

The view from abroad, courtesy of foreign filmmakers speaking primarily to their fellow citizens, is revealing, refreshing and occasionally jarring. The lineup encompasses a range of documentary approaches and techniques, with each film (of which only a couple have been seen by a U.S. audience) followed by a discussion of its goals, strategies, aesthetics and ethics. We will explore central aspects of nonfiction filmmaking including the representation of reality, the properties of storytelling and the interplay between advocacy and art.

**Jan. 22 *The Rebel Surgeon*** Erik Gandini (Sweden, 2017, 52 min)

After 30 years, orthopedic surgeon Erik Erichsen had enough of Swedish regulations, waiting lists and red tape. He and his wife Sennait, a nurse, flew to a region of Ethiopia where doctors are scarce. He examines hundreds of patients a day, and his waiting room is always packed. There's never time for a nuanced conversation; it's more likely to be something like, "That foot's got to come off, otherwise you will die." In the operating room, he's upbeat as he explains to his team how they're going to supplement their meager equipment with bicycle spokes, cable ties, hairpins and a cheap hand drill. But why did this Swedish surgeon come to this particular place? And how does he ensure that in his own domain, with no external monitoring, he doesn't turn into an autocrat? [www.idfa.nl/en/film/85b34a7d-7f9a-44ce-b402-033d68e17dcd/the-rebel-surgeon](http://www.idfa.nl/en/film/85b34a7d-7f9a-44ce-b402-033d68e17dcd/the-rebel-surgeon)

Erik Gandini was born and grew up in Italy. His feature documentary debut *Raja Sarajevo* (1994), about a group of young friends in the besieged city, was shot during the war with a small Hi-8 camera and received international exposure. *Not without Prijedor* (1996) centered on Bosnian refugees in Sweden returning to fight the war. *Amerasians* (1998) was about the 100,000 children of U.S. soldiers left in Vietnam. *Sacrificio – Who Betrayed Che Guevara?* (2001, with Tarik Saleh) questioned the legend around its subject's death. *Surplus: Terrorized into Being Consumers* (2003), a personal visual odyssey about the destructive nature of consumer culture shot in China, U.S., Cuba, Italy, Hungary, India, Canada and Sweden, won the Silver Wolf at IDFA (Amsterdam) and screened at more than 70 festivals. *GITMO – The New Rules of War* (2005, with Tarik Saleh), premiered at IDFA and was awarded first prize at Seattle IFF. *The Swedish Theory of Love* (2015)

**Jan. 29 *Yukiko*** Young Sun Noh (France, 2018, 70 min)

"Can you mourn for a person of whom you have no memory?" That's the question posed in this contemplative kaleidoscope of intimate impressions and associations that connect three women: the filmmaker, her mother, who was born and still lives in Korea, and her Japanese grandmother, who traveled to Seoul during the Japanese occupation of Korea to join her Korean lover. Shortly after the birth of her daughter, she returned alone to Tokyo. Hardly anything else is known about her. Noh's mother, who was a young child when the Korean War broke out, also has no memory of her. Call her "Yukiko," she once suggested. Over images of everyday landscapes, houses, a memorial and a home for the elderly, Noh muses about the old love story, and about daughters

growing up far away from their mothers. A meeting on the island of Okinawa widens her perspective, and the universal tragedy of history gradually emerges.

[www.idfa.nl/en/film/bd48803a-a784-42e0-a2ff-1cd0c2c83b7a/yukiko](http://www.idfa.nl/en/film/bd48803a-a784-42e0-a2ff-1cd0c2c83b7a/yukiko)

Director's statement:

During Japan's occupation of Korea, a Japanese woman goes to Seoul to join her Korean lover. At the end of the Second World War, she brought a girl into the world in Pyongyang, then had to flee. She returned to Japan, alone.

I dream of this woman, a foreigner, my unknown grandmother, deceased, without a name, without a face, isolated between two countries, simultaneously near and far, Korea and Japan. I dream of my mother, also so far away.

Over three generations, mothers and daughters remain strangers to one another. *Yukiko* is a story of missed transmissions, it is an attempt to retrieve fragments of stories, memories in tatters.

**Feb. 5 *The Dread* (*El Esanto*)** Martin Benchimol, Pablo Aparo (Argentina, 2017, 67 min)

The residents of the village of El Dorado don't like doctors. Anything short of a surgical procedure they can take care of themselves. Each has his or her own specialty and methods. Some heal from a distance—send a text message, the patient makes the sign of the cross and it's taken care of—while others use a special piece of string or incantation. For a toothache, hold a frog against your cheek. There's one man who can heal the dreaded affliction known as *espanto*, a mortal fear. How does 65-year-old Jorge do this? People prefer to keep it a secret, but those who have undergone his treatment will tell you it's very effective. Meanwhile, the men won't let their wives see Jorge for anything. In this drily comic film with a light touch, the villagers tell us their stories, exposing the inaccuracy of their theories and the mystery concealed behind them.

[www.idfa.nl/en/film/15f68468-be03-469b-b4fa-03011df1d12d/the-dread](http://www.idfa.nl/en/film/15f68468-be03-469b-b4fa-03011df1d12d/the-dread)

Best Mid-Length Documentary: IDFA

Bueno Aires natives Martin Benchimol (b. 1985) and Pablo Aparo (b. 1986) studied image and sound design at the University of Buenos Aires. Benchimol is a cinematographer and director, and Aparo is an editor and director. They previously made another documentary about a small town, *People of the River* (2012).

Interview (in Spanish): [www.otroscines.com/nota-12055-conociendo-a-los-directores-de-la-competencia-argentina](http://www.otroscines.com/nota-12055-conociendo-a-los-directores-de-la-competencia-argentina) (Apr 16, 2017)

“This curious documentary . . . astutely uses the singularity of the characters that it presents and draws, based on a series of brief interviews, a light film essay on the common sense of a small community that seems stopped in time: an ideology built notoriously with a handful of moth-eaten prejudices and bizarre speculations. . . It is a particular world in miniature, with its own rules, dynamics and contradictions, to which two avid filmmakers arrive with the almost invasive logic of the explorers. —Alejandro Ligenti, *La Nacion* (Buenos Aires)

“El Dorado is . . . a place where solidarity coexists with slander, religiosity with superstition, and conservatism is king. A world of ancestral rituals, of sexual repression and male supremacy, where homosexuality is a bad word and everyone seems united by the distrust of traditional

medicine. That is, towards civilization and progress as we know them.” —Gaspar Zimmerman, *Clarín* (Buenos Aires)

**Feb. 12 *The Barricade*** Bruno Masi (France, 2018, 20 x 3 min)

After months of unrest, student protests broke out in Paris in May 1968 that would ultimately lead to a general strike throughout France. The focus of the protests was on traditional institutions and the oppressive capitalist system. *The Barricade* is an hour-by-hour account of the most violent day of protest, in 20 episodes of three minutes. It was first released through Twitter as a series of live tweets, 50 years to the day of the events. This made it possible to maintain a historically accurate chronology, in what might best be described as fact-based fiction. The piece captures two perspectives on the protests through archive footage and two voice-overs. The first is a student at the center of the resisting force, and the other is an immigrant worker caught up in the conflict that isn't his. Initially, there's a certain romanticism in what we see, but the images become increasingly intense leading up to the dreadful event that changes the lives of both protagonists. [www.labarricade.fr/en/](http://www.labarricade.fr/en/)  
[www.idfa.nl/en/film/4f3b0099-a096-447f-8662-c0e5a78afac1/the-barricade](http://www.idfa.nl/en/film/4f3b0099-a096-447f-8662-c0e5a78afac1/the-barricade)

Bruno Masi is a photojournalist. In 2011, Masi and fellow photojournalist Guillaume Heraut produced a multimedia installation, a book of photography and the award-winning web doc “The Zone” [https://s1.lemde.fr/webdocs\\_contenu/fichiers/la\\_zone\\_va/index.html](https://s1.lemde.fr/webdocs_contenu/fichiers/la_zone_va/index.html) for *Le Monde* based on their visits to Chernobyl.

**Feb. 19 *The Other Side of the Wall*** (Al Otro Lado Del Muro) Pau Ortiz (Spain/Mexico, 2017, 68')

Rocío and big brother Alejandro came to Mexico from Honduras with their mom and younger siblings looking for a better life. When their mother ends up in prison, tensions bubble between the older children as they struggle to keep the family afloat. *The Other Side of the Wall* roots its timely story about dislocation and migration in an intimate, emotional domestic drama.

[www.theothersideofthewalldoc.com](http://www.theothersideofthewalldoc.com)

Best Feature Documentary at DocsDF. Int'l Doc FF of Mexico City

Best International Documentary at Hot Docs Canadian Int'l Doc Festival

Gold Hugo for Best Documentary at Chicago International Film Festival

Pau Ortiz is a director and editor. His previous film was *13 Maneras de Quedarse Solo* (2014).

Director's statement:

In 2014 I worked for a nonprofit organization which helps convicted women, overseeing their cases and helping their reintroduction to society. I met Rocío and Alejandro's mother on one of my visits to prison, and I was immediately struck by her energy and clear-headedness in such a terrible environment. The other inmates had a great respect for her.

The moment I pointed my camera at them and conducted my first interview I felt drawn to them, and I was particularly intrigued by the way they were handling the situation. The whole thing seemed to me like an extremely difficult predicament, but here I saw two courageous individuals

with a great sense of humor who were willing to keep fighting. And I deeply admired them.

I later found out more about their story. Their life had been full of ups and downs from an early age, but the family had stayed together and remained strong through all of it. That history had turned them into very unique individuals; they were a great, tight-knit family and their ties were deep and complex.

Feb. 26 **Sneak Preview** (France/Netherlands, 2018)