

## **SFU Press Releases Collection**

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â Art of Documentaryâ Intensive hosted by SFU

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In cooperation with the National Film Board of Canada, Simon Fraser University's Praxis Centre for Screenwriters will host 'The Art of Documentary,' an intensive four-day workshop to be held in Vancouver May 23-26, 2008.

Genie Award-winner Jennifer Baichwal (Manufactured Landscapes) and Academy Award nominee Connie Field (Freedom on My Mind) will mentor 12 gifted Canadian filmmakers chosen from a national competition to develop their projects. In addition, they will discuss 'The state of the art of documentary' at a public lecture to be held at the Vancity Theatre, 1181 Seymour, at 8 pm Sunday May 25. Tickets are available through <http://www.vifc.org/>.

'Documentary is as much about art as it is about content,' says Praxis director Patricia Gruben. 'We're lucky to have two brilliant practitioners of the documentary art form available to share their skills and insights with their filmmaking peers.'

Adds NFB executive producer Tracey Friesen: "What excites me about this unique program is the attention paid to aesthetics, narrative and craft—the real art of filmmaking. So often directors become entirely consumed by the business aspects of production. Here is a chance to set that aside and focus deeply on artistic expression."

Canadian Jennifer Baichwal is best known for her 2006 Genie-winning *Manufactured Landscapes*, for which she traveled with photographer Ed Burtynsky to portray devastated industrial landscapes around the world. Her films, including *Let It Come Down: The Life of Paul Bowles*, and *The True Meaning of Pictures: Shelby Lee Adams' Appalachia*, explore the work of artists encountering alien social landscapes.

San Francisco-based Connie Field gained international attention with *The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter*, which explored how women worked to support the war effort during WWII. *Freedom on My Mind*, her film on the civil rights movement, was nominated for an Academy Award in 1995. Her latest project, *Have You Heard from Johannesburg?*, is a 10 part series on the effort to end apartheid.

Joining Field and Baichwal as mentors are researcher and legal expert Elizabeth Klinck along with specialists in editing, producing, and sound design.

The 12 Art of Documentary projects include *Hello CBQM*, Inuvialuit filmmaker Dennis Allen's affectionate look at a bush radio station in Fort McPherson; *Nutcracker Nation*, which probes behind the kitsch to explore the Christmas ballet as a cultural phenomenon; *Pink Ink.*, a critique of the politics of breast cancer fundraising; *That's My Time*, a collaboration with comedian Irwin Barker as he battles terminal cancer; and *Eco-Pirate*, a portrait of controversial marine environmentalist Paul Watson by accomplished Vancouver filmmaker Trish Dolman.

The workshop is presented by Praxis Centre for Screenwriters, a program of SFU Contemporary Arts, and the National Film Board's Pacific & Yukon Centre, North West Centre and Quebec Centre, with funding from CITY-TV, British Columbia Film, CBC British Columbia, and CBC Montreal.

Backgrounder: ART OF DOCUMENTARY PARTICIPANTS

DENNIS ALLEN

HELLO CBQM

Whitehorse

This portrait of a community-run radio station in Ft. McPherson, NWT features a charismatic 75-year-old DJ, an eager young RCMP officer, a talented teenaged singer and several other

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characters who keep the lines of communication open in the Arctic wilderness. It is halfway through a one-year shoot. Inuvialuit filmmaker Dennis Allen has written and directed several films for the NFB, APTN and Knowledge Network. He is currently shooting *The Hunted*, a film on Mad Trapper Albert Johnson, for Discovery Channel.

GARRY BEITEL THE 'SOCALLED' MOVIE Montreal

A series of short vignettes on Canadian sonic impresario Josh 'Socalled' Drogin, a musician committed to breaking down musical genres from hiphop to klezmer. Garry Beitel, a lecturer at McGill University, has made numerous award-winning documentaries. The 'Socalled' Movie is scheduled to begin production in June 2008.

KAREN CHO TEN THOUSAND ROSES Montreal

Based on Judy Rebick's book on the second wave of feminism in Canada, this co-production with the NFB will be a feature-length documentary and a three-part TV series. It is structured as a road trip across the country and across time, mixing archival footage, live-action scenes, music and interviews with a strong visual signature. Karen Cho is a young Montreal filmmaker who wrote and directed the NFB's *In the Shadow of Gold Mountain*, on the Chinese Head Tax. She has directed four episodes of the Past Lives television series and is working on a doc about the Canadian refugee system for CBC and Radio Canada. *Ten Thousand Roses* is in research/development with the NFB.

TRISH DOLMAN ECO-PIRATE Vancouver

Dolman has been shooting footage of environmental activist Paul Watson for the past five years. Her film will portray both Watson's activism - pursuing and sinking whaling ships -- and his sophistication as a media personality, revealing the controversy in his theatrics. Trish Dolman is an accomplished producer of documentary (*Breaking Ranks*) and fiction films (*Flower and Garnet*), and director of a two-part documentary, *Ice Girls*, for BBC, CTV and WTN. *Eco-Pirate* has funding from the Rogers Documentary Fund and several broadcasters.

ERIKA DRUSHKA AT POLAND'S TROUGH Victoria

The revolution in Polish pig farming is one example of the globalizing effects of free trade and food politics on the planet's health and welfare. Drushka's roving camera will follow an American farmer trying to save Poland from the fate of hog farms in Wyoming, a marquess who uses her celebrity to help the cause, and a Polish agricultural activist, adding animated sequences and an inventive musical score. Erika Drushka recently directed *Rooted Lives*, a one-hour documentary on tree-planting currently in international distribution.

LISA JACKSON NO WORD FOR GOODBYE Vancouver

Métis filmmaker Lisa Jackson is writing and directing a one-hour documentary on Canadian aboriginal languages that travels to four far-flung communities to examine how our mother tongue shapes our worldview, and what we all stand to lose if these languages die. It is in development with the NFB Pacific and Yukon studio. Lisa Jackson's previous work includes *Reservation Soldiers*, a one-hour doc for CTV's W5, and the acclaimed short film *Suckerfish*, which uses animation and experimental techniques to explore aboriginal identity.

PATRICIA KEARNS PINK INK Montreal

This film on breast cancer and the politics of philanthropy is based on the book by Samantha King. It explores the influence of large corporations on the breast cancer campaign, in their ties to both the treatment of the disease and its origins. Patricia Kearns has made four social-issues documentaries, including *XS Stress: Teens Take Control* and *Choir Girls*. *Pink Ink* is an NFB production.

ADAMM LILEY THAT'S MY TIME London, ON

A collaboration with famed comedian Irwin Barker as he copes with terminal cancer in his stand-up routines and his daily life. The film will feature current and archival comedy material as well as Barker's own video diaries. Adamm Liley has directed several documentaries including the feature-length *Heads Up*, and has been field director for *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*.

ANNE MARIE NAKAGAWA POINT OF NO RETURN Calgary

This film will follow a former Jain monk and the co-leader of the Irish Green Party as they campaign for green moral and political ethics, using scripted sequences and an innovative editing style. Anne Marie Nakagawa is a visual artist with an MFA in mixed media art who has made music videos, experimental films and a feature-length documentary for the NFB.

JILL SHARPE CHASING THE MUSE Vancouver

*Chasing the Muse* is an innovative theatrical documentary on 20th century artists Frida Kahlo, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Emily Carr. It originated with a traveling international exhibit and accompanying book. The film will be an experimental biography of the creative process,

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focusing on key moments in the artistic lives of the three iconoclastic primitivists. Jill Sharpe has made numerous television documentaries on culture and politics, including *Weird Sex and Snowshoes*; *CultureJam: Hijacking Commercial Culture*; and *Girls Don't Fight*. *Chasing the Muse* is in development with the NFB's Pacific and Yukon studio.

EVANN SIEBENS

NUTCRACKER NATION

Vancouver

Nutcracker Nation will probe behind the kitsch to explore the famous ballet as a cultural phenomenon. Siebens will follow the rehearsal process through several productions, from children's dance classes through professional events and even an adaptation to classical Indian dance. The film will include interviews with scholars, critics and choreographers, following the narrative structure of the ballet itself. Evann Siebens is a former dancer who has made films on several international dance forms, including hula, Caribbean dance, and bharat natyam. Two of her films have been screened on PBS, another on POV.

KATARINA SOUKUP

PETER PITSEOLAK

Montreal

The first in-depth documentary of the famed Inuit artist and photographer Peter Pitseolak, made with the cooperation of the artist's family, an anthropologist who worked with Pitseolak, and the Canadian Museum of Civilization, giving access to his artwork and a wealth of archival footage. Katarina Soukup has worked for 10 years as a scriptwriter and producer with Igloolik Isuma Productions (*Atanarjuat the Fast Runner*). Peter Pitseolak will be her first film as director.