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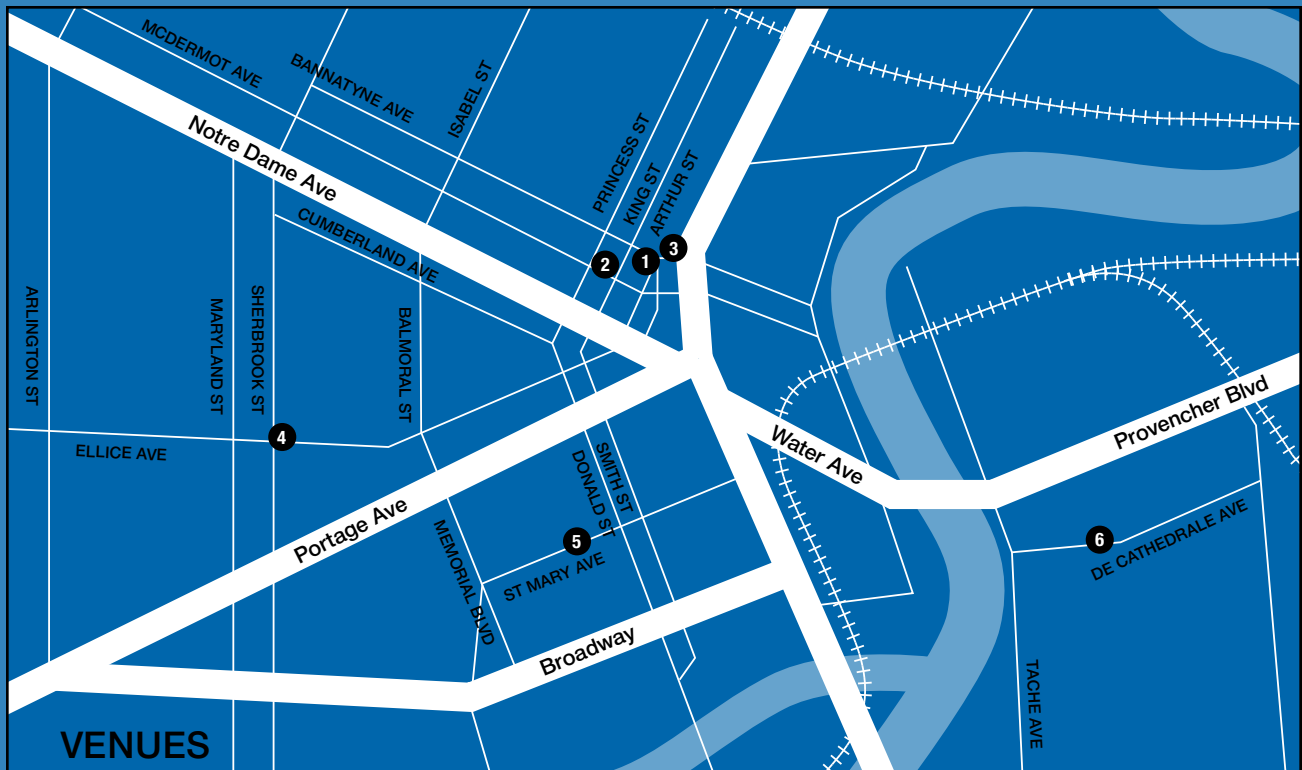
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 4 Tickets / Passes
- 5 Venues and Maps
- 6 Schedule
- 8 **ESSAY: *Truthmongers and Reality Engineers* by Paula Kelly**
- 11 **Filmmaker and Guest Bios**
- 15 **Panel Facilitators**
- 16 **Opening Night: *Capturing Reality***
- 17 **SERIES: *Capturing Reality in Documentary***
- 18 **SERIES: *Copyright in the Digital Age***
- 19 **SERIES: *Hybrid Forms***
- 21 **SERIES: *Resistance in Documentary Film***
- 22 **SERIES: *Capturing Connections Between Humans and Animals***
- 23 **SERIES: *Quebec Documentaries of the 21st Century***
- 27 **SERIES: *Showcase Canada***
- 30 **Closing Night: *Neil Young Trunk Show***
- 31 **Workshops, Industry Panels & Master Classes**
- 31 **Community Programs**
- 32 **ESSAY: *Doing What's Right: Alanis Obomsawin and Professor Norman Cornett* by Steve Loft**
- 35 **Partners, Sponsors and Funders / Credits**

# TICKETS/ PASSES

|  | MEMBERS* | NON-MEMBERS |
|--|----------|-------------|
| Event Pass<br><i>Includes screenings, panels and lectures</i>                                | \$55     | \$85        |
| Event Pass – <i>Early Bird Special</i> (up to Sept 30)                                       | \$40     | \$70        |
| Individual Screenings / Panels / Master Classes  | \$6      | \$8         |
| Advanced Editing Workshop<br><i>Limited participation; not included in the delegate pass</i> | \$35     | \$50        |
| Closing Night Screening at the West End Cultural Centre                                      | \$10     | \$10        |
| Quebec Documentary Series at CUSB  | FREE     | FREE        |
| All events at Urban Shaman Gallery   | FREE     | FREE        |

\*MEMBERSHIP RATES apply to members of Winnipeg Film Group, Cinematheque, the Documentary Organization of Canada, the National Indigenous Media Arts Coalition and Urban Shaman Gallery. Membership cards will be requested at time of admission.



## VENUES

### 1 CIN

Cinematheque (in Artspace)  
Main Floor, 100 Arthur Street

### 2 USG

Urban Shaman Gallery  
203 – 290 McDermot Avenue  
\*NOT wheelchair accessible

### 3 WCD

Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers  
The Rachel Browne Theatre  
2nd Floor, 211 Bannatyne  
–at Arthur Street

### 4 WECC

West End Cultural Centre  
586 Ellice Avenue

### 5 DELTA

Delta Winnipeg  
350 St. Mary Avenue

### 6 CUSB

Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface  
Salle Martial-Caron  
200, de la Cathedrale (Aulneau doors)

# SCHEDULE

## Thursday, October 22

|      | CINEMATHEQUE   | CUSB | OTHER VENUE |
|------|--|------|-------------|
| 4 PM | PANEL – Feature Docs: True Stories of Getting Films Made and Seen p.31   |      |             |
| 7 PM | OPENING SCREENING – <i>Capturing Reality</i> (Pepita Ferrari), with <i>Who Has Seen Allan King?</i> (Danielle Sturk) p.16-17 |      |             |
| 9 PM | OPENING RECEPTION p.16   |      |             |

## Friday, October 23

|         | CINEMATHEQUE  | CUSB   | OTHER VENUE |
|---------|---|--|-------------|
| 12 Noon | SCREENING – <i>Death by Popcorn: The Tragedy of the Winnipeg Jets</i> (L'Atelier national du Manitoba) p.18 |  |             |
| 2 PM    | SCREENING – <i>RiP: A remix manifesto</i> (Brett Gaylor) p.18   |  |             |
| 4 PM    | PANEL – Copyright in the Digital Age p.18   |  |             |
| 7 PM    | SCREENING – <i>Professor Norman Cornett</i> (Alanis Obomsawin) p.21   | SCREENING – <i>Un fleuve humain</i> (Sylvain L'Espérance) p.23 |             |
| 9 PM    | SCREENING – <i>Fig Trees</i> (John Greyson) p.19  | SCREENING – <i>Americano</i> (Carlos Ferrand Zavala) p.24      |             |
| 11 PM   | SCREENING – <i>Nollywood Babylon</i> (Ben Addelman, Samir Mallal) p.27                                      |  |             |

## Saturday, October 24

|         | CINEMATHEQUE  | CUSB   | OTHER VENUE  |
|---------|---|--|--|
| 10 AM   | MASTER CLASS – Lessons in Environmental Filmmaking (Judy Irving) p.31   |  |  |
| 12 Noon | SCREENING – <i>My Winnipeg</i> (Guy Maddin) p.20                        |  | PANEL – Capturing Reality in Documentary Film @ <b>WCD</b> p.17                              |
| 2 PM    | SCREENING – <i>Under Rich Earth</i> (Malcolm Rogge) p.21                | SCREENING – <i>Le père de Gracile</i> (Lucie Lambert) p.24           | PANEL – Working in Hybrid Forms @ <b>WCD</b> p.20  |
| 4 PM    | SCREENING – Canadian Documentary Shorts (various) p.28                  | SCREENING – <i>Roger Toupin, épicier variété</i> (Benoît Pilon) p.25 | PANEL – Resistance in Documentary Film @ <b>WCD</b> p.21                                     |
| 7 PM    | SCREENING – <i>Paris 1919</i> (Paul Cowan) p.17                         | SCREENING – <i>La class de Madame Lise</i> (Sylvie Groulx) p.25      | SCREENING – <i>Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance</i> (Alanis Obomsawin) @ <b>USG</b> p.27 |
| 9 PM    | SCREENING – <i>Utopia in Four Movements</i> (Sam Green, Dave Cerf) p.20 | SCREENING – <i>De l'autre côté de pays</i> (Catherine Hébert) p.26   | SCREENING – Canadian Aboriginal Documentary Shorts @ <b>USG</b> p.29                         |
| 10 PM   |   |  | PARTY – Gimme Some Booze / Film-maker party @ <b>Delta Winnipeg</b> p.12                     |

## Sunday, October 25

|       | CINEMATHEQUE  | CUSB   | OTHER VENUE  |
|-------|---|--|--|
| 10 AM | MASTER CLASS – DIY Documentary with Sam Green p.31                                  |  | WORKSHOP – Advanced Editing with Dave Cerf @ <b>WCD</b> p.31                         |
| 2 PM  | SCREENING – <i>The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill</i> (Judy Irving) p.22            | SCREENING – <i>L'Atelier de mon père</i> (Jennifer Alleyn) p.26              |  |
| 4 PM  | PANEL – Capturing Relationships Between Humans and Animals in Documentary Film p.22 | PANEL – Human Rights, Social Consciousness and the Documentarian's Role p.24 |  |
| 7 PM  |   |  | CLOSING SCREENING – <i>Neil Young Trunk Show</i> (Jonathan Demme) @ <b>WECC</b> p.30 |

Schedule subject to change



## ESSAY • Truthmongers and Reality Engineers

by PAULA KELLY with philosophical musings by MARC ALSPECTOR-KELLY

**I was watching Charlie Rose the other night on TV, interviewing that enfant terrible of New German cinema, Werner Herzog, who seemed to be grappling with the thorny conundrum we've come to know as Truth Vs. Reality in documentary films.**

Actually, Werner didn't quite put it in those terms, I mean, Truth Vs. Reality. What he revealed was that he does not make his own documentaries in the realist tradition of cinema vérité. He prefers to, yes, stage events in his documentaries, and then go in there, like an angry hornet, and zzzzt zzzzt zzzzt, prod and sting his participants until they do something interesting or important, something worth turning on the camera for. (I may not be remembering exactly how he put it.)

Then he said something like "below the surface" of documentary, there is an "ecstatic truth." Along those lines, anyway. I took down some notes, creating a document, if you will, and went to bed.

The next morning, I got up and drank some coffee and thought about Werner Herzog, ecstatic truths and the Nature of Reality. This is bigger than me, I thought, a mere filmmaker trying to get by. What can we really know, unless you're Werner, about these tediously profound questions that seem to follow us everywhere, like a trailing cloud of angst, a cloak of inexorable futility, in terms of?

Fortunately, I have a brother in Kalamazoo and it's been much too long since I last called him with an existential matter to resolve. His name is Marc and he teaches philosophy at the University of Western Michigan. He also has three sons under the age of nine.

So I got him on the phone and explained my predicament. If you're not Werner Herzog, how do you begin to address the prickly matter of Truth Vs. Reality? He understood the problem immediately, and once we got going, it turned out to be surprisingly simple to figure the whole thing out.

**Paula:** Why don't we start with definitions? What is Truth? No, wait a

minute. Let's start with something easy.

**Marc:** Yeah. I suppose we should consider what Documentary means. Hold on a minute. (Daddy's talking on the phone. No, Daniel, I can't do that with you. Not now, okay? I have to do this thing on the phone right now. Okay, I love you too.)

**Paula:** Are you still there?

**Marc:** Okay, so where were we?

**Paula:** Is this a good time for you?

As things turned out, it really wasn't the best time for Marc, because he had a small boy running in and out of the room. So I sent him an email with some questions and the results of our investigation went like this:

*What is a documentary?*

**Paula:** Okay, let me tackle this one. A documentary is a series of moving image sequences edited together to represent some sort of semblance of reality (whatever that means, and I think Stephen Hawking would agree with me). Alternately, a documentary is a cinematic structure for conveying some kind of underlying truth about an individual or set of circumstances. A documentary is—sigh. Why don't you give it a shot?

**Marc:** Seems to me that the distinction between a documentary and a fictional film is one of degree rather than kind, that there is a continuum between them. That doesn't make the distinction illegitimate; the colors red and green lie on a continuum, but that doesn't mean that the concepts of red and green aren't perfectly good concepts. At any rate, there are at least two dimensions to the continuum.

First, there are the specific, particular, facts, the verifiable details, that provide the building-blocks out of which the documentary is made: a person's name, where they went to school, what they did for a living, etc.



But a documentary rarely consists of just these; it will introduce other elements that are not so obviously based on historical record (what the person looked like when asked a certain question, what they wore at a particular event, the nuances of their relationship with their spouse/partner, etc.) On the other hand, even a “pure” work of fiction will build on at least various general facts (about what people are generally like, for example). A fiction that includes no elements from real life that the audience can recognize from their own experience would be incomprehensible.

Second, there is the story built out of those detailed facts. Reality does not come packaged in stories with theme, beginning, middle, and end; and there are inevitably too many facts to be represented (the number of teeth a person has at a particular age, for example, is not likely to be relevant). The documentary film-maker has to construct that story, in part, by selecting, ordering, and presenting those particulars. But as with the detailed facts out of which the story is constructed, the story itself can be more or less faithful to the subject-matter, in much the way that a news report can be more or less faithful to which events are significant enough to warrant reporting. This kind of fidelity is difficult to assess, and likely to be subject to interpretation. But a documentary nevertheless claims such fidelity; that is one of the differences between it and a work of fiction.

### *Can a documentary tell the truth?*

**Paula:** Well, what are the options here? That a documentary can't tell the truth? What the hell are we doing with all this footage?

**Marc:** Telling the truth here will correspondingly demonstrate the two dimensions presented above: accuracy in the particular, detailed facts out of which the story is constructed, and fidelity of the story constructed out of those facts to the documentary's subject-matter.

### *What is truth anyway?*

**Paula:** My cats, when they play together. Actually, that could be a docu-

mentary and every minute would be absolutely true.

**Marc:** Again, the same two dimensions are relevant. With respect to the particular, detailed facts, truth is mundane: if the documentary's narrator says that its subject was born in 1844, then what the film claims is true if its subject was indeed born in 1844. But when it comes to the story itself, the truth is harder to characterize. Do the facts selected for presentation, and does the order in which they are presented, fairly represent the history of the documentary's subject-matter? Is the story a true story? It is harder to see here what in reality corresponds to this. Perhaps in this case the truth is not so much a matter of accurate representation of an objective reality, but is instead more a matter of agreement among a reasonably wide and diverse number people who are familiar with the subject-matter.

### *Can a documentary ever really truly reflect reality?*

**Paula:** My answer is a question. What, in fact, is the meaning of reality in curved space-time as it represents the history of the universe? Is reality a relative perceptual experience unique to each one of us, and therefore different from anyone else's “experience” of the world? Is it enough to say there's a consensus about any observable phenomenon such that it is, by human definition, reality? That's three questions.

**Marc:** With respect to detailed facts, surely they don't depend on perception. (When someone was born doesn't depend on when anyone thinks they were born, e.g.) But the fidelity of the overall story looks more like it is dependent to some degree on the perceiver. There are just too many particular facts to present all of them (imagine how many true sentences you can construct just by describing the room around you, for example; an infinite number, no doubt), and they don't of themselves coalesce into a thematically organized story. So whether the story itself is accurate may be, to some extent, in the eye of the perceiver. (On the other hand, there is surely a limit to this; a sensitive, carefully researched documentary can tell a story that more accurately represents reality than a complete fabrication.)

**Does truth have anything to do with reality?**

**Paula:** Depends on who you talk to.

**Marc:** Yes, but the relation can be complex. With particular facts, truth just is accurate representation of reality (again, “she was born in 1844” is true if she was in reality born in 1844). But with the story itself built on those truths, whether it reflects reality may indeed depend somewhat on who you talk to. (See above.)

**Can documentary get any closer to the truth than, say, poetry or architecture?**

**Paula:** Alright, time to get serious. Of course, you can find truth in documentary films. It’s kind of an accidental moment of revelation—sometimes an unhappy accident, like stubbing your toe, sometimes a happy accident, like believing in God. Although Werner seems to believe that truth lurks under the surface of a documentary, like a

giant catfish trolling around in the Red River, I like to picture it as a shy creature, peeking out from between the branches from time to time. Over to you.

**Marc:** Yes. I’ve been referring to two dimensions so far. But there’s a third: the kind of truths presented in poetry, architecture, music, etc. Such truths—if that’s the right word to use, which I’m not so sure about—involve some kind of resonance between the work and its audience, which can be more on the emotional, conceptual, or inspirational level than on the cognitive or representative level. Documentaries are just as capable of generating such resonance as are any other works of art. So there are three levels of possible “truth” to capture: the accuracy of particular, detailed facts represented in the documentary; the fidelity of the story it tells in virtue of its selection and presentation of those facts; and the emotional, conceptual, or inspirational resonance it can generate. Unlike works of fiction or poetry, which are perhaps answerable to reality only in the third sense (and perhaps the second, albeit only in a very general way), a documentary is answerable to reality in all three senses.

In virtue of those greater constraints, a documentary is capable of a greater proximity to the truth.

**Paula:** Thanks Marc. I owe you one.

So, there you have it.

Some might argue that documentary filmmakers are nothing more than truthmongers and reality engineers. My brother Marc would say that “probably no film can occupy either extreme end (of truth or reality); there is no such thing as the pure documentary or pure work of fiction.” As for Werner, well, I believe he is beyond such arcane ideas as truth or reality. He lives on the plane of the spirit of documentary cinema. But that’s a whole other ball game, isn’t it?

**Paula Kelly** is a writer and filmmaker based in Winnipeg. Her documentary films and dramatic shorts have received various awards and nominations, including the feature documentary *Appassionata*.

The Winnipeg Film Group launches  
latest publication on October 21, 2009

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## FILMMAKER AND GUEST BIOS

**L'Atelier national du Manitoba** was a three-year art project devoted to the artistic study of Winnipeg pop culture ephemera. Known for the “Stand Tall,” “Discount Everything” and “Murder Capital” street art campaigns, the Atelier produced the blockbuster 2005 retrospective of lost Winnipeg television, *Garbage Hill*. Fiercely independent,



provocative and stridently contemptuous of censorship, the Atelier artists were nearly forced to destroy every single copy of their underground found footage collage-doc, *Death by Popcorn: The Tragedy of the Winnipeg Jets* in 2006. Though the Atelier project was completed in 2008, the artists associated with it – Walter Forsberg, Mike Maryniuk and Matthew Rankin – continue to re-imagine Winnipeg ephemera and have presented their work around the world at the Images Festival, Sundance, Clermont-Ferrand, the Film Society of Lincoln Center, SXSW and the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

**Dave Cerf** is a filmmaker, musician, sound designer, and software designer. His earliest memory is when his parents replaced his crib with a mainframe computer. After graduating California Institute of the Arts, he moved to the Bay Area and began collaborating with other musicians, filmmakers, and media artists. He composed music for Scott

Kennedy's film *OT: Our Town* and Sam Green's *The Weather Underground*, and provided a live audio performance



over the films of Jennifer Reeves, Pat O'Neill, and Melinda Stone, including her 2003 California Tour of abandoned drive-in movie theatres.

For the past 30 years, **Paul Cowan** has worked as director, cinematographer and writer, in both drama and documentary, and has been honoured with numerous international awards. His award-winning documentaries include *Westray* and *The Peacekeepers*. His feature drama credits include *Justice Denied* and *Double or Nothing: The Rise and Fall of Robert Campeau*.



Cowan is an Oscar® nominee for *Going the Distance*, his documentary about the Edmonton Commonwealth Games.

**Martin Delisle** holds a B.A. in Visual Arts from Ottawa University and a Film Diploma from Algonquin College. He has been a cameraman and cinematographer, a lecturer at both Ottawa University and Algonquin College, a film reviewer for Radio-Canada in Ottawa, and Director of Programming at the Canadian Film Institute, where he organized several national traveling film festivals. From

1989 to 2005, Delisle worked at Telefilm Canada, first in their Festivals Bureau promoting Canadian films and filmmak-



ers internationally, then becoming a Script Analyst for their Film Operations Unit. Since 2005, Delisle has worked as a freelance consultant working in diverse aspects of film, including marketing, dissemination, programming and script development.

In ten years of feature documentary and fiction filmmaking, cinematographer **Mark Ellam** has brought a unique cinematic vision to reality. He has helped to create award-winning films including *The Take* by Avi Lewis, *Empz 4 Life* by Allan King - Canada's “father of cinema



verité” – and Alexandre Trudeau's films *So Close, So Far* and *Secure Freedom*. For *Big Sugar*, by Brian McKenna, Mark travelled alone and undercover to the Dominican Republic, capturing footage of Haitian plantation workers suffering under conditions of slavery. Mark's recent work as cinematographer includes Brett Gaylor's *RiP: A remix manifesto*.

**Sylvain L'Espérance** studied visual arts at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM) and then film at Concordia

## FILMMAKER AND GUEST BIOS

University. In 1992, he directed *Les printemps incertains*, a documentary portraying the decline of a working-class Montréal neighbourhood, a work which revealed his concerns with both social and formal issues as well as a mode of working which includes experimental elements. He explored the topic of work

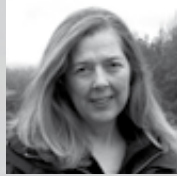


in *Le temps qu'il fait* (1997), and *La main invisible* (2002), shot in Guinea, where the world of artisans

and the transformation of raw material are symbolically extrapolated into dance. He followed with *Un fleuve humain* (2006), for which he served not only as producer and director, but also director of photography.

Since 1984, **Pepita Ferrari** has worked as an animator, director and producer on a wide variety of productions. Ferrari has directed and produced an animated

short on dinosaurs which is featured in several films and television specials, including *The Hunt for China's Dinosaurs*, on PBS. Her 2008 film *Capturing Reality: The Art of Documentary* looks at over 30 luminaries of documentary film.



**Brett Gaylor** is a documentary filmmaker and new media director. He is the creator of [opensourcecinema.org](http://opensourcecinema.org), a video remix community which supports



the production of his feature documentary *RIP: A remix manifesto*. He is also the web producer of the Homeless Nation.org, a web project dedicated to bridging the digital divide - allowing everyone to participate in online culture. Brett is one of Canada's first

videobloggers and has been working with youth and media for over 10 years, and is a founding instructor of the Gulf Islands Film and Television School.

**Sam Green** received his Master's Degree in Journalism from University of California Berkeley, where he studied documentary with acclaimed filmmaker Marlon Riggs. His most recent feature-length film, the Oscar® nominated



documentary *The Weather Underground* (co-directed with Bill Siegel), tells the story of a group of radical young women and men who tried

to violently overthrow the United States government during the late 1960s and 70s. Other documentaries include *The Rainbow Man/John 3:16* and the shorts *lot 63*, *grace*, *Pie Fight '69* co-directed with Christian Bruno), *N-Judah 5:30*, *The Fabulous Stains: Behind the Movie*

## Gimme Some Booze Filmmaker Party

Saturday • October 24

All ticket and pass-holders welcome

Mix and Mingle with filmmakers and special guests

Blaze Lounge @ Delta Winnipeg

350 St. Mary Avenue

10PM – 1AM • Appetizers Provided • Cash Bar

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(directed with Sarah Jacobson). Green currently teaches at the University of San Francisco and the San Francisco Art Institute.

**John Greyson** is a Toronto film/video artist whose features, shorts and installations include *Fig Trees* (2009 Best Documentary Teddy, Berlin International



Film Festival), *Proteus*, *Zero Patience* and *Lilies* (Best Film at festivals in Montreal, Johannesburg,

Los Angeles and San Francisco). An associate professor at York University, he was awarded the Toronto Arts Award for Film/Video in 2000 and the prestigious Bell Canada Video Art Award in 2007.

**Judy Irving** is a Sundance and Emmy award winning filmmaker whose credits



include *The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill*, a feature documentary about the relationship between a

homeless street musician and a flock of wild parrots in San Francisco, and *Dark Circle*, a feature documentary about the nuclear industry. *Wild Parrots* was a "Top Ten Film of the Year" (National Film Critics' Poll), was the highest-rated program on the 2007 national PBS series "Independent Lens."

**Shereen Jerrett** has filmed everything from vampire castles in Romania, to Leila's Hair Museum in Indiana. She has



made films about whales, neurotics, nerds and her family members. Working in both indies and commercial venues, she has directed and written award-winning documentaries, dramas, TV series, commercials, educational, art films, new media, and some things that just plain defy description.

Inspired by the aesthetics and melodramatic flourishes of silent cinema, Central European literature and the desolation of his native Winnipeg, **Guy Maddin** has



fashioned a career like no other. A Super-8-cranking modern-day Eisenstein, filming plots that would make John Waters blush, Maddin embraces a cinema where expressionism, somnambulism and lurid sexual neuroses unite—and conquer!

**Alanis Obomsawin** a member of the Abenaki Nation, is one of Canada's most distinguished filmmakers. For over four decades, she has directed documentaries that chronicle the lives and concerns of First Nations people and explore issues of importance to all. Obomsawin began her career as a singer, writer and

storyteller, but dove into filmmaking in 1967. Since then, Obomsawin has made over 20 uncompromising documentaries on issues affecting Aboriginal people in Canada. In 2008, Obomsawin was honoured with the Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime



Artistic Achievement and was additionally the subject of a special retrospective at The Museum of

Modern Art in New York City. Recently, Obomsawin was honored with an Outstanding Achievement Retrospective Award at the 2009 Hot Docs Documentary Festival.

Born in Winnipeg in 1969, **Malcolm Rogge** is a filmmaker and writer based in Toronto. His debut feature documentary film, *Under Rich Earth*, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival



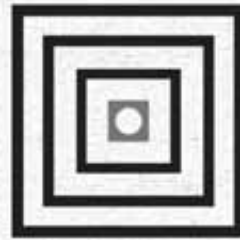
and met with rave reviews. After four years studying theatre, philosophy and literature in Winnipeg,

Malcolm completed a Masters in Environmental Studies at York University, a Graduate Diploma in Latin American and Caribbean Studies and a Bachelor of Laws from Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto. He melds his passion for art and politics using diverse approaches in film and video.

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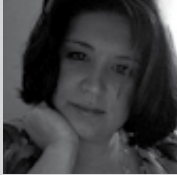
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## PANEL FACILITATORS

**Claudia García de la Huerta** is currently Programs Manager for On Screen Manitoba, where she manages the film initiatives of the innovative Manitoba Music & Motion Pictures Development Project (M3P). Before her move into the film industry, she was host and producer for CBC radio, first in Winnipeg and then in Toronto. García de la Huerta was born in Chile and came to Canada in 1975, after her father's release from two years of political imprisonment following that country's coup d'état.



**Noam Gonick** is a filmmaker and artist who weaves narrative tapestries with uncommon thread, from apocalyptic raves and Native arson gangs in Winnipeg to general strikes, psychics and queer back-to-the-land hippie cults. He is the youngest member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. One of the most prominent young filmmakers in Canada, Noam Gonick has presented work at the Venice, Berlin, Toronto and Sundance Film Festivals and at the Museum of Modern art in New York. His films have been collected by the National Gallery of Canada, the National Archives and the Australian Cinematheque, as well as broadcast and screened around the world.



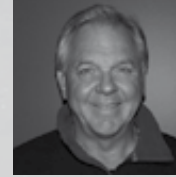
**Sean McManus** is the Training Coordinator at Manitoba Music where he produces a professional development workshop series for the music industry and manages a resource centre that is one-of-a-kind in Canada. As a member of the folk roots band the Dust Poets, Sean has experience performing, writing, touring, recording and managing an indie band. He is a graduate of the Brandon University School of Music and has a Masters degree in Musicology from York University.



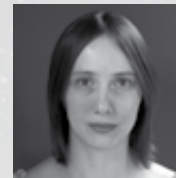
**Matthew Rankin** was born in Winnipeg and educated in Montréal and Québec City. A graduate of l'Université Laval and l'Institut national de l'image et du son, Rankin returned to Winnipeg in 2005 to work more directly with the imagery of his native province. His films include *Où est Maurice?* (2006), which was selected for the Toronto International Film Festival, and, with Mike Maryniuk, the short experimental documentary *Cattle Call* (2008) which screened at Sundance and SXSW in 2009, where it was the recipient of the Best Experimental Short Award.



**Nigel Simms** has worked in the Canadian television industry for more than 20 years, starting out with CBC's documentary unit in Toronto. After stints producing the CBC current affairs programs *Man Alive* and *Market Place*, Nigel "immigrated" to Winnipeg, eventually becoming Executive Producer of *Country Canada* and the digital channel "Bold". Nigel has recently returned to Winnipeg after five years as Managing Editor for CBC Saskatchewan. He says he's happy to be home.



**Michelle van Beusekom** has worked in the Canadian film and television industry for fifteen years, joining the National Film Board of Canada in 2006 as the Assistant Director General of its English Program. Prior to joining the NFB, Michelle worked as the Manager of Program Development at CBC Television-Montreal, at W Network (formerly WTN) as a Production Executive, and was co-programmer of *Planet in Focus: The Toronto International Environmental Film & Video Festival*.



## Special Opening Night Presentation



### CAPTURING REALITY

Dir. Pepita Ferrari (Canada, 97 mins, 2008)

\*Special presentation introduced by the director

THUR OCT 22 | 7 PM – CIN

A journey into documentary filmmaking with some of the world's top directors: What is documentary? Why make them? Where do people get their ideas from? Errol Morris, Werner Herzog and over 30 of today's top documentary filmmakers provide an in-depth look at non-fiction filmmaking and the steps to making a documentary. These masters of the craft reflect upon the nature of documentary as a form of storytelling and offer insight into their approach to the 'truth.'

Please join us following the film at 9pm for the opening night reception.

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## WHO HAS SEEN ALLAN KING?

Dir. Danielle Sturk (Canada, 8 mins, 2009)

\*Special presentation introduced by the director

THUR OCT 22 | 7 PM – CIN *Precedes CAPTURING REALITY*

Renowned Canadian filmmaker Allan King shares his perspective on filmmaking, developing trust with documentary participants and the last film he intended to make, while presenting his controversial film *Warrendale* at Gimme Some Truth in 2008.



## PARIS 1919

Dir. Paul Cowan (Canada, 90 mins, 2009)

\*Special presentation introduced by the director

SAT OCT 24 | 7 PM – CIN

For six fateful months in 1919, *Paris* was the centre of the world. The last shots had been fired in the most devastating war in history – and world leaders had descended on Paris to broker peace for all time. Inspired by Margaret MacMillan's masterful work of popular history, *Paris 1919* revisits the event with a vivid sense of narrative and reflects upon the great missed opportunities of history.

**PANEL DISCUSSION**  
**Capturing Reality in**  
**Documentary Film**  
**SATURDAY OCT 24**  
**12 Noon – WCD**

Award winning directors Pepita Ferrari (Montreal) and Paul Cowan (Montreal) will discuss the matter of capturing reality in documentary film.  
– Discussion facilitated by Michelle Van Buesekom, Producer of *Capturing Reality*.





## DEATH BY POPCORN: THE TRAGEDY OF THE WINNIPEG JETS

Dir. L'Atelier national du Manitoba (Canada, 60 mins, 2006)

\*Special presentation introduced by the directors

FRI OCT 23 | 12 NOON – CIN

*Death by Popcorn: The Tragedy of the Winnipeg Jets* is recognized as much for being a “media collage tour de force” as for the legal copyright controversy it sparked after the filmmakers publicly declared they obtained the footage from the CKY dumpsters. “From this material, L’Atelier stitched together a compelling, fragmented history: an epic tale that descends into tragedy as Winnipeg’s hockey heroes become powerless against their foes.” (Solomon Nagler)



## RiP: A REMIX MANIFESTO

Dir. Brett Gaylor (Canada, 80 mins, 2009)

\*Special presentation introduced by the director

FRI OCT 23 | 2 PM – CIN

In *RiP: A remix manifesto*, web activist and filmmaker Brett Gaylor explores issues of copyright in the information age, mashing up the media landscape of the 20th century and shattering the wall between users and producers. The film’s central protagonist is Girl Talk, a mash-up musician topping the charts with his sample-based songs. But is Girl Talk a paragon of people power or the Pied Piper of piracy? Which side of the ideas war are you on?

\*There will also be a special presentation of *RiP* as part of the University of Manitoba Students Union’s Speakers Series Thur Oct 22 at 1 PM

**PANEL DISCUSSION**  
**Copyright in the Digital Age**  
**FRIDAY OCT 23**  
**4PM – CIN**

Directors Brett Gaylor (Montreal), two members of L’Atelier national du Manitoba, Mike Maryniuk and Matthew Rankin (Winnipeg), and cinematographer Mark Ellam will discuss the highly controversial and litigious matter of found footage and copyright in the digital age.  
– Discussion facilitated by Sean McManus, of Manitoba Music.







## FIG TREES

Dir. John Greyson (Canada, 104 mins, 2009)

\*Special presentation introduced by the director

FRI OCT 23 | 9 PM – CIN

Director John Greyson's *Fig Trees*, winner of a Teddy Award at the prestigious Berlinale in 2009, is a documentary opera about the struggles of AIDS activists Tim McCaskell of Toronto and Zackie Achmat of Capetown, as they fight for access to treatment drugs.



## MY WINNIPEG

Dir. Guy Maddin (Canada, 80 mins, 2007)

\* Special presentation introduced by the director

SAT OCT 24 | 12 NOON – CIN

Guy Maddin's award-winning docu-fantasia *My Winnipeg* is a richly layered tribute to his hometown. "Winnipeg. Winnipeg. Snowy, sleep-walking Winnipeg. My home for my entire life. I need to get out of here. I must leave it now. What if I film my way out of here...? Once this filmed re-enactment is complete, I can free myself of the heinous power of family and city, and escape, once and for all. After a lifetime of many botched attempts, this time I'm leaving for good – again!"



## UTOPIA IN FOUR MOVEMENTS

Dir. Sam Green (USA, live performance)

\* Special performance by Sam Green, with live sound by Dave Cerf

SAT OCT 24 | 9 PM – CIN

Filmmaker Sam Green presents a live, work-in-progress screening of his new film project *Utopia in Four Movements*. Part lecture, part documentary, this piece explores the battered state of the utopian impulse at the dawn of the 21st century through several seemingly unrelated vignettes - including a history of Esperanto, a portrait of an exiled American radical, and a meditation on the world's largest shopping mall. Green narrates *Utopia* in person and uses PowerPoint to cue images while San Francisco musician Dave Cerf performs a live soundtrack. Drawing on performative practices such as Benshi, the travelogue, and the public lecture, *Utopia in Four Movements* uses the collective experience of cinema as a starting point for a meditation on the value of the utopian and its problematic nature in an era without big ideas.

**PANEL DISCUSSION**  
**Working in Hybrid Forms**  
**SATURDAY OCT 24**  
**2 PM – WCD**

Directors Sam Green (San Francisco), John Greyson (Toronto) and Guy Maddin (Winnipeg) will discuss the artistic impulse behind working in hybrid forms, and the inherent challenges for these forms of documentaries.  
– Discussion facilitated by Winnipeg filmmaker Noam Gonick.

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## PROFESSOR NORMAN CORNETT: “SINCE WHEN DO WE DIVORCE THE RIGHT ANSWER FROM AN HONEST ANSWER?”

Dir. Alanis Obomsawin (Canada, 80 mins, 2009)

\* Special presentation introduced by the director

FRI OCT 23 | 7 PM – CIN

With this feature documentary, Alanis Obomsawin pays tribute to Dr. Norman Cornett, a popular Religious Studies professor dismissed by McGill University in 2007. Addressing subjects as varied as palliative care and First Nations issues, Cornett won the respect of students with his unconventional approach.



## UNDER RICH EARTH

Dir. Malcolm Rogge (Canada, 92 mins, 2008)

\* Special presentation introduced by the director

SAT OCT 24 | 2 PM – CIN

What happens when a virtually unknown mining company raises millions of dollars in Toronto to finance a project in Ecuador, one which local farmers are determined to stop? To what lengths will the company go to impose its own vision of progress and to obtain profits? *Under Rich Earth* (Bajo suelos ricos) recounts the story of an extraordinary clash between local modest farmers and the powerful global mining industry.

**PANEL DISCUSSION**  
**Resistance in Documentary Film**  
**SATURDAY OCT 24**  
**4 PM – WCD**

Legendary Canadian Aboriginal director Alanis Obomsawin (Montreal) is joined by director Malcolm Rogge (Winnipeg / Toronto) to discuss the personal challenges and responsibilities, and ethical concerns inherent with capturing resistance in documentary.  
– Discussion facilitated by Claudia García de la Huerta, of On Screen Manitoba.



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## DOG STORIES

(screens as part of Canadian Documentary Shorts)  
Dir. Shereen Jerrett (Canada, 24 mins, 1992)

SAT OCT 24 | 4 PM – CIN

These people are merely telling stories about dogs... or are they? In a series of interviews, *Dog Stories* reveals as much about the people telling the stories as the dogs they are describing. With humour and a candid eye, the dog owners are more honest in regards to their feelings about a dog than almost any other aspect of their life, and in the process they reveal a lot about themselves.



## THE WILD PARROTS OF TELEGRAPH HILL

Dir. Judy Irving (USA, 83 mins, 2005)  
\* Special presentation introduced by the director

SUN OCT 25 | 2 PM – CIN

*The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill* is an award-winning feature documentary about the remarkable relationship between a homeless street musician and a flock of wild parrots in San Francisco. "It is that rare documentary that has romance, comedy, and a surprise ending that makes you feel as if you could fly out of the theatre." (Bruce Newman, San Jose Mercury News)

**PANEL DISCUSSION**  
**Capturing Relationships between**  
**Humans and Animals in Documentary Film**  
**SUNDAY OCT 25**  
**4 PM – CIN**

Directors Judy Irving (San Francisco) and Shereen Jerrett (Winnipeg) discuss the intricacies of dealing with animals in documentary – and the surprising insight animals provide into the humans they are connected to.  
– Discussion facilitated by Nigel Simms.





## UN FLEUVE HUMAIN (The River Where We Live)

Dir. Sylvain L'Espérance (Canada, 92 mins, 2006)

\*Special presentation introduced by the director

FRI OCT 23 | 7 PM – CUSB

Social consciousness is rooted in Sylvain L'Espérance's films, as well as his concern with globalization. *Un fleuve humain (The River Where We Live)* is representative of this, yet with a poetic and sensitive approach. L'Espérance went to Mali, to the Niger River delta, where he observes the various forms of human activity around it and the effects of a 30 year drought and encroaching desertification.



## AMERICANO

Dir. Carlos Ferrand Zavala (Canada, 110 mins, 2007)

FRI OCT 23 | 9 PM – CUSB

*Americano* is a road movie where, instead of going south as people would normally do, Carlos Ferrand Zavala takes us on journey from Patagonia back to Nunavut, while revisiting old friends or acquaintances along the way. They are family members, filmmakers, professors and a cook. Through the conversations we discover that all these people are related to, or still fighting for, a social or political cause, whether past or present. In his unique way, he portrays the major upheavals that have transformed the American continent over the past thirty years while forcing us to question our own identity.



## LE PÈRE DE GRACILE

Dir. Lucie Lambert (Canada, 81 mins, 2004)

SAT OCT 24 | 2 PM – CUSB

*Le père de Gracile* is a documentary fable, with a poetic and dreamlike tone that understates this story. Gracile, a ten-year old girl, goaded by a dream, leaves her mother to go searching for her father, who has disappeared and works as a woodcutter somewhere on the Québec Lower North Shore. She discovers on this long trek that the forest is devastated by heavy machinery, driven by men whose bad luck has forced them to lead this life away from their homes and families. Every one of them that she meets confides in her and, herein lies the touching aspect of this film, a natural symbiosis seems to establish itself between the hard-working man and the fragile little girl, as if each of them became her father for a moment.

**PANEL DISCUSSION**  
**Human Rights, Social Consciousness and the**  
**Documentarian's Role**

**\*In French (no English translation)**

**SUNDAY OCT 25**

**4 PM – CUSB**

Curator Martin Delisle and director Sylvain L'Espérance discuss the role of the director when dealing with the issue of human rights and social consciousness, and when the boundaries between documentation and participation get blurred.

– Discussion facilitated by Matthew Rankin.







## ROGER TOUPIN, épicier variété

Dir. Benoît Pilon (Canada, 97 mins, 2003)

SAT OCT 24 | 4 PM – CUSB

*Roger Toupin, épicier variété* paints a moving portrait of a small business and its owner, and a quiet homage to its long history. It is also a study of the rapidly changing Plateau Mont-Royal neighborhood, once a working-class area of Montreal populated by large families that has become a residential yuppie hotspot, increasingly expensive with far fewer families. Roger Toupin is an odd character, but we cannot but grow to like him as we learn about his kindness, his ever-lasting love for his deceased girlfriend, the care and love he gives his aging mother, and his indomitable faith in God.



## LA CLASSE DE MADAME LISE

Dir. Sylvie Groulx (Canada, 89 mins, 2006)

SAT OCT 24 | 7 PM – CUSB

Lise Coupal teaches the first grade in a multi-ethnic neighborhood of Montreal. She is a warm, patient and tolerant, albeit strict woman. Her students are six years old and Sylvie Groulx concentrates particularly on a few of them: Rafik, Solace, Rahat, Jessica and Adonay. We discover the problems with which Lise and the school have to deal with: children of various ethnical origins, cultural differences, and children that are taught in French but go back to families where the parents do not have any knowledge of that language and cannot help them. But the children find in Madame Lise comfort and encouragement at every turn.



## DE L'AUTRE CÔTÉ DU PAYS (The Other Side of the Country)

Dir. Catherine Hébert (Canada, 84 mins, 2008)

SAT OCT 24 | 9 PM – CUSB

For the past 20 years, a war in the Northern part of Uganda has opposed government forces and a relatively small group of rebels. The government has used this war as a ploy to remain in power and as a pretext to force 17 million people to move into camps. These are supposedly safe havens from the rebels while, much to the contrary people die in them from diseases and rebels easily penetrate them. Focusing on five victims of this conflict, *De l'autre côté du pays* is a powerful and incisive indictment of the Ugandan government's *laissez-faire* and also on the countries that provide financial assistance to Uganda and let this war continue uselessly.



## L'ATELIER DE MON PÈRE (My Father's Studio)

Dir. Jennifer Alleyn (Canada, 72 mins, 2008)

SUN OCT 25 | 2 PM – CUSB

Jennifer Alleyn has been immersed in the visual art world all her life, being the daughter of the versatile and famous artist Edmund Alleyn who marked Canadian Art history at a time when it was in complete transformation, particularly between the 1950s and 1970s. When he passed away in 2004, Jennifer inherited her father's studio on Saint-Laurent Boulevard in Montreal, still impregnated with his creative soul and containing a great number of his important works. In *L'Atelier de mon père*, she brilliantly brings back to life his genius, his innovative spirit and his unique integrity as an artist.





## NOLLYWOOD BABYLON

Dirs. Ben Addelman, Samir Mallal (Canada, 74 mins, 2008)

FRI OCT 23 | 11 PM – CIN

*Nollywood Babylon* is about the explosive popularity of Nigeria's movie industry. The film drops viewers into the chaos of Lagos' Idumota market. Here, among the bustling stalls, films are sold and unlikely stars are born. Unfazed by low budgets, enterprising filmmakers create a brash, inventive and wildly popular form of B-Movie that has Nigerians Nollywood-obsessed. In these films, voodoo and magic infuse urban stories, reflecting the collision of traditional mysticism and modern culture that Nigerians experience every day.



## KANEHSATAKE: 270 YEARS OF RESISTANCE

Dir. Alanis Obomsawin (Canada, 120 mins, 1993)

\* Special presentation introduced by the director  
FREE admission

SAT OCT 24 | 7 PM – USG

On a hot July day in 1990, an historic confrontation propelled Aboriginal issues in Kanehsatake and the village of Oka, Québec, into the international spotlight and into the Canadian conscience. Director Alanis Obomsawin endured 78 nerve-racking days and nights filming the armed stand-off between the Mohawks, the Québec police and the Canadian army. The result is a portrait of the people behind the barricades, providing insight into the Mohawks' unyielding determination to protect their land.

## Canadian Documentary Shorts

SAT OCT 24 | 4 PM - CIN

### Volta

Dir: Ryan Mullins (13 mins, 2009)

Former projectionist Emmanuel Agboyme and others tell the story of this cinema and look back on the sense of community it brought out in everyone, every night at dusk.

### Overburden

Dir: Neil McArthur and Warren Cariou (15 mins, 2009)

Native communities in Alberta, Canada have been living with oil sands development for decades. This film explores the cultural, economic, environmental, and health effects of the oil sands on these Cree and Dene people by asking them to tell their own stories.

### Ghost and Gravel Roads

Dir: Mike Rollo (13 mins, 2008)

An inventory of lost memories and places, the sun bleached landscape of Saskatchewan serves as a metaphor for displacement, a framing of emptiness and absence.

### Dog Stories

Dir: Shereen Jerrett (24 mins, 1992)

Dogs featured in the stories include Sunny the lucky dog, whose owner has won a prize a week since she got him; Blitz, the world's smartest dog (sort of); border collie Jenny the baseball fanatic; and Ivana the dancing poodle.



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## Canadian Aboriginal Documentary Shorts

SAT OCT 24 | 9 PM - USG (FREE ADMISSION)

### Two Scoops

Dir: Jackie Traverse & Crossing Communities Art Project (3 mins, 2008)

*Two Scoops* is a stop motion animation exploring the intergenerational effects of the 60s and 70s scoop of Aboriginal children stolen into the child welfare system.

### 4wheelwarpony

Dir: Dustinn Craig (9 mins, 2008)

This film juxtaposes native culture with skateboard culture and its effects on pop culture.

### A Grim Fairy Tale

Dir: Bonnie Devine (7 mins, 2008)

The contents of an old wooden chest reveal the story of the battle for the Black Hills.

### Mikomiing

Dir: Leonard Sumner (9 mins, 2009)

This documentary follows a day in the life of a fisherman in the First Nation community of Little Saskatchewan, Manitoba.

### Su Naa (My Big Brother)

Dir: Helen Haig-Brown (11 mins, 2005)

This experimental documentary reveals the logic of memories during a tragic moment.

### Buried Traces

Dir: Michelle Smith (8 mins, 2008)

*Buried Traces* is an experimental documentary exploring questions of Métis identity, cultural loss and renewal

### Empty

Dir: Jackie Traverse & Crossing Communities Art Project (5 mins, 2009)

*Empty* is an animated portrayal of a daughter experiencing the destruction that alcoholism has inflicted on her mother.

### A Snapshot in Time

Dir: Dustinn Craig (10 mins, 2009)

Hard choices and quiet moments are captured through snapshots taken at a graveyard in Fort Sill.

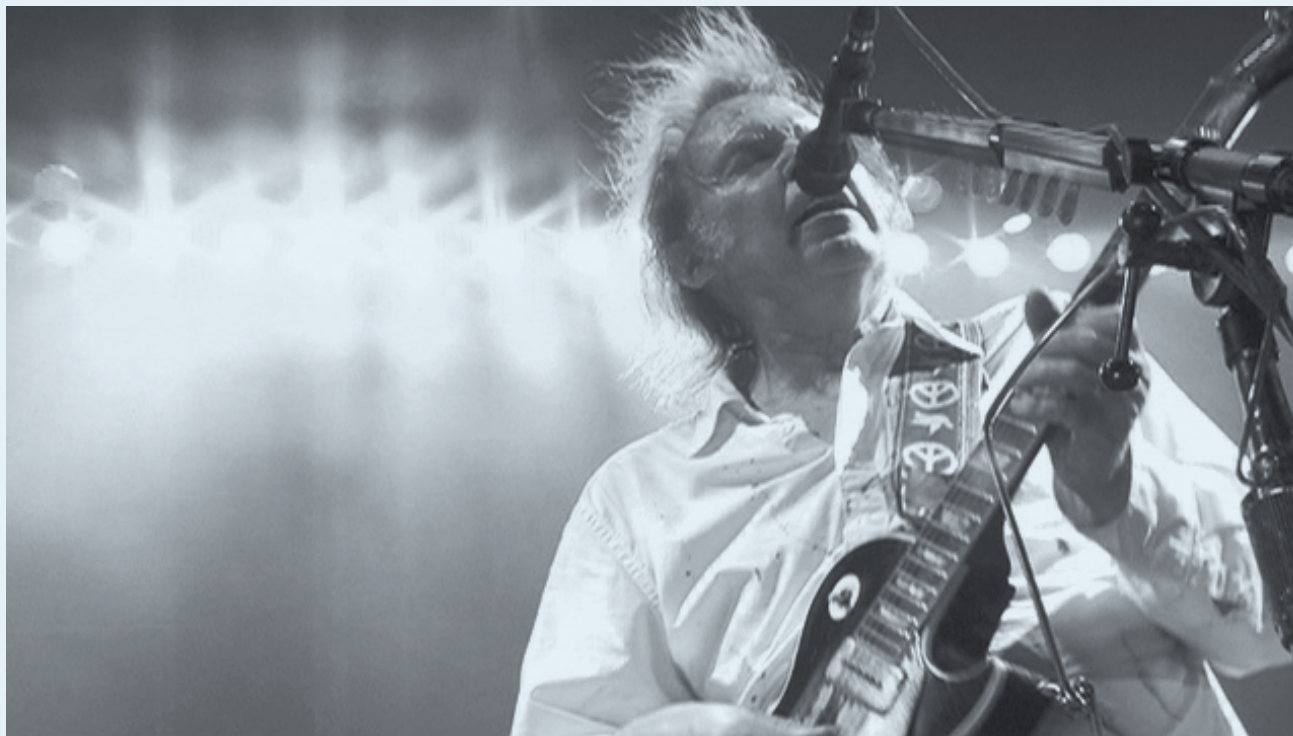


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## Special Closing Night Presentation



### NEIL YOUNG TRUNK SHOW

Dir. Jonathan Demme (USA, 120 mins, 2009)

SUN OCT 25 | 7 PM – WECC

The spontaneous and raw film was shot during two shows at the Tower Theater in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania during the Chrome Dreams II tour. Director Jonathan Demme described it as “a reaction to *Heart of Gold*,” his previous film featuring Neil Young.... The viewer is taken into the live experience from all angles, including candid backstage moments with crew and complete set-up, from the wires to the rigging. “We didn’t plan anything,” said Demme. “This was the easiest film in the world to make.” (Toronto International Film Festival)



Co-Presented with the  
West End Cultural Centre  
Closing night sponsor:



## Workshops, Industry Panels & Master Classes

### INDUSTRY PANEL:

Feature Docs: True Stories of Getting Films Made and Seen  
THURS OCT 22 | 4 PM to 6 PM - CIN

Feature documentaries have been growing in popularity at the box office. They remain strong at festivals and frequently grace our TV screens. But they are a puzzle to fund and risky to finance. Navigating the relationships between funding partners, broadcasters and distributors is a tricky process for filmmakers. Derek Mazur (NFB, Prairie Region), Charlotte Engel (Bravo!TV), Murray Battle (Knowledge Network), Robin Smith (KinoSmith), Malcolm Rogge (*Under Rich Earth*), and Brett Gaylor (*RiP: A remix manifesto*) talk about how to make it work.



### MASTER CLASS:

Environmental Filmmaking  
with Judy Irving  
SAT OCT 24 | 10 AM to 12 Noon – CIN

Featuring film clips spanning 30 years, including *Alaska: Land in the Balance* (1975), *Dark Circle* (1983), *Secrets of the Bay* (1990), and *The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill* (2005), Judy Irving will discuss how her concept of environmental filmmaking has changed over the years.



### MASTER CLASS:

DIY Documentary  
with Sam Green  
SUN OCT 25 | 10 AM to 2 PM - CIN

Based on his own personal experiences as an independent documentary filmmaker, Sam Green will elaborate on how to shape a documentary idea into a compelling non-fiction film. Topics include: crafting framework and storyline, creating relationships with subjects, researching, managing the production, collaborating with a director of photography and editor and working through the distribution process.



### WORKSHOP:

Advanced Editing Tools and Short Cuts  
with Dave Cerf  
SUN OCT 25 | 10 AM to 2 PM WCD

Dave Cerf will share some of his short cuts and editing tricks to get the computer to do the work for you, combining technologies like AppleScript, XML, and a host of other tools to help with the editing process. This workshop will focus on enabling tools for better transcript management and “paper editing” for documentaries. Cerf will also share his technique for auto-subtitling documentary footage in foreign languages, making it possible to edit footage in a foreign language.



## COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Once again **Gimme Some Truth** is taking ‘documentary’ out into the community, to enable youth from inner city drop-in programs, high school students and university students alike to engage with and better understand the issues behind documentaries, and documentary as a form of expression.

*(Note: these events are not open to the general public)*

### Screening

*RiP: A remix manifesto*

Director Brett Gaylor introduces his film at the University of Manitoba. In special partnership with the U of M Student's Union.

THURS OCT 22 | 12:30 PM

### Screening

*Is the Crown at War With Us?*

Director Alanis Obomsawin visits Tec Voc High School for an outreach screening of her film.

THURS OCT 22 | 1 PM

### Outreach Workshop

A special workshop on remixing and new forms using [www.opensourcecinema.org](http://www.opensourcecinema.org) for inner-city youth.

SAT OCT 24 | 10 AM

### Outreach Workshop

A special workshop on digital documentary film production for inner-city youth.

SUN OCT 25 | 10 AM



## ESSAY • Doing What's Right: Alanis Obomsawin and Professor Norman Cornett

by STEVE LOFT

*It is a miracle that curiosity survives formal education...*  
-Albert Einstein

*...It is because modern education is so seldom inspired by a great hope that it so seldom achieves great results. The wish to preserve the past rather than the hope of creating the future dominates the minds of those who control the teaching of the young...*  
-Bertrand Russell

Midway through her new film, Alanis Obomsawin has included a scene from the 1966 film adaptation of Ray Bradbury's iconic 1953 novel *Fahrenheit 451*. In this scene the young, idealistic Clarisse tearfully recounts her firing from her job as a schoolteacher in a book free world to book burning "fireman" Montag.

"Well I was right to be worried...she says, "I've been dismissed. I'm not to go to the school anymore. They disapprove of me. We have fun in my class and they don't like that."

Such too, is the plight of Professor Norman Cornett...the eponymous protagonist of Obomsawin's latest documentary *Professor Norman Cornett*: "Since when do we divorce the right answer from an honest answer?" But he is no naive schoolmarm, no shrinking violet or filmic plot device. Professor Cornett, known for his (some would say) unorthodox teaching style, had been an instructor of Religious Studies at McGill University in Montreal for fifteen years before he was unceremoniously removed from his position in 2007 with no explanation or appeal.

Music, art, religion, politics, economics, philosophy...these are the things Dr. Cornett taught...by and through a creative process that found the overlaps and the interconnectedness of them to each other. And his students loved him for it. Not so much the administration of the McGill who were invited to participate in the documentary, but did not respond. In an interview about the film, Obomsawin recalls her first exposure to Cornett's methods. "I first met Norman in 2001 and that was the first

time I went to his class. It was an extraordinary experience. Every year since meeting him, I would visit him and his students two or three times a year, sometimes more depending on what was going on, until 2007. Some friends of mine wanted to make a film about him and asked me to direct it. I said yes because it gave me a chance to give something back to him for his incredible generosity. It was my way of thanking him for that experience."<sup>1</sup>

Obomsawin, one of Canada's most intriguing and accomplished filmmakers, has always been able to weave a tale, interlacing complex political and social narratives into stories of violence, resistance, strength, passion, hope and tragedy. In over three decades with the National Film Board, she has served up daring and groundbreaking documentaries, most concerned with Aboriginal socio-political concerns.

But here she steps back, just a bit...to let the passion of Dr. Cornett and his students tell a very different kind of story. Much of the film explores Cornett's teaching methods. For him, "the freedom to speak our minds"...exists as a fundamental part of critical discourse. He creates experiential environments through the introduction of creative enterprise...everything from jazz licks to visual art. A story about passion and hope to be sure, about the love of learning, and teaching, but also about an institutional system that brooks no challenge to its "academic correctness."

Some aspects of his classes may have violated official regulations: some of Cornett's class "sessions" met on weekends, and he used only participation to evaluate students.<sup>2</sup> Powerful and evocative the film personalizes the voices of those most affected; Cornett, his wife Laura, his colleagues, but most of all, the students whose lives he touched. Robert Verrall, a former producer for the National Film Board and also a frequent participant in Cornett's class sessions says, "Dr. Cornett is a dream teacher for a filmmaker. He understands how films can be a catalyst for important moral discussion."<sup>3</sup>

Theorist and scholar John Raulston Saul wrote in his groundbreaking book about meaning in contemporary society, *Voltaire's Bastards*, that



“determining how individuals communicate is the best chance rulers have to control what they think.” ...the more sophisticated the elites, the more they concentrate on creating integrated intellectual systems which control expression through the communications structures.”<sup>4</sup>

Saul, who characterizes creative people as “catalysts of change”, maintains they “break up the old formulas of wisdom or truth and thus free the human imagination so that individuals can begin thinking of themselves and their society in new ways.”<sup>5</sup>

Documentary, like education itself, should not be a language of obfuscation (even though that may be its outcome when not done well), but of critical enlightenment.

Obomsawin challenges orthodoxy in education. In this she questions the dogmatic ideology of “rationality” that is suspicious of anything that seeks to engage both mind AND soul. Like Dr. Cornett, Obomsawin asks us to “reflect” on the nature of teaching and our institutions of education.....creating our own idea, our own values and our own critical decisions, making ourselves, and not the film, the director, or even Dr. Cornett the mirror of the learning. They are the means...we...all of us who learn from them, give them meaning.

Obomsawin teases out these questions by employing one of Dr. Cornett’s own techniques. She presents us with “reflections”, through the students and the professor, on issues such as academic freedom, intellectual curiosity and the role of creativity in critical thought.

Not analysis, but thoughtfulness. She peels away notions of academic elitism, and abuse, not only of process, but of the people the institution is supposed to serve...the students.

Says Ms. Obomsawin, “Long before I was making films, my fight, too, was always about education. In those days, we had the residential schools. I attended those. I spent a lot of time in the 60s fighting against these schools, trying to acquire inclusion in the classroom, pushing

ourselves into the classroom—that’s what we were doing. That’s where it all starts. So to see his way of teaching was very, very special to me, to care so much for students and make them feel like they don’t want to miss one class; that’s how exciting it is. It’s a loss not to have him teach anymore.”<sup>6</sup>

For Dr. Cornett, the struggle is not about the legalities and politics of institutional bureaucracy, but about “what is good...what is just...what is right...”

He is a brilliant, decent man, but in the end, we are saddened and despairing of his everyman fight against a system, and a bureaucracy that cares little for his abilities...to teach, to inspire. “Every story that I hear differs from one person to the next but I’m always so moved by the courage of people, how they have managed to go on. Every time I sit down with someone who talks about his or her life, to me it’s a very sacred thing,” Obomsawin says.<sup>7</sup>

His is the loneliest struggle there is...the (struggle) of principle against indifference, of creativity against bureaucracy, of idealism against pragmatism, humanism against an unyielding and dotting rationalism.

*Was there ever any man thus beaten out of season,  
When in the why and the wherefore is neither rhyme nor reason?*<sup>8</sup>

As Alanis Obomsawin says, “It’s incredibly sad, isn’t it? It’s worse than being unfair; you wonder how they do that, treat people in that way, to negate someone’s existence.”<sup>9</sup>

But as Dr. Cornett tells his students in the film, “the only answer that counts is an honest answer.” We can only hope that the people who deserve it most; Dr. Cornett and his students, will get one.

*But now there was a long morning’s walk until noon, and if the men were silent it was because there was everything to think about and much to remember. Perhaps later in the morning,*

*when the sun was up and had warmed them, they would begin to talk, or just say the things they remembered, to be sure they were there, to be absolutely certain that things were safe in them. Montag felt the slow stir of words, the slow simmer. And when it came his turn, what could he say, what could he offer on a day like this, to make the trip a little easier? To everything there is a season. Yes. A time to keep silence, and a time to speak. Yes, all that. But what else. What else? Something, something . . .*

*"And on either side of the river was there a tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of nations."*

*Yes, thought Montag, that's the one I'll save for noon. For noon . . .  
When we reach the city.<sup>10</sup>*

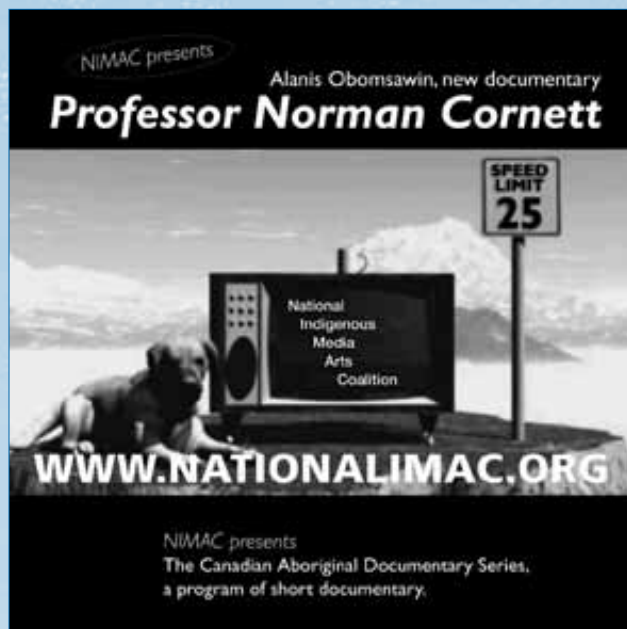
Endnotes:

1. [http://stillinmotion.typepad.com/still\\_in\\_motion/2009/05/interview-alanis-](http://stillinmotion.typepad.com/still_in_motion/2009/05/interview-alanis-obomsawin-recipient-of-the-hotdocs-outstanding-achievement-award.html)

[obomsawin-recipient-of-the-hotdocs-outstanding-achievement-award.html](http://stillinmotion.typepad.com/still_in_motion/2009/05/interview-alanis-obomsawin-recipient-of-the-hotdocs-outstanding-achievement-award.html)

2. By Daniel Gurin, The McGill Daily 17 September 2007
3. By Daniel Gurin, The McGill Daily 17 September 2007
4. John Ralston Saul, *Voltaire's Bastards: The Dictatorship of Reason in the West* (Penguin Books, Toronto, 1993), 536.
5. *Ibid*, 537.
6. [http://stillinmotion.typepad.com/still\\_in\\_motion/2009/05/interview-alanis-obomsawin-recipient-of-the-hotdocs-outstanding-achievement-award.html](http://stillinmotion.typepad.com/still_in_motion/2009/05/interview-alanis-obomsawin-recipient-of-the-hotdocs-outstanding-achievement-award.html)
7. *Ibid*
8. DROMIO OF SYRACUSE: in Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, 1590.
9. [http://stillinmotion.typepad.com/still\\_in\\_motion/2009/05/interview-alanis-obomsawin-recipient-of-the-hotdocs-outstanding-achievement-award.html](http://stillinmotion.typepad.com/still_in_motion/2009/05/interview-alanis-obomsawin-recipient-of-the-hotdocs-outstanding-achievement-award.html)
10. Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451* (Ballantine Books, New York, 1953), 164,165.

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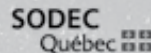
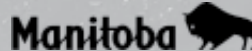
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