

A Vida Politica

A documentary film by Katrina Mansoor made under the Real World Scheme jointly organised by Pathways of Women's Empowerment RPC and Screen South

A series of creative films exploring the activism of 4 Brazilian women, as they demonstrate innovative ways of bringing hidden issues into the political public domain.

Each film marks the activism as its key driving element. Stylistically, the films capture the point of view and reality for our shape shifting activists. Each focusing on the way that the activists employ their activism, through Image, Voice, Art and Body. The journey for the viewer is to understand the journey from being inactive and invisible to active. These short films capture key moments in the lives of activists who take their personal 'activism' into the public arena.

Each film intends to create the contrast between the person and the public, which is shown metaphorically in the way that the shots are built from the private, intimate close-ups to the wide shots of the activism in practice.

Whilst each film intends to mark the activism as its key driving element, stylistically, the films capture the point of view and reality for our shapeshifting activists. The journey for the viewer is to understand the journey from being inactive and invisible to active. Each film focuses on the way that the activists employ their activism, through Image, Voice, Art and Body. To this end, the narrative is joined in a specific way to compliment the way that the activism is being employed.

The films are focused on a multitude of ways to operate within society demonstrating the ingenuity of their operations rather than backstory to causes and issues...

Body - Daspu, Brazils ironic and intelligent fashion label run by Prostitutes – Daspu's focus is to disregard the notion of the prostitute as a 'victim'. This short is about Jane focusing on her ability to 'choose' to be a prostitute and to have the 'right' to be a citizen, despite her work. The film begins as she gets ready for a fashion shoot for Daspu, as her hair is done and the location is setup, the photographer directs her and you see the 'modelling' process from Jane's point of view. Additional to that you hear Jane's views on how becoming a model has changed her perspective of the world. Also how people's perceptions change when they look at you as a model, rather than a prostitute.

Voice - Head of the Domestic workers association in Brazil, Creuza is an exceptional activist. Creuza believes that you can change things most within politics, so she is pursuing a political career for the fourth time. She believes she has a chance this time. This short documents one of Creuza's political speeches in several places. The fragmentary nature of the film creatively emphasises her form of activism - her voice. She has nothing else; no money, no status; no ability to buy votes. The shots contrast and focus on the people on the streets, the people in churches, as she walks through the city playing her political theme tune and talking about the way she wants to redefine the situation for black people and domestic workers.

Art - Pro-choice campaigners have had several rebuffs from the Catholic Church over their stance on abortion. The reality for women in Brazil (especially those that are poor and black) is that having an abortion is illegal and dangerous. This film captures the endeavours of a street artist dressed as a clown who wants to teach people through simple set art pieces about the dangers. Also a street protest campaigning for Abortions to be made legal.

Image - the Black Movement assert their rights through various forms of activism. The role of 'hair' when considering racial identity within Brazil, is to look at African hair as a vehicle for wider political activism. Set within a hairdressers in Salvador - observing the way that black women use their hair to promote their identity and image. The images focus on the braiding, weaving, dreading and afro-styling of women who have moved away from the notion that only hair that 'swings' is good hair.