

Monographic Editorial

"Documentary and Fiction in Contemporary Latin American Cinema: Borders and Roads"

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Distinguishing between documentary and fiction has been an open debate from the very start. The first productions considered documentaries created staging that determined or exclusively dealt with the reality that was recorded. The case of *Nanouk el esquimal* by Robert Flaherty is well known as an example of this incidence in the characters and their actions, not like a manipulation of the world represented, but rather like the inherent necessity of the documentary to organize itself like a type of story.

The theoretical reflections developed on these exchanges have given form to the notion of hybridity, that proposes a meeting place between both narratives. Our interest upon organizing this dossier was mainly to update this discussion, recognizing its roots in a phenomenon as old as cinema itself, interrogating the current practices of Latin American cinema and its ways of debating the borders between fiction and documentary, also revealing the political power of these cruces that allow for imagining other ways of representing or imagining possible worlds. We interpret these "powers of invention" (Lazzarato) as micropolitical tactics to endure in adverse political, social and economic contexts like contemporary times.

We are interested in putting concepts into circulation that would make a broader study of such transits. For such, the notion of indetermination developed by Emilio Bernini proved useful, with which a reflection is established regarding the post-documentary to understand a filmic mode that lies in the historic real but is not thought of as different from the fiction (p.298). Other contributions to this reflection come from the same artistic practice,

like the case of the Portuguese documentary filmmaker Salomé Lamas, the Chilean Camila José Donoso, and the Argentine filmmaker and professor Sergio Wolf. Lamas defines his procedures as "parafictions", in which "there is an anomaly in regards to the meeting of fiction and nonfiction, that are like parallel lines, but that finally meet". Donoso has disseminated the concept of "transfiction" to explain her cinema, pushing the predefinitions of the documentary and fiction, to propose a productive relationship between the people and communities with which she and the film crew work. Wolf states that in a documentary, that which is called a "scene" is configured: "That scene forces me to invent, and there is nothing more challenging than having to invent in a documentary, genre that is presumed to be tied to or choked by the real and concrete" (p.11).

As a result of our interest to recognize these reflections from the place of creation, we decided to open a space within the dossier to writings that came from the filmmakers. Here you will find the contributions of Camila José Donoso, Tiziana Panizza and Fernando Lavanderos.

The articles that comprise this dossier address this problem in different ways. Although there are multiple similarities between the articles, there are three predominant classifications in which to group them.

In the most specific reflection on the limits of the documentary and the fiction, we find "That sex that is not 100011001: On digital/Chilean/trans visibility *" by Carl Fischer, who analyzes three Chilean films that define how transfiction in their way of generating a continuity between life and the scenic representation of its protagonists and calls attention to digital cinema as privileged space for the portraying trans people to share features of plasticity and hybridity. In a similar category but from the territory of fiction is "History in Chilean Fiction Films: Strategies for an Audiovisual Common Sense Production" by Claudio Salinas et al, in which the authors propose that the historic representation in Chilean cinema works based on the comprehension of the present, as a way of "imagining, reinforcing and dislocating" current conflicts. Also, in that same category is the article where Christian León analyzes the subjective shift in the Ecuadorian documentary, breaking with a strong tradition

of social and nationalist documentary and creates a new pact between filmmakers and audience in which there is a convergence of both a desire to show life itself in a way that is trustworthy, as well as historical, social, discursive, narrative and technological mediations that make it possible.

In addition, we identify an interest to address the problem of the memory and the political past that manifests for example in the article by Martín Farías, who examines almost 200 musical documentaries made between in the mid-90s and today, focusing on the relative invisibility of this genre due to its border location between documentary cinema and the music, at the same time recognizing a tendency that has to do with turning towards intimate and personal stories as well as the production regarding memory in post-dictatorship. Meanwhile, María Belén Contreras analyzes *Cuaterros* (2016) by Albertina Carri in the tone of a filmic essay, highlighting her intention to establish archivism as theme as well as a mechanism of representation so that the de-hierarchization of the materials comes as a method of investigation of the personal and filmic memory. In this same category, we find the work of Philippa Page and Cecilia Sosa, an attempt to accompany the transnational documentary project of Alejo Moguillansky and map from different dimensions post-dictatorship Argentina, interrogating from inside the same process, its ethic, consistency and its procedures.

Finally, among the collaborations centered on the work of filmmakers, there is "Variations of realism in contemporary Chilean cinema. The movies of Alejandro Fernández Almendras", in which Carolina Urrutia proposes to study the realist operations with which the filmmaker works, critique of the dominant economic system, as well as its documenting procedures. In her text on the film by Pablo Larraín *No*, Rocío Silva Moreno proposes that the strategies of verisimilitude together with institutional validation of the film propose a construction of complex political implications, given that the conflict is redistributed from the functional mode to the dominant model, which at the same time portrays and hides the historic past. Finally, "Essay aspects of documentary falsity. Study of A paper tiger" by Isleny Cruz addresses this film by Ospina as a work that transits from the notion of the false documentary to expressions characteristic of the audiovisual essay. The film is self-reflexive and incorporates both a reflection on the Colombian historical confluence, and the modes of representation, among which the *collage* as vanguard form has a central place.

In the organizing of this dossier, we wanted to propose diverse roads into the issue that would allow for us to address it from a wide variety of angles. We received many, diverse works; those that comprise this volume give good look into a discussion that is certainly not resolved and may continue to be even more relevant thanks to these contributions.

References

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