

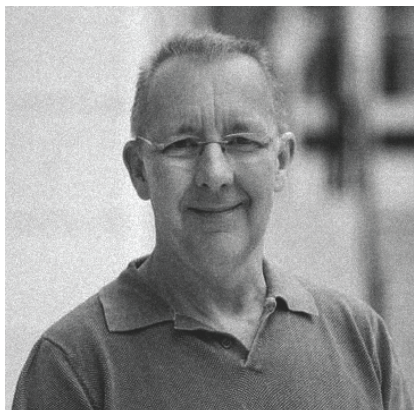
# Open City Docs

Ethnographic and Documentary Film  
[Practical] MA





© China in Ethiopia (Paul Zhou, 2018) - One World Media Student Award Winner 2018



Why do we make documentary films? There are probably as many answers as there are filmmakers, but here at Open City Docs at UCL there is one overriding reason we teach this craft to our students: to help them - and all those who watch their work - to experience complexity, to think about it more subtly, and to find better ways of living in a profoundly opaque world.

We start with the frank admission that, much of the time, we haven't a clue as to what is really going on around us. If we want to reduce that cluelessness, there is only one solution: to get out there and watch and listen, and see what our neighbours, both near and more distant, are doing and saying. So, we teach curiosity, we encourage nosiness, we show that there are no simple answers to any interesting question. Above all, we teach our students to look and listen.

But we also teach how to make a story in pictures. We teach that the only reason to make film is to show something that cannot be said with words. And leading this work, we have some of the best British and European filmmakers providing our teaching and the one-to-one mentoring that all our students get. Their names can be found in this catalogue in front of the respective studios in which they teach, and short biographies for each are on page 53 and 54.

We are hugely proud of the work that results, and that we present here. For the third year running, a graduate of ours won the One World Media award for Best Student Film 2018: Paul Zhou for his remarkable

exploration of 'China in Ethiopia', a film that found the inside story on a bag factory in Ethiopia and the Chinese expats who manage it. Another graduate work from last year: Shanu Subramaniam's 'India's Forbidden Love: An Honour Killing on Trial', both went out on Al Jazeera and was shortlisted for an IDA shorts award. We expect similar successes for the films and filmmakers listed in this catalogue as their work starts to appear in the world.

2018 was also the first year in which our students produced Virtual Reality projects as part of our 'Studio 4 - UCL 360: Immersive Factual Storytelling' pathway. The best work from this studio was exhibited at Open City Documentary Festival last September, and has gone on around the world in various guises. No one knows what the future of VR holds but our students are working at the forefront and scoping the potential of this medium.

Open City Docs at UCL's Future Media Studio - which now runs a two year MFA led by Sophie Fiennes, Kim Longinotto and Riete Oord, and will shortly launch other masters' programmes in different disciplines - provide a space in the heart of London to explore the future of storytelling. Follow developments about the school, students, our festival and filmmakers via the Open City Docs social media channels, site and newsletter. Visit us at our studio, and don't forget to put the dates (4th-10th September) for the ninth edition of Open City Documentary Festival in your diary!

Michael Stewart, Director of Open City Docs

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# STUDIO 1A

## Experimental & Cinematic Non-Fiction

Lasse Johansson, Richard Alywn,  
Bonnie Rae Brickman

At the start of every year there is always one dominant question – how will these students make it in the future as documentary filmmakers? We are all trying to teach them the technical core, whilst the individual studios are also responsible for giving students a certain philosophical framework. Trying to respond to what the students are looking for is much more difficult. The only real way to do this is by looking at the work produced over the past year. In 2017/18, we saw a sharp focus in the graduation films. 6 of the 16 films were given a distinction, and the quality throughout was high. What satisfied me the most during 2017/18 was the attention to detail on display in these works. If these students can retain this spirit, they will have a strong future as filmmakers.

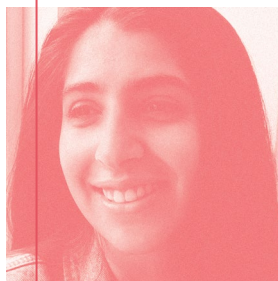
Lasse Johansson



## YADO & I

Dir. Sara Almheiri  
25' / 2018

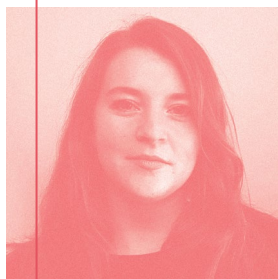
This film looks at the director, a young woman from the United Arab Emirates, and her relationship with her grandmother, a traditional woman who has always refused to be filmed. It explores how the U.A.E has drastically changed over the past few decades yet has quickly forgotten its history.



## MZUNGUS IN THE WIND

Dir. Anna Boylan  
24' / 2018

Humans have lived in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, a large primeval forest located in south-western Uganda, for 60,000 years. Now its primary inhabitants are a population of endangered mountain gorillas. Communities now live on the boundaries looking in, and three young men wait at its gates to sell their crafts.



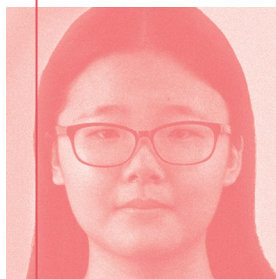


## THE MARKS OF HISTORY

Dir. Wenqi Cai

29' / 2018

This film is about the past and present stories of a group of elderly people living in a nursing home in Dushanzi, Xinjiang. Most of them are part of the first generation of Xinjiang. History makes them what they are today, but they are also part of history itself.

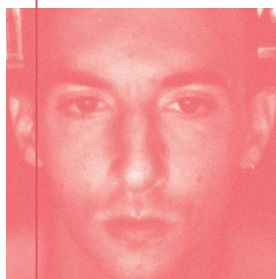


## O LAND OF WRATH

Dir. Adrian Camilleri

23' / 2018

'O Land of Wrath' is a mix of experimental visual poetry and documentary. The film's narrative revolves around Maltese folk music: 'Ghana', and musicians: 'Ghanejja', with underlying themes of the Maltese subconscious. The elements of the film are transmitted through a technical and social/cultural voice on Ghana and visions of Ghanejja and of the Maltese landscape and psyche.



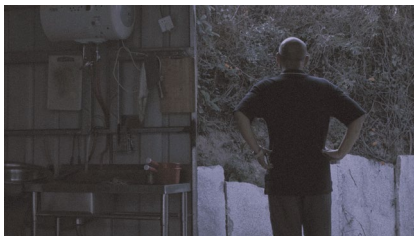
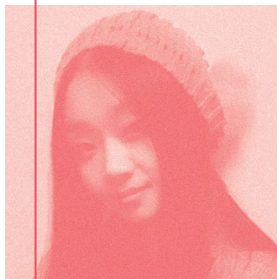


## BLACK HAIR

Dir. Danlin Chen

22' / 2018

'Black Hair' is a participatory essay film exploring the close relationship between the filmmaker and the grandmother who stepped in to raise her whilst her parents were away. It is not only a film about a special person, but also a film about time and love, and a film with a particular expression of time and its passing.

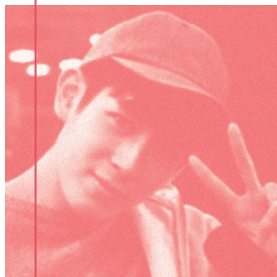


## HALF IMMORTAL

Dir. Lin Kaichun

13' / 2018

This film portrays a Chinese fortune teller's life and struggles, following him as he tells fortunes day to day. In the eyes of others, Mr. Wu is so powerful that it seems he could be immortal. However, unbeknownst to them, Mr. Wu is dealing with dilemmas of his own. Half Immortal looks into his heart and tries to figure out his journey, to see where the truth lies.





## ON THE WAVE OF LIFE

Dir. Hanna Yin Lindgren

20' / 2018

The film follows Anisya, a woman from a fishing village in Sri Lanka, who works several jobs to stay afloat. We observe Anisya's daily tasks, constantly busy from the early morning until the night. As the film unfolds, she reveals the story of her relationship with her abusive husband and the love that follows.



## CLASSICS READING EDUCATION

Dir. Lihang Syu

33' / 2018

This is a film about a private school - the Dongshan Academy in Suzhou, China - that exists outside of the mainstream educational system, where students only form of study is reading classics. It is one of thousands of schools like this in China that follow the practice of returning back to a traditional form of education. This film intends to find out about the students' life there, and how students, parents, and teachers feel about this type of education.



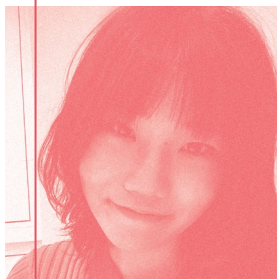


## SIXTEEN YEARS

Dir. Zhu Meng

16' / 2018

'Sixteen Years' observes how Deepak Tyagi, who has immigrated to China with his family from India, adapts to the Chinese lifestyle. This film documents Tyagi's family's daily life through the various aspects of study, work and family life.

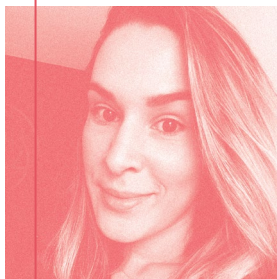


## GREAT LITTLE THINGS

Dir. Kasia Niechwiedowicz

26' / 2018

Kasia was three when she lost both forearms in a freak accident involving harvesting equipment. Throughout the years her life has been filled with great challenges, and even the little things have been difficult. In this film, her recollections of stories from the past are contrasted with observational scenes demonstrating her ability to adapt to the world and its demands.





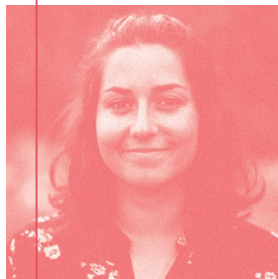


## CLOSE TO HOME

Dir. Annabel Romanos

18' / 2018

'Close to Home' follows the director's emotional and filmic journey through themes such as feminism, love, and documentary itself. Through the stories of her friends and family, she tries to gain an insight into her own personal, future-determining obstacle.

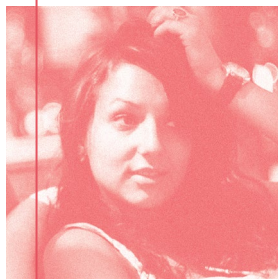


## THE PASTOR'S WIFE

Dir. Oana Tenter

26' / 2018

In a rural Roma community in Romania, a Pentecostal pastor's wife has got a lot of work to do. In-between cleaning and taking care of her young daughters, she is also set to radically change the way of life of her Roma people.





## LUKE'S WORKING HOLIDAY

Dir. Ming Yee Wan  
16' / 2018

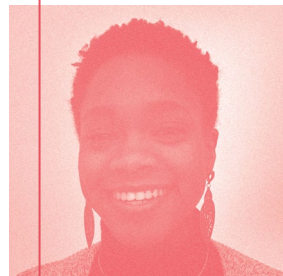
Luke, a young man from Hong Kong, has stayed in London for nearly two years on a working holiday visa. Now, the working holiday is coming to end. He works hard and hopes he can stay in London and establish his own life there. But the result was not as expected, and he has decided to come back to Hong Kong.



## NEXT QUESTION

Dir. Tshay Williams  
15' / 2018

'Next Question' is an interactive documentary that explores the dynamics of grief and healing by bringing the viewer into the emotional space of two friends.



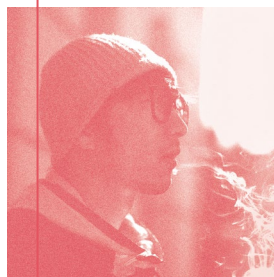


## NO HUMAN IS ILLEGAL

Dir. Nan Wu

16' / 2018

This film concerns Chinese immigrants and their living environment in London. Having left a difficult life in China in order to survive, the new one they face in the UK is no easier since the introduction of the hostile environment policy. This film depicts the immigrant's struggle, and the conflicts that emerged between Chinese communities in London and the police. No one is illegal, and no one should suffer, especially if their persecution is proved to be unjust.

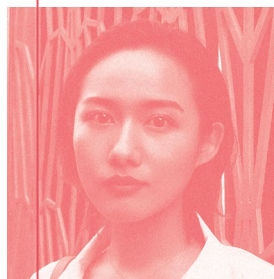


## THE LAST YURT

Dir. Yiqiao You

26' / 2018

'The Last Yurt' is a film about one Kazakh family transferring from winter pastures to spring pastures in KeGugin mountain, China. In the past two years the government has begun moving herdsmen into permanent homes for winter, and intends to improve their spring and summer living conditions going forward too. This may be the last time that they build their own yurt.



# STUDIO 1B

Experimental  
& Cinematic  
Non-Fiction

James Price, Sandhya Suri,  
Ariadna Fatjo-Vilas



## A FULL MOON IN THE SUMMERTIME

Dir. Baofeng Cai

26' / 2018

"Don't introduce me as your dad, just introduce me as any other old man, an old man who has lived a hard life, who started off poor and became wealthy, then became unwell, and from that illness became determined to write." This is how this film subjects asks the director to describe the film being made about him. This film documents his life and his journey, from where he lives now back to his hometown, and from life into death - to ensure that his past, and that of his generation is not forgotten.



## DID YOU EAT?

Dir. Xindan Cai

17' / 2018

Starting with a traditional Chinese greeting: "did you eat?", this film takes us on a journey to explore the memorable stories that go on behind food. What is discovered gives a flavour of different people's lives in London, a city of strangers.





## STAY WITH ME

Dir. Yao Cheng

13' / 2018

There are four different generations living together in this house. Zhang Yu and her baby niece are left under their grandmother's care, as her parents are away most of the year working abroad to try to keep the family afloat. This film shows the life they lead and looks at what is it like to live this way and the cost of the parent's absence.



## THE LISTENING PLACE

Dir. Chloe Choppen

21' / 2018

Suicide is the taboo killer we are refusing to acknowledge. In a quiet corner of South London, a team of determined survivors are fighting to change that. With infectious tenacity and warmth, 'The Listening Place' offers its visitors the rare chance to be heard, and asks us – "could you listen?"



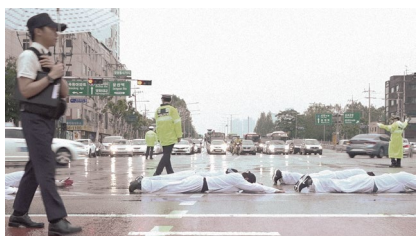
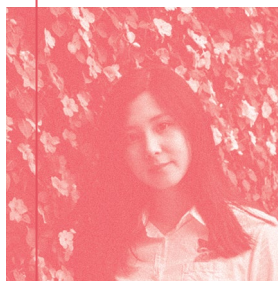




## ARE YOU LISTENING?

Dir. Xuefei Hou  
27' / 2018

60 year old Xiuming Guo is a master craftsman of traditional Chinese musical instruments and is just as skilled at playing them. Whilst making a new instrument, he finds that his work is constantly interrupted by various events. What should he do with the present and the future? Is anyone still listening?



## ON THE EDGE OF 75 METRES

Dir. Hyunjung Kim  
29' / 2018

Since 2006, five workers have been protesting against the company Starflex and its previous owner. They are demanding the company keep its promise but the company refuses to negotiate with them. They choose extreme methods to let the public know about this. Protesting for more than 10 years, they are living on the edge of life.



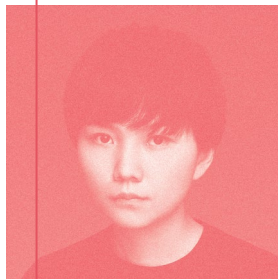


## MY HOME USED TO BE A PRISON

Dir. Zhaofeng Lu

15' / 2018

Shanghai Longchang Apartments used to be a prison. Now there are about 200 households living here, most of which are migrant workers and elderly people. Zhang has lived here since he was born, witnessing how the Longchang Apartments has changed over the decades. After his parents died he became more isolated. His home has now become a prison for himself, from which he cannot escape.

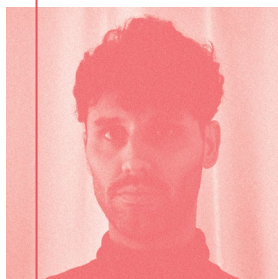


## THE WATERCOURSE

Dir. Sergio Marquez

22' / 2018

'The Watercourse' is an essay film retracing the story of a son and his late father. To overcome the traumas of the past, the son revisits different places including their hometown - a post-industrial city in the outskirts of Barcelona - that is crossed by a dry watercourse.





## QUEEN HISAKO

Dir. Kei Matsunaga

21' / 2018

"This is my life and I will never change the way I live." This film follows the filmmaker's grandmother - a smart, stubborn former restaurateur, mother and socialite - observing her in close proximity, hearing her views, and observing the unique way in which she engages with the wider world, living very much on her own terms. "She is the queen, she's the number one," remarks her daughter, and even in her late life, this looks unlikely to change.

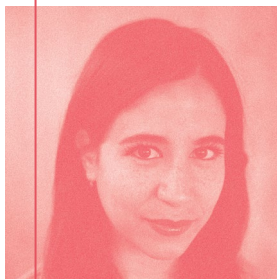


## SISTERS SPEAK

Dir. Lucia Molina Pflaum

27' / 2018

Five young Muslim women host a talk radio show in Luton where they discuss topics considered controversial and taboo within the British Muslim community. In this intimate portrait, the women share their beliefs, ambitions, and dreams - both on and off the air.





## NARROW WATER

Dir. Lisa O'Hagan

22' / 2018

A picturesque and poetic documentary essay, this film starts in Newry, in Northern Ireland, looking at the land around and exploring its personal, geographical and historical significance. A "town of checkpoints", it borders the North and South of Ireland with a tense, troubled history that traverses both. Filming the place and narrating over with memories of her past and the place's present, this film sees the filmmaker continually searching for the right words to describe such a complex, conflicted site.

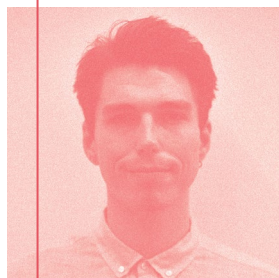


## THE WORLD OF WRESTLING

Dir. Charlie Pearson

17' / 2018

Presented through a reading of Roland Barthes' 'The World of Wrestling', an essay in his 1957 classic collection: 'Mythologies', 'The World of Wrestling' follows the filmmaker as he attempts to unravel the enigmatic and eccentric phenomena that is professional wrestling.





## THE VETERAN

Dir. Ruiting Qiang

15' / 2018

The film mainly records the later life of a veteran of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, hearing his testimony about his experience on the battlefield 70 years ago. It hopes to encourage the younger generation to care more about veterans, and keep the history near and the heroes in mind.



## 27 DAYS OF MEMORY

Dir. Rafaela Schoeffmann

22' / 2018

'27 Days of Memory' is an essay film about an Israeli living abroad returning to her home in Jerusalem. The visit raises questions and complexities as she finds her way through her personal and national narratives, across four important holidays and memorial days in the Jewish Israeli calendar.



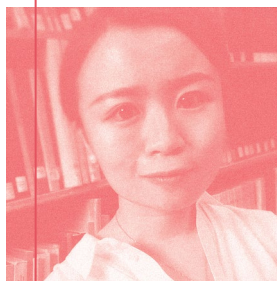


## LIKE GOLD, LIKE GREY

Dir. Zi Wei

20' / 2018

'Like Gold, Like Grey' is a purely observational film about the manufacturing of saxophones, which takes place in a small village in northern part of China. The village is known as the "Saxophone Capital" as it produces more than 10,000 saxophones per month in more than 70 factories. Although over 3,500 people are working on the production of saxophones, less than 10 people there know how to play this instrument.



## THE COUNTRY CLINIC

Dir. Zhang Xinjie

30' / 2018

"Being human is what it is." "Living and working until death comes." This film tells a story of ordinary people struggling to live their life. The film's subject became a doctor by chance but has followed this path for more than five decades. People rely on him, but he cares more about money. He is curing others but he is vulnerable too. Here in the clinic, everything is going on.





# STUDIO 2

## Documentary for Broadcast and Beyond

Lucy Sandys-Winsch, Juliet Brown,  
Bonnie Rae Brickman

This year has been a terrific year for graduates of Studio 2. For their graduate films, students are encouraged to make documentaries they really care about to reveal issues of both personal and universal importance. The wide range of international subjects include the very personal: battling statelessness in Malaysia; to discovering Indian heritage. Other students took an observational approach: through portraiture of black domestic workers in South Africa; and a in site where the forgotten remains of soldiers discovered in Latvia are finally given a proper burial. In China, themes around childhood were popular: left-behind children, effects of the recent two-child policy, and the ongoing preference for male babies elsewhere. Studio 2 is committed to supporting students find their own filmmaking voice to explore world-wide issues whilst preparing them to be as employable as possible in the documentaries industry.

Lucy Sandys-Winsch

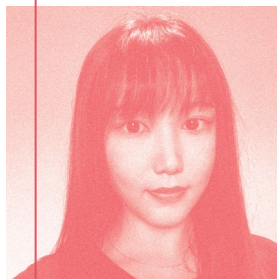


## A DYING ART

Dir. Mu Biheng

16' / 2018

This film tells a story of a Chinese porcelain master who strives to see that the traditional culture of porcelain production is continued. Instead of continuing his art, the master's son has focused his energy towards making money, much to the disappointment of the master. The master begins to train his granddaughter instead, hoping that she will inherit his career and continue the tradition.



## MEMORIES IN SAND

Dir. Chia Yang Chou

16' / 2018

After both of her grandparents are diagnosed with early-stage dementia, the filmmaker takes it on herself to increase awareness of the importance of memory. Through this film, audiences may come to realise that memories can be stored in a different way when a brain is affected by dementia, and even though they may become distant, that they are not always lost.





## OBREE

Dir. Benjamin Collier

29' / 2018

In 1993, amateur cyclist Graeme Obree's unusual riding position and homemade bike earned him a maverick status, but little success. 'Obree' chronicles his remarkable final attempt at cycling glory that year. Blocking his path is the establishment darling Chris Boardman, whose eyes are also firmly fixed on the same feats.

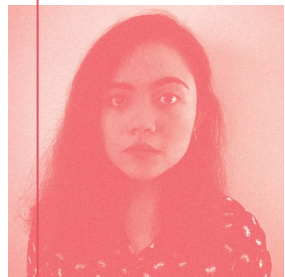


## ANAK MALAYSIA

Dir. Sarah Cowan

29' / 2018

'Anak Malaysia' sheds light on Malaysia's hidden issue of statelessness. Following the filmmaker's stateless mother during the final stage of her latest citizenship application, the film explores the relationship between citizenship and belonging by embarking on a journey of discovery about the mother's predicament before she receives the final application verdict.

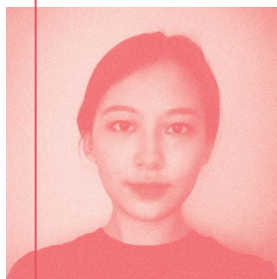




## ABSENT

Dir. Jingjing He  
24' / 2018

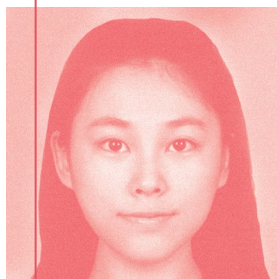
In China nine million children are left behind in their villages, brought up by their grandparents as their parents head to the cities in search of higher salaries and a better life. Mengting and her older brother, Jin, are two of these nine million. This way of life leaves an invisible barrier between these two kids and their parents.



## ANOTHER CHILD IN THE FAMILY

Dir. Ju Ran  
19' / 2018

'Another Child in the Family' is a documentary about how the two-child policy in China affects families who want to have a second child. Zhang Ruize and Xu Jiahui are both nine-years-old and have become used to being only children. However, the arrival of a new family member will completely change their lives.





## UNEARTHED

Dir. Banuta Kalns-Timans

29' / 2018

In the much fought over country of Latvia, the physical legacy of the two World Wars lies forgotten beneath the earth. 'Unearthed' follows a team of international volunteers as they uncover the past to give soldiers lost in these conflicts a proper burial.



## PART OF THE FAMILY

Dir. Daniela Kantor

18' / 2018

This film gives a voice to three of the many female domestic workers in South Africa. It explores their struggles and ambitions, and considers the complicated nature of their relationship with their employers and their own families. Their hard work will hopefully provide a better life for the next generation.





## TWO'S COMPANY

Dir. Siddharth Karthikeyan

18' / 2018

'Two's Company' is a humorous and endearing look into the shared lives of Mary, a 59-year-old woman with learning difficulties, and Myrna, her carer of ten years. The film traces the week before Mary's big stage performance at the Acton Carnival - a feat that would not have been possible for her ten years ago.



## BURIAL SERVICES

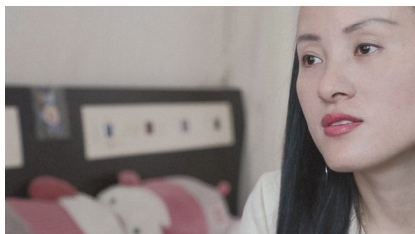
Dir. Livia Langers

15' / 2018

The Shetland Islands, a subarctic archipelago of Scotland, are home to over 70 burial grounds. Set against the dramatic backdrop of the Islands' otherworldly landscapes, 'Burial Services' provides snapshots of the everyday lives of three gravediggers. Each offer reflections, both pragmatic and profound, upon their unusual livelihood.



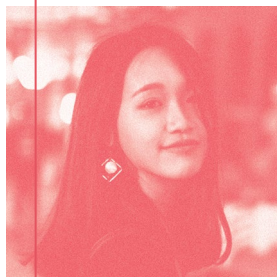




## THE KINGDOM OF MEN

Dir. Yiqi Liu  
23' / 2018

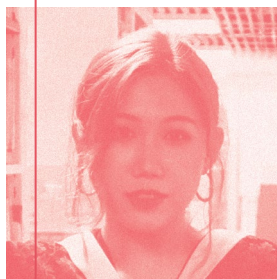
Yan and Hua are sisters, both of their families have strong preferences for sons. With only two daughters, Yan and her husband are eager to have a son. Pregnant at the time of filming, the question on everyone's mind is: will she have a son this time?



## MY FAMILY'S TREE

Dir. Yuyao Lu  
20' / 2018

This documentary is the story of a Chaoshan family, focusing on Jun, the third and youngest daughter in the family. Chaoshan district has a patriarchal culture and a serious preference for male children, which has always influenced the way Jun has experienced the world. Jun's world was broken after she found out her father was having an affair, hoping to have more sons. This film takes viewers on a journey with Jun as she meets with her family members to uncover and address this unfortunate family story.



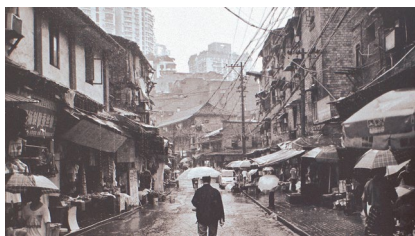
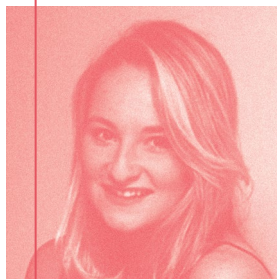


## THE BEE PEOPLE

Dir. Lauren Maxey

14' / 2018

'The Bee People' follows two characters who work in the world of wild and farmed bees, introducing the pressures they face. Bex, a conservation officer for a bee charity, records sightings of bees, monitoring the endangered species. Grant introduces us to his social experiment of raising friendly, hygienic, productive queens.

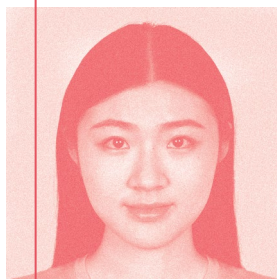


## THE VANISHING CITY

Dir. Landshali Nie

19' / 2018

'The Vanishing City' is a film about a complicated issue. Chongqing is a major city in southwestern China. Over the last three decades much of the area's oldest parts have experienced large-scale redevelopment. Some intellectuals want to preserve them. However, the inhabitants of these areas can't wait to leave. Both of these groups have their reasons for the beliefs that they hold.



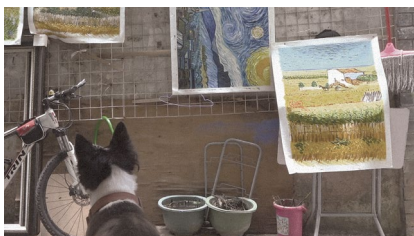
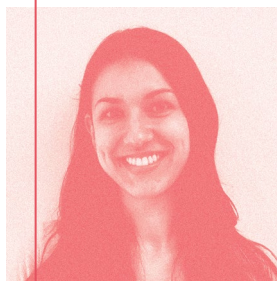


## FAMILY TIES

Dir. Sonia Singh

20' / 2018

'Family Ties' retraces the life and final footsteps of Nazar Singh - an Indian freedom fighter and hard working immigrant - through the eyes of his son and granddaughter. This emotional journey takes us to the villages of Punjab, and reminds us of the great responsibility that comes with our heritage.

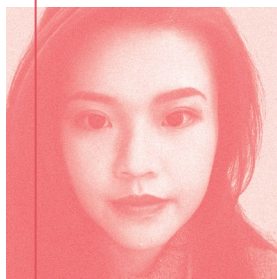


## ON THE WAY TO ORIGINALITY

Dir. Liuyun Zhang

33' / 2018

Dafen Oil Painting Village of Shenzhen in China is a world renowned arts factory for duplicating famous paintings and producing commercial paintings. Since 2008, Shenzhen's government has been encouraging a transformation, inspiring the village to be more oriented towards creativity and originality. Chen and Yang are both painters who work in the Dafen oil painting village. Since the transformation efforts, Chen has become an original artist in his own right. Meanwhile, Yang dreams of producing his own original work.



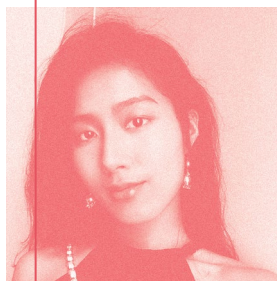


## PAY FOR YOUR OPPORTUNITY

Dir. Minxu Zhu

19' / 2018

'Pay For Your Opportunity' is about employment inequality and labour exploitation, focusing on disabled people in a Chinese factory in Jiangxi, China. Over 600 people there are legally classified as disabled, but overtime and poor working conditions are making things difficult for the disabled workers.



# STUDIO 3

## Cinematic Documentary Storytelling

Dieter Deswarte, Dylan Hewitt,  
Michael Ho

Studio 3 focuses on issue-based narrative documentary. With creativity and skill our 2017/18 students told engaging, powerful stories from all around the world. From the loneliness epidemic in the UK to women's rights in Morocco. From the overwhelming pressures on young Chinese students to a tiny South Pacific island facing climate change disaster. We encourage our students to discover their voice through experimentation and constant practice. In doing so we hope they will push at the boundaries of the documentary form and find new and innovative ways to tell stories that resonate with global audiences.

Dieter Deswarte



## DISCONNECTED

Dir. Alice Aedy

15' / 2018

1 in 4 young people in the UK report feeling lonely some or all of the time. An answer phone machine was set up where young people across the country could leave anonymous voicemails talking about their experiences. 'Disconnected' is a short documentary shot on 16mm film which confronts us with disarmingly honest testimonies and explores a world in which we are connected, but more isolated than ever.

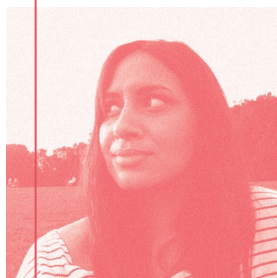


## CALL ME RHUBARB

Dir. Anupreet Boparai

16' / 2018

For over forty years, Rhubarb has spent his days bringing joy and laughter to children and adults alike. 'Call Me Rhubarb' offers viewers a glimpse into his colourful world and the chance to find out more about the man behind the mask.





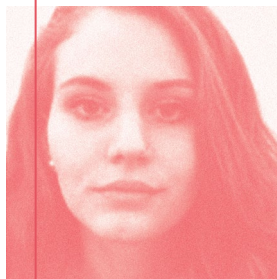


## SOME KIND OF BOND

Dir. Chiara Cavarzan

24' / 2018

'Some Kind of Bond' delves into the story of the people you might meet in the cemetery of a small town in the North East of Italy. The film explores how different people deal with loss, grief and death, and the role that the graveyards play in such matters.



## STONE'S SOUL

Dir. Chuqi Chen

18' / 2018

He Guo has been an ink slab sculptor for 10 years. This meticulous, methodical film shows the magic behind this strange and specialised craft, following the sculpture process from start to finish. As Guo works, he tells his own story at the same time, slowly revealing a introspective artisan with a deep consideration for his craft.



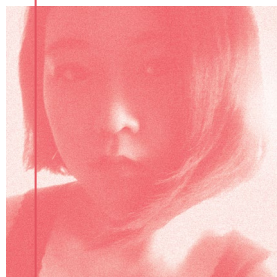


## BECAUSE OF LOVE

Dir. Ziqian Cong

11' / 2018

"People are born and they will die." This touching, personal short film exists in memory of the filmmaker's grandparents' love story following the grandfather's death two years ago. Since then, the grandmother has lived on her own and she misses her husband every day. Her lonely life is an example of that experienced by elderly people the world over who have loved and lost.

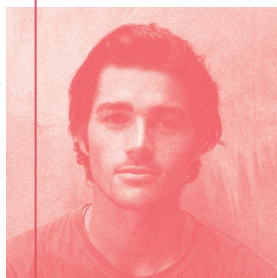


## THE SINKING NATION

Dir. Jack Harries

12' / 2018

'The Sinking Nation' is a short documentary about the impending threat of sea-level rise to the small and remote island of Kiribati in the Pacific Ocean. The film features David Katoatau, an affable weightlifter and unlikely climate activist from Kiribati. We explore the complex issues of climate change, religion and mass migration.





## EMPTY NESTERS

Dir. Bidan Hou  
22' / 2018

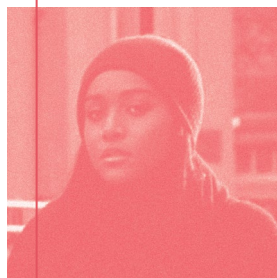
'Empty Nesters' is a film about life in a village where there are no young people. Only the elderly live there and life is tough as they must work to earn money. The director hopes the film will raise awareness about the modern phenomenon of the elderly living alone in China.



## BUILDING BABYLON

Dir. Alizee Jean-Baptiste  
15' / 2018

To protest against the construction of a highway that will result in the destruction of a forest in Strasbourg, France, several men decide to occupy the land illegally. They create a ZAD, a term used to describe a militant occupation intended to physically blockade a development project. In this forest, they find what society could not give them: a space to be themselves, a community, a sense of belonging, and a home. This film takes a journey through the ZAD. Travelling from one Zadist to another, it reveals what makes the ZAD the unique place it is today.

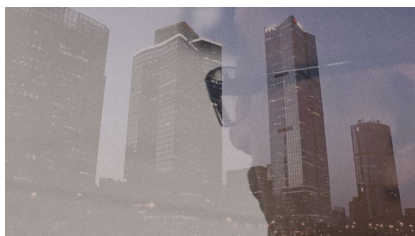




## DEAR MOM

Dir. Juanyu Men  
19' / 2018

'Dear Mom' is a touching personal documentary in the form of a letter from the Chinese filmmaker to her "tiger mom" detailing the pressures that were put on her as a child. It displays the alienation, social pressure and loneliness behind the culture in which the filmmaker was brought up and the peculiar kind of love that exist between this mother and daughter.



## BEIJING DREAM

Dir. He Ren  
20' / 2018

Reality or dream? Small hometown or big city? Blind dates or waiting for Ms. Right? Qin Hu is a man caught between his dream of living in Beijing, and moving back to his boring hometown, where his family's desire is for him to marry. What decision will he make in the end?



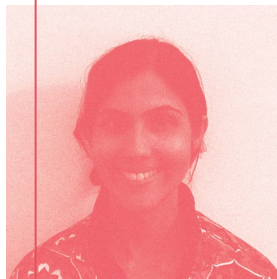


## THE NEW YORK GANGES

Dir. Priya Shah

14' / 2018

'The New York Ganges' is a portrait film about a bay on the outskirts of Queens and Brooklyn where many eastern New Yorkers go daily to worship the mother of the seas - or just to bathe, fish and catch a breath of fresh air. With views of flights lifting off from JFK international airport, this beach serves as a reminder of the motherland.

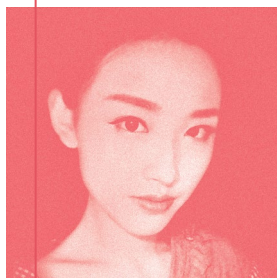


## THE MAKING OF A KING

Dir. Zhang Shitong

25' / 2018

'The Making of a King' follows the everyday life of three drag kings, and how they explore their inner identity and sexuality through drag. Adam is a well-known drag king in London, while Sammy is a young trans man, and Max is bisexual. They have found a sense of belonging in the form of the drag king lifestyle.





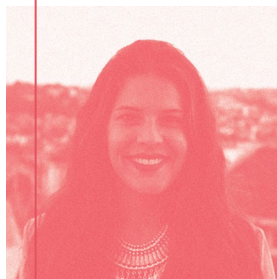


## FANTASIA WARRIORS

Dir. Yzza Slaoui

21' / 2018

'Fantasia Warriors' depicts the struggles of a young Moroccan woman, Halima Bahraoui, as she strives to take part in Fantasia, a traditional equestrian performance in Morocco that is exclusively open to men. Her struggle for the chance to take part in something she is well qualified for speaks of wider limitations in the country, and women's efforts to overcome them.



## A BETTER LIFE

Dir. Yu Song

25' / 2018

"Life was miserable at first, it truly was." This film tells the story of a family who migrated from a village to the city a decade ago. It seems they have started a better life in the city, but in fact they are facing the same problems that thousands of families face in China. Multiple generations live in the same home, and even the elderly have to work. Simply getting by proves a struggle.







## SO FAR, SO CLOSE

Dir. Han Xie

18' / 2018

This is the story of two elders who are going to move from the countryside to the city. They have been living in their old house for more than twenty years, but the date of moving out is growing close. Life was all peace and quiet until the demolition project was launched. As the deadline approaches, they live under the pressure of demolition, and all the while the clock is ticking.



## GAOKAO

Dir. Xinyi Xu

20' / 2018

In China's Hebei Province, more than 400,000 students take part in the College Entrance Examination ("Gaokao") each year, and only about 0.06% can go to the top two universities. Most of those students come from the super high schools in a small city called Hengshui. The film is about the students' life and the expectations they receive in Hengshui No.1 and No.2 High School, the most famous high schools in China.



# STUDIO 4

## UCL 360 - Immersive Factual Storytelling

Dinah Lammiman, Jayisha Patel,  
Rafael Lino, Anatole Sloan,  
Jeremiah Ambrose, Axel Drioli

Studio 4 launched in September 2017 on a wave of creative energy around Virtual Reality. UCL was one of the first to embark on a training programme around this fast emerging genre, the very nature of which brought its own challenges. Throughout this first year, the course has had to adapt to continuing developments in the VR world. Straight from the cutting rooms of the best VR production houses, our tutors have mentored students on this journey, while also encouraging them to learn to teach themselves, to equip them for this constantly evolving medium and marketplace.

From day one they filmed with 360 cameras, mastered spatial audio, learnt the basics of coding and games engines, and explored immersive storytelling alongside a continuing programme of industry engagement. The results are some exciting and ambitious VR experiences, presented here, two of which featured in this year's Open City Documentary Festival. The VR story has changed course once again. The hype has gone a little quiet. But immersive storytelling is here to stay, changing the way we interpret and represent our world. And UCL Studio 4 graduates are shaping that future, with many of them now working full time in the Virtual Reality field.

Dinah Lammiman



## AMAZIGH

Dir. Zllan Su, Yinjie Yang, Ning Zhong

8' / 2018

'Amazigh' follows a group of Berber people - an ethnic group indigenous to North Africa - who have been forced to leave their homeland. This unique and beautiful experience tells the story of Salah, a man who has grown up nomadically and self-sufficiently in the Western Sahara. As global warming has affected the area, he and his family have had to leave the desert and build a new life, with new challenges and constraints and a loss of the freedom they had depended on to date.



## INSTABILITY

Dir. Jiawei Chen, Yining Li, Hongmin Tan

9' / 2018

Chuanjie Zhang is one of the hundreds of thousands of migrant workers in Beijing whose home has been demolished in recent years. Brought in as a labourer to help build the facilities for the 2008 Olympics, he finds himself now no longer needed. From within the ruin and rubble, he tells his story, talking about his troubled past and his hopes for the future, and why he still has hope for the city that has seemingly abandoned him. "They didn't just take my home, they took my memories."





## ISOLATION

Dir. Lucas Zhou, Effy Hou  
8' / 2018

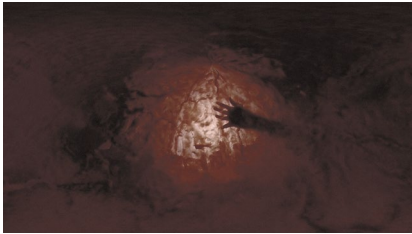
As a girl describes her experience of depression, she relays how she has come to cope with this debilitating illness, talking about the strategies she has adopted and how her thinking about it has changed. Shot around some of London's most well known landmarks, the film reveals the realities of life within a major city, showing how it is entirely possible to feel alone even when surrounded by people.



## LOST AT HOME

Dir. Kyra Li, Yvonne Tao  
8' / 2018

"Have you ever been separated from a loved one for a long time?" 'Lost at Home' tells the story of Ding, a seventeen-year-old who has been living away from his parents for most of his life, struggling with the distance. Placing Ding's contemporary narration within places from his past, the film bridges the gap between his childhood memories and his present troubles, evocatively examining the emotional toil that displacement can take on a child.

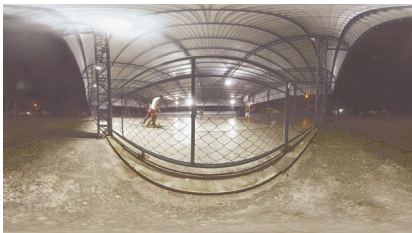


## NOWHERE

Dir. Carolina Marconi, Ruogu Huang, Jiawei Gui

7' / 2018

An inventive, involving project, 'Nowhere' places the viewer inside the womb, using vibrant, arresting imagery and dynamic spatial sound in order to uniquely replicate this perspective. As the narrative develops, a twist is revealed. A drama that is heard playing out outside of the body's interior walls changes the viewer's understanding of what they are undergoing and what it might mean.



## STAND TALL

Dir. Jiajun Jiang, Yuchuan Lyu, Zhi Li

7' / 2018

"All my life I have been trying to prove I am a man of capability." This film profiles Juninho, a Brazilian futsal coach and football fanatic born with a disability heavily limiting the use of his limbs. Following Juninho's struggles to live a regular life and engage with the sport he loves, 'Stand Tall' is an uplifting personal portrait giving insight into how even the greatest of challenges can be overcome, given enough dedication and strength.



## STARS ON THE GROUND

Dir. Daniel Li, Bohan Gu, Hanwen Zhang

13' / 2018

Using the filmmaker's father—a Chinese factory employee working in Africa—as a starting point, this visually astounding investigative film looks at Chinese owned and operated mines in Nigeria, interviewing workers and employees, surveying the situation there, and exploring the complex dynamics that emerge. Workers spend their lives away from their families and the work is hard, dangerous and all-consuming, yet the dividends are great. But who benefits from this ever-expanding industry, and what are the costs?



## SYNAESTHETE

Dir. Ruyi Meer, Yunlong Zhang

8' / 2018

"I taste colour." 'Synaesthete' looks at the condition of synaesthesia, also known as 'coloured hearing.' A way of experiencing the world for which there is no real language, this innovative and engaging film uses hand-drawn animation and 3D imagery to take viewers into the world of the synaesthete, hearing about the experiences of those who have it, whilst visualising the stimulating sensation of being able to see and hear colour. Synaesthesia can be both a blessing and a curse for those that experience it, this film reveals.





## TRACKING

Dir. Jinjing Hu, Yihang Xu, Yanqiu Li

9' / 2018

With rare access to Mihajlo Popesku, a former Head of Engineering at Cambridge Analytica, 'Tracking' is an experimental documentary about information and its use and misuse. In between revealing interviews with Popesku, the film travels through virtual worlds, visualising how advertisers, politicians and platforms use data in order to exploit and manipulate, exploring how easily, and how effectively, internet users can be targeted and influenced. "Data is power, whoever has the data has the power."



## UNESCAPABLE

Dir. Bijia Zhou, Ye Chen, Xinzhi Shi

8' / 2018

This documentary looks into the issue of 'child brides' in China, where underage girls are pushed into marriage, sometimes when they are only 11 or 12 years of age. Hearing the sombre story of one woman who escaped a forced marriage to make a life of her own, this creative, moving film moves through China's breathtaking rural landscapes whilst hearing the dark stories of this antiquated practice that sometimes continues to take place within them.

Image: The Ashes of Water (Antonia Perelló, 2017, 10')

## MA Ethnographic & Documentary Film (Practical)

This unique practical MA programme is based out of UCL but run by leading film practitioners, offering high-quality practice-based learning in a top level university research environment.

Offers the choice of 4 studios (Cinematic Non-Fiction, Broadcast Documentary, Cinematic Documentary Storytelling, and UCL 360 Immersive Factual Storytelling (VR/AR))

Students will produce 3 non-fiction films in various modes, developing a diverse portfolio of work, before producing a graduation film of 15-25 minutes in length.

Students have their own camera equipment and editing suites year-round, and a dedicated senior mentor guiding them through their final graduation film.

For more information please visit:  
[www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate/taught-degrees/ethnographic-documentary-film-practical-ma](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate/taught-degrees/ethnographic-documentary-film-practical-ma)



Image: China In Ethiopia (Paul Zhou, 2017)

## MFA Creative Documentary (By Practice)

A 2 year MFA providing all the technical and intellectual resources required to not just make outstanding non-fiction moving image, but to discover new ways of looking at the world.

An advanced practical programme that also draws upon broad-based anthropological and critical thinking about the social and cultural world.

Students will leave with a deep practical knowledge of the craft of non-fiction filmmaking, and a mid-length (40mins+) feature documentary film to their name.

Taught by leading filmmakers: directors Sophie Fiennes (*Grace Jones: Bloodlight & Bami*, *The Pervert's Guide to Cinema*), Kim Longinotto (*Salma, Divorce Iranian Style*), and producer Rietje Oord (*The Leader, His Driver and The Driver's Wife*).

For more information please visit:  
[www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate/taught-degrees/creative-documentary-by-practice-mfa](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate/taught-degrees/creative-documentary-by-practice-mfa)





## UCL 360 - Studio 4: Immersive Factual Storytelling (VR/AR)

UCL 360 is the Immersive Factual Storytelling (VR/AR) studio in UCL's MA Ethnographic & Documentary Film – the first course of its kind in the UK, and one of the first in the world.

Provides students with the foundations in immersive factual storytelling formats - teaching filmmaking, spatial sound and post-production techniques for 360° VR.

Offers access to 360° filming equipment throughout the year, alongside introduction to a wide range of the latest VR/AR and other immersive technologies.

Receive training from experts sitting at the heart of this new, fast-moving media sector, and become involved in shaping immersive factual filmmaking for the future

For more information please visit:  
[www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/studying/ma-ethnographic-documentary-film](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/studying/ma-ethnographic-documentary-film)



## UCL Short Courses at the Open City Doc School

Learn the art and craft of non-fiction filmmaking with a short course at the Open City Docs School at UCL.

Led by a variety of leading filmmakers and offered with affordable rates and work-friendly timings, regular short courses are on offer in the following areas:

- practical filmmaking
- self-shooting / directing documentaries
- radio / audio documentary
- film history and theory
- VR / 360° filmmaking / immersive non-fiction
- + our popular summer film school

For more information please visit:  
<https://opencitylondon.com/school/short-courses/>



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# TUTORS

## Michael Stewart (Course Leader, Open City Docs School)

Founder of Open City Documentary Festival and MyStreet Films. He has worked on or produced ten documentaries for Granada (Disappearing World) and the BBC (Everyman, Timewatch).

## Bonnie Rae Brickman (Editing Tutor, MA)

Bonnie is a film and television editor with over 25 years' experience. Her work has screened on television and at film festivals worldwide including Clermont-Ferrand, HotDocs, Open City Documentary Festival, SF Frameline, LA Outfest, BFI Flare and Fringe!, and won various awards including four New York Area Emmy Award Certificates, Underwire's Best Editor Award, and was shortlisted for the Kevin Spacey Foundation Artists of Choice Award.

## Ariadna Fatjo-Vilas (Editing Tutor, MA)

Ariadna is an editor with over 10 years experience in documentaries, fiction and artists films. Her films have played in festivals worldwide (inc. Berlinale, Sundance and Toronto) and have received an Oscar nomination and a BAFTA award, (The Act of Killing), three prizes at Tribeca (Una Noche), and a Grierson nomination (Estate. A Reverie), amongst other accolades. She was nominated for the 2016 Jules Wright Prize for Female Creative Technicians.

## Michael Ho (Editing Tutor, MA)

Michael studied editing at the NFTS. Since graduating, he's cut short films, music videos, both short and long-form documentary for television, as well as working as an assistant editor in TV drama and feature films. He recently directed a short film about his father for BBC4 / BFI - From HK to MK.

## Sandhya Suri (Senior Tutor, MA)

Sandhya is a British-Indian writer/director based in London. Her feature documentary I For India premiered in the Sundance Film Festival, before being released theatrically to critical acclaim. In 2016 she made her first fiction feature Santhosh. Sandhya's latest feature documentary Around India With a Movie Camera has just been released theatrically by the BFI, and she has recently completed her TIFF Short Cuts winning fiction short The Field.

## Richard Alwyn (Senior Tutor, MA)

Specialising in intimate portraits of ordinary people often caught at extraordinary moments in their lives, Richard's films have been shown throughout the world. In 2002 he made his first fiction film for the BBC, the BAFTA nominated Stopping Distance. In 2006, he won the Prix Italia for The Beslan Siege. Recent work includes two trilogies for BBC Four, Catholics and Cathedrals, and a film about the loss of the ability to use language, Speechless.

## Dylan Howitt (Senior Tutor, MA)

Dylan is a filmmaker with many years of experience telling compelling stories from all around the world. He's directed, filmed and edited for: NETFLIX, BBC, ITV, C4, Five, Sky, Discovery, British Council, Christian Aid, and the Open University, amongst others. His recent series for the BBC on contemporary ethics, Matters of Life and Death, was nominated for a BAFTA, as was the children's series Rooted for Channel Five. Out of Thin Air is his first feature film.

## Lasse Johansson (Course Tutor, MA)

Lasse is a self-shooting documentary director and media trainer with a background in fine art and sociology. Apart from making his own independent films Lasse works as a freelance cameraman and editor making films and online content for a variety of charities, non-profit and educational organisations. He also works internationally as a media trainer on projects aiming to empower local voices and media organisations.



### James Price (Course Tutor, MA)

James' films have been shown on the BBC, Channel 4, and More4, in art exhibitions and at film festivals worldwide. James' recent projects include Reading Pepys (Kings College London); Chandigarh Corrections Omissions (Linköping University); Diamond Street, Estuary: Working Lives, and Study for the Estuary (ACE, 2011-present); The Body Adorned (Horniman Museum, 2012-3), and What is Freedom? (Channel 4, 2009).

### Dieter Deswarte (Course Tutor, MA)

Dieter is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and editor based in London. For several years now he has dedicated part of his practice to working with local and international charities and arts organisations, ranging from short documentaries on wildlife conservation projects in Zambia to short animations for research on disability related bullying in the UK. His most recent film St Helena, An End to Isolation was broadcast on BBC News.

### Lucy Sandys-Winsch (Course Tutor)

Lucy is a multi award-nominated director, series producer and executive producer, with a very strong track record across landmark documentary strands such as Channel 4's 'Cutting Edge' and BBC's 'Modern Times'. As well as having been nominated for Griersons and BAFTAs, Lucy has been on judging juries for the Griersons, Student RTS Awards and the Sheffield Documentary Festival New Talent Pitch.

### Dinah Lammiman (Senior VR Tutor, MA)

For many years Dinah was a senior broadcast journalist for the BBC. Latterly she's worked extensively in immersive media, specializing in binaural and other sound concepts for museum and visitor attractions (including the National Trust, the Royal Collection, Oslo's Fram Museum and SS Great Britain), alongside producing innovative mobile phone games and creating installations for VR/360 experiences.

### Jayisha Patel (Senior VR Tutor, MA)

Jayisha is an award winning filmmaker who works at the intersection of cinematic film and VR. Her films (A Paradise, India's Wushu Warriors, Notes to my Father VR, Circle) have premiered at festivals such as Berlinale, TIFF, Sundance, Locarno and New York Film Festival amongst others, and won various awards. Her works embody an intersectional female gaze and seek to give a platform to women of color fighting stereotypes, in bold and unconventional ways.

### Jeremiah Ambrose (VR Tutor, MA)

Working in the areas of digital art, media futures and experimental practice, Jeremiah's practice-based PhD looks at emergent narratives and interaction aesthetics in VR and interactive 360° film.

### Axel Drioli (VR Tutor, MA)

Axel is a freelance Immersive audio designer and producer, who has worked on international 360 and VR projects. Some of his recent clients are Mixed Immersion, Visualise, Picture This Production, 1.618 digital, Pebble Studios and more.

### Anatole Sloan (VR Tutor, MA)

Anatole is a co-founder and managing director at Zoya, a Soho based film production company specialising in creative advertising and digital content.

### Rafael Lino (VR Tutor, MA)

Rafael is a VR post-production specialist, currently freelancing and working on projects for clients such as UNESCO and Tate Modern. Previously he was a part of film production collective LUMATERA, and was involved with pioneering 3D360 capture methods at Visualise.



# THE ART OF NON-FICTION

4<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup>  
September 2019

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Richard Alwyn, Lasse Johansson, Sandhya Suri, James Price, Juliet Brown, Lucy Sandys-Winsch, Dylan Howitt, Dieter Deswarte, Dinah Lammiman, Jayisha Patel, Rafael Lino, Anatole Sloan, Jeremiah Ambrose, Axel Drioli, Bonnie Rae Brickman, Ariadna Fatjo-Vilas, Michael Ho, Sophie Fiennes, Kim Longinotto, Riete Oord

### Mentors

Dylan Howitt, Richard Alwyn, Sandhya Suri, Grant Gee, Vanessa Stockley, Simon Chambers, Emily James, Sophie Fiennes, Eva Weber, Jeff Daniel Silva, Christopher Hird, Lucy Sandys-Winsch, Liz Mermin, Marc Schmidt, Xialou Guo, Gareth Evans

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