reporting from India on electronic waste for a documentary for PBS Frontline World.

Neil McArthur was born in Regina and spent part of his childhood in northern Saskatchewan. Currently a professor at the University of Manitoba, he specialises in the history of European philosophy and literature. His film *Out of the Way* premiered at the 2006 Calgary International Film Festival. He is a member of the Winnipeg Film Group (WFG) and has trained in film and video production through the WFG and SAW Video in Ottawa.

This forum follows the screening of *Upstream Battle*.
Forum is free of charge.

REALITY SANDWICHES

ESSAY BY HAIDA PAUL

"...documentary... a cinematic tradition and mode of audience reception that is continually evolving and is without clear boundaries..."¹

One day in the early seventies I watched an extraordinary film called *High School*. Produced, directed and edited by Frederick Wiseman and photographed by Richard Leiterman, *High School* was an epiphany for me. Or perhaps the seed of an epiphany, which sprouted in my mind and took root in the way I began thinking about documentary.

At the time, I was an apprentice negative-cutter and scarcely knew the defining divide between documentary and fiction film until some one told me about 'suspension of disbelief.' This term, to me, described a vital requirement in everyday life, not just at the movies.

"According to the theory, suspension of disbelief is a quid pro quo: the audience tacitly agrees to provisionally suspend their judgment in exchange for the promise of entertainment..."²

During my next few years as a fledgling editor, I wielded my splicer with enthusiasm on every project that came my way: ads, promos, documentaries of every kind, tv dramas and feature films. It soon became clear that they all, in one way or another, involved issues of belief or disbelief, for which I, as an editor, was expected to enhance or dispel.

"Propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent..."³

Around this time two things happened. A friend took me to see *Welfare* (another Wiseman masterpiece, made in 1975 and photographed by William Brayne), and I realized that if I was going to fiddle with the 'truth', I wanted it to be the kind of truth that Wiseman's films demonstrate.

When *High School* and *Welfare* were made, films described as *cinéma vérité* and *direct cinema* were generally viewed as representations of unvarnished reality, a truer documentation. Wiseman's insight, however, was to recognize that there is no pure documentary form, and that all filmmaking, irrespective of the intention, involves a process of imposing order. For this reason he prefers to call his films 'reality fictions.'

"Any documentary, mine or anyone else's, made in no matter what style, is arbitrary, biased, prejudiced, compressed and subjective. Like any of its sisterly or brotherly fictional forms, it is born in choice..."⁴

In documentary, the initial fracture with reality occurs in the choices made on location. The context of the shoot is always relevant. Who and what are being filmed? Why? Subjectivity and objectivity intermingle freely in those decisions. My preference is to work with directors who know their bias and whether or not they wish to pursue it into the editing room. Documentary editing is a constant process of manipulation. But even more than this, it is a creative expression of a particular point of view.

Wiseman, who always edits his own films, utilizes his experiences during location shooting as a form of research. He 'finds' the film

in the editing process which can take anywhere from six months to a year.

"This great glop of material which represents the externally recorded memory of my experience of making the film is of necessity incomplete. The memories not preserved on film float somewhat in my mind as fragments available for recall, unavailable for inclusion but of great importance in the mining and shifting process known as editing. This editorial process ... is sometimes deductive, sometimes associational, sometimes non-logical and sometimes a failure... The crucial element for me is to try and think through my own relationship to the material by whatever combination of means is compatible. This involves a need to conduct a four-way conversation between myself, the sequence being worked on, my memory, and general values and experience..."⁵

Wiseman's films offer no commentary or narration. The sound tracks carry no scored music or sound other than what was recorded on location. His films are long, sometimes exceeding three hours. They provoke questions that have no simple answers. They allow, even encourage, opposing perspectives.

I'm unable to think of a term that might describe the opposite of 'suspending disbelief.' However, Wiseman's work presents us with an opportunity to neither believe nor disbelieve. He shows us his own distillation of his own experience. We are then free to make of it what we will. Responsibility for interpretation is in the mind of the beholder. And isn't that finally the purpose of art?

CURATOR BIOGRAPHY

Haida has worked in film and television for over 40 years. Her passion for the documentary form was ignited by the early work of Allan King, the Maysles Brothers & Charlotte Zwerin and, perhaps most significantly, Frederick Wiseman. Over the years she has collaborated with independent filmmakers from Canada, India, Britain, the United States, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Indonesia. Her teaching activities include apprenticeship training for Directors' Guild of Canada, workshops and seminars with Cineworks Canada, sessional lecturer at Simon Fraser University, Emily Carr University, and the University of British Columbia.



NOTES

The title of this essay is taken from Allen Ginsberg's book of poetry, 'Reality Sandwiches', City Lights Publishers, 1963.

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary_film
Source: Nichols, Bill. 'Foreword', in Barry Keith Grant and Jeannette Sloniowski (eds.) Documenting The Documentary: Close Readings of Documentary Film and Video. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suspension_of_disbelief

³ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Propaganda>
Source: Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, Propaganda and Persuasion

⁴ johnjosephbachir.org/content/wiseman.pdf
Source: Wiseman, Frederick. "Editing as a four-way conversation".
Dox: Documentary Film Quarterly, n.1 (April 1994): 4-6

⁵ *ibid*



Welfare

Frederick Wiseman, USA, 1975, 167 minutes

CURATED BY HAIDA PAUL

Welfare is one of Frederick Wiseman's most demanding and rewarding films. Shot in 1975 at a New York City welfare agency, the film reflects the struggle of welfare workers and clients attempting to function within the web of institutional laws and regulations governing their transactions. As with most Wiseman films (such as *Titicut Follies*, *High School*, *Juvenile Court*, *Law & Order*) the venue is institutional and easily recognizable. The action takes place within that framework of social mechanism. The camera simply looks and records. The resulting footage, superbly photographed by William Brayne, exposes the relentless flow of problems that drive people to seek aid: unemployment, inadequate housing, addiction, racism, homophobia, medical and psychiatric disorders, child abuse, and neglect of the elderly. The needs are overwhelming. The red tape is endless. Claimants' responses to the system run the gamut from abject resignation to enraged antagonism.

A young woman is told by her interviewer that he's 'looking after two and a half million people and that if a couple of thousand don't get what's due them, I'm doing a good job.' The young woman leaves. A man with a fractured skull heaps racist abuse on a kindly security officer. Two children play at shooting each other with umbrellas. A woman wrapped in a huge overcoat suckles her baby. Beside her, an old man gazes apprehensively at the handful of forms he holds.

In the early 70s, technical advances made it possible to shoot synchronized sound documentaries with available light. This enabled Wiseman to use lightweight equipment, no additional lights, and a small, unobtrusive crew. He recorded sound in tandem with Brayne on camera. They used a system of discreet signals to communicate on who or what the camera should follow. Wiseman's editing is brilliant. What emerges is the evocation of endless days spent standing in queues or waiting in crowded corridors under the relentless glare of fluorescent lights. The film does not judge welfare workers, people on welfare, the security staff, or the person who sweeps up at the end of the day. It is a film that asks the question 'whose fault is all this?' *Welfare* is as sadly relevant today as when it was made 35 years ago.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

Limelight Video



My Mother's Farm

Ilze Burkovska Jacobsen, Norway, 2008, 55 minutes

Tale Kalna is nothing short of a Latvian legend. Shortly after she was born in 1947 her father was imprisoned, tortured, and sent to Siberia simply because he owned a farm. Like most other Latvians of her generation, it became a dream to once again own land. For this dream to become reality, Tale endured some historical political moments: the USSR occupation, Latvia's hard-fought independence, the fall of the red army, and eventually the joining of the EU. Throughout these tumultuous decades she managed to raise two beautiful daughters, work as a propaganda specialist, bring opera to the countryside, and advocate for better rural transit. Tale Kalna's thoughts have never been limited by the borders of her own little farm.

Her tale is told through the eyes of her eldest daughter, director Ilze Burkovska Jacobsen, who began filming 'mama' during glasnost and perestroika. Ilze affectionately chronicles over sixty years of Latvian history through the labours and accomplishments of her mother. With candid narration we learn that in '1985 something unexpected happens. The Soviet Union gets a leader who walks among the people. Mikhail Gorbachev thinks like mama. The country needs agricultural reform.' This was a golden time for Tale, a passionate and patriotic woman who rented, and eventually owned, one of the first independent farms in the Republic of Latvia. As her daughter lovingly notes, 'a little voice can make a difference and if nobody else speaks out, you will.'

PRECEDED BY:

Mama, L'Chaim!

Elkan Spiller, Germany, 2008, 5 minutes

Sixty-two-year-old Chaim Lubelski lives with his ninety-five-year-old mother, a concentration camp survivor. Chaim's mother was born in Poland and survived the camps, though her parents and first husband all perished. Knowing what his parents had endured, Chaim made it his mission in life to care for them as they got older and now attends to his mother twenty-four hours a day. These lively and humorous characters share both the light-hearted antics of daily life and the tears and memories of the Holocaust. A touching and surprisingly joyful insight into the lives of these astonishing survivors.

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Video Pool
videopool.typepad.com

Land of Oil and Water

Neil McArthur
mcarthur@novuscom.net

Le Parkour

Vancouver Film School
www.vfs.com

Mama, L'Chaim!

Elkan Spiller
elkanspiller@gmail.com

Ma'rib

Rainer Komers
r.komers@t-online.de

Meaning of Life, The

Face to Face Media
www.facetofacemedia.ca

Mémère Métisse

Winnipeg Film Group
www.winnipegfilmgroup.com

Memories of Angels, The

National Film Board of Canada
www.nfb.ca

Milking the Rhino

Kartemquin Films
www.kartemquin.com

Mirage of El Dorado

Productions Multi-Monde
www.pmm.qc.ca

My Mother's Farm

Norwegian Film Institute
www.nfi.no/english/

Necrobusiness

Swedish Film Institute
www.sfi.se

Nobody's Perfect

AUTLOOK Filmsales
www.autlookfilms.com

One Percent, The

Films Transit International
www.filmstransit.com

Presidio Modelo

Pablo Alvarez-Mesa
palvarezmesa@gmail.com

Pulling John

iNK Stories
www.inkstories.com

Queen and I, The

Swedish Film Institute
www.sfi.se

Real Place, The

National Film Board of Canada
www.nfb.ca

Requiem for Mrs. H.

flumenfilme
www.flumenfilm.de

Robinsons Of Mantsinsaari

Deckert Distribution
www.deckert-distribution.com

Rough Aunties

Women Make Movies
www.wmm.com

San Francisco State: On Strike

California Newsreel
www.newsreel.org

Say My Name

Women Make Movies
www.wmm.com

Scarred Justice:

The Orangeburg Massacre 1968
California Newsreel
www.newsreel.org

Seeking Refuge

InformAction
www.informactionfilms.com

Shining Stars / Maytal

Go2Films
www.go2films.com

Shooting Women

Women Make Movies
www.wmm.com

Shots in the Dark

National Film Board of Canada
www.nfb.ca

Slaves

Swedish Film Institute
www.sfi.se

Soneros: The Sound of the River

La Maroma Producciones
www.lamaroma.com

Sound Shadows

Norwegian Film Institute
www.nfi.no/english/

Steel Homes

Odd Girl Out Productions
www.oddgirlout.co.uk

Succo Pomodori

Astra Burke
astra@ca.inter.net

Sweetest Embrace, The

National Film Board of Canada
www.nfb.ca

Terra Sacer

V Tape
www.vtape.org

To the Tar Sands

Jodie Martinson
jodie.martinson@gmail.com

Transit Dubai

Volya Films
www.volyafilms.nl

Tree Lover, The

Swedish Film Institute
www.sfi.se

Tulku

National Film Board of Canada
www.nfb.ca

Upstream Battle

expressive.tv
www.expressive.tv

Virtuoso

Vancouver Film School
www.vfs.com

Waterlife

Mongrel Media
www.mongrelmedia.com

Welfare

Zipporah Films
www.zipporah.com

Who the Jew are You?

Blue Plate Productions
www.blueplate.ca

World According to Traudl, The

Veronique Glorieux
glorieux72@hotmail.com

Word Within the Word

Magic Lantern Foundation
www.magiclanternfoundation.org

Yodok Stories

Norwegian Film Institute
www.nfi.no/english/

Youssou N'Dour:

I Bring What I Love
www.ibringwhatilove.com

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For more information contact Robin Mirsky, Executive Director, at (416) 935-2526.

**Application deadlines for the Rogers Documentary Fund are
Thursday, June 25 and Wednesday, October 7, 2009.**

Application deadline for the Rogers Cable Network Fund is Wednesday, October 21, 2009.

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