

# Documentary

CAMF6007

# Introduction to module

- Module Handbook
- Create a portfolio of individual research – Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November deadline
- Create individual documentary – Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> January deadline

# Documentary

- Documentary modes
- Does subject matter?
- Workshop ideas using different modes

Form not formula

# **WHAT ARE DOCUMENTARY MODES?**

# Documentary Modes

- Documentary films are about actual events
- Definitions of documentary are fluid
- Document implies a truthful, neutral record
- Documentaries are shaped by the viewpoint of the filmmaker(s)

# Documentary Modes

- Expository
- Poetic
- Observational
- Participatory
- Reflexive
- Performative

# Expository

- Objective, accurate, verifiable
- Discontinuous imagery & editing
- Expressive, non-diegetic sound

# Expository - The Civil War (1990)



# Poetic

- Abstract, expressive, affective
- Discontinuous imagery & editing
- Expressive, non-diegetic sound

# Poetic – Koyaanisqatsi (1982)



# Observational

- Neutral, passive, self-effacing
- Continuous imagery, often continuous editing linking action
- Synchronous, diegetic sound

# Observational – Salesman (1968)



# Participatory

- Filmmaker is active participant, engages with others, potential for manipulation/distortion.
- Continuous imagery, often continuous editing linking action.
- Sync sound of interviews/interactions, may use voiceover & music.

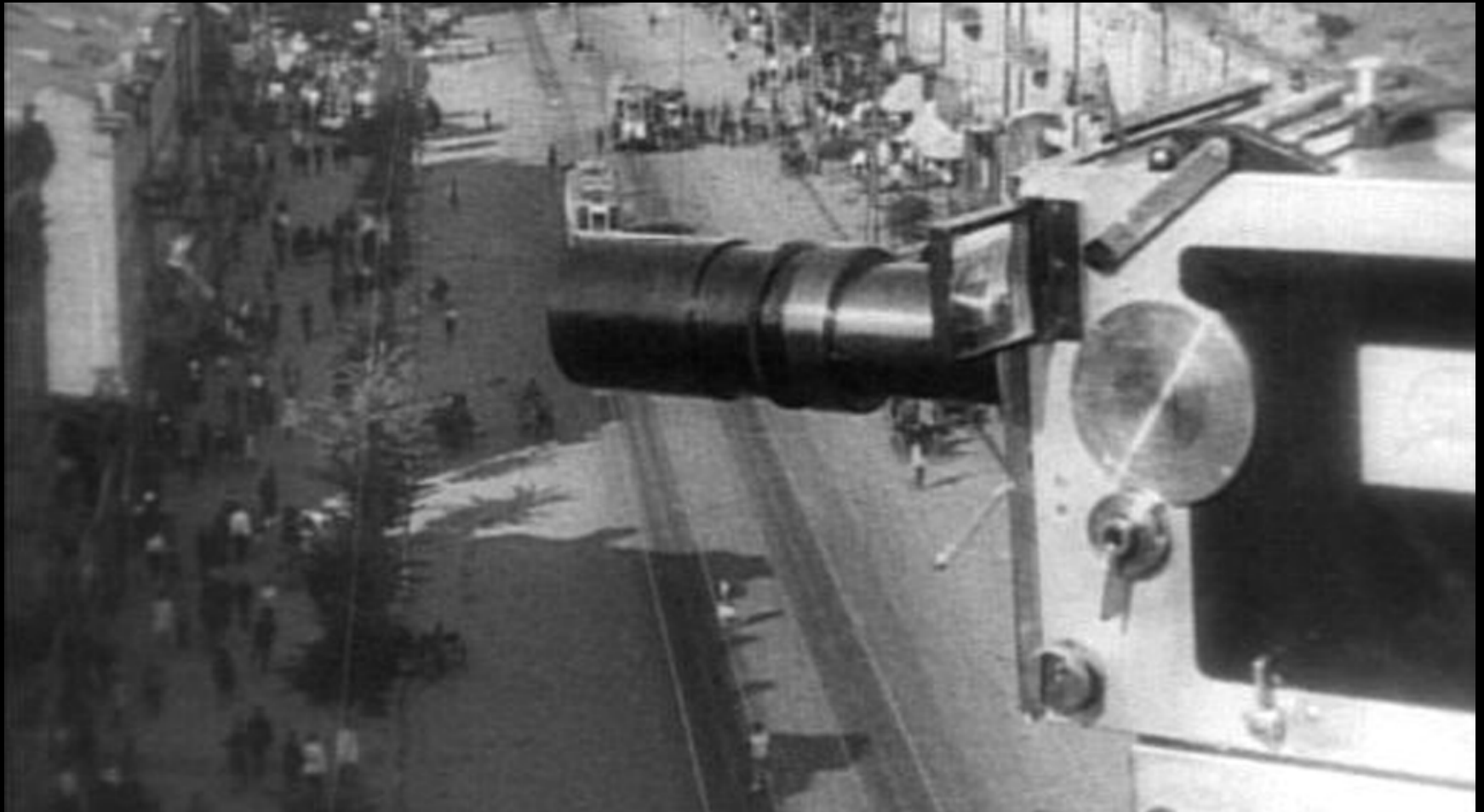
# Participatory - Sherman's March (1986)



# Reflexive

- Often uses formal abstraction, detached, questioning subjects and representation.
- Contextual editing, using continuity and discontinuity to draw attention to form.
- Music, voiceover and sync sound used to again reflect on context of communication.

# Reflexive - The Man With The Movie Camera (1929)



# Performative

- Highly personal point of view, expressing individual perspective/experience.
- May use continuous and/or discontinuous editing to express personal experience.
- Uses, sync and non-sync, music and voiceover to express author's voice.

# Performative - Tarnation (2003)



Form versus content

**DOES SUBJECT MATTER?**

# Does subject matter?

- Modes are the form a documentary takes
- Is the mode independent of the subject?

# Sports

- Blanket TV coverage sports
- Broadcast journalism different from major documentary modes
- Sport as a subject can be approached in any of the major documentary modes

# Expository – Fire In Babylon (2010)



# Poetic – Zidane (2006)



# Observational – Hoop Dreams (1994)



# Participatory -

- Uuh...

# Reflexive -

- Erm...

# Performative -

- Funny you should ask...

# Sports

- Do different subjects have innate criteria within them that impose/negate approaches?
- Sport – heroic individualism, triumph/failure, nationalism
- Do these aspects lend themselves to Participatory, Reflexive or Performative approaches?
- Can you really make any subject in any mode?

Mode/subject/you

# **DOCUMENTARY WORKSHOP**

# Mode versus Subject

- Working in pairs brainstorm ideas for potential documentaries that you each might make
- Discuss subjects that you might approach
- Discuss modes in which you might film
- At the end of the session, informally present ideas to the group