

LIFT DEBUTS EIGHT COMMISSIONED FILMS MADE FROM THE MADVO COLLECTION

Toronto, January 12, 2018— In 2014, the **Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto** received a donation of a 200-reel collection of the films and outtakes of local documentary filmmaker Jacques Madvo. Madvo travelled the world from the 1960s to the 1980s, shooting 16mm footage that made its way into the *People and Places* documentaries he produced for TVO. The footage is a treasure trove of documentation of international culture and life from almost a half-century ago. With the assistance of an Initiatives Grant from the Canada Council for the Arts, LIFT **commissioned eight films and videos** that incorporate the Madvo collection footage as a starting point. These films will debut over two nights at the **Revue Cinema** at 400 Roncesvalles Avenue, **January 23 and 24, 2018**.

The participating filmmakers include both veterans of the field and emerging filmmakers. Each of them made works that explore personal cultural connections, interrogate the nature of documentary and look at the specific material qualities of filmmaking that the footage inspired. The resulting films are works that foreground the artistic resonance of the Madvo footage and find clues to our contemporary world. Two filmmaking teams even travelled to Colombia and Iran to supplement Madvo's footage with present-day experiences, expanding Madvo's quest into the modern world. The filmmakers include Stephen Broomer, Ben Donoghue and Julieta María, Franci Duran, Zoë Heyn-Jones, Mike Hoolboom, Fraser McCallum, Madi Piller, and the filmmaking trio of Faraz Anoushahpour, Parastoo Anoushahpour and Ryan Ferko.

The Madvo Collection Commissioning Project

Tuesday, January 23, 2018 at 7:00pm

Wednesday, January 24, 2018 at 7:00pm

Revue Cinema, 400 Roncesvalles Avenue

Each night features a different 50-minute program.

Admission: \$12 General / \$9 for LIFT and Revue Cinema members

TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2018

Fanfare, Fraser McCallum, 9 min.

Fanfare examines links between national identity, celebration, and state power by working with images of ceremonies and sites filmed by Jacques Madvo in the 1970s. Madvo's films document a moment when traditional military celebrations began to appear against the backdrop of modernizing Canadian cities. The incongruity between modern cityscapes and military marches reveals the coexistence of two vastly different expressions of statecraft. The residue of this unresolved juxtaposition continues to this day, and is taken up in new footage which builds upon the themes identified in Madvo's images.

Soy un ser cuyas raíces // I am a being whose roots, Zoë Heyn-Jones, 12 min.

Soy un ser cuyas raíces // I am a being whose roots reworks Jacques Madvo's *Countries & People: Venezuela* to explore labour and migration. Taking the final words of the film's voice-over as a starting point, *Soy un ser cuyas raíces // I am a being whose roots* pairs Madvo's film footage with a text-based conversation with young Venezuelan literature scholar and language teacher Angel Said Dominguez Pinto. Dominguez Pinto relocated to Panama in 2014 to make a living teaching English, Spanish and German in Panama City after Venezuela's economic collapse. Over e-mail, we co-authored a conversational text, exploring migration, labour, exile, and hemispheric relationships.

Chooka, Faraz Anoushahpour, Parastoo Anoushahpour and Ryan Ferko, 20 min.

In 1973, the Shah of Iran commissioned the construction of a paper factory in the lush northern province of Gilan. The arrival of heavy industry in a predominately agricultural region brought with it a series of interventions into this landscape, including the construction of modernist apartment blocks and purpose-built villas to house foreign engineers from Canada and the United States and their families. Their stay, however, came to a sudden halt in 1979 with the Iranian revolution forcing them to flee the site overnight.

Chooka unfolds around the site of this factory, returning to the location 40 years after it mysteriously appeared in Jacques Madvo's 1978 footage. Treating his archival material as a guide, the film moves through a landscape altered by industry, technology and revolution, bringing silent images from the past forward to a location caught within a perpetually uncertain present.

Fountains of Paris, Stephen Broomer, 8 min.

Jacques Madvo's street photography of Paris in 1961 is a launching point for a reflection on water forms and their distortion of optics.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2018

The Shifting Sands, Madi Piller, 11 min.

Jacques Madvo's documentary, *Israel: Land of Destiny* (1977), is abstracted in *The Shifting Sands*, a new film by Madi Piller. Piller's film asserts the intersection of history and identification with the Land through the personal struggles of the filmmaker's father as a young Jewish refugee, arriving in 1946 in Palestine. High contrast, repeated images of the war in 1948 immediately after the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz Israel (to be known as the State of Israel) interact with Madvo's observations of Israeli society after its first 30 years of existence. The film juxtaposes images in a fractured timeline that reflects on the acceptance of the formation of a Jewish state. The work is framed within the philosophical thinking of Martin Buber and the recent history of Israel. Shifting sands can both erase and reveal human endeavour.

Nostalgia de mi muelle / Nostalgia of my pier, Ben Donoghue and Julieta María, 12 min.

Mixing contemporary footage of the Caribbean coast of Colombia and scenes from the 1970s documentary series *People and Places*, shot by Jaques Madvo in Lebanon and the West Bank, the film explores the migration of Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian people to Colombia in the early 20th century. Over three sections elements of culture, place and transformation take place.

A black woman preparing Arab food in Barranquilla, Colombia is juxtaposed with footage of a dinner celebration in Lebanon. A Colombian/Arab pop star is seen on TV in a Colombian/Palestinian restaurant. A mother of pearl workshop builds on the disappearing tradition of Christian iconography of Palestine. Traditions from a place of memory are transformed and given a new trajectory in a new place.

Traje de luces // Suit of Lights, Franci Duran, 18 min.

Suit of Lights is an expressive document composed with footage of a Spanish bullfight, that iconic imagery of highly decorated masculinity and violence masked as nationalism. The footage was drawn from Jacques Madvo Collection material filmed in Spain between 1976-1978. Madvo shot this footage at a time when Spain began its difficult and flawed transition to democracy in the years following dictator Francisco Franco's death in 1975. "To make peace is to forget. To reconcile it is necessary that memory be faulty and limited," stated Susan Sontag in *Regarding the Pain of Others*. The film consists of 16mm footage that has been decayed in soil, contact-printed and laboriously re-photographed and these abstractions of light and darkness ground the inquiry surrounding why citizens accept the harm done to others in their name.

3 Dreams of Horses, Mike Hoolboom, 5.5 min.

Film is made out of gelatin that comes from horses. They're waiting to be slaughtered, so that pictures can be made.

LIFT's Madvo Collection Commissioning Project has been supported by the Initiatives Program of the Canada Council for the Arts (Media Arts Section). Special Thanks to Denis Madvo and Hermine Madvo for their support of this initiative.

The Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT) is Canada's foremost artist-run production and education organization dedicated to celebrating excellence in the moving image. LIFT exists to provide support and encouragement for independent filmmakers and artists through affordable access to production, post-production and exhibition equipment; professional and creative development; workshops and courses; commissioning and exhibitions; artist-residencies; and a variety of other services. LIFT is supported by its membership, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Ontario Arts Foundation, the Government of Ontario and the Toronto Arts Council. <http://lift.ca>