

Black Box Investigations — Press Release Kit:

Canadian Filmmaker Explores Inside of Human Body — and Camera — in European Premiere of Quirky Short Film

In Black Box Investigations, Canadian filmmaker and artist Paige Smith uses a disposable camera to explore the inside of her own body

[For release] — Few people understand the inner workings of cameras — or the human body — but in her new short film [Black Box Investigations](#), Canadian filmmaker and visual artist Paige Smith literally travels inside both “black boxes.”

Originally premiering at the Vancouver International Film Festival last year, Smith’s magnetic short attempts to document the inside of both the human body and the camera body, revealing how little we know about how these complex systems work.

“Both are open systems, or ‘black boxes,’ but they’re systems we only understand through inputs and outputs. Most of us don’t know the details of the inner workings,” says Smith, who was originally inspired by media philosopher Vilém Flusser’s book *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*. In it, the author describes photography as a game between the camera and the operator, and talks about how photographers “feed the camera” and “spit out photographs.”

“For me, to be a photographer or videomaker is to be in my body. I contort myself to get the lens points just right. I get cold on location. I feel the weight of the equipment on my back,” explains Smith, who created, directed, performed and edited the work. “So, playing on the idea of ‘feeding’ and ‘spitting out’ I thought it might be interesting to compare the opaqueness of the human body with that of the camera body. What would it mean to instead of feeding the camera, to feed myself with the camera?”

After unwrapping a disposable camera, Smith “consumes” the device, trying to document the inner workings of her own body. The grainy photos are then displayed, revealing how illegible the black box system of her body truly is. Smith then turns to the inside of the camera itself, smashing open the plastic body with a hammer and revealing its electronic anatomy.

The film also includes shots of the DSLR camera Smith uses to film the short, as well as the ceiling of her apartment, which exposes the apparatus of the production itself.

“My partner always worries about me with these kinds of weird performance pieces,” says Smith with a laugh. “But I wanted to create a work that viscerally conveys the excitement of the game between photographer and camera — and that makes the viewer aware of how these apparatus influence how we imagine and see the world.”

[Black Box Investigations](#) is an Official Selection of the Festival du Film Canadien de Dieppe, and will be screening alongside filmmaker David B. Ricard’s *David Contre Goliath* on Sunday, March 24th.

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For more information, contact:

Paige Smith: Paigesmithfilm@gmail.com, 778-378-7793. Electronic link to short available on request.

Black Box Investigations Official Teaser: <https://vimeo.com/855085524>

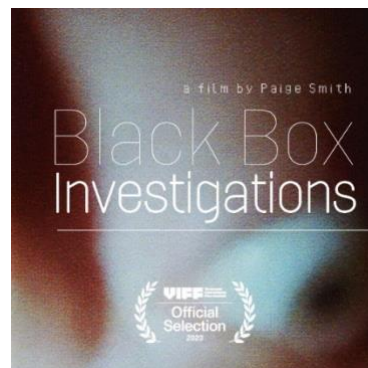
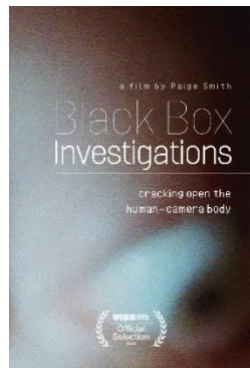
Black Box Investigations Official Webpage: <https://www.paigesmithfilm.com/black-box-investigations>

Black Box Investigations Online Screener (pw: viff2023): <https://vimeo.com/855083458>

Black Box Investigations Still Images (more available & full resolution available upon request):



Poster + Social Media Photos (more available & full resolution available upon request):



Director Information:



Paige Smith Bio:

Paige Smith is an experimental filmmaker and visual artist whose artwork collapses distinctions like fiction/reality or nature/culture to fabulate new understandings of ourselves and the places where we exist. She primarily works with lens-based media, often emphasizing materiality through overlapping layers and material interventions. She studied Film and Contemporary Art at Simon Fraser University and is currently pursuing her Master of Fine Art at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada.

Black Box Investigations credits:

All elements of the *Black Box Investigations* were created by Paige Smith. Credits for writing, directing, photography, sound, and performance should be given to Paige Smith.

Paige Smith

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Paige Smith Filmography:

- Black Box Investigations*** (3 minutes) [Digital SLR] 2023
- Festival du Film Canadien de Dieppe, Dieppe, France (2024)
 - Wide Open Experimental Film Festival, Oklahoma City, USA (2024)
 - Vancouver International Film Festival, curated by Casey Wei, Vancouver, Canada (2023)
- The Big Reveal*** (2 minutes 24 seconds) [Bolex 16mm] 2022
- “COSMIC QUEERITIES”, curated by Sidney Gordon and Celina de Leon with Xinema, VIFF Centre, Vancouver, Canada (2023)
 - IGNITE! Youth Arts Festival, Vancouver, Canada (2023)
 - “Watching You Watching Me” Cineworks Independent Filmmakers Society, Vancouver, Canada (2022)
 - “Photo Show & Film Screening at WAVE”, curated by Rainbow Tunnel Films, Wave Collective Space, San Francisco, USA (2022)
 - “BFA Graduating Exhibition 2022: Collecting Plum Blossoms”, Audain Gallery, Vancouver, Canada (2022)
- Tethered Connection*** (Media art installation, looping) [Digital SLR] 2022
- “Digital Interventions – Part II: Mediating Vessels”, Massy Arts Society, Vancouver, Canada (2022)
 - “Watching You Watching Me” Cineworks Independent Filmmakers Society, Vancouver, Canada (2022)
- Static*** (Media art installation, looping) [Bolex 16mm] 2019
- “Watching You Watching Me” Cineworks Independent Filmmakers Society, Vancouver, Canada (2022)
 - Vines Art Festival, Vancouver, Canada (2020)
 - “Your Kontinent Digital Carnival: Fire”, Richmond World Festival, Richmond, Canada (2019)
- Watching Us*** (8 minutes) [RED Epic] 2018
- “Watching You Watching Me” Cineworks Independent Filmmakers Society, Vancouver, Canada (2022)
 - Dawson City Film Festival, Dawson City, Yukon Territory, Canada (2020)
 - Victoria Short Film Festival, Victoria, Canada (2019)
 - “Post-Patriarchy? New Acquisitions Screening”, curated by Casey Wei, VIVO Media Arts Centre, Vancouver, Canada (2019)
- Diver*** (4 minutes 4 seconds) [Digital SLR] 2015
- Moonrise Film Festival, Wells, Canada (2016)
 - Audience Choice Award – Experimental Film