

Screening & Seminar

David MacDougall, Professorial Fellow at the Centre for Cross-Cultural Research, Australian National University.



Monday 26th September

Screening: 3:30 - 6:30 pm *Photo Wallahs* (1991) and *Doon School Chronicles* (2000)

Seminar: 7:30 pm

Photography and Digital Imaging Studio, Dublin Institute of Technology, 31 East Essex Street, Temple Bar, School of Media, Dublin Institute of Technology

David MacDougall is a documentary filmmaker and writer on cinema. His first feature-length film, *To Live With Herds*, filmed in Uganda, won the Grand Prix Venezia Genti at the Venice Film Festival in 1972. Soon after, he and his wife Judith MacDougall produced the *Turkana Conversations* trilogy of films on semi-nomadic camel herders of north-western Kenya. Of these, *Lorang's Way* won the prize of Cinéma du Réel in Paris in 1979, and *The Wedding Camels* the Film Prize of the Royal Anthropological Institute in 1980. With Judith MacDougall, he then co-directed a number of films on indigenous communities in Australia and, in 1991, a film on photographic practices in an Indian hill town, *Photo Wallahs*. In 1993 he made *Tempus de Baristas*, on goat herders in the mountains of Sardinia, winner of the 1995 Earthwatch Film Award. Since 1997 he has been conducting a film study of the Doon School in northern India. This has resulted in five films: *Doon School Chronicles* (2000), *With Morning Hearts* (2001), *Karam in Jaipur* (2001), *The New Boys* (2003), and *The Age of Reason* (2004). MacDougall writes regularly on documentary and ethnographic cinema and is the author of *Transcultural Cinema* (Princeton, 1998) and the forthcoming *The Corporeal Image: Film, Ethnography, and the Senses*. He is presently a Professorial Fellow at the Centre for Cross-Cultural Research, Australian National University.



Photo Wallahs

(Directed by David and Judith MacDougall, 1991- 60 mins)

Doon School Chronicles

(Directed by David MacDougall, 2000 -120 mins)

An extraordinarily insightful and intimate exploration of the social and cultural landscape of India's most elite boys' boarding school. In following the boys' daily routines and dramas, the film also affords us a rare glimpse at processes of post-colonial Indian identity formation. This is a wonderful teaching tool that will enhance any course dealing with issues of adolescence, education, institutional structure and 'habitus,' or postcolonial elites. My students were stupefied by the eloquence, independence, and maturity of the Doon School boys - Prof. Lucien Taylor, Associate Director, The Film Study Centre, Harvard University.

Photo Wallahs is a film about the varied meanings of photography. It is set in Mussoorie, a famous hill station in northern India, which has attracted tourists since the 19th century. In this setting photography has thrived. Without spoken commentary, the film discovers its subject in the streets, bazaars, shops, photographic studios and private homes of Mussoorie. In the process it compares the diverse work and attitudes of the local photographers - Mussoorie's "photo wallahs". Although photography has developed certain culturally distinctive features in India, its many forms and uses there tell us much about the nature and significance of photography throughout the world. *Doon School Chronicles* (Directed by David MacDougall, 2000 -120 mins) is an intimate study of India's most prestigious boys' boarding school. Sometimes called 'the Eton of India,' Doon School has nevertheless developed its own distinctive style and presents a curious mixture of privilege and egalitarianism. It was established by a group of Indian nationalists in the 1930s to produce a new generation of leaders who would guide the nation after Independence. Since then it has become highly influential in the creation of the new Indian elites and has come to epitomize many aspects of Indian post-coloniality. Filmed over a two-year period, the film looks at the life of Indian middle-class boys as they experience the effects of institutional, national, and global pressures during the transitional years from childhood to adulthood. The film explores the 'social aesthetics' and ideology of the school through its rituals, the physical environment it has created, and its effects upon several boys of different ages and temperaments. It is divided into ten 'chapters,' each headed by a text taken from school documents.

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