Documentary
Educational Resources

NEW FILMS | FALL 2017 - WINTER 2018

COTTON ROAD

Laura Kissel
110 min, 2015

Americans consume nearly twenty billion new items of clothing each year, and at least one billion of them are made in China. *Cotton Road* traces the transnational movement of cotton, from farms in South Carolina to factory cities in China. This film reveals a contemporary landscape of globalized labor through human stories, and provides an opportunity to reflect on the ways our consumption impacts others and drives a global economy.

( ) **BEST DOCUMENTARY**
Beaufort Int'l Film Festival

TASHI'S TURBINE

Amitabh Joshi
57 min, 2016

This film follows two friends, Tashi and Jeevan, on a journey to build a stronger Nepal through sustainable energy. The friends set out to install a wind turbine in the remote Himalayan village of Namdok, where only a few homes are lit at night. They work with the villagers but still meet many obstacles, including choosing which homes will receive one of the first fifteen light bulbs. Tashi and Jeevan's efforts to bring light to the community are part of an ideology of grassroots nation-building, environmental consciousness, and their desire to help villagers out of poverty.

( ) **OFFICIAL SELECTION**
SVA/AAA Film Festival

OUT OF THE MAYA TOMBS

David Lebrun
96/54 min with 46 min of extras, 2017

Over the past 50 years, thousands of exquisitely painted Maya vases, most looted from tombs, have flooded into public and private collections. These amazing works of art opened an extraordinary window on the Maya past, but the race to unearth these treasures has destroyed ancient cities. *Out of the Maya Tombs* explores ancient Maya life and mythology, as well as the tangled issues involved in the collection and study of looted art. The story is told by villagers, looters, archaeologists, dealers and curators. For each, these vases hold a different value and meaning.

( ) **BEST FILM**
International Festival of Archaeological Film

SPECIAL SCREENING
Guggenheim Museum,
National Gallery of Art

MONIR

Bahman Kiarostami
54 min, 2015

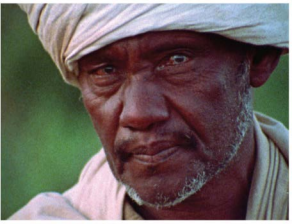
Monir explores the life and practice of Iranian artist Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, one of the most innovative and influential artists working in the Middle East today. Known as a pioneer of contemporary geometric mirror works, Monir created a new artistic language informed by both traditional Iranian craft and architecture, and years spent in New York City during the height of Abstract Expressionism. Through intimate cinema verite and archival footage, this film shows Monir's artistic methods, as well as the deep effects Iran's politics have had on her life and craft.

Previously unreleased in the United States. Now available for the first time on DVD and streaming video

JEAN-MICHEL KIBUSHI: PALABRES ANIMÉES DU GRIOT

Jean-Michel Kibushi
72 min, 1991-2004

Jean-Michel Kibushi is pioneer of both Congolese and African animation. This compilation brings together Kibushi's best-known works from 1991 to 2004. Kibushi addresses issues related to contemporary life, such as corruption and political violence. While all use stop motion animation, Kibushi draws widely on materials – from jointed paper cutouts, to clay, to puppetry to children's drawings – set against elaborate backgrounds to convey poignant social and political messages. Whether offering traditional wisdom or political critiques, these animated films capture the spirit and culture of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.



Digitally transfered and remastered from original film materials in 2016

FACES OF CHANGE COLLECTION

produced by Norman Miller
688 min, 1979-1983, digitally remastered 2016

A landmark project in the history of ethnographic filmmaking, *Faces of Change* utilized observational cinema for exploring cultures in transition by revealing the everyday dilemmas and decisions of real individuals. Designed as a resource for cross-cultural, comparative study of rural society, education, rural economy, women and belief systems, the collection is comprised of sets of films produced in distinct geographic and cultural contexts. The re-released films include the complete Afghanistan, Bolivia, China Coast, and Kenya series, offering invaluable documentation of each of the profiled communities, and insight into an important moment in ethnographic filmmaking.

BEST DOCUMENTARY
Woodstock Film Festival

A SNAKE GIVES BIRTH TO A SNAKE

Michael Lessac
101 min, 2014

A Snake Gives Birth to a Snake follows a group of South African actors seeking to share their country's experiment with truth and reconciliation through theatre. The group tours the war-torn regions of Northern Ireland, Rwanda, and the former Yugoslavia, performing and conducting workshops for survivors of civil conflicts. As they engage with these communities and their memories of atrocity, the actors find they must once again confront their homeland's violent past, and question their own capacity for healing and forgiveness.

OFFICIAL SELECTION
SVA/AAA Film Festival

TRANSNATIONAL FIESTA: 20 YEARS LATER

Wilton Martínez, co-produced with Paul H. Gelles
82 min, 2014

Transnational Fiesta: 20 Years Later offers an updated look at the Andean migrant community first documented in *Transnational Fiesta: 1992*. The film follows the Quispe-Abril family as they travel from Maryland back to Peru to celebrate the patron saint fiesta of Cabanaconde. The film highlights the persistence of Andean culture over time and space, as well as the relationship a new generation of immigrants have to their parents' homeland. Packaged as a 2-DVD set which includes the original film *Transnational Fiesta: 1992* in its entirety.

SPECIAL SCREENINGS
Brown University,
Wesleyan University,
University of London

IN MY MOTHER'S HOUSE

Lina Fruzzetti, Ákos Östör
82 min, 2016

A personal story with global resonance, this film follows anthropologist Lina Fruzzetti on a quest to understand her African and European roots. Fruzzetti's Italian father died when she was a baby in Italy's former colony of Eritrea, where he had met her mother. Although she never knew her father or met his family, in 2005, Fruzzetti received a surprising email from an Italian cousin. This correspondence sparked a decade-long journey from her American home in Providence, RI to Carrara, Italy and Asmara, Eritrea to learn her own history, and ultimately to show colonialism's lasting effects on families and diasporas.

BEST MONGOLIAN FILM
Mongolia Int'l Film Festival

LIVE FROM UB

Lauren Knapp
82 min, 2015

Live From UB focuses on the contemporary rock music scene in Mongolia's capital, Ulaanbaatar (UB), to explore music's role in shaping the modern nation. The histories of western rock and Mongolian traditional music are understood within the context of Soviet socialism and the emergence of democracy. Following the musicians in Mohanik — one of today's most promising independent bands — the film reveals the contemporary synthesis of Mongolian and western influences in the creation of a new sound, and forging of a new Mongolian identity through music.

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Margaret Mead Film Festival

CHINA REMIX

Dorian Carli-Jones, Melissa Lefkowitz
29 min, 2015

The city of Guangzhou is home to China's largest community of African immigrants. Despite facing prejudice and the risk of deportation, three African hip-hop artists strive to change perceptions and achieve a better life in their new land of opportunity. *China Remix* follows these entertainers as they prepare for their shows, perform, and live their daily lives with their Chinese and African family members and friends. In doing so, the film illuminates the broadening African diaspora, and challenges eurocentric views of globalization and cultural syntheses.

See also the new book ***Drawn to Landscape: The Pioneering Work of J.B. Jackson***

JB JACKSON AND THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE

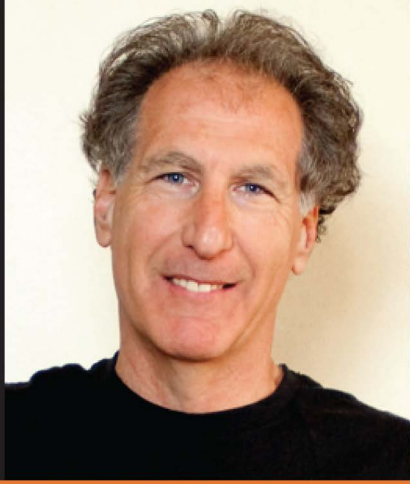
produced by Janet Mendelsohn
103 min with 57 min of extras, 2015

This comprehensive compilation highlights the work and personality of John Brinckerhoff (J.B.) Jackson, considered by many to be the originator of landscape studies in the United States. The DVD includes *Figure in a Landscape: A Conversation with J.B. Jackson* (1988), *J.B. Jackson and The Love of Everyday Places* (1989), a portfolio of Jackson's drawings, watercolors and teaching slides, and interviews with scholars and artists on the impact of Jackson's ideas and his continued relevance today.

"The commonplace aspects of the world could teach us a great deal not only about American history and society but also about ourselves. It is a matter of learning how to see." —*J.B. Jackson*

FILMMAKER SPOTLIGHT

STEVEN FELD



Steven Feld is a filmmaker, sound/performance artist, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at University of New Mexico, and Senior Scholar at School for Advanced Research, Santa Fe. After studies in music, film, and photography, he received the Ph.D in Anthropological Linguistics at Indiana University in 1979. Key theoretical themes developed in this work are the anthropology of sound and voice; acoustemology, particularly regarding eco-cosmology as relational ontology; emotive sensuality; and experimental, dialogic writing, recording, and filmmaking.

JAZZ COSMOPOLITANISM IN ACCRA – A FILM SERIES BY STEVEN FELD

300 min with 38 min of extras, 2009-2016

Steven Feld's collaborative documentaries reveal Accra's resonances with jazz histories, styles, and performance practices ranging from New Orleans to bebop and the avant-garde. The films in this series feature vibrant live performances and interviews with famed percussionist Guy Warren/Ghanaba, multi-instrumentalist, afrifone inventor, and sound sculptor Nii Noi Nortey, percussionist and guitarist Nii Otoo Annan, the horn honking La Drivers Union Por Por Group, and master puppeteer J.C. Abbey. The *Jazz Cosmopolitanism in Accra* series, alone or with the companion book and CD series of the same title, conveys a sense of diasporic intimacy and musical cosmopolitanism in Ghana.

VOL 1: HALLELUJAH!

60 min, 2009

Hallelujah! presents an African talking drums version of Georg Friedrich Händel's Hallelujah chorus, as staged and performed by legendary drummer Ghanaba together with the Winneba Youth Choir. Ghanaba's unique approach to Händel mixes elements of African, Christian, and Islamic ritual with formal European concert performance, Ghanaian ceremony, and improvisation.

VOL 2: ACCRA TRANE STATION

60 with 18 min of extras, 2009

This film distills three years of video conversations with Nii Noi Nortey, the Ghanaian sculptor, instrument inventor, and avant-garde instrumentalist. Nortey discusses the African legacy of John Coltrane, and how it inspired invention of his "afrifone" instruments, and a series of twenty Accra Trane Station sculptures and four CD recordings. The recordings and film also feature his longtime percussionist Nii Otoo Annan, "the Elvin Jones of West Africa."

VOL 3: A POR POR FUNERAL FOR ASHIRIFIE

60 min, 2009

Por Por music (pronounced "paw paw") is named for the honking sound of antique squeeze-bulb car horns, ubiquitous on the wooden lorries of Ghana's early transport history. In March 2008 the La Drivers Union Por Por Group lost one of its key members, Nelson Ashirifie Mensah. This film documents the funeral performed in his memory and discusses Por Por's relation to the New Orleans jazz funeral.

VOL 4: THE STORY OF POR POR

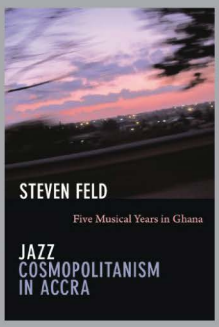
60 min with 20 min of extras, 2013

After electric horns arrived in West Africa, honk horns virtually disappeared. But a union of bus and truck drivers in the Accra township of La kept the por por horns and invented a jazzy honking music adding bells, drums, and voices. This film documents the origins and performance of this music and features the testimonies of senior transport industry workers who are centrally involved in its history.

VOL 5: J.C. ABBEY, GHANA'S PUPPETEER

55 min, 2016

This film distills three years of video conversations with Nii Noi Nortey, the Ghanaian sculptor, instrument inventor, and avant-garde instrumentalist. Nortey discusses the African legacy of John Coltrane, and how it inspired invention of his "afrifone" instruments, and a series of twenty Accra Trane Station sculptures and four CD recordings.



ALSO SEE THE COMPANION BOOK

JAZZ COSMOPOLITANISM IN ACCRA: FIVE MUSICAL YEARS IN GHANA

Steven Feld, 328 pages, 2012, Duke University Press

In this remarkable book, Steven Feld, pioneer of the anthropology of sound, listens to the vernacular cosmopolitanism of jazz players in Ghana. Some have traveled widely, played with American jazz greats, and blended the innovations of John Coltrane with local instruments and worldviews. Combining memoir, biography, ethnography, and history, Feld conveys a diasporic intimacy and dialogue that contests American nationalist and Afrocentric narratives of jazz history.

BEST DOCUMENTARY
Tribeca Film Festival

DEMOCRATS

Camilla Nielsson
100 min, 2015

In the wake of long-time leader Robert Mugabe's contentious 2008 presidential win, Zimbabwe took a historic step forward by convening its first bipartisan constitutional committee. Paul Mangwana and Douglas Mwonzora were appointed to the committee from rival political parties, but both were determined to end decades of corrupt, authoritarian leadership. Filmed over the course of three years, Democrats offers unprecedented access to this new political process and the lives of the two men overseeing it, and a rare, first-hand account of a country's steps towards democracy.

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Int'l Festival of Ethnographic Film, Belgrade

COLOURS OF THE ALPHABET

Alastair Cole
80 min, 2016

Through a unique lens combining linguistic anthropology and the perspectives of children, *Colours of the Alphabet* reveals the complexities of our multilingual world. The film follows three first grade students in rural Zambia as they struggle to make sense of their classroom--where the language they are taught is different from the language they speak at home. Through the experiences of these children, this film highlights the importance of mother-tongue education, and offers insights into the plight of nearly 40% of the world's population who lack access to education in their own language.

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Margaret Mead Film Festival

SO LONG ASLEEP

David Plath
60 min, 2016

During WWII's Asia-Pacific War, a million young Korean men were rounded up and shipped overseas to labor camps in Imperial Japan. Thousands died, and were dumped into unmarked graves on the island of Hokkaido. On the 70th anniversary of the end of the War, a group of multinational volunteers carried the remains of 115 men home to Korea for reburial. Using the past to face the future, So Long Asleep brings together Korean and Japanese students in a unique and powerful story of repatriation.

HOUSE IN THE FIELDS

Tala Hadid
86 min, 2017

House in the Fields examines life in an isolated Amazigh community in the rural south-west of the High Atlas Mountains. The thousand-year history of the Amazigh in Morocco has been primarily transmitted and preserved by bards and storytellers in oral form among its Tamazight speaking communities. *House in the Fields* continues this tradition, and is told in collaboration with two teenage sisters, one who must give up school to be married, and the other who dreams of being a lawyer. As such, this film offers a uniquely intimate take on the ethnographic documentary, showing issues of tradition and change from the perspectives of young women.

2017 WINNER

JOHN MARSHALL AWARD
FOR CONTEMPORARY ETHNOGRAPHIC MEDIA

Since 2015, DER has presented the John Marshall Award for Contemporary Ethnographic Media at the Camden International Film Festival to foster dialogue about the past, present and future of works that document social processes and cultural traditions. Named in honor of DER founder, John Marshall, the award recognizes outstanding films that allow characters to speak for themselves, and that skillfully convey the larger social, political and economic forces shaping the lives and relationships at a story's core.

PAST AWARD WINNERS:
2015 — *I Am the People*
2016 — *Liberation: The User's Guide*

NATIONAL BROADCAST
America ReFramed, US Broadcast, 2017

GOOD LUCK SOUP

Matthew Hashiguchi
57 min, 2016

In this personal documentary, filmmaker Matthew Hashiguchi shares his experience of growing up as a mixed race Asian American in a predominantly white Midwestern neighborhood. As Hashiguchi explores his multiracial identity and heritage, he is guided by his spunky Japanese American grandmother, who tells him stories about their family and her own internment in a prison camp during World War II. Through interviews with family members, home movies, and thoughtful narration, Hashiguchi offers an intimate portrait of the Asian American experience.

OFFICIAL SELECTION
SVA/AAA Film Festival

BANJO ROMANTIKA

Shara K. Lange, Lee Bidgood
65 min, 2015

Banjo Romantika follows Czech musicians who play a unique version of American Bluegrass, melding the political past and present into a lively musical tradition. Czechs first heard bluegrass during World War II, when the Armed Forces Network broadcast American music for soldiers. For dissatisfied Czechs living in a communist state, bluegrass represented freedom. In this film, ethnomusicologist Lee Bidgood explores the genre's fascinating history with musicians in the Czech Republic, and performs original Czech Bluegrass songs at renowned venue, The Down Home, in Johnson City, Tennessee

See Biella's related film on the Maasai, *The Chairman and the Lions* (2012)

CHANGA REVISITED

Peter Biella, Leonard Kamerling
90 min, 2016

Changa Revisited is the story of Tanzania Maasai elder, Toreto ole Koisenge, and his family seen from two points in time across a thirty year divide. His life has drastically changed since anthropologist Peter Biella first visited his home thirty years ago. Then he had six hundred cattle. Now disease has reduced his herd to twenty. The world of Maasai pastoralists has gotten smaller and smaller since the Tanzania government forced them to live in permanent villages and end the seasonal cattle migrations. "The world is upside-down... what can you do except change?" says Toreto.

A collection of previously unreleased films by seminal ethnographic filmmaker Robert Gardner

FORSAKEN FRAGMENTS

Robert Gardner
72 min, 1958-2010

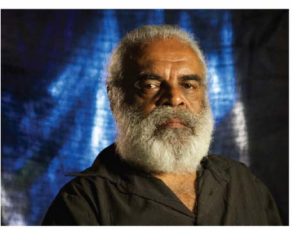
These short films and "uncompleted" fragments span Gardner's interests, from ethnography to the art world. This DVD includes *The Old Lady a.k.a A Human Document* (1958), filmed while shooting in the Kalahari with John Marshall; and the charming, *It Could be Good, It Could Be Bad* (1997), about friendship and storytelling, shot in Bob Fulton's small plane over the Southern Chilean Andes. Also included: *Tide* (1966); *Creatures of Pain* (1968); *Three Non-commercials* (1973); *Healing* (1978); *Hauling Sharks* (1988); *Supplicating Women* (1985); *Life Keeps Passing On* (1985); *The Photographer* (2007); and *Deus Ex Boltanski* (2010). These short pieces stand alone as riveting cinematic experiences, offering insight into Gardner's personality and curiosity.

( ) **BEST FOREIGN DOCUMENTARY**
LA Femme Int'l Film Festival

HEADHUNT REVISITED: WITH BRUSH, CANVAS & CAMERA

Michele Westmorland
77 min, 2017

Headhunt Revisited: With Brush, Canvas & Camera explores the role of art in documenting cultures and the complexities of representation through the work of Caroline Mytinger. Mytinger traveled to Melanesia in the 1920s, then known as land of the headhunters, to paint portraits of its native peoples. These portraits were recognized as important cultural documents by Margaret Mead, who exhibited them at the American Museum of Natural History. This film retraces Mytinger's four-year journey in Melanesia and the return of her paintings to her subjects' descendents, and examines the legacy of her work.



( ) **OFFICIAL SELECTION**
Margaret Mead Film Festival

THE REDFERN STORY

Darlene Johnson
57 min, 2013

In 1972, inspired by the Civil Rights and Black Power movements in the U.S., a small group of Australian activists founded the National Black Theatre in the Aboriginal neighborhood of Redfern. Under the direction of actor/playwright Bob Maza, the group used satire to engage multiracial Australian audiences and bring the cause of indigenous people to public notice. Through interviews and archival footage, this film illuminates a crucial moment in the struggles of Australian indigenous people to gain land rights and better treatment.

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AVAILABILITY & ACCESS

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