



Films from the Flaherty

Museum of Modern Art

Wednesday August 17, 2022

Film Notes

Em busca de Aurora / In the Search of Aurora

João Vieira Torres | 50 min | 2022 | Brazil, France

The story of a journey among the living and the dead in the heart of Brazil’s desertic Sertão, searching for the sources of violence and love. A collective reading circle where listeners are invited to become tellers.

Chooka

Parastoo Anoushahpour, Faraz Anoushahpour, Ryan Ferko | 21 min | 2018 | Canada, Iran

In 1973, the Shah of Iran commissioned the construction of a paper factory in the lush northern province of Gilan. Foreign engineers from Canada and the United States were brought to develop and run the facility, bringing with them their families as well as a species of pine tree previously unknown to the region. Their stay, however, came to a sudden halt in 1979 with the Iranian revolution forcing them to flee the site overnight.

Chooka unfolds between the site of this factory and a rural family house located in a nearby village. Coinciding with the construction of the factory, this family hosted the production of Bahram Beyzaie’s film *The Stranger and The Fog*. After the revolution, Beyzaie returned to the same house to produce his film *Bashu, The Little Stranger*, about a young war refugee who escapes the south and ends up alone in a small northern village.

Returning to this landscape 40 years later, we meet the family again. It is summer and the grandfather of the family who hosted Beyzaie has passed away. His adult son is working at the paper factory while his grandson, between English classes, shows us the secret corners of his family’s house. Mediated through screens and photography, *Chooka* weaves original material with elements of archival documentary footage and fragments of Beyzaie’s cinema to explore the entangled relationship between a stranger and a host, a factory and a village, a film crew and a family, foreign trees and a landscape.

Amisk

Alanis Obomsawin | 40 min | 1977 | Canada

In 1977, the James Bay Festival took place over nine days in Montreal. This historic one-of-a-kind event was held in support of the James Bay Cree whose territory, resources and culture were threatened by the expansion of hydro-electric dams. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit performers came from across North America to show their support in an act of Indigenous unity and solidarity few people in Montreal had ever witnessed. Rarely seen early performances by legendary Indigenous artists Gordon Tootoosis, Tom Jackson, Duke Redbird, Willie Dunn and director Alanis Obomsawin herself are interspersed with testimonies of members of the James Bay Cree. Their stories reveal first-hand experiences of the negative impacts of capitalistic expansion on Cree land.

Bios

João Vieira Torres

João Vieira Torres is a French-Brazilian artist/filmmaker born in Recife, Brazil. He lives and works between France and Brazil. He obtained a masters degree in Photography and Video Art from the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, followed by the post-graduation residency at Le Fresnoy-Studio National des Arts Contemporains (2010-12), and continued his research in the PHD programme *Document et Art Contemporain* at the École Supérieure Européenne de l’Image. Vieira Torres uses various forms of artistic expression: photography, cinema, video art, and performance. One of the main axes of their work is the issue of “foreignness” and forms of instability and perspectives breaking points that originate it.

He has shown his work, among other places, at Venice Biennale College (IT) / DocLisboa (PT) / New York Film Festival (US) / Kinoforum São Paulo (BR) / Centre Pompidou(FR) / Palais de Tokyo (FR) / Edinburgh International Film Festival (UK) / Art of the Real Lincoln Center (US) / Ann Arbor Film Fest (US) / FID Marseille (FR) / Olhar de Cinema (BR) / Rencontres Internationales du Documentaire de Montréal (CA) / Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin (FR/DE) / Museu da Imagem e do som de São Paulo (BR) / Anthology Film Archives(US) / MIS São Paulo (BR) / LABoral (ESP) / IndieLisboa(PT) / Tampere Short Film Fest (FI) / Uniondocs New York (US) / Vilnius CAC (LT).

Parastoo Anoushahpour

Faraz Anoushahpour

Ryan Ferko

Parastoo Anoushahpour, Faraz Anoushahpour, and Ryan Ferko have worked in collaboration since 2013. Their shared practice explores the interplay of multiple subjectivities as a strategy to address the power inherent in narrative structures. Foregrounding the idea of place as a central focus, their work seeks to both decode their surroundings and trouble the production of images through speculative narration and dialectical imagery. Shifting between both gallery and cinema contexts, recent projects have been presented at Berlinale, Punto De Vista International Documentary Festival, Viennale, Media City Film Festival, New York Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, and others internationally.

Alanis Obomsawin

CC, GOQ, filmmaker, singer, artist, storyteller (born 31 August 1932 near Lebanon, New Hampshire), Alanis Obomsawin is one of Canada’s most distinguished documentary filmmakers.

She began her career as a professional singer and storyteller before joining the National Film Board (NFB) in 1967. Her award-winning films address the struggles of Indigenous peoples in Canada from their perspective, giving prominence to voices that have long been ignored or dismissed. A Companion of the Order of Canada and a Grand Officer of the Ordre national du Québec, she has received the Prix Albert-Tessier and the Canadian Screen Awards’ Humanitarian Award, as well as multiple Governor General’s Awards, lifetime achievement awards and honorary degrees.



The Flaherty Seminar

These films were among the 60 works selected for **Continents of Drifting Clouds, the 67th Flaherty Film Seminar**, curated by Almudena Escobar López and Sky Hopinka. The Flaherty Seminar is a weeklong annual event dedicated to the most adventurous voices in nonfiction cinema; this year’s works and conversations ushered in a paradigm shift—from ways of seeing, to changing the ways we know.

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