2014

Media-Centered: More Docs to Watch

Winifred Fordham Metz

University of North Carolina- Chapel Hill, freddie@email.unc.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>

Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Metz, Winifred Fordham (2014) "Media-Centered: More Docs to Watch," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 26: Iss. 5, Article 40.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6874>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

Endnotes

1. **Maynard Smith, John.** *The Theory of Evolution.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
2. **Palmer, Douglas,** and the **Natural History Museum** (London, England). *Evolution: The Story of Life.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009.
3. **Benton, Michael J.** *The History of Life: A Very Short Introduction.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2008.
4. **Zimmer, Carl.** *The Tangled Bank: An Introduction to Evolution.* Greenwood Village, CO: Roberts and Company, 2014.*
5. **Fortey, Richard.** *Fossils: The History of Life.* 4th Ed., New York, NY: Sterling, 2009.*
6. **Carroll, Sean B.** *The Making of the Fittest: DNA and the Ultimate Forensic Record of Evolution.* New York: W.W. Norton, 2006.*
7. **Carroll, Sean B.** *Endless Forms Most Beautiful: The New Science of EvoDevo and the Making of the Animal Kingdom.* New York: W.W. Norton, 2005.*
8. **Carroll, Sean B.** *Remarkable Creatures: Epic Adventures in the Search for the Origins of Species.* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009.*
9. **Gould, Stephen Jay.** *Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and Nature of History.* New York: W.W. Norton, 1989.
10. **Maynard Smith, John.** "Taking a Chance on Evolution." Review of *Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and Nature of History*, by **Stephen Jay Gould**. *New York Review of Books*, May 14, 1992. <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1992/may/14/taking-a-chance-on-evolution/>
11. **Knoll, Andrew H.** *Life on a Young Planet: The First Three Billion Years of Evolution on Earth.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003.*
12. **Shubin, Neil.** *Your Inner Fish: A Journey into the 3.5-Billion-Year History of the Human Body.* New York: Pantheon Books, 2008.*
13. **Dawkins, Richard.** *The Greatest Show on Earth: The Evidence for Evolution.* New York: Free Press, 2009.
14. **Coyne, Jerry A.** *Why Evolution Is True.* New York: Viking, 2009.*
15. **Smith, Cameron.** *The Fact of Evolution.* Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2011.
16. **De Duve, Christian.** *Life Evolving: Molecules, Mind, and Meaning.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.*
17. **De Duve, Christian,** and **Neil Patterson.** *Genetics of Original Sin: The Impact of Natural Selection on the Future of Humanity.* Foreword by **Edward O. Wilson**. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010.
18. **Conway Morris, Simon.** *Life's Solution: Inevitable Humans in a Lonely Universe.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003.*
19. **Meinesz, Alexandre.** *How Life Began: Evolution's Three Geneses.* Translated by **Daniel Simberloff**. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008.*

Editor's note: An asterisk () denotes a title selected for *Resources for College Libraries*.

Media-Centered — More Docs to Watch

Column Editor: **Winifred Fordham Metz** (Media Librarian & Head, Media Resources Center, House Undergraduate Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Phone: 919-962-4099) <freddie@email.unc.edu> <http://www.lib.unc.edu/house/mrc>

Column Editor's Note: *The use of media in the classroom is ubiquitous, especially with the ready availability of streaming online. Visual theses are on the rise. Academic interest in and classroom use of film and global cinema continues to grow at an exponential rate. Resultantly, the importance of a rich and varied media resources collection is essential to academic institutions, public libraries, and K-12 media centers. It takes a lot of work, development, and research to maintain and grow a collection like this. Resources that aid in this process are invaluable... — WM*

Now several editions in to this column, I have touched on many elements of collection development and acquisitions for Media ranging from pedagogy to copyright as well as offering nuts and bolts information on streaming media, distribution and professional development organizations. Last time, I offered the first of a multi-edition article outlining short lists of documentaries to watch. All of them have sparked considerable conversations at screenings and festivals I have attended and many of them will find resonance in our collection at UNC. Loathe to assign a hierarchy to films that all offer something unique, important or memorable — here in no particular order are more docs to watch.

La Maison De La Radio

Renowned French director **Nicolas Philibert** (Être et avoir) delivers a quirky and thoroughly enjoyable documentary of a behind-the-airwaves look at Radio France. Evoking his trademark cinematic style, inquisitive lens, and thoughtful (albeit at a considerably amped up speed) pacing, **Philibert** deliberately sets out to present a "day-in-the-life-of" Radio France. And he does just that; in a fluid whirlwind hour and a half we see a richly composed approximation of a day (and night) at the station.

One by one, we're introduced (without caption) to the key players, producers, writers, guests and crew that create the shows and broadcasts for Radio France. What makes this film so engrossing is that we're not left to suffer a stream of talking heads discussing what they do for Radio France, we see them in action: in their sound booths, at the drafting table, in planning sessions, speaking with their sources, editing their segments, getting feedback from their producers, singing, taping, and interviewing guests.

One of the underlying strengths of **Philibert's** work here is that he balances action with moments of silence — for example, the dead air at the producer's table when some-

one suggests they interview **Justin Beiber**, speaks volumes... Other scenes rely entirely on visuals and conversations in concert and sometimes to comedic effect as with **Frédéric Lodéon**, the fellow who runs a classical music show and is shown buried amongst stacks and stacks of CDs with just his head peaking out for the interview.

Ultimately, **Philibert** has expertly stitched together many hours of close observation of the intensely busy, productive world that is Radio France, providing an often interior and reflective piece albeit one with moments of frenetic effervescence.

La Maison de la Radio Director: **Nicolas Philibert** 2013 Country: France. Available on DVD or streaming through Kino Lorber edu: <http://bit.ly/1pi34AG>.

Evolution of a Criminal

Filmmaker **Darius Monroe** has an extremely important first-hand story to tell about the far-reaching effects of poverty on American youth. In this compelling personal narrative, **Monroe** charts the unlikely path and resulting consequences of one very ill-conceived decision of his youth. How does a well-liked 16-year-old go from honor student to convicted felon overnight? Overwhelmed by his family's mounting financial problems, **Darius** and two of his friends planned a robbery. Leaving school midday, they drove to the suburbs of Houston and held-up a neighborhood bank. **Monroe** and his friends were caught, he was tried as an adult, and he ended up serving three years of a five-year sentence in prison.

Many years later, after earning a masters degree from NYU's Graduate Film program, **Monroe** experienced a panic attack in line at a bank and realized he needed to go back to Houston and apologize. Not quite sure how to get started, he decided to turn the camera on himself on his return to Houston, yielding this unflinching, and intimate documentary. What we see, is a dramatic reenactment of the events leading up to the robbery and **Monroe's** incarceration — quite effectively interspersed with archival footage and illuminating interviews with members of his family, old friends, witnesses from the bank and the case prosecutor.

Evolution of a Criminal Director: **Darius Clark Monroe** 2014 Country: USA. For more info, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/evolutionofacriminal>.

Rich Hill

Filmmaker **Tracy Doz Tragos** grew up visiting her grandparents in Rich Hill as a child. Years later, she returns with her cousin **Andrew Droz Palermo** and a camera to capture —

continued on page 71

8 Library Services That Will... Make You Smile.

- 1) **Publishing Sources** - Almost 200,000 at our disposal
- 2) **New Title Selection Plan** - Immediate notification
- 3) **Electronic Ordering** - Simple online ordering system
- 4) **Early Release Program** - Immediate availability guarantee
- 5) **Cataloging** - We do the busy-work for you
- 6) **Comprehensive Reporting** - Up-to-the-minute order status
- 7) **Duplicate Order Alert** - We're on guard, you avoid hassles
- 8) **Paperback Reinforcement & Binding** - Avoid expensive wear & obsolescence

For more details, visit:
emery-pratt.com

"Things always go smoothly with Emery-Pratt. Their people are knowledgeable, and always provide friendly, rapid service."

*Cameron University
Lawton, OK*

Emery-Pratt

Dependability. Reliability. Smileability.

1966 W M 21, Owosso, MI 48867-9317
Phone: 800 248-3887 • Fax: 800 523-6379
emery-pratt.com

Media-Centered from page 70

verite — the stories of three young boys living in this small rural American town; **Andrew, Harley and Appachey**. **Palermo's** cinematic eye offers a dreamily lyrical visage strongly juxtaposed against these young boys' realities — childhoods deeply affected by poverty, their parent's drug addictions and mental health issues, abandonment, incarceration as well as domestic violence and child abuse.

Tragos' approach lends an amazingly organic-level intimacy, allowing us to see these stories unfold without external judgment or social commentary — something that undoubtedly works to pull us in almost immediately. Filmed over the course of several months, that time yields a fairly full and deeply complex portrayal of each of the boys' lives — and we're hooked; we see struggle, poverty, pain and loss — but we also see hope.

Rich Hill Director(s): Tracy Droz Tragos and Andrew Droz Palermo 2014 Country: USA. Available on DVD via Passion River Films (www.passionriver.com).

Light Fly, Fly High

Thulasi Ekanandam believes fervently that she was born to be a boxer. As a former Dalit in India, society demands that she remain at the bottom of this social system — accept

a husband, marry quickly and have children and quite thoroughly demur to her husband's family. Instead, she chose to run away from home at age 14 to escape an arranged marriage to a much older man and follow her passion of boxing. Seeing marriage as a "jail life," **Thulasi** refused to compromise, trading in her sari and bangles for boxing gloves and headgear. Thulasi — and many young women like her who are struggling to carve some social and financial freedom — look to fighting in the ring as a means of achieving their independence.

No doubt a gifted boxer, **Thulasi** ranked 3rd in India for her weight division, but immoral coaches, demands from boxing officials asking for endless bribes and unexpected injuries in the ring continually stand in her way of success. Here, directors **Hofseth** and **Østigaard** poignantly deliver **Thulasi's** struggles inside and outside the ring with a serene visual precision expertly charged with sparks of humor and despair that are poignantly reflective of both **Thulasi's** personality and her plight.

Light Fly, Fly High Directors: **Susann Østigaard, Beathe Hofseth** 2013 Country: Netherlands. Available on DVD via Women Make Movies (wmm.com).

Open Heart

Eight Rwandan children, including six-year-old Angelique, have been approved for life-saving heart surgery at Salam Center, the one hospital on the African continent per-

forming free cardiac care. But their parents aren't allowed on the 2,500-mile trip to the Sudan. And if the children die, their bodies must remain there. Rwandan cardiologist **Dr. Emanuel Rusingiza** works with **Dr. Gino Strada** to save children suffering severe cardiac complications stemming from untreated strep throat and rheumatic fever (an epidemic affecting more than 13 million in Africa today).

Here, director **Kief Davidson** forges a new path in health-issue advocacy docs, exchanging sanctimony and didacticism for emotion and visceral, pulse-quickenning drama. And, his cinematic eye and narrative mind craft a much larger story than one would imagine possible in a scant 40 minutes. Much like the cardiac surgeons he presents, **Davidson's** documentary is one of precision and compelling detail. Surgery scenes, while graphic, work to underscore the amazing resiliency of the heart and the child to which it belongs.

Open Heart Director: **Kief Davidson** 2013 Country (openheartfilm.com/).

Pablo's Winter

Former Almadén mercury miner **Pablo** spends his halcyon days cursing, kvetching and chain-smoking to the chagrin of his wife and doctor. For centuries, Almadén was home to one of Spain's major mercury mines. Now closed for many years, the town and its former miners like **Pablo** continue to struggle. Direc-

continued on page 72

Media-Centered from page 71

tor **Chico Pereira's** gorgeous black, white and gray documentary debut exudes a lush vigor and richness belied by the economic state of Almaden and the advancing years of many of its residents.

Dry-witted drama unfolds over not-so-quiet conversations and many a Marlboro in this laconic observational character study with a protagonist, who at first, second and third glance remains singularly off-putting. But more time spent with **Pablo** yields a much larger tale of hero and town — with the beauty of both becoming increasingly more clear and the personality of one becoming begrudgingly endearing. Ultimately, this cinematic and very alluring visual narrative cleverly combines the striking vistas of the village with the musings and ministrations of a grumpy old man to such excellent effect, you'll want to pull up a chair and join him.

Pablo's Winter Director: **Chico Pereira** 2012 Country: Spain. For more information, visit: <http://www.pabloswinter.com>.

Saga of a Photo

Margot Klausner was an important figure in the foundation of **Israel's Habimah National Theater** and the undeniable first lady of the **Israeli Film Industry** — with her studio (the first in Israel) Herzliyah built in 1949. Here, director **Mooli Landesman** uses a mix of family photos, home movies, archival film footage, interviews with her mother and uncle as well as dramatic re-enactments based on **Margot's** diaries — to present a rich and complex telling of **Margot's** early life of privilege in Europe, her introduction to Palestine and the Yishuv, and resulting life's work in helping articulate a National arts and cultural identity for Israel via theater and film.

Margot, a German Jew, was raised among Europe's affluent class, the youngest daughter of the **Leiser Shoe Company** co-founder and scion, **Julius Klausner**. **Landesman** begins her film reflecting on her grandmother as she is shown walking through a field in Israel. She then traces **Margot's** story back to a single photo of her wedding day in 1926 Berlin, Germany. **Margot** met and married **Jacques Rosner** when she was little more than 19. And, what began as a honeymoon in Palestine, turned into many months of travel and time spent on Kibbutz. As **Margot's** story continues to unfold, we learn **Margot** eventually leaves **Jacques** for Israel and once settled there, imparts on her life's work with a seemingly singular focus.

Saga of a Photo Director: **Mooli Landesman** 2013 Country: Israel. Available on DVD via Ruth Diskin Films (www.ruthfilms.com).

Beauty is Embarrassing

As director **Neil Berkeley's** documentary on artist/creator/musician/family man **Wayne White** unfolds, it becomes apparent why the likes of **Paul Reubens**, **Todd Oldham**, **Mark**

Mothersbaugh, **Matt Groening** and **Mimi Pond** absolutely adore this LBJ puppet-suit-wearing, profanity-spewing, banjo-pickin', prolific southern iconoclast. Most folks recognize **White** from his incredibly creative artwork gracing the vintage 1980s sets of **Pee-Wee's Playhouse**. He is also pretty famous for creating the imagery for music videos for the **Smashing Pumpkins** and **Peter Gabriel**. And, more recently, he has become known by a younger generation for his hysterically irreverent paintings — cleverly concise words carefully crafted in a 3D effect onto re-purposed vintage landscape reproductions. But, what a lot of folks didn't know and what **Berkeley** shows us is a peek into the life of this affable, Emmy award-winning artist, as profane as he is prolific and full of frenetic energy and verve.

Director **Neil Berkeley** quickly draws you in, as he steadfastly trains his camera on the artist, wisely letting **White** act as his own narrator. **White** essentially sums up the trajectory of his artistic life and his process when he states early on, "I want to try everything I can. I want to take this painting idea and see if you can do a puppet version of it. I want to take this cartooning and turn it into a set. I want to take this set and turn it back into a painting." And, so he does.

Beauty is Embarrassing Directors: **Neil Berkeley** 2012 Country: USA (beautyisembarrassing.com/).

Keep Watching...

Looks like we're out of space for more reviews, so here is an alpha list of more films from 2013-2014 to view.

112 Weddings — Director: **Doug Block** 2014 Country: USA (<http://112weddingsmovie.com>) — filmmaker **Doug Block** spent twenty years videotaping weddings. Years later, he's decided to reach out to several of the couples and see how their marriages are today...

Apollonian Story — Director(s): **Ilan Moskovitch** and **Dan Bronfeld** 2013 Country: Israel (<http://apollonian-story.com/en/>) — **Nissim Kahlon** has painstakingly and singularly crafted an amazing home amongst a series of caves along the Herzliya coast, but at what cost to his family and their relationships?

Afternoon of a Faun: Tanaquil Le Clercq — Director: **Nancy Buirski** 2014 Country: USA Available via Kino Lorber

Edu (kinolorberedu.com) — an intimate and reflective portrait of the ballerina and the artists she inspired.

Bronx Obama — Director: **Ryan Murdock** 2014 Country: USA (<http://www.bronxobamamovie.com>) — **Louis Ortiz**, an unemployed single father from the Bronx, strikes a remarkably similar visage to our Commander in Chief.

Cutie & the Boxer — Director: **Zachary Heinzerling** 2013 Country: USA. For more info visit (www.cutieandtheboxer.com) — this is quite a complex and beautifully crafted portrait of artists **Ushio & Noriko Shinohara**.

The Hand that Feeds — Director(s): **Rachel Lears** and **Robin Blotnick** 2014 Country: USA. For more information visit: <http://thehandthatfeedsfilm.com> — compelling doc covering a group of undocumented immigrant fast-food employees as they fight for better treatment in the workplace, a decent wage and benefits.

Olga - To My Friends — Director(s): **Paul-Anders Simma** 2013 Countries: Finland, Norway, Sweden (www.taskovskifilms.com/film/olga-to-my-friends) — the isolating and solitary work of a woman caretaker at a reindeer herdsman's outpost in the middle of the Russian part of Lapland.

Seeds of Time — Director: **Sandy McLeod** 2013 Country: USA (seedsoftimemovie.com/) — an important and timely doc about scientist **Cary Fowler** and his mission to preserve seeds at the global level.

The Supreme Price — Director: **Joanna Lipper** 2014 Country: U.S. Nigeria. Available on DVD via Women Make Movies (wmm.com) — incredible story of the daughter of Nigeria's president-elect **MKO Abiola** and human rights activist **Kudirat Abiola**, and her work today.

Through a Lens Darkly: Black Photographers and the Emergence of a People — Director: **Thomas Allen Harris** 2014 Country: USA (throughalensdarkly.wordpress.com/) — an essential doc underscoring the importance imagery has played and continues to play in shaping African American narrative.

Ukraine Is Not A Brothel — Director: **Kitty Green** Countries: 2013 Ukraine, Australia (www.ukraineisnotabrothel.com/) — a complex doc on controversial Ukrainian feminist activist organization **FEMEN**.

L'ultimo pastore (The Last Shepherd) — Director: **Marco Bonfanti** 2013 Country: Italy (www.lultimopastore.it/) — a beautiful slice of life following **Renato Zucchelli**, his dog **Moru** and partner **Piero** as they continue a traveling herding tradition in spite of the expanding cities and highways surrounding them. 🐕

Rumors from page 63

the **Charleston Conference** this year. **Regina Romano Reynolds** is Director, U.S. ISSN Center and Head, ISSN Section at the **Library of Congress**. I am sure that **Regina** will be front

and center on relevant discussion of the ISSN and serials issues. Speaking of which, **Francois-Xavier Pelegrin**, Head of the Bibliographic Data Section, **ISSN International Centre** will also be speaking in several sessions, most notably about **ROAD**, the **Directory of Open Access scholarly Resources** worldwide.

continued on page 75