

FILMMAKER WITHOUT THE CAMERA

Subject-matter

Acknowledging that language organizes our experience of material reality and that human meaning of reality relies in a symbolic system – “The film director without the camera” – associates the filmmaker’s task with the task of the translator.

Generally abstaining from the traditional techniques that inquire the interval between reality and representation, and that tend to revive key elements of the observational mode while challenging the epistemological claims that historically accompanied it through strategies of parafiction, performativity and experimental ethnography. The subject addresses the topic of contemporary reflexive filmmaking. It focuses on field research as it engages with materials and methodologies of reflexivity.

Furthermore the work is contextualized within the field of contemporary art as well as cinema, which will be analyzed under the light of visual culture, artistic studies, and film studies.

Technical requirements / materials for the classes

Auditorium, projector, sound system, MacBook Air adaptor (thunderbolt)

Other materials: A3 paper, pencil graphite HB, a piece of cloth (white sheet), lightning (optional)

CLASS I

Class breakdown

1. Introduction to the course
2. Presentation of the students
3. A letter from Hollis Frampton to Donald Richie, dated January 7, 1973
4. Theory
5. Practical exercise (indoors)
6. Reflection and critical discussion
7. Screening

Bibliography:

Frampton.H (1973) A letter from Hollis Frampton to Donald Richie, dated January 7
Lambert-Beatty, C. (2009). *Make-believe: Parafiction and plausibility*. *October*, 51-84, ed. MITT Press
Deleuze, G. (1991). *The Fold*, Yale French Studies, No. Baroque Topographies: Literature / History / Philosophy, 227-247, ed. Yale University Press
Barret. E (2007) *Experiential learning in practice as research: Context, method, knowledge*

Recommended bibliography:

Barret, E (2007) *Practice as Research Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, ed Tauris & Co Ltd
Ferraris, M (2018) *Perspectives_of_Documentality*, Firenze University Press

Presentation of the students

A letter from Hollis Frampton to Donald Richie, dated January 7, 1973

Capturing reality

By Salomé Lamas

Documentary film came side by side with, whilst retaining a model of truth inserted by Friedrich Nietzsche, according to whom the ideal of the true was the most profound fiction, at the heart of the real. When the ideal or model of truth was applied to the real, it began to change many things, since the camera was being directed to a pre-existing real, but, in another sense, nothing had changed in conditions of the story: the objective and the subjective were displaced, not transformed; the story remained truthful, really-truthful instead of fictionally-truthful. But the veracity of the story had not stopped being a fiction. The break is not between fiction and reality, but in the new mode of story, which affects both of them. What is opposed to fiction is not the real; it is not the truth; it is the story-telling function of the poor, in so far as it gives the false the power that makes it into memory, a legend. The idea that when we stand for the real as the origin we will end up with its translation, both worlds contain its truth. The cinematic display generates not a cinema of truth but the truth of cinema.¹

The documentary character must first of all be real if he is to affirm fiction as a power and not a model: he has to start to tell stories in order to affirm himself all the more as real and not fictional. The character is continually becoming another, and is no longer separable from this becoming which merges with a person. This is also valid for the film-maker himself, he too becomes another, in so far as he takes real characters as intercessors and replaces his fictions by their own story-telling, but conversely, gives this story-telling the shape of translation and critique. The filmmaker has to reach both what the character was before (origin) and will be after (translation); he has to bring together the before and the after in the incessant passage from one state to the other.

“Him before and the story after, or him after and the story before.” Jean-Luc Godard acknowledges that the same transformation involves the fiction cinema and the non-fiction cinema and blurs their difference; in the same movement, descriptions become pure, purely optical and sound, narrations falsifying and stories, simulations. The whole cinema becomes a free, indirect discourse, operating in reality.² The forger and his power, the filmmaker and his characters, or the reverse, in community allows them the creation of truth.

¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema II: Time-Image*. (The Powers of the False) (1987)

² Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema II: Time-Image*. (The Powers of the False) (1987)

Surveillance cameras indicate that "recording reality" is too vague a criterion, and not just because "reality" sooner or later becomes a very difficult concept to narrow down ("reality-TV" programs in which almost everything is a construction). The continuous mechanical recording of a raw tape lacks the touch of someone selecting and editing for the purpose of expressing or communicating something to someone. Both fiction and non-fiction films differ markedly from a simple mirroring. This is among other things revealed through the camera-display, i.e. all the intentional subtleties such as camera moves, cuts, composition, and all sorts of adjustments. As well as through the post-production process: image editing, post-production sound, color correction and effects. Time may be condensed and chronologies ruptured, music, (sub)titles, voice-over, scenes may be interlaced or interrupted, etc.

A film is not a mere representation; it is the idea in translation. Mentioning "representation of reality" is a mistaken definition of documentary, once the idea of film as mirroring is accepted as false. Jean Rouch³ exemplifies "I go on the subway, I look at it and I note that the subway is dirty and that people are bored – that's not a film. I go on the subway and I say to myself 'these people are bored, why? What's happening, what are they doing here? Why do they accept it? Why don't they smash the subway? Why do they sit here going over the same route everyday?' at that moment you can make a film."

Capturing reality (cont.) / Parafiction I

In contemporary society the concept of "objective truth" has been replaced by concepts such as perception and authenticity. The equation of Visible = Real = Truth is no longer applicable, and other tricks have been put into practice.

These films are casual juxtapositions of the elevated with the banal, with a strange and convincing paradoxical logic. Like all images these films oscillate between fact and fiction, and this ambiguity is at the same time the power of representation.

In both documentary filmmaking and the reception of these documentaries, the focus is more on ethical, political, and aesthetic options. In order to counter this we can ask if it is not also this that moves the interests that surround fiction cinema: Are these not all very personal? Do these not have moral or even ideological points of view that are grounded in their characters, action, and sets, and do these not intend to distinguish themselves as aesthetic artistic products that elevate reality to the level of critique? Contemporary fiction tends to constantly suck up reality by renewing its realistic codes and intensifying its effects on the real. When the language, as Roland Barthes demonstrates, disappears like a construction in order to merge with the things and the real, it appears to "speak."

The whole story may be pure fantasy, the characters fictitious and the behavior of the actors may consist of incredible stunts - but still the film may be striving for "truth" in

³ On Jean Rouch interviewed by James Blue, Film Comment, Vol. II.

another sense of the word: true emotions and perhaps even to illustrate some more general truths about human life.

In a panorama where fiction is documented and documentary acquires fictional properties—that is, where the transit between fiction and documentary is in an unprecedented way both in the contemporary audiovisual and in the quotidian, traversed by all types of images, displays, and technologies—the growth of documentary responds to the generalized spectacle, where what is disputed is the most authentic performance, the most extraordinary confession, the capacity of empathy, and the spontaneity of the characters (anonymous individuals or celebrities).

Increasingly reflective, attractive, and distant, combining the incident with the theatrical, contemporary documentary makes us consider: What do I see on the screen? Am I watching reality, truth, manipulation, fiction, or all of these at the same time? These are questions that according to the critic Jean-Louis Comolli belong to the institution of cinema, but when they are set forth in the world of spectacle in which we live, they turn into questions that pertain to us all.

Parafiction II / Contemporary Documentality: Reflexive Re-Turns in Documentary Filmmaking and the work of Salomé Lamas (excerpts)

By Sara Magno

The work of Salomé Lamas, generally abstain from the traditional techniques that inquire the interval between reality and representation, and tend to revive key elements of the observational mode while challenging the epistemological claims that historically accompanied it through strategies of parafiction, performativity and experimental ethnography. (...)

Her work shows that there is something inherently desirable about blurring the boundary between reality and fiction and something inherently undesirable about minimizing an attention to processes of mediation in the production of visible evidence. It lives precisely on the border between documentary and fiction and effectively collapses the difference between the two as a structuring divide. However, an urgent question must be posed, if all images/languages are the product of convention, of the play of codes, then what is the difference between fiction and nonfiction? “The denial of univocal meaning, the infinite spiral of interpretation, the negation of originary presence in speech, the unstable identity of the sign, the positioning of the subject by discourse, the unstable nature of inside-outside oppositions and the pervasive presence of intertextuality” (Stam, 180) are some of the critiques that Bakhtin (1984) and Kristeva already foreshadow in post-structuralism. These conditions provoked a crisis for documentary. The assault on documentary came from both sides: its authority was eroded by the collapse of referentiality, but occurred equally in the name of a progressive politics, as part of a critical project that sought to dismantle false, ideological notions like objectivity, authenticity, and neutrality— considered to be false concepts with hidden complicity

and a will to power. This crisis can be seen as catalyst for transformation. A “new documentary”, as Linda Williams (1993) called it in a landmark text, responded to technological change and epistemological uncertainty by turning to reflexivity, artifice, and performativity. These films take postmodern critiques seriously, yet they foregrounded the construction of contingent truths. They take up strategies of re-enactment, essayism, and subjectivism, and are accompanied by critical writing (Minh-ha) that supply these developments. The “blurring of boundaries” Lamas reinforces in her work at times points precisely to one of these characteristics as typical of contemporary art’s “documentary turn.” Nevertheless, “Ubi Sunt” (2017) and “Coup de Grace” (2017), for example, proposes a type of filmmaking that directly engages with the dialectical tension between representation and the narrative power of social reality but proposing something different. The films “suggest a particular ability of the documentary to enact a parafictive kind of cinema: around, but not beyond, the real: beyond, but not beside, the fictive.” (Ribas, 2017: 4) Through Lamas’ work, I am interested in looking at the notion of parafiction, as an alternative to terms such as “metafiction” and “anti-illusionism” that are normally associated with reflexivity (Stam, 2000: 151). Carrie Lambert-Beatty (2009) also suggests that parafiction is related to, but is not the same as the category of fiction as established in literary and dramatic art. It remains outside of it, with one foot in the field of the real. Unlike historical fictions, in parafiction real and/or imaginary personages and stories intersect the world as it is being lived. Parafictional strategies work to produce and reinforce trust in the viewer and, because of that, these fictions can be experienced as fact. (Lambert-Beatty, 2009: 54) Can the work of Lamas, as parafiction, be a form of intervening in the real, a kind of experiment with truth, or a type of fiction that sets up a platform for the collision of several fragments, or elements, of stories, and facts, derived from direct experience in the world? Does Lamas’ work, by engaging in a parafictive style, reject the boundaries between reality and fiction to rethink a state of uncertainty inherent in documentary film, or to assert a quality to reality itself? The notion of parafiction in reflexive documentary intends to be further discussed within this research. The issue of fiction will be further discussed within this project where I intend to articulate its relation to accounts on reflexivity and how it has influenced the contemporary thinking and the making of Lamas documentary films.

This project, therefore, aims to interrogate the notions of reflexivity, truth, objectivity, and subjectivity by looking at specific strategies such as the re-enactment, interview, creation of parafictions and experimental ethnography, as ways of producing different forms of reflexive documentary.

International Doctoral Program in Culture Studies, 2017

Make Believe – Parafiction and Plausability (excerpts)

By Carrie Lambert-Beatty

“Being taken in by a parafiction, after all, is not just epistemologically destabilizing. It is humiliating. Think of the audience member who asks a sincere question of a parafictioneering presenter, only to realize later he was one of the few not in on the

joke. Or consider the (purely hypothetical) art historian, perhaps in a studio visit with an artist, who nods knowingly about an historical figure before learning that he made her up. Parafiction is an antidote to vanity. It changes you, leaves you both curious and chastened. It also forever changes one's interface with the media, art, museums, and scholarship. The difference is a certain critical outlook, but one that should be differentiated from models of criticality as skepticism.(...)

Art works, lectures, books, exhibitions, and of course journal articles: they shimmer slightly, possibly plausible, plausibly possible.

However, this can be particularly destabilizing for scholarship. (...)

I believe there is a correlation here with the initial resistance of the academia to a practice based research (in the arts).

Over the last couple of decades a new trend has emerged in research in the creative performing and visual arts, one that includes practice and performance as depictions of and vehicles for research. This has been highly significant and often controversial especially in academic circles. Claiming a new form of investigation where issues of validity, originality and assertions to knowledge are not fundamental to the credit of the research.

Before the performing and creative visual arts have been regarded as contributors to knowledge, not as problem solvers, not to take too seriously. But the idea that the creative arts can be more than creative production constituting intellectual inquiry and contributing to new understanding and insight is a step that questions what gets valued as knowledge.

This tendency comes eventually from the failure or the desire to transcend the guards of traditional models and methodologies of research found in the humanities and in the sciences.

While parafictional art and activism respond to broader areas of cultural practice, it seems imperative to examine their lessons (...). They are the conditions for the enterprise of scholarly study of contemporary art in general— for this strange practice of trying to think historically about the present. Doing this work we approach the parafictional all the time, relying on memories and stories to build our histories— only a step away from gossip, it sometimes seems. “Our” arguments can function performatively, shaping our subjects’ future work, and being shaped by them in turn. Moreover, like the viewer of parafiction, we are always a step behind. Not only because our field is ever-expanding temporally but because, as part of our immanence to globalization, it is growing geographically.

We have the responsibility—and feel the pressure—to be ever more inclusive and transnational in our narratives. But, few of us have the languages, the cultural knowledge, or the local art-historical background to properly master a fraction of what we would like to think, teach, and write about.

What to do? The subject of parafiction might answer by paraphrasing the pretend Nike Web site. Scholars don't usually wear pressed suits. So why should their scholarship? What if contemporary art history were to differ from other parts of the

field in owning rather than minimizing some of these contradictions and realities? Maybe—“facts have to be treated as processes.” Acknowledging that no one of us is an authority on the full range of art we need to discuss might encourage us not to narrow our focus but to find ways to research, write, and advise collaboratively. Admitting and even valuing the provisionality of our knowledge—understanding that term not only as “subject to alteration” but as in the word “provisions.”

In 2009, October Magazine ed. Ltd. and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The Fold

By Gilles Deleuze

The fold follows from Deleuze’s general development of a materialist metaphysics that holds the potential to differ as the original and ongoing movement of the cosmos. One term Deleuzians are perhaps more familiar with is actualization, which occurs when a single potential (singularity) is selected from the virtual and made concrete. To give an example, Darwinian natural selection is this type of selection, as it picks a genetic mutation but neither exhausts that particular potential nor prevents other potentials from being selected in the future. As Steven Jay Gould says, rewind and replay the evolutionary history of a species 100 times and you will get 100 different results.

In summary, Deleuze tends to make concepts: 1) open-ended and inexhaustive, e.g. always have the potential to differ and grow despite a certain consistency of operation (“underdetermination of concepts”); 2) non-exclusive and unlimited, e.g. every application is creative, generative, and an ongoing process and therefore always allows alternate routes to be taken, as in every actualization enables counter-actualizations (cf. Deleuze’s preference of potential to the possible); 3) exist in exteriority to one another and are therefore infinite, e.g. a general rule of Deleuze’s metaphysics is that the relation between two terms itself is a third term, so there is nothing “necessary” or “intrinsic,” only determinants within differing sizes of infinity.

The fold is Deleuze’s form of connection. One could contrast it with Althusser’s use of articulation, which is how he sometimes describes the connection between relatively autonomous levels of society (they articulate & dis-articulate). For Deleuze, all of the universe is a process of folding and unfolding the outside – which creates an interior that is not an inside grown autonomously from the outside world but merely a doubling of the outside (something he gets from Foucault, and cites AOK for, as well as “subjectivation”). Because subjectivation is a difficult example there’s nothing better than the recent PBS documentary called *Origami: Between the Folds* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrAHSIZ2ku8>) for Deleuze described the cosmos as “an origami universe” that follows a systolic-diastolic unfolding & folding whereby explosions of difference are followed up by selection and accretion, only to expand again. Or, to use the terms of *Difference and Repetition*, the universe expands by externally differentiating (laying out difference in the virtual plane of potential), internally differentiating by selecting an internal difference (concrete

actualization through matter), and differentiates again. As an aside, this is also the movement of life, in particular organisms, which internalize small aspects of their milieu until they no longer need those aspects of the milieu to survive (think of organisms that internalize water regulation so they can explore land), which can be described as difference providing the becoming-unnecessary or becoming-independence of life.

Therefore, the fold is the form of connection that follows the general principles of a Deleuzian concept: open-ended & inexhaustive, non-exclusive and unlimited, exterior & infinite.

Practical exercise: The fold (feeling your way around the form)

Materials: A3 paper, HB graphite pencil, a piece of cloth (white sheet), lighting (optional)

Introduction to exercise: The fold (feeling your way around the form) the student explores blind contour drawing - Contour drawing is creating precise line drawings by drawing the individual, consecutive parts of the form to arrive at the whole form. Blind means without looking at the paper while drawing, with total concentration on the subject of the drawing rather than the drawing itself. This problem is designed to improve visual concentration. The student is expected to reflect upon the Deleuzian concept of 'the fold'.

Exercise synopsis: The student will be drawing a blind contour drawing of a piece of cloth. The student must keep in mind that s/he must draw with a strong, confident line rather than a sketchy one. The student's line must flow with the contours of the piece of cloth, noticing all its folds. The student will represent one of the most difficult forms to draw, a piece of cloth with many folds.

The student will start the drawing by looking at a specific point in the hanging piece of cloth, from which s/he will start the drawing. The student will look at his/her paper and place the pencil on the paper in that position.

The student will now look back at the hanging piece of cloth that s/he is drawing from, beginning to move his/her eyes along the contour of the cloth as s/he moves the pencil on the paper. The student will not look at the paper.

The student moves the pencil on the paper imagining that the pencil's point is actually touching the hanging piece of cloth, tracing this first contour of the piece of cloth in every detail and feeling it as s/he draws. They should be constantly looking at what they are drawing. The student should look at the paper only after they believe they have returned the pencil to its initial position – the position from which the line was begun.

When the student finishes a line s/he looks at the paper and starts a second line by placing the pencil in position to draw it. After placing the pencil at the starting point of the second line s/he looks only at the piece of cloth, again imagining that the pencil follows all the details of that line.

The student draws each succeeding contour with this technique (drawing blind while feeling the form). The student will repeat this process until the exercise is completed. The student shouldn't be concerned about achieving a "good drawing", nor distortion or mistakes in the drawing.

Duration: 40 min, drawing the same piece of cloth.

Objectives and briefing: In this problem, the student begins to understand the importance of being able to concentrate on what s/he is seeing. This exercise will require a great deal of concentration, however, it is one of the most rewarding exercises in that even the beginner can achieve a good degree of success.

Learning to see through the sense of touch is what contour drawing is all about. Most drawing techniques deal with the overall form and pare it down to its details. Contour drawing is quite the opposite; the aim is to develop the drawing line-by-line, detail-by-detail, until the whole form is created. What is the difference between an outline drawing and a contour drawing? An outline drawing defines only two dimensions - length and width - whereas a contour drawing suggests three dimensions: length, width, and depth.

This exercise takes a great deal of concentration and it is almost impossible to achieve a perfect drawing with this technique. The exercise is designed to help the student begin to see what is actually in front of him/her, and not about what the student thinks they see. It takes so much concentration to do the exercise that the student is expected to feel tired after completing it.

The student is expected to share their experience at the end of the exercise and to compare it with the exercises of the other students. The student will be asked to fill out a questionnaire and to participate, on a critical level, in the class discussion, the higher the level of the student, the higher the level of discussion and reflection will be expected of them in class.

Questionnaire for open discussion:

(To be filled out after the exercise. The student is expected to answer according to his/her level. The student is expected to associate this experience with former experiences. The student can provide a separate answer to each question or s/he can choose to address several questions in the same answer.)

1. Briefly describe the physical and mental impact caused by the exercise.
2. Briefly describe your chain of thoughts while performing the exercise.
3. Briefly describe your level of attention while performing the exercise.
4. Briefly describe your expectations in relation to the final result of the exercise.

2016 - Eldorado XXI

HD video, 2:39 color, Dolby 5.1 sound, 125 min., Portugal-France-Peru

Production: O Som e a Fúria, Shellac Sud, Tambo Films

Support: Instituto do Cinema e Audiovisual (ICA), Centre National du Cinéma (CNC), EURIMAGES – Council of Europe

Development awards: FIDLab 2013 FID Marseille (Le prix Sublimage, Le prix Vidéo de Poche).

Development Support: DocStation 2014 Berlinale, Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center, Yaddo, Bogliasco Foundation, Berliner Künstlerprogramm des DAAD, Critical Media Practice – Workshop (WIP), Harvard University

Distribution: O Som e a Furia, Shellac Sud

Synopsis

Eldorado XXI is a haunting and mysterious ethnographic reality cut-up. Set in the Peruvian Andes at La Rinconada y Cerro Lunar, the highest settlement in the world at 5,500 meters, it depicts an illusion that leads men to self-destruction, moved by the same interests, dealt with the same tools and means, in contemporaneity as it has been dealt in the ancient times.

Eldorado XXI is a parafictional attempt to combine a sensory ethnographic approach with critical media practices.

Some eighty thousand people live in crowded dwellings in La Rinconada y Cerro Lunar, without even the minimum for subsistence farming; they foster the hope that one day they will find the means to resettle elsewhere. There are enough stories of fortunes made randomly to keep hope and the fever alive. As a measure of safety, the miners chew large quantities of coca leaves. They carry the leaves in their pockets daily to deceive hunger and prevent exhaustion. If they live to work again the next day, it is common to celebrate with alcohol and to frequent the local brothels. This becomes a quick road to self-destruction, the only motivation behind it being to soften the harshness of everyday life.

Under the system of *cachorro*, the miner works for thirty days without remuneration and on the thirty-first day (if lucky) he is allowed to explore the mine for four hours for his own profit. The little precious metal he might carry down the mountain has now to be separated from the rock through antiquated methods using highly toxic levels of mercury. Then the value of the gold powder has to be negotiated in a nonregulated establishment within the community, and the miner will be offered the minimum amount possible.

The system is an unpredictable lottery; nevertheless *cachorro* means that miners and employers avoid “certain taxes.” It is a mental game, in which the possibility of generating a small fortune motivates the miners. To believe in and aspire to “something bigger” can be a greater motivation than a miserable paycheck at the end of the month; a constant low wage would simply not be worth a life of danger.

La Rinconada and Cerro Lunar are doomed towns, which will very shortly become ghost towns since the mines are running low on precious metal.

You are alone. You hear nothing, you know nothing, and you expect nothing. This is a mysterious film dwelling on the complexity of the human being. It stimulates the

viewer to reflect and contemplate, constantly seeking an active audience. It will carry you on a hallucinatory journey. You will not be indifferent to it.

EldoradoXXI_sample1 – 11:13

EldoradoXXI_sample2 – 12:33

The Working Hour/ Lamas' Eldorado XXI (excerpt)

By Michael Scinski

Salomé Lamas' experimental feature *Eldorado XXI* is a film that we might call a "modified ethnography," in the sense that Lamas has gone to a particular location—La Rinconada y Cerro Lunar settlement in the Peruvian Andes—to observe both the landscape and those individuals who populate it. But as with a number of similarly minded films in recent years, the ethnographic "subjects" are understood to be heavily involved in the versions of themselves they choose to expose to Lamas and, by extension, the film's viewership. Lamas herself refers to *Eldorado XXI* as a "critical media practice para-fiction attempt," and while that string of verbiage may seem like a great deal of post-structuralist throatclearing, her tentative genre designation is well worth considering. (...)

Lamas is implicitly asking her viewers to sit and observe the most basic difficulties the miners face in this pitiless region, to share in their monotony as they spend their labour power travelling in and out of the mines. Miles away from the sort of aestheticized heroics (and implicit masculine labour discourse) of a figure such as Sebastião Salgado, Lamas presents this garbage-strewn human highway with a minimum of fuss. It is not an unappealing shot by any means, although one must realistically acknowledge that any hour-long shot in any film is a tough proposition for the nonspecialist viewer unaccustomed to the tendencies of "slow cinema." (...)

The choice of location, along with the strict and unmoving position of the camera, provide a winding path (complete with momentary obstructions) that introduces a temporal element within the sequence—the journeys of individual miners—in addition to the expanded time of the shot itself. (...)

Furthermore, Lamas' decision to create a foreshortened composition, together with the gradual setting of the sun, results in an encroaching modernist flatness. The hillside trail begins to dissipate, becoming a blotchy, speckled form against which indistinct points of light trace repetitive patterns. This action in itself creates a fascinating tension. The ordinary, even aggravating, scene becomes more aesthetically engaging on purely formal terms. (...)

At the same time, this appreciation threatens to occlude the specific human life that is, if not the "true" subject of the shot, at the very least its *raison d'être*. Lamas prompts a viewer to consider the tussle between politics and aesthetics, which is without a doubt a primary component of her "parafictional" project. (...)

There is no question that *Eldorado XXI* is a critical intervention, a piece of protest cinema of sorts. Although I think this can be read rather directly off the surface of the film, it is all that much clearer when considered in light of Lamas' broader cinematic practice.

Text published at *Cinemascope Magazine*, December 2016.