

ICA 07 Film Program Report

The 2007 ICA Film Program pioneered the inclusion of film within the conference's options for panels and plenary sessions. While this is not the first time that a film has been shown at an ICA panel or plenary, the Film Program offered a series of screenings with directors and/or producers in attendance. San Francisco's vibrant and rich film community was the perfect environment to discuss communications from the gazes and perspective of local filmmakers. Each of the six films under the umbrella of the theme contributed to the creation of an illustrative mosaic of Bay Area film production. The films ranged from short productions by local film collectives to an Oscar nominated documentary. The topics addressed included globalization, immigration, racism, marginalized communities, queer identity, and political activism. The main asset of the program was the presence of the filmmakers and the lively Q&A sessions that followed each of the screenings. This is what made the program very special.

Regarding attendance, some members of the public were there for all the programs, commenting on what an interesting and different option the screenings were. As someone mentioned to us, "I thought that the room was going to be packed." Looking at the numbers (see Figure 1), it seems that we can be satisfied with the attendance, considering that this was the first time a film program was offered. In hindsight, and considering ways to improve future offerings, audience numbers could have been increased by: having the screenings in a room closer to main conference venues; giving more info about the films in the print program rather than providing a general blurb about it; placing flyers on various tables located in hotel corridors and outside conference rooms. It is also important to note how difficult it was to fit a program with films of different lengths into the existing panel schedule. But we think that it was a right decision to do it this way because it incorporated the film program as an option within the offerings for a specific time slot. It will be important to figure out how to have more time for the Q&A sessions, as they were excellent but too brief.

The following are some suggestions for future Film Programs at ICA conferences:

- 1) While virtually every location in the world has a local film production scene that can guarantee good material for at least one day of screenings, we recommend the addition of a global/international segment to the program, as we had originally considered for a two-day option in San Francisco.
- 2) Extending the Film Program to two or three days, with one day dedicated to local producers and filmmakers and the rest to screenings of a selection of submitted films. This will require a committee/jury to select the materials and grant awards.
- 3) Many attendees expressed interested in seeing a number of the films, but were daunted by the thought of sitting through hours and hours of screenings in one day. A suggestion is to shorten the daily length of the screenings (e.g. to afternoons), and to have it run multiple days. (Rental equipment costs per day may be a problem).
- 4) Having a guest ICA attendee (other than the Film Program organizers) introduce a film that is within her/his area of expertise. In addition to the potential pedagogical value, this could also help boost attendance. (A problem with this recommendation is having enough time.)

- 5) Lastly, we feel it is very important to choose the local organizer for the Film Program carefully, as this will make or break the significance and coherence of the program. Some qualities to look for in an organizer: a person that has close contacts to the local film producing community; has a commitment to promoting this localism; and if the scope of the film program were to be expanded, has some institutional support mostly in terms of personnel.

In sum, we consider that it is worth aiming for a second film program in Montreal 2008.

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Figure 1. 2007 ICA Film Program Attendance

Film title	Time	Audience size
Queer Women of Color	Su0900	7
Cine Accion / Romantico	Su1030	16
Straight Outta Hunters Point	Su1200	25
Maquilapolis	Su1330	18
Other Cinema	Su1500	11
Weather Underground	Su1630	10