

Refugees: Films + Debate



Free Admission

January 26: Little Fiel + Sleepwalking Land

February 9: Montreal la Blanche

March 9: Human Flow

6:00 pm

**LIB 072 Library Theatre
Ryerson University
350 Victoria Street, Toronto**

**Ryerson
University**

**Faculty
of Arts**

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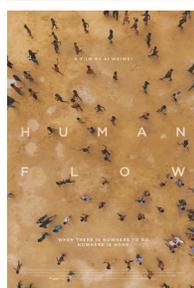
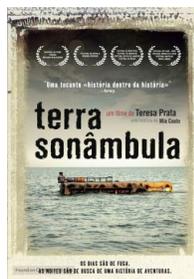
**Centre
for
Ani
Memory
Testimony
Studies**

Refugees: Films + Debate

The massive movement of refugees in the 21st century, from the Middle East and the global South to Europe, the US and Canada, is challenging our notions of borders.

For much of the 19th and the 20th centuries borders in the Western world were linked in a positive manner – albeit not without tensions – to concepts of assimilation, acculturation, nostalgia, exchange, mixing, third spaces, rhizomes, etc. However, in recent times the politics of borders has been subject to changes stemming from heightened fears of terrorism and an economic logic of protectionism that have reanimated in host populations archaic apprehensions of the foreigner, and mobilized social memories that once justified genocides, pogroms, ghettos and exclusions.

In parallel, the experience of those seeking refuge in the West is no longer declined from a utopian perspective. The longstanding link between utopia and exile appears to have dissolved away, pulverized. What now seems to most characterize the experience of refugees in the West – transnational mafias, geopolitical interests, inter-ethnic conflicts – has, in the majority of cases, forced individuals into new spaces of exclusion and danger. In response to these challenges a significant body of work has been produced in recent years by filmmakers such as those including in this film series Irina Patkanian, Teresa Prata, Bachir Bensaddek, and Ai Weiwei.



The CMTS and Ryerson University invite you to the *Refugees: Films + Debate*. The series seeks to examine the representation of refugee experience in contemporary cinema asking: what is new in contemporary representations of the refugee / of host populations; and, do contemporary representations propose new reflections on the crisis of refugees?

Hudson Moura, programmer
Department of Politics and Public Administration
Ryerson University

January 26th

Little Fiel (Short, USA, 2017, 17 min.) Irina Patkanian



Little Fiel is a stop motion animation/documentary that tells a universal story of peaceful people who have been coerced, conscripted and enticed into killing each other. It is based on the life story of Mozambican artist Fiel dos Santos who grew up during the 16 year old civil war - another proxy war equipped and sustained by conflicting foreign powers. Fiel created eight figures representing his family from decommissioned AK47s and M16s. <http://irinapatkanian.com/fiel2.html> This screening is in partnership with the *II Mostra of Lusophone Cinema*.

Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, Irina Patkanian is an award winning filmmaker, a William J. Fulbright and MacDowell fellow and the president of ³In Parenthesis,² a nonprofit film, theater and media arts company (www.inparentheses.org). Her documentaries and fiction narrative short films have played and won awards in film festivals and art venues worldwide. Irina teaches creative documentary and single camera production at Brooklyn College since 2001.



January 26th

Sleepwalking Land (POR/MOZ, 2007, 97 min.) Teresa Prata



Mozambique, Civil War. Muidinga is a fragile boy, whose bigger wish is to find his family. He reads in a diary, found beside a dead body, the history of a woman that seeks her son in a ship. Due to his hope to find his own family, Muidinga

convinces himself that he is the boy who is being search. He tries to find the woman, with the help of Tuahir, a thin old man full of experience and wisdom. The journey is hard: they move between refugees in state of delirium. Not to get insane, they only have each other. The road which way they walk, as sleepwalkers, is magic: understand their desires and move them from a place to another. This screening is in partnership with the *II Mostra of Lusophone Cinema*.



Childhood in Mozambique. Adolescence in Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais, Brazil, where Teresa Prata studies music: piano. Course of Biology (diplom) in Coimbra, Portugal. During the same time, she makes a Theater Course, - takes part for 6 years of the Theater Group CITAC - has a radio programm about Art and works in an Art Gallery where she makes experimental videos and installations. Since 1994 student at Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie, Berlin (dfffb).



February 9th

Montreal la Blanche (CAN, 2016, 87 min.) Bachir Bensaddek



The film is based on Bensaddek's 2004 play and it centres on Kahina (Karina Aktouf), a former Algerian pop star who abandoned the country during the Algerian Civil War and emigrated to Canada to live in peace and privacy. One Christmas Eve, however, she gets into a taxi driven by Amokrane (Rabah Aït Ouyahia), a more recent Algerian immigrant who recognizes her, forcing each to confront questions of personal identity and cultural assimilation as their personal stories and dramas collide.



Bachir Bensaddek is a Canadian television director of Algerian Berber descent, best known for his co-direction of 2002 Emmy Award-winning TV series Cirque du Soleil: Fire Within. Born in Algeria, Bensaddek came to Montreal as a student before immigrating to Canada. In May 2011, he released his documentary film Rap arabe, covering the rap scene in three countries (Morocco, Lebanon, Syria).



March 9th

Human Flow (GER/USA, 2017, 140 min.) Ai Weiwei

Directed by artist-activist Ai Weiwei and filmed in 40 refugee camps in 23 countries, this stunningly cinematic documentary chronicles the staggering breadth of the global refugee crisis with uncommon insight and empathetic artistry. Ai Weiwei captures the condition of today's more-than-65-million displaced individuals as they look for a place to call home. To profoundly moving effect, footage of the camps is interwoven with personal testimonies from those forced from their native lands due to war, famine and climate change.



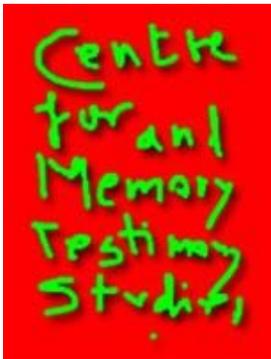
Though perhaps more famous for his art installations and his defiance of the Chinese authorities, Ai Weiwei, who now lives in Berlin, has made more than a dozen documentaries and his cinematic sophistication reaches new heights here—the drone shots alone will leave you gasping for the way they powerfully convey the scale of the crisis. *"Human Flow is a personal journey, an attempt to understand the conditions of humanity in our days... The film is made with deep beliefs in the value of human rights. In this time of uncertainty, we need more tolerance, compassion and trust for each other since we all are one. Otherwise, humanity will face an even bigger crisis..."*

Centre for Memory and Testimony Studies

The Centre was created on January 14, 2013. Based at Wilfrid Laurier University, CMTS aims to be a catalyst for interdisciplinary research and a space of confluence for scholars, artists and community agencies working in the field of memory representation and testimonial studies in the 21st century. CMTS seeks to undertake comparative explorations of how memory and its counterpart, forgetting, are represented in Canada and how these approaches compare with other researches, artistic representations and investigations undertaken in other cultural and geographic spaces.

The scope of the activities of CMTS is not only international but also multi-disciplinary, opening the possibility for debate and on-going collaboration among professionals and practitioners who have traditionally been separated from one another.

CMTS is open to faculty, students, artists, writers and filmmakers and any one whose work and activities are linked to the field of memory and testimony representations. CMTS seeks to become a forum for joint initiatives—conferences, workshops, exhibits, teaching programs, and publications—either originating or hosted in Canada.



www.cmtstudies.org

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