

Digital Nomads

live mixed documentary
by Julia Sokolnicka



What is a live mixed documentary?

Live mixed documentary is an archive of documentary footage edited and composed live in the cinema, gallery or any other screening space, at the reassemblance of a mix performed by the DJ in music or VJ in video art, and within the framing of an occasion.

The method was developed during the artist's research "Reality and Realness" - on notion of conversation as a most inclusive method of knowledge production, and on cinematic intimacy of mobile devices as a documentary tool. She worked on technology as a tool of creating personal content and self-image of the people portrayed on film, incorporating their public image representation and personal social media content into the film.

As both director and cinematographer, she works closely with the portrayed characters - people her age and with similar aspirations and intellectual capability of observing and discussing the odds of the modern world.

Her camera grasps intimate portraits of the generation brought up on internet, that re-invents and challenges collective identity of the global village. Individuals who live in a global context, but at the same time work on alternative and positive proposals for the late capitalism's reality, searching for re-definition of alternative and underground, also within what's offered as freedom - the digital space.

The questions of what is the contemporary definition of counter culture in the western world is one of the main research questions of the project.

An archive of portraits is growing while Julia Sokolnicka's research continues. The contact with her characters also includes the agreement on the contexts of their representation - how they would like to be seen. The idea of inclusivity is one of the project's main rules and it also manifests through a live contact with the audience during the screening and the use of online platforms to maintain it and combine international networks through the notion of the film.

The author is always present mixing each "episode" and she uses her own voice to narrate.

Storylines and narratives



The form of a live mixed film - research based and conversation based production model, creates specific circumstances of a growing archive and much more storylines than one film could handle. It could be treated as a potential of creating a “hard edited” version of it as a series or feature documentary film, or as a potential to constantly revisit and re-frame the collected footage also as a form of an essay film. The live research invites audience as well as the portrayed characters, to change the course of the narrative.

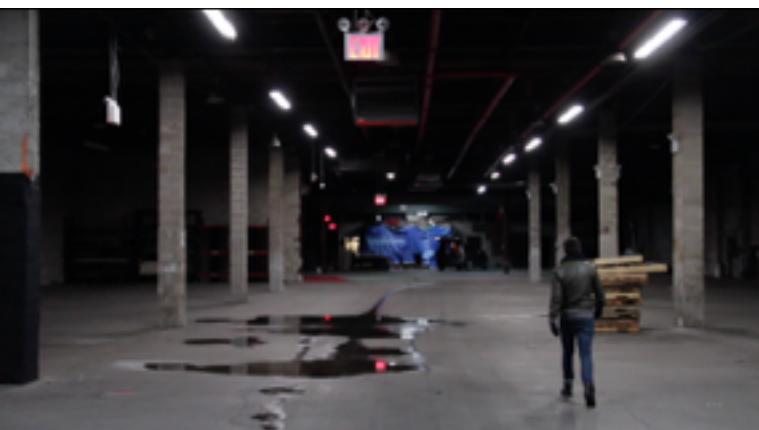
The documentary film plot forming rules are: framing stories and portraits into dialogue/monologue scenes and establishment scenes, following of the characters through time, similar questions and topics and at least few possible narrative crossovers between places and communities portrayed.



The planned production periods and those already realized are following of the research’s problematics. The Digital Nomad trace leads to South-East Asia, to high-tech metropolias of China, tracing alternative collectives of western cities, and interviewing scientists and intellectuals as well as the community of nomadic international artists. The production mode is planned geographically while the narratives follows more the ideas than places.

Nightlife as a Real Space and Utopia

A narrative already realized by Julia Sokolnicka in 2015 and still being followed up, deals with the notion of the underground and identifying contemporary global subcultures.

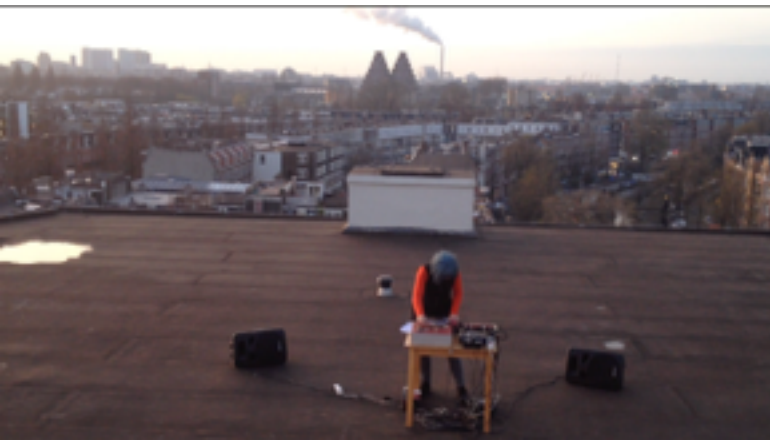


Digital Nomads is a projects that started in New York City in 2014. The city at the time was re-discovering the electronic music rave scene. Since the mid 90’s it has been extensively a difficult place to live for artists and too expensive to host spaces for an actual communal exchange. Post Giuliani New York City has pushed it’s substantial cultural movements to the Underground, evoking an uprising of the DIY culture.

What’s most interesting- it appears that inside of the metropolias with the world’s most expensive real estate rates and rents, the culture does not die, it moves to the digital space and it moves into the night. As one of the portrayed characters- performer Gertjan Francizus says “No one wants to stress at night”.

The focus point of the night life experience in Digital Nomads is not only the extraordinarily smart artists and cultural activists, who work at the grassroots of their cities, but also underlining the importance of the personal, real space experience that they create in their practice. The art and events produced by the “night life people” are always based on cathartic, personal experiences and focused on forming vivid community bonds - notions that are forgotten elsewhere. As an uprising DJ and local Brooklyn personality Ariana Paoletti says “We all sweat on the dancefloor, we touch on the dancefloor, we have to confront each other. The dancefloor is our therapy”.





The Communities and notion of Togetherness

The question of how does the nightlife's freedom convey to the daylife, remains one of the crucial questions of the research. If the space of the night is the promise of future inclusivity and brings experimental social rules to the multiracial, multigender and generally complex society of the future, then is there a place for such bonds outside of the stigma of "party people" and environment of individuals who often identify themselves as outcasts?

Politics of authenticity of the Metropolis

Gentrification is the dark eminence within most communities portrayed in Digital Nomads. The Cities observed until now are Amsterdam, New York and Berlin, and all the featured communities are international. Each city offers a different gentrification politics.

What they all have in common though is the relationship between counterculture and the model of gentrification and the fact that the alternative movements are those who stress the need of authenticity of local cultures, often against the institutional agenda of the city officials.

What's interesting is that the authenticity and the support of the state do not have to necessarily exclude each other (Berlin). It also could exist within a local economy based on the rules of the market (Amsterdam), and finds its own path in the landscape of the late capitalism.



Technology as Space

Use of mixed film footage in the film reassembles how the mixed media narrates today's reality. The concept of the interface of the reality is the artist's ruling aesthetical choice, so Digital Nomads are a film full of GIF's, found footage and screenshots, but also cinematic impressions, stop motion animation and poetic portraits. The entire presentation is performed as a multiscreen projection and it features the character's social media profiles.



Digital Nomads as a Platform:

The online platforms aim to serve the agenda of communities portrayed in the film and to help connect different communities through showing of their work but also informing them of each other. The social media base of the film would be repeating and sharing the platform and field of work of people in the film.

Twitter:

https://twitter.com/nomads_digital

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/digitalnomadsdoc/>





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JULIA SOKOLNICKA, born in Warsaw in 1983, is an experimental and documentary filmmaker, writer and researcher. Her film work comes from documentary cinema and discusses the presence of an author in the cinema, and the space of the cinema itself, as well as performativity of filmmaking. Her work is shown both on film festivals as in gallery spaces, often taking a form of a presentation. She's an author of music, and dance videos and visual concepts for theatre and commercials.

She studied Philosophy in Warsaw University and film directing in Warsaw's Wajda School, and later in National Film and Television School in University of Silesia in Katowice. In 2014 she moved to Amsterdam where she graduated with Master of Film artistic research degree in 2016, with her documentary archive live mixed in the cinema - Digital Nomads (2016) as well as a research "Reality and Realness- the selfie movie" on the use of mobile technology as a cinematic tool building intimacy in documentary film practice.

She worked as a journalist and photojournalist for Polish nongovernmental organization online service ngo.pl in Warsaw, writing about cultural politics of the city. In 2012 she started an art directing company Susok first engaged in social entrepreneurship around ethical trade and vintage, organizing spaces outside of shopping malls, where residents of different ages and backgrounds could meet. She then moved to art directing and designing costumes and set design for theatre film and commercial media projects. Susok continues in Amsterdam as a Dutch company, realizing commercial film projects, product styling and art directing consultations.

As a documentary filmmaker she worked for e-teatr.pl co-creating an online television focusing on theatre in Poland. She then directed and self produced a few short documentaries and music video's. Her short documentary "Side Roads" (2015) has received an international festival recognition.

She continuously collaborates with other artists on projects in the field of theatre, dance, performance art and visual arts.

Since 2015 she's a part of an international performance collective "Physical People".

Julia Sokolnicka is based in Amsterdam and Warsaw.

FILMOGRAPHY

2010 - "Z głowy / In the Head" - Best film Allegro Short na Off Plus Camera 2010

2015 - "Side Roads/ Pobocze" - Best Documentary Los Angeles International Culture Film Festival, Best Student Documentary Mumbai International Film Festival

