



SVA Galleries
gallery@sva.edu

10th Annual Thesis Showcase

Presented by SVA MFA Social Documentary Film

Thursday, April 1 – Sunday, April 4, 2021

Online: galleries.sva.edu

School of Visual Arts (SVA) and **MFA Social Documentary Film (SocDoc)** present the “10th Annual Thesis Showcase,” a screening series of the documentary work-in-progress thesis films of the class of 2020, which graduated last May. Screenings will take place entirely online from Thursday, April 1, through Sunday, April 4, at galleries.sva.edu/socdocshowcase10.

In celebrating the program’s 10th class of graduates, department chair Maro Chermayeff says, “These films inspire and amaze us—especially as they began their films before the pandemic and finished them in this newfound isolation.”

The thesis showcase exhibits the work of **Veronique Engel, Adam Evans, Catherine Finsness, Yuby Hernandez, Keliang Li, Hansen Lin, Oxana Onipko, Rohan Rao, Reed Smith, Ben Wang, Shuming Zhang, Zoey Zhang** and **Weixin Zhuang**. Class of 2020 graduates not screening their films include **Mark Crowell, Jamie Deredorian-Delia, Shiqin Gao, Ao Li** and **Cheng Yang**.

The films range in subject, from young sisters in a cloistered convent to a one-horse western town reenacting its storied past; from a brilliant professor and the indecipherable language on an ancient stone to the inexplicable loss for words when losing one’s own mother; from domestic violence in Russia to a traditional handloom artist in India weaving a story of hope and aspiration in a world where he is deemed “untouchable.” Rounding out the films are the stories of the Jamaican youth synchronized swim team, a Chinatown barbershop’s last day, New York City street musicians, a youth food justice organization, a Chinese soccer team for “left-behind” children, “freegans” combing New York City garbage for usable items, a sensitive portrait of a dominatrix and a pair of wheelchair-bound dancers. The works are stunning, informative and emotionally resonant.

Four of the films, ***Wata Dawtas***, directed by **Veronique Engel**; ***Sisters of Summit***, directed by **Catherine Finsness**; ***Sweet Summer Tangelos***, directed by **Keliang Li**; and ***Three Threads***, directed by **Rohan Rao**, have additionally been honored with the Showcase Spotlight, which highlights those films that are primed for public exhibition in the near future. These filmmakers have the opportunity to share their films with a group of documentary industry advisors who can potentially help further their projects—and careers.

All films will be streaming throughout the entire four days of the thesis showcase. In addition to the online screenings, the department will host four live Q&A events with the filmmakers, faculty and special guests. All events are free and open to the public. Find RSVP and more information at galleries.sva.edu/socdocshowcase10.

The schedule of the **Filmmaker Q&As** is below.



Thursday April 1, 7:00pm ET

Waste Is My Passion, Director: **Yuby Hernandez**

The Last Cut, Director: **Ben Wang**

Tie Up, Director: **Weixin Zhuang**

Friday, April 2, 7:00pm ET

Mountain's Heart, Director: **Hansen Lin**

Into the Black and Blue Forest, Director: **Oxana Onipko**

Rebels Against Hunger, Director: **Reed Smith**

**** SHOWCASE SPOTLIGHT ****

Saturday April 3, 10:00am ET

Wata Dawtas, Director: **Veronique Engel**

Sisters of Summit, Director: **Catherine Finsness**

Sweet Summer Tangelos, Director: **Keliang Li**

Three Threads, Director: **Rohan Rao**

Saturday April 3, 7:00pm ET

The Ballad of Tombstone, AZ, Director: **Adam Evans**

Dancing Inward, Director: **Shuming Zhang**

Busker, Director: **Zoey Zhang**

The MFA in Social Documentary Film at SVA is two-year, full-time graduate filmmaking program, and a part of the most active documentary film community in the world. Students work directly with accomplished filmmakers who are faculty, mentors and collaborators, giving students the benefit of their expertise. MFA Social Documentary Film fosters filmmakers who are technologically and artistically assured. Students make many films throughout the program; each allows them opportunities to experiment and hone their craft with support, guidance and critique. They are introduced to the industry through an unparalleled faculty of active, award-winning filmmakers, as well as through internships, guest speakers, film festivals, screenings and other events. The department also works to foster a direct line into the production community that will be their best network after graduation. For more information visit mfasocdoc.sva.edu.

School of Visual Arts has been a leader in the education of artists, designers and creative professionals for more than seven decades. With a faculty of distinguished working professionals, a dynamic curriculum and an emphasis on critical thinking, SVA is a catalyst for innovation and social responsibility. Comprising 6,000 students at its Manhattan campus and 38,000 alumni in 128 countries, SVA also represents one of the most influential artistic communities in the world. For more information about the College's 31 undergraduate and graduate degree programs and Continuing Education division, visit sva.edu.