

pulse

Your North Shore
Guide to arts & culture

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Filmmakers Ryder Thomas White and Alexandra Caulfield bring their cross-country community project to the North Shore for a month-long presentation at the Seymour Art Gallery.
PHOTO CINDY GOODMAN

Canadian Frame(lines) explores regional perspectives

Coast to coast

Canadian Frame(lines), on now through June 18, at the Seymour Art Gallery (seymourartgallery.com). Artist talk: Sunday, May 15, 2 p.m. Opening reception: Sunday, May 15, 3-4:30 p.m. Deep Cove films screening: Saturday, June 18, 2 p.m.

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A video exhibition that opened Wednesday at Deep Cove's Seymour Art Gallery is offering gallerygoers a unique opportunity to see snapshots of the realities of life in 11 small Canadian towns from the personal perspectives of the residents who call them home.

Vancouver filmmakers Ryder Thomas White and Alexandra

Caulfield embarked on a community filmmaking project in 2013 and spent the majority of the year travelling from coast to coast. Their vehicle of choice was a modified school bus, complete with a living space as well as film processing lab, and their goal was to connect with residents of a host of diverse communities ranging from Pender Harbour, B.C., to St. Stephen, N.B.

Interested in contributing to the ongoing discussion of Canadian identity, the duo sought program participants and asked them about themselves and what they felt was important about their respective communities, encouraging them to express themselves through film. After offering training, project participants were given a camera and a roll of black and white Super 8mm film.

The resulting 74 films, silent and each over three minutes

long, are being showcased at the Seymour gallery as part of an exhibition, entitled *Canadian Frame(lines)*.

"It features films that you're likely never going to see anywhere else and images from towns that you're probably never going to go to. It's a really unique way to essentially give yourself a little walking tour of over 70 people's points of view on their towns and you don't have to leave the beauty and serenity of Deep Cove," says White.

The filmmakers met while studying in Simon Fraser University's film production program, and are currently partners in Caulfield White Creative Industries, a small scale commercial videography and visual marketing company that produces

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Finished films screened in individual communities

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media for artists, entrepreneurs and small businesses for primarily use on the web and social media.

The idea for *Canadian Frame(lines)* goes back to 2010.

"It really came out of a combined desire to travel, and also work with film and also work with community. Both of us had a strong desire coming out of school to unearth real life stories and small scale stories, things that might not break on a national, provincial or even major metropolitan level but things that small groups of people would find important and people in vastly different sorts of environments might find interesting or enlightening," says White, a member of Iris Film Collective.

Prior to arriving in the different communities, with populations ranging from 400 to 4,000 people, the duo forged connections with representatives of community-based organizations. Through those partnerships, they were supported in connecting with local residents upon arrival.

"Meeting people from all sorts of different backgrounds, walks of life, really vastly different life experiences, that

was something I found really fascinating and really enjoyable. I love hearing people's stories and everyone has one in them that they want to tell if someone will listen. I was really happy to just talk with these people either after our workshops or a lot of people had us over for dinner or just saw us around town and told us about their lives and that was probably the most enjoyable thing for me," says Caulfield. She produces independent films, mainly shorts and has one feature that's in post-production right now. She also serves as festival co-ordinator for Cinema Spectacular, an all-Canadian motion picture variety show, set for May 29 at the Vancity Theatre.

The films were screened in their individual communities and the full show was exhibited once before, at Vancouver's Interurban Gallery in 2014.

"It was exciting to be asked to show it again and it's been fun and nostalgic to revisit the work," says Caulfield.

At the Seymour gallery, *Canadian Frame(lines)* will feature 10 digital projectors screening the films simultaneously, as well as an ambient soundscape element the duo created from sounds recorded in the different communities.

"There will also be some didactic panels that give a little bit of detail about each of the communities and a context for people of the images that they're seeing. People don't have to stay at one projector and watch all the films front to back. They can move around the space and find what's interesting to them and just engage with the work that way," says Caulfield.

As part of the exhibition, Caulfield and White will be working with interested local community members to help them produce their own three-minute films, which will screen on the final day of the show.

"I would really encourage people to come out and do that. It's a really fun and interesting and exciting way to take a fresh look at your community. Really when you're out there with a camera that's film and you're not instantly seeing the photos you get back and you have to plan how you want to shoot it, I think it helps you see the community with fresh eyes," she says.

Community members (teams of one to three participants) interested in working with the duo to learn basic filmmaking and direct an 8mm short film in Deep Cove, can find out more at seymourartgallery.com.