Everything Strange and New



Afghan Star

China's Wild West



First Thursday. September 3 2009. 7pm

Wayne has a job, a wife, two kids, and a house. He's living the American Dream. There's a fine line, however, between a dream and nightmare, and Wayne finds himself at odds with the life he has and preoccupied by the life he thinks he wants. He floats passively in a swirling sea inhabited by his emotionally unpredictable wife, his out-of-control young children, and his embattled friends, who have demons of their own. As things change for others. Wayne's life takes emotional turns, which are sometimes subtle and sometimes violent but never enough to shake him off the track he doesn't remember choosing. Writer/director Frazer Bradshaw shows us an exquisitely rendered, but challengingly bleak, examination of daily life. He focuses the story in unique ways that draw attention more intently to the emotional and psychological interplay of ideas, rather than following a narrative arc. Bradshaw, an established cinematographer, frames the world in beautifully composed shots that emphasize Wayne's trapped existence. To underline the moral anomie of the disturbingly familiar universe, he utilizes a jarring, dissonant score at times and moments of silence in others. Everything Strange and New is the kind of transcendent filmmaking that develops a cinematic language all its own, and in doing so opens viewers up to themselves.

First Thursday. November 5 2009. 7pm

After 30 years of Taliban and wartime rule, pop culture is

creeping back into Afghanistan. Director Havana Marking has

captured it in this inspired documentary, Afghan Star. An American

Idol-type contest set in Afghanistan? What moreintriguing inroad

into a region usually represented in our news media by death and

violence? To understand the magnitude of this film, we must look

at the facts -2,000 contestants compete for a chance to be the

next Afghan pop idol. Three of them are women. In an unheard-of

precedent, all genders, ethnic groups, and age sectors are equal.

More than one-third of the country watches the show and votes

with text messages. For many this represents their first encounter

In a larger sense, we get a glimpse into the ongoing struggle of a

country trying to segue into the modern world and the dangerous underpinnings its citizens must navigate. Though moving and in-

spiring, what is really brilliant about Afghan Star is that by observ-

ing a people's relationship to pop culture, we get a different, if not

Recipient of the World Cinema Directing Award: Documentary.

auditions to the finals in Kabul. All is not safe for her subjects

because they must actually risk their lives to sing.

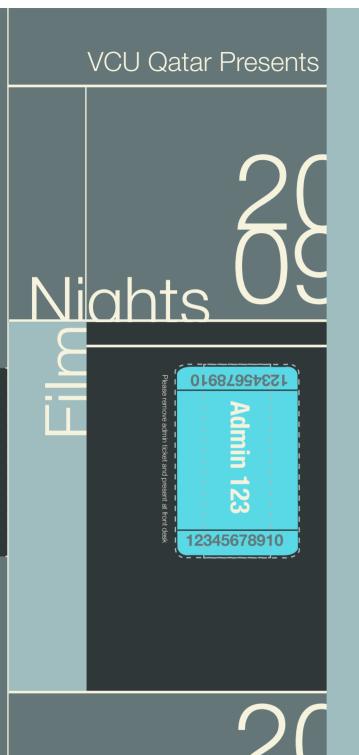
more human, look at this troubled part of the world.

with any kind of democratic process. Marking follows the dramatic stories of four of the contestants over three months, from regional

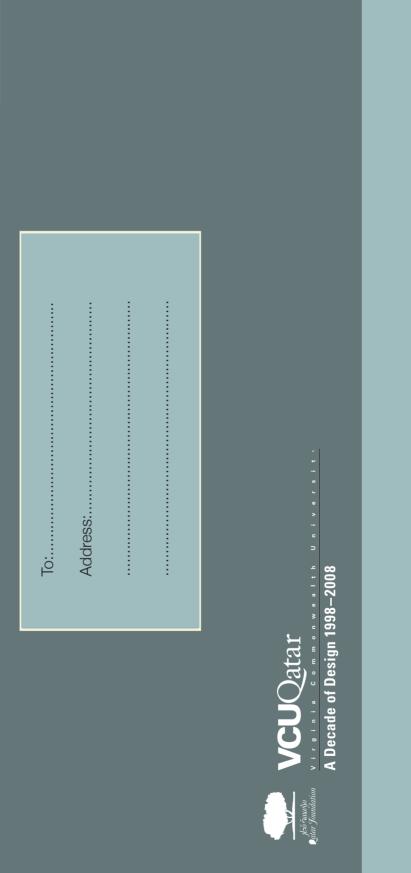
This part-observational, part-impressionistic study of a day in the life of a Muslim community illustrates their hopeful efforts to discover jade in a dried-up riverbed in a remote

First Thursday. November 5 2009. 7pm

town on the Silk Road in western China.



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Horizontal Boundaries



Director(s):
Pat O'Neill
Picture Editor/Sound Editor

First Thursday. April 1 2010. 7pm

Horizontal Boundaries looks at certain aspects of the geography of California as the basis for cinematic disruption and restatement. The ""boundaries"" in question turn out to be frame lines, the divisions between images. Pat O'Neill integrates the lines into the compositional language of the piece, a dynamic repositioning that causes image combinations to be generated unpredictably. The result is a tapestry of exquisite contradiction.



Bio
Pat O'Neill - Born in Los Angeles
in 1939, Pat O'Neill is a visual
artist who makes film, sculpture,
and projected video installations.
Some film tiles include 7362
(1968); Water and Power, which
received the Sundance Grand
Jury Prize for documentary in
1990, and The Decay of Fiction
(2002). He was the subject of a
one-person exhibition of video
installations and sculpture at the
Rosamund Felsen Gallery in Los
Angeles in June 2008. O'Neill was
also involved in creating visual
effects for commercial projects for
more than 20 years and taught at
Cal Arts in the early 1970s.

