

## Documentary Reframed: Process, Politics and Aesthetics

The documentary has come of age. Once tagged "boring," documentaries are now box office hits and are beginning to shape mass opinion. PAVED Arts presents a selection of independent Canadian and international documentary films and videos to explore how this surge of interest in the documentary genre is affecting media artists and filmmakers working interstitially, outside corporate-controlled broadcast production systems.

The screenings are structured according to four themes that emerged through research conducted with artists, filmmakers, and independent distributors across Canada and abroad. The themes are *Found Footage*, *Psycho-spiritual Realities*, *Encountering the Other*, and *Re-imaging/imagining History*. *Found Footage* refers to the avant-garde practice of constructing something new from already existing clips borrowed from television, cinema, news media, internet, commercials, public relations videos, or industrial training films. In *Psycho-spiritual Realities*, filmmakers cross genre boundaries and employ techniques from animation, video art, fictional drama, and Surrealism to convey psychological or spiritual conditions. In *Encountering the Other*, filmmakers are challenged by the visual legacy of exploitation and violence that accompanies ethnographic representations to find new ways to approach foreign or "exoticized" subject matter. An insistence upon remembering forgotten histories is a powerful response to the colonial negation of indigenous and minority experiences in the final theme of *Re-imaging/imagining History*.

The works test a variety of creative strategies for representing personal, social, and political realities, often pushing the boundaries of what is considered "documentary." The viewer is invited to consider how the intersection of form, content, and mode of production within the documentary genre influences reception while both masking and revealing ideological assumptions.

Maureen Latta

## Documentary Reframed

"Cinema in the gallery" screenings:

**Thursday, March 22, 7:00 pm**

*Found Footage*

**Saturday, March 24, 1:00 pm**

*Psycho-spiritual realities*

**Thursday, March 29, 7:00 pm**

*Encountering the Other*

**Saturday, March 31, 1:00 pm**

*Re-imaging/imagining History*

**Sunday, April 1, 4:00 pm**

Feature presentation: *Sisters in Law*  
**Roxy Theatre, 320 20<sup>th</sup> Street West, Saskatoon**

**Wednesday, April 4, 7:00 pm**

Panel Discussion

**Tuesdays – Saturdays, 12:00 – 6:00 pm**

Media Gallery and Resource Centre

All events at PAVED Arts except as noted.  
Admission to all events is free.



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## Documentary Reframed

Process, Politics and Aesthetics

Screenings and viewings of  
Canadian and international  
documentaries

**Thursday, March 22**  
**Found Footage**

**7:00 pm**  
**When Canadians Attack**  
**Brett Kashmere (Canada, 2005) 4 min.**  
A voice-over narration of a Roland Barthes essay, "Of Sports and Men," resignifies found footage capturing the rougher side of Canada's favourite sport.

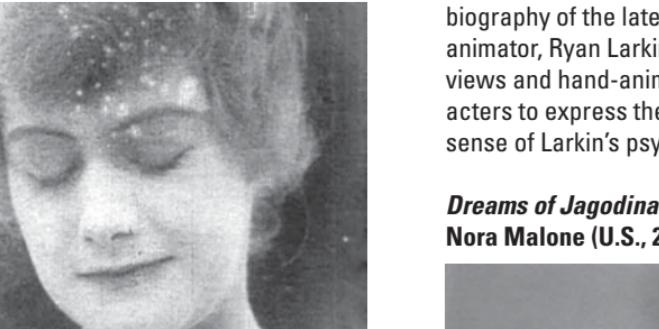
**Mixed Signals**  
**Richard Martin (Canada, 2005) 8 min.**  
Borrowed images recorded from a digitally-scrambled broadcast create a pixelated blur of sound and colour to suggest the interdependence of fundamentalist religion and right-wing politics.

**I Thought I was Seeing Convicts**  
**Harun Farocki (Germany, 2000) 25 min.**  
Appropriated prison surveillance video, text, and voice-over convincingly argue



that "whoever controls the technical means is considered powerful."

**8:00 pm**  
**The Phantom of the Operator**  
**Caroline Martel (Canada, 2004) 65 min.**

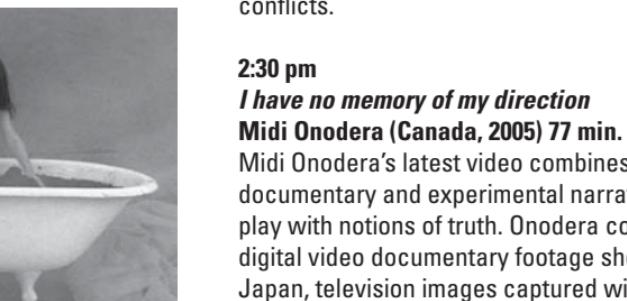


Caroline Martel imaginatively contextualizes the visual ephemera of the female telephone operator by recycling industrial, advertising, and scientific management films produced in North America between 1903 and 1989. More than a retelling of telecommunications history, this film is an eerie science fiction fable about the role of human beings in a technologically-determined world.

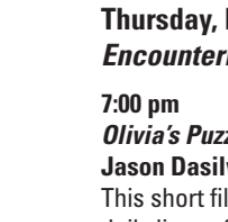
**Saturday, March 24**  
**Psycho-spiritual realities**

**1:00 pm**  
**Ryan, Chris Landreth (Canada, 2004) 14 min.**  
This Oscar-winning short is the creative biography of the late pioneering NFB animator, Ryan Larkin, using audio interviews and hand-animated, three-D characters to express the filmmaker's empathic sense of Larkin's psychological disarray.

**Dreams of Jagodina**  
**Nora Malone (U.S., 2005) 29 min.**



A lyrical narration scripted from interviews with a Serbian woman accompanies fictional recreations of her experiences growing up with an abusive stepfather and the dream world that saved her.



**Happy Crying Nursing Home**

**Niklas Sven Vollmer (U.S., 2004) 29 min.**

Featuring family footage taken before, during, and after the birth of the filmmaker's baby, this film presents the outer journey of new fatherhood and its secret inner conflicts.

**2:30 pm**

**I have no memory of my direction**

**Midi Onodera (Canada, 2005) 77 min.**

Midi Onodera's latest video combines documentary and experimental narrative to play with notions of truth. Onodera collages digital video documentary footage shot in Japan, television images captured with toy cameras, and pop culture imagery. She joins these visual elements with a fictional meta-narrative in the third person, a meditation on the filmmaker's Japanese roots, war, terrorism, myth, and memory.

**Thursday, March 29**  
**Encountering the Other**

**7:00 pm**  
**Olivia's Puzzle**

**Jason Dasilva (Canada, 2001) 12 min.**

This short film finds linkages between the daily lives of two school girls, one in Goa and one in British Columbia.

**The Day When the Moon Menstruated**

**Takuma Kuikaro and Marica Kuikaro (Brazil, 2004) 28 min.**

Participants in a video workshop in Kuikaro Village in the Upper Xingu, Brazil capture the village rituals following an eclipse, while the villagers themselves explain what they are doing and why.

**Visitors of the Night, An Van Dienderen (China, Belgium, 1998) 34 min.**

An innocent attempt at ethnography falls apart when the filmmaker is confronted with obstacles to documenting the apparently matriarchal Mosuo culture of China.

**Seven Fires**

**Jennifer Wemigwans (Canada, 2002) 65 min.**

The filmmaker presents Sally Gaikezheyongai recasting the story of colonization from the Ojibway perspective using the oral tradition of storytelling.

beginning of this influential avant-garde film that critiques the ethnographic gaze through disjunctive editing and a probing narration.

**Ali Kazimi (Canada, 2004) 87 min.**

Ali Kazimi challenges Canada's multicultural notion of itself by unearthing forgotten visual artefacts and re-membering the history of the Komagata Maru, a ship of would-be Indian immigrants held in Vancouver's harbour for 61 days

nally by the women and children. Minh-Ha's formal strategy comments on herself as an "eager observer collecting samples."

**Saturday, March 31**

**Re-imaging/imagining History**

**1:00 pm**

**Comrade Dad**

**Karin Lee (Canada, 2005) 26 min.**

Karin Lee uses archival footage, actors, family films, and cultural objects to reflect on her Chinese immigrant father's life within the political landscape of Canada.

**Wednesday, April 4 - 7:00 pm Panel Discussion**

With curator Maureen Latta and documentary filmmakers Tasha Hubbard (Calgary) and Danny Pederson-Bradbury (Saskatoon).  
Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Communications Network.

Feature presentation  
**Sunday, April 1 - 4:00 pm**  
**Roxy Theatre, 320 20<sup>th</sup> Street West**

**Sisters in Law, Florence Ayisi and Kim Longinotto, (Cameroon/UK, 2004) 104 min.**  
A documentary about the workings of a courthouse in Cameroon under the legal guidance of prosecutor Vera Ngassa and court president Beatrice Ntuba, who set legal precedents while helping the women and children of their patriarchal village of Kumba Town. A hopeful story of female empowerment and grassroots action in modern-day Africa. Co-sponsored by the Department of Women's and Gender Studies, University of Saskatchewan, and the Roxy Theatre.

WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES



Images left to right, courtesy of: Harun Farocki, Caroline Martel, Women Make Movies, Vtape, Women Make Movies, Vtape.