

## Montreal International Documentary Festival 2014 Program

**Montreal, Wednesday, October 22, 2014** – The 17<sup>th</sup> annual Montreal International Documentary Festival is coming up from November 12 to 23. With **141 films** from **44 countries** and more than a hundred guests, this year's RIDM is more exciting than ever.

The festival will present **21 world premieres, 19 North American premieres, 21 Canadian premieres and 47 Quebec premieres**. Quebec has pride of place in the line-up with no fewer than **35 local films** of all lengths by our most accomplished filmmakers and our most promising up-and-comers.

The RIDM is honoured to open with the world premiere of ***Le nez* by Quebec filmmaker Kim Nguyen**. The *War Witch* director takes us on a fascinating journey through the mysterious world of the sense of smell. Closing the festival is another world premiere: the new documentary ***Spartiates* by Swiss filmmaker Nicolas Wadimoff** (*Clandestins* and *Aisheen – Still Alive in Gaza*). We travel to the outskirts of Marseille, where a mixed martial arts instructor – a larger-than-life personality and a strict taskmaster – is struggling to keep his school open.

### **OFFICIAL COMPETITION**

**Eleven awards** will be presented to the winning films in the RIDM's **four competitive sections**.

#### **International feature competition**

With 13 films of wildly diverse styles and origins, the international feature competition is a testament to the variety and innovation found in documentary cinema. From a Turkish documentary tale (*Once Upon a Time*) and direct cinema from the Democratic Republic of Congo (*Examen d'État*), to essays touching on the personal and the political in Cyprus (*Evaporating Borders*) and a dizzying ethnographic experience in Lebanon, these stories all inspire us to see the world in a new light.

The use of novel directing techniques gives rise to unique, unforgettable films such as *Tour of Duty*, the story of former "comfort women" from South Korea; *N – The Madness of Reason*, a deep, visually arresting reflection on the legacy of colonialism in Africa; and *Actress*, a portrait – part documentary, part performance – of an actress known mainly for her work on *The Wire*.

The RIDM will also reconnect with some favourite artists, such as Joshua Oppenheimer with *The Look of Silence*, the eagerly anticipated companion piece to *The Act of Killing*. The new film is a devastating look at the Indonesian genocide from the victims' point of view. J.P. Sniadecki, whose work came to our attention last year in the Sensory Ethnography Lab retrospective, returns with *The Iron Ministry*, a fascinating immersion in Chinese life, filmed entirely aboard the country's trains. The festival also has the latest from Pierre-Yves Vandeweerdt (*Les tourmentes*) and Fernand Melgar (*L'abri*), both former recipients of the RIDM's Grand Prix.

#### **Canadian feature competition**

A strong field of Canadian films includes new works by several well-known directors: Claude Demers (*D'où je viens*), Bruno Baillargeon (*L'œuvre des jours*), Jean-François Caissy (*La marche à suivre*), Paul Cowan (*Les 18 fugitives*, co-directed by Palestinian filmmaker Amer Shomali), Marie-Hélène Cousineau (*Sol*, co-directed by Inuit director Susan Avingaq), Diane Poitras (*Nuits*) and Alanis Obomsawin (*Trick or Treaty?*).

Emerging talents are also well represented: with *Juanicas*, Karina Garcia Casanova has made an intensely emotional chronicle of her brother's mental illness; in *Les derniers hommes éléphants*

Arnaud Bouquet and Daniel Ferguson chronicle life among the Bunong of Cambodia, whose endangered culture has for millennia been founded on the taming of wild elephants; Vincent Toi's *I've Seen the Unicorn* takes us to the director's birthplace, Mauritius, for a poetic look at the horse racing and its deep significance for the country's people; and Julia Kwan's *Everything Will Be* is an insightful reflection on the transformation of Vancouver's Chinatown.

### **International short and medium-length competitions**

Sixteen shorts and eight medium-length films showcase the art of making concise documentaries, a talent mastered by the filmmakers in this selection. In *Atlantis*, Ben Russell explores the mythical lost city with a kaleidoscopic essay somewhere between philosophy and pure perception. Pierre Schoeller, the director of *L'exercice de l'État*, returns with *Le temps perdu*, a chronicle of everyday life in a Syrian refugee camp in Iraqi Kurdistan. Yuri Ancarani, the Italian director who thrilled last year's festivalgoers with his trilogy of shorts, is back with *San Siro*, an epic and slyly funny anatomy of Milan's famous stadium. And, using animation, Marie-Josée Saint-Pierre brings the exceptional artist Claude Jutra back to life. Among this year's exciting discoveries are the intriguing *Buffalo Juggalos*, about the strange subculture of Insane Clown Posse fans; *Les immaculés*, a documentary in rendered images about the stigmatization of Gypsies in Europe; and *Boucle piqué*, an intense look into the lives of young figure skaters.

## **PANORAMA**

### **Special Presentations**

The **Special Presentations** showcase today's greatest documentarians: Hubert Sauper, the director of *Darwin's Nightmare*, with a new broadside about neo-colonialism, *We Come As Friends*; Sergei Loznitsa with one of the year's best received documentaries at Cannes, *Maidan*, on the Ukrainian revolution; Julie Bertuccelli with her French hit *La cour de Babel*, filmed in a transition class for young immigrants; Martin Scorsese with *The 50-Year Argument*, a fascinating documentary, co-directed by David Tedeschi, about the *New York Review of Books*; Frederick Wiseman, returning with *National Gallery*, a deeply personal love letter to the world of museums; and *Winter's Bone* director Debra Granik, presenting her first documentary, *Stray Dog*, a simple and touching portrait of a biker and Vietnam veteran. The selection includes several eagerly anticipated films: *CITIZENFOUR* by Laura Poitras, about whistleblower Edward Snowden, who contacted the director for help releasing his revelations about the NSA; *The Kingdom of Dreams and Madness*, a look inside the famous Ghibli animation studio; *Eau argentée, Syrie autoportrait*, an unforgettable dialogue between two Syrian filmmakers, one living amidst the conflict and the other in exile; and *Altman* by Ron Mann, a portrait of the talented American director Robert Altman. The section includes works by two local filmmakers, Michka Saäl's *China Me* and Patricio Henriquez's *Mon insécurité nationale*.

### **Horizons**

The **Horizons** section focuses on current events: the Egyptian revolution in *Moug*, combining documentary and animation; political spectacle in Canada with *God Save Justin Trudeau* by Guylaine Maroist and Éric Ruel; the post-9/11 Canadian security certificate with *The Secret Trial 5*; and the treatment of the mentally ill in Senegal (*Ce qu'il reste de la folie*) and amputees in Sierra Leone (*The Flying Stars*). The links between Aboriginal culture and Québécois identity are explored, with Roy Dupuis, in *L'empreinte* by Carole Poliquin and Yvan Dubuc. And the first film by Quebec director Steve Patry, *De prisons en prisons*, looks at three ex-convicts' efforts to reintegrate into society.

### **Counter-current**

**Counter-current** challenges our perceptions of popular and underground culture: we learn about free schools in the United States in *Approaching the Elephant*; skateboarding and graffiti culture in Colombia in *Los hongos*; the Italian-Canadian bicycle builder Marinoni in a film of the same name; the life and times of playwright David Fennario in Martin Duckworth's new documentary, *Fennario – The Good Fight*; the inner workings of Mormonism in *Liahona*; and the taboo world of drugs and prostitution in *Atlas*, the shocking new film by photographer Antoine d'Agata.

## **Territories**

A section devoted to human-environment relationships, **Territories** provides opportunities to better understand our planet and its inhabitants. The section includes two Quebec films: *Ceux comme la terre*, about missionary René Fumoleau and his life with the Dene, and *Le cri silencieux du chevreuil*, about Anticosti Island. Do not miss the magnificent film *The Stone River*, a haunting film about stone workers in Vermont, and *The Empire of Shame*, which exposes the terrible working conditions endured by Samsung employees in South Korea. Another gem in this section is *Episode of the Sea*, which marries Brechtian theatricality and sociological observation in a Dutch fishing village.

## **Beat Dox**

The RIDM's selection of documentaries on musical topics includes eight films in which the best of music and cinema come together. Among them are several local productions: *La ville est un île* about Montreal's anglo indie scene, *La muse errante* about Jewish music around the world, *Sur la piste des DJs*, a group portrait of six Montreal DJs, and *Bamako temps suspendu*, a beautiful moment of musical improvisation in Mali by Sylvain L'Espérance. Fans of Britpop icons Pulp will be eager to see the excellent documentary *Pulp: A Film about Life, Death and Supermarkets*, while Talking Heads devotees will be treated to a special 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary screening of Jonathan Demme's *Stop Making Sense*. Rounding out the selection are *Memphis*, a superb docu-fiction about bluesman Willis Earl Beal and the city of Memphis, and *Living Stars*, a thoroughly delightful Argentinian film that is already a huge hit among the festival team.

## **UXdoc**

This year the festival's transmedia section presents webdocs as interesting to explore as they are rich in content, including a pair of projects created for the Oculus Rift virtual reality headset. In each case, digital art, gaming and cinema come together to explore issues as diverse as oil drilling (*Offshore*), the occupation of Palestine (*Dream Homes Property Consultants* and *Points of View*), cyberterrorism (*Netwars / out of CTRL*) and the legacy of the Chilean dictatorship (*Assent*).

## **RETROSPECTIVES AND TRIBUTES**

### **James Benning**

The festival will celebrate the work of American experimental director **James Benning**. The event – with 10 films, two installations (presented in collaboration with VOX, centre de l'image contemporaine), a small-group workshop and a master class – is the most extensive program of its kind ever to be presented in Canada. It also includes several premieres, such as *natural history* and *FUCK ME (orange)* (both 2014).

### **Kazuo Hara**

The RIDM is also presenting a retrospective of the films of the legendary Japanese director **Kazuo Hara**. For the occasion, Hara will make his first visit to Quebec and present his four documentaries: *Goodbye CP*, *Extreme Private Eros: Love Song 1974*, *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On* and *A Dedicated Life*.

### **Of Men and Beasts**

Lastly, the festival includes **Of Men and Beasts**, a thematic retrospective of films about animals. Comprising 23 shorts and features, the special program will reveal how several filmmakers reinvented and pushed the boundaries of the animal documentary. The line-up includes acclaimed filmmakers who explored the animal kingdom, including Jean Painlevé (a selection of short films), Barbet Schroeder with *Koko: A Talking Gorilla*; Frederick Wiseman with *Primate*; Chris Marker with *Vive la baleine*; George Franju with *Le sang des bêtes*; and Pierre Perrault with *L'oumigmag ou l'objectif documentaire*, to name just a few.

The RIDM will also honour German filmmaker **Harun Farocki**, who passed away this year, with a screening of his masterpiece, *Images of the World and Inscriptions of War*. There will also be a **tenth anniversary** celebration of the **Wapikoni Mobile** with the premiere of the medium-length film *Les*

*indiens, l'aigle et le dindon*, preceded by a selection of shorts. Lastly, the great homegrown talents of tomorrow will show their stuff at the **Nuit de la relève Radio-Canada**, a program of shorts by students from INIS, UQAM and Concordia.

## **PARALLEL ACTIVITIES**

The RIDM hosts numerous parallel activities in conjunction with its film screenings. Master classes, screenings with debates, round tables, concerts and interactive installations all add new dimensions to the 12 days of the festival.

### **Master classes, workshops and guest lectures**

There will be master classes and workshops led by **Kazuo Hara**, **James Benning** and **Michel Fano**, France's leading sound designer for film, who will present *Le territoire des autres* and *La griffe et la dent* from the Of Men and Beasts program. **Hubert Sauper**, the director of *We Come As Friends* and *Darwin's Nightmare*, will give a talk about neocolonialism and the appropriation of lands in Africa.

### **Discussions**

Two **round tables** will delve into questions related to documentary creation. The first looks into the occupational hazards of making documentaries, while the second will explore the fine line between "protagonists" and "characters."

Four **debates** about social issues will take place after screenings of the following films: *God Save Justin Trudeau* (political spectacle), *Marmato* (land rights), *Mon insécurité nationale* (sacrificing freedom for security) and *The Empire of Shame* (gender and occupational health and safety).

### **Installations**

**Two installations by James Benning**, *One Way Boogie Woogie 2012* and *Stemple Pass*, will be presented at VOX, centre de l'image contemporaine, from November 15, 2014 to February 21, 2015.

**The Gifoscopes**, a fun – and free – interactive installation, opened on October 2 and will remain available until November 23 on the Promenade des Artistes, steps away from festival headquarters. Inspired by the praxinoscope, a late-19<sup>th</sup> century invention, the Gifoscopes make connections between the dawn of cinema and the web today. Passers by are invited to put illustrations in motion, including works by DOIION, Sonya Roy and the En Masse artists' collective, in collaboration with See Creature, as well as creating their own image strips, which can be made on-site at any time using the materials provided. There will also be workshops during the festival.

The **UXdoc Space**, in the Cinémathèque québécoise from November 13 to 23, is dedicated to interactive works and new technologies, featuring two projects designed for the **Oculus Rift** virtual reality headset. *CLOUDS* and *Assent* are immersive 3D experiences in which the participant can experience one of cinema's possible futures. Plus, the **mobile app Le cancer du temps**, an interactive fable about our chronic inability to get things done, co-produced by the NFB and France Télévisions, will have its world premiere in the space.

**ListenTree** gives us a glimpse of a future in which digital information could become an integral part of our surroundings. Designed by two MIT students, ListenTree is an audio-haptic installation integrated into the natural environment. The apparatus is embedded in the ground and attached to a tree, transforming it into a speaker. The sounds it produces are audible from a metre or two away, but when the visitor puts an ear to the tree or its branches, the audio becomes crystal clear. From November 12 to 23, the installation, located outside the Agora at UQAM's Cœur des sciences, will feature both live and pre-recorded audio.

### **Music programs**

In conjunction with the films in the Beat Dox section of music-themed documentaries, the nightly **Beat Dox Sessions** will take place at festival headquarters. Put together in partnership with high-profile local industry players like Pop Montréal, M pour Montréal and Suoni per il Popolo, the line-up

showcases local talent. Performers will include Suuns, So Called, Poirier, Champion, Secret Sun, Miracle Fortress, Country and PyPy.

*Quebec's only film festival dedicated to documentaries, the Montreal International Documentary Festival presents the best reality-based films, including the works of established directors and new talents.*

**The 17<sup>th</sup> annual RIDM will take place from November 12 to 23, 2014.**

**Information: [www.ridm.qc.ca](http://www.ridm.qc.ca) / [info@ridm.qc.ca](mailto:info@ridm.qc.ca)**

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