



Graduate student research creation at Hexagram Concordia

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“Hearing in the Dark,” a talk by Alexis Williams

“Rhizomatic narratives: social activism, media ecology and cultures of resistance” a talk by Victor Arroyo.

by CHERYL GLADU on APRIL 1, 2014 · LEAVE A COMMENT

Tuesday, 8 April 2014 at 12:00-13:00
Hexagram Resource Centre EV 11.705
Concordia University, Montréal



Description: The city is where social and cultural exclusion coexist in constant tension with uneven social representation of the marginalized, and Montreal is not the exception. Social activists gather every week in the city, reshaping the public sphere. These are the kind of phenomena my research is concerned with, and from where my research interests emerged. I’m primarily looking at the processes behind the construction of cultures of resistance and how the political gesture of documenting them helps to make visible the invisible. One of those invisible aspects is the always-present issue of exploitation in social documentary, an issue I’m very concerned with. How can I construct a story about human social action, exploring their social and political dimensions, their beliefs and norms, not using the conventional documentary form, but rather thinking about the documentary form as a response to the confusion of the world with its spectacle, as a critique of the conditions of production of the leisure industry and its politics of representation?

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It is not uncommon for activists and documentary filmmakers to make a film hoping to build awareness, however, we should look closely at this assumption, underpinning the hopes of social activists, social workers and documentary filmmakers: That if people know, they will act. The trajectory from exposure to action is not seamless. As we all know, media, in our already crowded media landscape, is not a transparent delivery system for testimony. A constellation of factors contributes to the efficacy of a testimony. Representation and iconographic strategies should make us reflect as much about the testimonial encounter as the testimony itself. How can my research produce truthful representation of a given culture of resistance, attaining as well, rigorous theoretical knowledge about their social and political dimensions?

My research proposal builds around these questions, with help of the model of rhizome proposed by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in their book *A Thousand Plateaus*. They wrote that “A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, inter being, intermezzo” (Deleuze, Guattari. 1987, pag.7). A rhizomatic narrative allows and encourages to understand a problematic from different perspectives. It is a way of looking at the world, a tool to use when mapping one’s unique experiences in and of the world.

Bio: An experimental filmmaker, working with documentary filmmaking, video-art and video installation. He was born in 1977 in Mexico, from the marriage between Reynaldo Arroyo and Leticia Avila. Lives in Montreal, Canada, happily married to Angie since 2009. Leonardo-Kai, his son, born in December 2011, calls him Papa every morning.

www.victor-arroyo.com

Tagged with: *film* • *MFA* • *research-creation*

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