

Toronto's 'Other' Art Scene

In this project Richard Mongiat and David Sylvestre endeavor to trace the history of artist generated galleries and collectives that operated as alternative exhibition venues in Toronto from the late 1980's to present day. And show, over the course of several short videos, how a movement that started as a group of renegade artist collectives exhibiting their work in temporary spaces eventually evolved into the sustainable artist collective galleries we are familiar with today.

It's important to document this period in Toronto's art history when there was an explosion of artists coming on to the scene and a shortage of opportunities and venues to show their work.

This moment was exceptional because of the sheer number of artists who embraced the DIY ethos to work together to create collectives and exhibitions that took place outside of the scope of the existing gallery and museum institutions.

These artists were not content to wait for galleries curators and institutions to recognize them – instead they created their own art scene. These are stories of passion, hope, imagination, ambition, industriousness and determination.

And nobody is documenting this. If it's not being recognized by an institution or museum, then in a historical sense, it fails to exist. This project's purpose is to make sure that these initiatives by artists are documented, celebrated and recognized as the forerunners of the visual arts scene we know today.

Produced and directed by Richard Mongiat and David Sylvestre were very much part of the alternative visual arts scene that they are documenting. Richard founded Loop Gallery (with artist Catherine Beaudette). David was one of the founding members of The Red Head Gallery and Roundup. And both founded the From*A*Pit Collective (with artist Krys Verral) and curated two shows, "True to Form" at the Dufferin Mall and "Pop-Eye" at College Park.

The House Project

Collective Members: Artists: Penelope Stewart, Madeleine Lamont, Siobhan Gray, Lois Andison, Christine Ho Ping Kong and Suzy Schlanger. Writers: Sylvie Fortin, Claire Christie

Cinematography and sound recording Jeff Winch

Edited by Vanessa Jung

Sound Editing and Original Music by Nicholas Stirling

Archival Photography by Isaac Applebaum

Archival video Fred Fitzpatrick

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