

Los imperativos de la liberación

By Gita Hashemi

Curatorial essay for *AutoLiberación_1, _2, _3*

Video screenings curated for *Arte Nuevo InteractivA'07*

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This is my third time participating at InteractivA, initially invited as an artist, and, since 2005, also as a guest curator. I can't boast of festival hopping, biennial touring or cosmopolitan art marketing. What I can claim are sensitive roots and tendrils that, displaced from their soil of origin, eagerly spread in multiple directions in search of solid earth, murmuring undercurrents, towering trees and expansive skies. To'ho/Merida: Roots and tendrils. Over its last four incarnations, Arte Nuevo InteractivA has become an important site for experimentation and conversation, a post/colonial locale aware of its historical and geopolitical complexities and unwilling to cover them up with sleek displays and pretentious parties, a communal feast rather than a festival of spectacles. To'ho/Merida: Saludos por esta tercera vez.

For those of us involved in emancipatory projects, it is imperative that we politicize and ground representation and discourse in materiality and embodiment. In other words, we must interrogate geo-political and socio-economic location(s), relations, identity(ies) and identification(s) as foundational to our analysis of the conditions and relations of representation, of discursive privilege or lack thereof. The corporatization of knowledge as property and emergence of culture and art as capital and commodity have tangibly linked intellectual, cultural and artistic work to material relations and indisputably established them as sites for the re/production of socio-economic privilege, thus casting intellectuals/artists/culture workers as shareholders or labourers. We must become freedom fighters.

In the wake for/of “modernity” — with its legacies of enlightenment rationality, colonial/expansionist wars, settler and puppet states, forced modernization, environmental and humanitarian disasters, corporate capitalism and global fascism — we must go beyond the production and promotion of critical theory as the primary tasks of intellectual practice. We must simultaneously construct (semi-) autonomous spaces where racialized, marginalized and/or occupied individuals and communities in the “global north” and “global south” may establish their own narratives of self and resistance. Sites where the ethos of experimentation may challenge fixed and totalizing paradigms, where self-representation and auto-ethnography become tactical weapons in the media wars and dissent may find expression as aesthetic practice and vice versa. From these locations it becomes possible to imagine, embody, deploy and sustain effective alternative ethics in opposition to the global domination of white capitalist patriarchy's logic and relations.

It is imperative that we reject not only singular meta-narratives of collectivity and capitalist modernity but also the dictates of the exceedingly prolific Discourse Industry that spans the spheres of the academy, the media and the arts. While producing many mini-meta-narratives — fragmented, customizable and niche-marketed — Discourse Industry functions with one hand to dematerialize and disembodify representation, to homogenize and globalize it, and, with the other hand, to profit materially from the commodification of representation, from the very material conditions and relations of representation and its processes and products. In the “post-colonial,” “post-material,” “post-feminist” world — the spanking “new” order of things, we must

interrogate the political economy and institutional/structural cartography of discursive production — representation — as highly relevant to our assessment of a discourse's relevance to our work. We must concern ourselves with accounting for the inequitable material conditions and relations that sustain and are sustained by the capitalist intellectual/cultural tourist industry at the cost of those whose lands, resources, spaces, images, stories, hospitalities we pass through, appropriate, occupy and benefit from. Where representation and discourse are no longer bound to fixed location, gender, race, class, ethnicity and sexuality and stories/representations and bodies/social nodes can, like capital, expand and roam nomadically in many places, touch many bodies, assume and perform many identities and appropriate many locations, cultures and stories, we must insist on grounding and embodying discourse.

We must ask, “who is speaking?” and “for whom?” “From which location?” “What are the intentions of the speaker?” and “what are the effects of the speech?” “Who profits and who benefits and in what ways?” “Who remains silent?” and “who pays for the speech?” “What kind of ethics does the speech embody?” and “what are its material conditions and modes of production?”

We must ask these questions not just because they can be answered with a concreteness and certainty that is crucial to an analysis of the discourse, but, more importantly, because asking them sends ripples through smooth domestic and international intellectual/industrial multiculturalism by making real conflicts visible. These are real differences in positions, powers, aspirations and agendas that implicate the interrogator and the interrogated in conflict, and, therefore, ground representation and discourse as material and embodied. These questions and the act of questioning are rightly interpreted as antagonistic and oppositional, but to the extent that our work is about liberation as an ongoing process of self-actualization and communal empowerment we must risk being fugitives in occupied lands. To'ho/Merida, Fugitive Territories: Le vuelvo con/para Auto liberación.

AutoLiberación is a selection rather than a commissioned collection, in other words the program is comprised of videos that have emerged independent of the curatorial process and in response to their makers' own needs and priorities. The program was inspired by many conversations and encounters in the context of local and transnational independent community, artist and activist networks where I and the participants function as nodes, locations, conduits and facilitators (also as places, memories, stories, processes and agents). Generally, in these networks relations of friendship and solidarity (rather than those of capital) animate and facilitate both artistic production and curatorial articulation.

In AutoLiberación, representational practice is understood as embodied and material, as representation *of* and *by*. The works in this program do not share fixed locations, identities or political strategies. The conceptual space and political imperative of the program — self liberation(s) — are, rather, an articulation of a shared desire; a space where that desire can be expressed with the specificity and clarity of acts of self-representation and where mutual recognition and solidarity can be collaboratively explored, grounded and built upon.

Notions of self-representation, collaboration and alternative networks — the heart of both friendship and solidarity — also animate the very production and dissemination of the videos included in AutoLiberación. Their makers — functioning in diverse milieus variously as artists, activists, cultural workers, community mobilizers, poets, chroniclers, journalists, broadcasters — build on the use value of creative practice and media production as communal resources within self-directed micro-economies as alternatives to dominant art/intellectual/political/economic

systems. Where white patriarchal capitalism limits the notion of democracy to depoliticized individual (self-) expression, the works in this program employ the tools of expression in the service of challenging, subverting and changing dominant relations of power.

These aesthetic values are observable in their highly collaborative relations and processes of production, diverse forms of direct community engagement in the projects, their independent dissemination, and/or in the construction of visual and narrative approaches that question and resist easy-to-digest, sleek, stereotypical and simplistic forms of the art/media/entertainment industries. In constructing these highly politicized aesthetics, these works resist/counter the aesthetized politics that characterize fascism and neoliberalism's masquerade as "democracy," "free speech" and "progress" as mediated by technologically re/produced spectacles.

The work of these artists and collectives thus also lays direct claim to theorizing and building upon the use value of information and communication technologies (media) in the ways they employ both production and dissemination technologies as public resource and social space rather than private property, and to the extent they assume these technologies in the service of collective aspirations rather than corporate profit making. Such withdrawal of the processes of representation from the sphere of capitalist relations not only functions toward constructing autonomous public media but also facilitates the formulation and spread of revolutionary demands that would, without some form of autonomous media, remain isolated and fragmented or else get co-opted and emptied of their transformative potentials. In the works in *AutoLiberación*, politically purposeful communication is the answer to depoliticized self-expression mediated by consumer technology.

Encuadres Dis/Continuos Dis/Continuous Frames

AutoLiberación_1 explores the dis/continuities of the present moment in relation to gender, race and class as key socio-economic determinants. Viscerally foregrounding the position and mediation of the camera (frame), the apparatus of the disciplinary gaze, Julieta Maria's *Unknown* is a poetic reflection on the subtleties of being a woman; not the seductive sleek-haired fashionista that gazes back submissively from the cover of this magazine and the poster for that product, but a brown woman with thick eyebrows and bushy hair, wearing socks and going in circles in a small enclosed domestic space at an unknown (any) location. *Unknown* asks unsettling questions but offers no specific answers except to insist on the act of questioning as the foundation of knowledge of the self in relation to the world.

In *Juarez*, Alex Flores and Lorena Vassolo set out in search of answers in the disappearance of over 70 women and murders of nearly 400 in Ciudad Juárez since 1993. Directly involving some of the women's families, local activists, journalists, whistle-blowers and artists who refuse to let the systemic nature of the murders and disappearances be swept under the cheap carpet of inadequate and rigged criminal investigations, the videomakers and their subjects collaborate in mapping the femicide in Ciudad Juárez against the background of the local and global politics and economics of maquiladora and sex/pornography industries, in the context of Mexico's domestic politics pre- and post-NAFTA, and as a continuation of misogyny as patriarchy's strategy for domination. Rather than posing as a detached, dispassionate, didactic expose (dominant style of documentary production) or as a sensationalist pornographic spectacle (customary mode of journalistic production), *Juarez* functions as a feminist locus for rituals of empowerment and self-narration where stories of women's resistance are prioritized and the production of the video itself becomes an occasion for community dialogue and participation in acts of solidarity and self-liberation.

Retratos de lo Des/Conocido Portraits of the Un/Known

Can (self)portrait be a revolutionary genre? Yes, and in that it is not simply limited to recording the existence of verifiable or even credible revolutionary figureheads, as is the tradition in patriarchal political left so saturated with stock iconographies and repetitious biographies (in effect part and parcel of mass produced ideologies). In *AutoLiberación_2*, (self-) portrait is seen as a revolutionary practice to the extent that the portrait is a space where specific collective memories, histories and lived realities are not only recorded for posterity but have to be reckoned with ethically and politically. In *You Are Evil*, Louis Taylor's direct poetic address to the viewer, in present tense, paints a portrait of the other which, through a visually potent reversal of the frame, also functions as a portrait of himself wrestling with questions of ethical responsibility and social accountability in a world dominated by the geopolitics of the so-called "war on terror." Julieta Maria's *Findings* weaves photographic portraits of her own family into a visual poem that traces their migration from Palestine to Columbia. Here the frame is temporally and spatially in motion thus the (self-) portrait doubles as a historical and geopolitical landscape.

The selection of 9 videos from Balata Film Collective's corpus included here in their totality stands as a highly detailed (self-) portrait that extends well outside its frame to implicate viewers in the politics of framing. Based in one of the largest refugee camps in Palestine, the collective, mostly youth, was formed through the initiative of Ruby Said, a local activist who, while hosting an international solidarity activist who was video documenting Israeli attacks on the camp during the beginning of the Second Intifada, decided to learn to use the camera herself to narrate the lives and struggles in the camp from an insider's perspective.¹ In Balata Film Collective's work, auto-ethnography is an ethical imperative and a political strategy. For Balata residents, a community of refugees displaced in the Nakbe (1948 catastrophic occupation of Palestine by Zionists that formed the settler state of Israel), the violence of Israeli occupation is not limited to its immediately visible practices (images that most of us are by now familiar with) such as the spectacular displays of tanks and armed-to-the-teeth soldiers rolling onto their streets and into their homes, nor is resistance limited to suicide bombings and guerilla brigades, though these are present and ongoing in their lives. By focusing on other everyday realities — the community's celebration of the coming home of a father after 20 years in an Israeli prison, the challenge of making a traditional meal with a vegetable that grows on Israeli occupied lands and the debates amongst Balata residents about the elections held under occupation — the Balata Film Collective's videos recast occupation and resistance as historical continuities not just expedient political urgencies. Working with borrowed and second-hand equipment and distributing their videos for free on the Internet, the Collective is itself a resounding act of self-liberation and a portrait of a people unwilling to submit.

Calle del Alma Soul Street

AutoLiberación_3 is a walk down the streets in the global north, Colonial Canada. Not the aimless stroll of the flaneur nor a *dérive*, this walk is a purposeful journey from the physical land of the indigenous peoples of Canada through the settler suburbs to the center of a colonial metropolis. Here urbanism attempts to contain and mask the conflicts inherent in the daily workings of a settler state and its population, and continuously fails. The purpose of this walk is not simply to see or see with new eyes — or even to experience — this place and its inhabitants — the voyeuristic journey of a tourist — but to urge all of us who live in las Americas to rethink our relationship to the lands on which we live and to one another. "I wish they would take a walk

down the streets of our souls,” says Doreen Silversmith, a Six Nations activist from Kanonhstaton, in Audrey Huntley and Sarah Kapoor’s *Letters from Caledonia/Six Nations*, a video reportage from the site of a land reclamation struggle staged by Haudenosaunee people against urban development in Caledonia, a suburb of Toronto, illegally creeping in and occupying their lands. For indigenous warriors and resisters, the imperative of fighting back arises not only from a question of ownership of the land — which communally belongs to the Six Nations — but from the necessity of protecting the land against the environmental exploitation that accompanies unleashed urban developments, their way of life and their communities from the hegemonic white settler state. Huntley and Kapoor take standard journalism to a different plane when they use video as a productive social space where people who are directly involved in conflict can enter into a mediated dialogue. *The Good Old Boys*, by Vicky Moufawad-Paul, is a highly animated road trip inside/outside the barricades put up by the Mohawk community of Kanehsatake in resistance to the corrupt local government imposed on them by the Canadian state. In addition to documenting a moment of victory by the warriors (however exhilarating and ephemeral), this piece is significant in that it also functions as an offering, in the spirit of transnational solidarity, from a Palestinian artist/activist to Mohawk activists. This is indicative of the ways in which resistance to (neo)colonialism is being defined as a global project through specific localized actions.

Back in the heart of Toronto, the youth of Regent Park TV take us for a walk in their culturally diverse neighbourhood, Canada’s largest and oldest public housing complex, as it is about to be transformed by the city’s top-down ‘revitalization’ plan. In decisive steps, this selection of 9 videos from RPTV’s ongoing broadcast goes from a portrait of a neighbourhood undergoing change driven by capitalist interests to a portrait of the global village where uncritical consumption rides on child labour exploitation. In that short distance, the videomakers raise crucial questions in relation to considerations of social good. Punctuated with the adventures of BikeMan in his confrontation with the Striped Bandit in the world’s capital of bike theft, these videos offer a walk down the streets of the inner city’s soul, generously brought to us by the streetwise and inquisitive youth of RPTV. As in the work of Balata Film Collective, beyond the subject matter and content, RPTV’s significance is in the way it functions as a locus for transforming consciousness as an act of self-liberation.

For me, InteractivA has become a space for praxis: a process through which theory is embodied, enacted and practiced. This curatorial effort conceptually and methodologically echoes InteractivA in using alternative networks and relations and in positing curation as a work of mediation rather than hierarchical production. In its initial phases, this program was titled “Land Matters,” to point to the location and materiality of representational practice as a foundation of political and artistic discourse. But that would have been stating the obvious. The political imperative of this program — its title — emerged from a more active interpretation of the social purpose and intentions of the projects represented here. Land matters? Of course it does. And, from Palestine to Six Nations to Juarez, people stand up and fight for their land against (neo)colonialism and neo-liberalism, against military and corporate occupation, against settlement mentality and gentrification. These are imperatives of self-liberation as a project of reconstituting a sustainable and equitable collectivity. To’ho/Merida: Estos movimientos irregulares le trajeron como recuerdos de la solidaridad.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Zainab Amadahy, Adonis Huggins and Vicky-Moufawad-Paul for their valuable suggestions towards some of the projects included here, to all

the participating artists for allowing me to include their work in this program, to Izida Zorde for her editorial assistance, and, as always, to Raul Moarquench Ferrera-Balanquet for his untiring visionary work at InteractivA and for inviting me to join in that, and to the community of artists and volunteers in Merida for their crucial work in staging the biennial and for their gracious hospitality.

AutoLiberación_1: Dis/Continuous Frames **[78 min screen time]**

Title: *Unknown*

Artist: *Julieta María*

Tech Specification: Digital Video, DVD

Duration: 2:50 min

Synopsis:

Unknown is a visual exploration of the self through video. It is a physical and emotional investigation that uses the camera as a mirror to attempt to access and understand the mystery of being alive. Subtly and desperately at times, the piece touches on issues like feminine identity, death and the unconscious. It is filled with visceral reflections that cannot provide any answers, but are doomed to follow a circular path with no resolution.

Artist's Bio: - ([Colombia/Canada](#))

Julieta Maria is a Toronto-based artist with a degree in Visual Arts from York University. She has worked in several media, including painting and photography, and in the last five years has developed an interest in digital video and interactive installations. Her work has been shown in several venues in Toronto, Colombia and the U.S. As an immigrant, in her work Julieta has often explored memory and language in deeply personal ways. She is a member of the editorial committee for Disfagia Magazine, part of e-fagia group (www.e-fagia.org) and member of the board of directors of Alucine Festival (www.alucinefestival.com).

Web address: www.e-fagia.org/julieta.html

Title: *Juarez*

Author: *Alex Flores, Lorena Vassolo*

Tech Specification: Beta SP NTSC (DVD)

Duration: 75:00 min

Synopsis:

Juarez is a feature length documentary that questions why Mexico's federal government has not yet thoroughly investigated the brutal murders of over 450 women in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua. The videomakers talk to families of the victims, forensic experts, journalists, artists and activists to expose the high levels of corruption and violence in Mexico that have led to increasing violence against women and, as many interviewees theorize, the murders of women in Juarez. The documentary also includes moving interviews with the children of some of the murdered women who are the other victims of this wave femicide. *Juarez* was shot entirely on location in Juarez and Mexico City in 2006.

Artist Bios: ([Canada](#))

Born in Mexico, *Alex Flores* is an eco-feminist, social justice activist and independent visual artist and videomaker. Alex received her teaching degree in Mexico City in 1988, moved to San Francisco in 1989, and has since worked in a variety of visual and sculptural media. Her furniture design has been shown in Texas, San Francisco and Mexico City. She moved to Toronto in 2001, and in 2003 founded the Gatuna Film & Video Collective who teach and

produce videos that address social and cultural issues. As the artistic director of Gatuna, she writes, directs, edits, and teaches workshops in media production.

(Canada)

Lorena Paula Vassolo is a feminist and human rights activist and an independent writer, actor and filmmaker. Born in Buenos Aires, Lorena was raised in Calgary after her family immigrated to Canada in 1982 during the last military dictatorship. In 1991 Lorena returned to Argentina where she participated in human rights activism and was involved in the development of the Barrial Theatre Cooperative and worked in numerous independent plays and short films. She also volunteered for the organization “Los Carasucias,” directed by Monica Carranza, which provides food and basic necessities to over 2500 poor/low income families.

AutoLiberación_2: Portraits of the Un/known **[69 min screen time]**

Title: *You Are Evil*

Artist: *Louis Taylor*

Tech Specification: Digital Video, DVD

Duration: 6:00 min

Synopsis:

You Are Evil is Louis Taylor's second film. It rose out of his anger and despair at the path we've taken as a culture since the events of 9/11. It is a 6-minute growl of vexation, a biting condemnation and a bitter indictment; an indictment that ironically comes full circle to skewer the accuser.

Artist's Bio: - (Canada)

Louis Taylor is the writer/director of various award-winning films, including *Esther, Baby & Me*, *You Are Evil* and *Moloch*. He is currently working on a documentary about New Orleans, Black America and the state of race relations post-Katrina.

Title: *Findings*

Author: *Julieta María*

Tech Specification: Digital Video, DVD

Duration: 5:00 min

Synopsis:

This video is inspired by the history of my grandparent's family, who emigrated from Palestine to Colombia in the 1920s. It is an approximation to personal history thorough facts, fantasies, photographs and landscapes, reformulating the past, the site of memory, while reorganizing its images.

Artist's Bio - (Canada)

Julieta María is a Toronto-based artist with a degree in Visual Arts from York University. She has worked in several media, including painting and photography, and in the last five years has developed an interest in digital video and interactive installations. Her work has been shown in several venues in Toronto, Colombia and the U.S. As an immigrant, in her work Julieta has often explored memory and language in deeply personal ways. She is a member of the editorial committee for Disfagia Magazine, part of e-fagia group (www.e-fagia.org) and member of the board of directors of Alucine Festival (www.alucinefestival.com).

Web address: www.e-fagia.org/julieta.html

Title: *The Palestinian Tradition of Embroidery Under the Zionist Occupation*

Author: *Balata Film Collective*

Tech Specification: Digital Video, DVD

Duration: 9:30 min

Synopsis:

Traditional embroidery is a hidden form of resistance to Israeli attempts at economic, social and political subjugation of Palestinians. Women's embroidery is one of few means of economic independence, neither dependent on Israeli contractors nor its market. Embroidery is also a powerful means of expressing identity and making a connection with the Palestinian past prior to the *Nakbeh*, the catastrophic Zionist occupation of 1948 that led to the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and the destruction of nearly 500 towns and villages.

Title: *Shadows of Occupation*

Author: *Balata Film Collective*

Tech Specification: Digital Video, DVD

Duration: 1:11 min

Synopsis:

Camp children prepare a shadow puppet theatre production as part of balatacamp.net activities. But during the performance, the characters of their imagination move from the screen onto the streets of Balata.

Title: *Grass Doesn't Grow in the Camp*

Author: *Balata Film Collective*

Tech Specification: Digital Video, DVD

Duration: 8:50 min

Synopsis:

After 20 years in Israeli prison, Balata resident Meqdad Khatib is released. His newly-wed wife was pregnant when he was arrested, and Meqdad had never seen his son until he too was imprisoned years later as a young adult. Finally the family is to be reunited. The balatacamp.net girl journalist team goes along to the checkpoint and Meqdad's house to check things out. Along the way they come across Israeli jeeps, praise-singing grandmothers and fields of green grass.

Title: *Children of the Stones*

Author: *Balata Film Collective*

Tech Specification: Digital Video, DVD

Duration: 7:10 min

Synopsis:

The children of Palestine lead a childhood of oppression, struggle and isolation. Faced with daily Israeli military invasions, the short moments of relative quiet and safety take on unexpected importance and beauty. *Children of the Stones* offers a snapshot of the daily lives of Palestinian children.

Title: *Hunted Everywhere*

Author: *Balata Film Collective*

Tech Specification: Digital Video, DVD

Duration: 10:40 min

Synopsis:

Leaders of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades describe their lives as the most wanted men in the West Bank. Topics include: how to evade capture by the Israeli Occupation Forces, dealing with the constant possibility of assassination and immediate death, relations with

their mothers, why they became fighters. Features interviews with Ahmed Abu Saltah, Ala Sanaqra, Nasser Khatib and Atallah Hashash.

Title: *Women in Death Castles*

Author: *Balata Film Collective*

Tech Specification: Digital Video, DVD

Duration: 10:03 min

Synopsis:

A high proportion of Palestinian women prisoners in Israeli Occupation prisons are from the Nablus region. In this video, recently released women from Balata and Nablus speak out about their pain and struggle while imprisoned. Testimonies describe interrogation, physical and mental torture, isolation and loneliness. Includes interviews with ex-prisoners, children of current prisoners and officials from the Prisoners Society support organization.

Title: *Elections Furore*

Author: *Balata Film Collective*

Tech Specification: Digital Video, DVD

Duration: 6:50 min

Synopsis:

Filmed during Palestinian National Authority elections on January 9, 2005, the balatacamp.net girl journalists hit the streets during voting to see what camp residents really think. Responses vary widely. From “how can we have elections before the occupation has ended?” to “of course we have elections, we must try to continue our daily lives, even under occupation” to “as they say, a drowning person will clutch any stick,” this video shows the diversity of political thought and engagement amongst Palestinians.

Title: *Our Sons*

Author: *Balata Film Collective*

Tech Specification: Digital Video, DVD

Duration: 1:35 min

Synopsis:

Two teenage boys from Balata were arrested outside the Israeli Berakhya colony/settlement overlooking Nablus in early April 2005. They said they were picking almonds, but the Israeli military claimed they were trying to commit a suicide operation. Ammar’s father and Mahmoud’s mother speak about their trauma in discovering that their sons had disappeared into the Israeli military prison maze. Produced by the Yafa Cultural Centre Young Journalist Team the day after the arrests.

Title: *Akoub, the Challenge*

Author: *Balata Film Collective*

Tech Specification: Digital Video, DVD

Duration: 2:16 min

Synopsis:

The vegetable *akoub* plays an important role in both Palestinian identity and cooking. *Akoub the Challenge* describes how Israeli checkpoints, settlements and military bases are making it an

increasingly difficult and dangerous ingredient to gather. Market vendors, vegetable dealers and Palestinian grandmothers explain how even a simple vegetable has been forced to join the ranks of the resistance.

Collective Bio - (Palestine)

Based in Balata – one of the largest refugee communities in the West Bank with a population of 30,000 in one square kilometer – the Balata Film Collective was formed in 2004 to enable young Palestinians from the camp to break their isolation, challenge their oppression and represent the realities of living under Israeli occupation to the world. The collective shoots, edits and produces videos in Arabic and English. Videos are regularly uploaded to the Balata Camp website for wide distribution as a means of connecting to both the international community and the Palestinian diasporas as well as countering the mainstream media portrayal of the Palestinian people.

Website: <http://www.balatacamp.net/website/filmcollective/index.htm>

AutoLiberación_3: Soul Street **[71 min screen time]**

Note: All of the following videos are in English.

Title: *Letters from Caledonia/Six Nations*

Artists: *Audrey Huntley and Sarah Kapoor*

Tech Specification: Digital video, DVD

Duration: 18:00 mins

Synopsis:

Letters from Caledonia/Six Nations asks four people - Doreen Silversmith from Kanonhstaton (the reclamation site), Dawn Martin-Hill, a Six Nations resident, the spokesperson of the Caledonian Citizens' Alliance, Ken Hewitt and a Caledonian resident, Joe Zammuto – at the core of the land reclamation struggle in Caledonia/Six Nations to reflect on its origins and exchange solutions.

Artist Bios – (Canada)

Audrey Huntley is an independent filmmaker of mixed Anishnawbe and settler ancestry. She has been involved in social justice activism for many years both in Europe and on Turtle Island. She recently co-founded wolf dog productions. Current projects include *From Six Nations to Oaxaca* which follows the journey of an Indigenous activist involved in a land struggle in Canada to meet with Indigenous activists in Mexico.

Sarah Kapoor is a filmmaker with a track record for making documentaries that use investigative journalism to tap into the spiritual realm and reach the message beneath the matter. Sarah has worked as an awarding producer and on air for various departments at the CBC. Most recently she was the senior producer for *The Next Great Prime Minister*.

Website: http://www.cbc.ca/sunday/2006/09/092406_1.html

Title: *The Good Old Boys*

Artist: *Vicky Moufawad-Paul*

Tech Specification: DVD

Duration: 4:40 min

Synopsis:

In 2004 Quebec's Mohawk community of Kanehsatake put up a barricade to demonstrate that they were no longer willing to accept the appointment of corrupt bureaucrats to govern their lives. James Gabriel, the Grand Chief who was backed by the Quebec Police and the Department of Indian Affairs, grossly mismanaged the community's resources to maintain colonial dependence. This video was shot during a confrontation in which the Mohawk warriors forced Gabriel's highly equipped team out of Kanehsatake. As per Mohawk warriors' request, the footage is edited to the "Dukes of Hazard" theme and AC/DC's "Highway to Hell."

Artist Bio - ([Canada](#))

Vicky Moufawad-Paul is a video artist whose practice spans close to ten years. As a Palestinian born in Lebanon, she situates the personal in the political while exploring ideas of home and the difficulty of return. Moufawad-Paul programmed the Toronto Arab Film Festival for three years where she focused on issues of anti-colonial struggle, diaspora and (mis)representation. She has an Honours BA in Political Science and Media Information & Technoculture from the University of Western Ontario, and an MFA in Film & Video from York University. She is currently the Programming and Exhibitions Coordinator at A Space Gallery in Toronto.

Title: ***The Adventures of Bike Man, Episode 1***

Artist: ***Regent Part TV***

Tech Specification: DVD

Duration: 4:00 min

Synopsis:

The Adventures of Bike Man is an entertaining series about a local superhero and a bandit while teaching young bike riders about safety and the importance of locking up their bikes. Toronto is considered North America's capital of bike thefts. In this episode, the Bike Man, our superhero with a great set of wheels, seeks to prevent his archrival, the Stripped Bandit, from stealing a young girl's bike.

Title: ***The Regent Park Revitalization***

Artist: ***Regent Part TV***

Tech Specification: DVD

Duration: 8:25 min

Synopsis:

Regent Park is undergoing redevelopment. Over the next 10 to 15 years every building in Regent Park will be demolished and replaced. This video was produced to provide residents with basic information about the process of demolition and the redevelopment process. The video features short interviews with housing representatives and people who had to move out of their homes.

Title: ***Let the Class Wars Begin: The Cabbagetown Restaurant***

Artist: ***Regent Part TV***

Tech Specification: DVD

Duration: 7:05 min

Synopsis:

The Cabbagetown Restaurant is being pushed into closure by members of the Old Cabbagetown Business Association (BIA), an association of businesses in the area. The BIA alleges that the restaurant is a waterhole for drunks, drug dealers and unsavory behavior and even spent \$5000 for duty officers to zero in on the restaurant. Restaurant owner Victor Jiang and the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) dispute the claim, arguing that the charges have more to do with the BIA's agenda to gentrify the area and push poor people out.

Title: ***The Adventures of Bike Man, Episode 2***

Artist: ***Regent Part TV***

Tech Specification: DVD

Duration: 5:00 min

Synopsis:

The Striped Bandit has come up with an evil plan to steal bikes from unsuspecting riders. Can Bike Man stop him? In this episode, BikeMan teaches young people the importance of wearing a helmet.

Title: ***Child Labour***

Artist: ***Regent Part TV***

Tech Specification: DVD

Duration: 11:15 min

Synopsis:

In this documentary, local youth get informed about globalization, sweatshop-free alternatives and show people that consumers have the power to influence change.

Title: ***The Hijab***

Tech Specification: DVD

Duration: 6:00 min

Synopsis:

A group of pre-teen girls explore their own beliefs and values while giving a much wider audience a better insight on wearing the Hijab and its role in Islam. In doing so, they raise fundamental questions about Canada's commitment to multiculturalism and diversity.

Title: ***The Adventures of Bike Man, Episode 3***

Artist: ***Regent Part TV***

Tech Specification: DVD

Duration: 5:00 min

Synopsis:

The Striped Bandit seeks to rid the world of Bikeman once and for all. Is this the end of Bikeman? Watch another thrilling adventure of Bikeman and The Striped Bandit to find out!

Group Bio - (Canada)

Regent Park TV (RPTV) is a weekly video broadcast produced by youth about their community, their culture and the issues that matter to them. RPTV was launched in November 2006 by Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre, a youth-driven, not-for-profit organization located in the heart of Toronto's Regent Park, Canada's oldest and largest public housing community. We believe that community-based media practices play a vital role in building and sustaining healthy communities, and we seek to increase civic engagement and effect positive change through youth-led media. Our program is aimed at marginalized, culturally diverse youth living in and around the community. With free access to media technology, participants meet during the summer and weekly after school to explore issues that concern them and to develop resources that contribute to their community and address systemic barriers to equitable social participation. Videos are disseminated through community screenings facilitated by the youth producers as well as broadcast through a youth-developed and maintained website.\

Website: <http://www.regentpark.tv>

<http://www.catchdaflava.com>

¹ V. Moufawad-Paul. “Resistance, Collective Memory and Creating Decolonized Territory.”
Fuse Magazine, v. 29, no. 4 (2006)