

November 24

Film + Forum

**Five Films About Parenting and Addiction**

The Loft, Kinbridge Community Centre

Duncan McIntosh Arena, 200 Christopher Drive, 2nd Floor, Cambridge

7:00 pm



**Glue Made Me a Ghost (Cambodia 8 min)**

This film was written and performed by ex-street children, most of whom were addicted to glue. The story is based on real life experiences of these and other children with long histories of using glue, while trying to earn money from scavenging and sleeping on the streets. All of these children are now reintegrated with schools and their families.

These children have friends that have been injured by traffic accidents while using and they wanted to educate their peers of the risks of drug use, as well as the negative future ahead for a glue sniffer on the streets. The film has simulated glue use and shows what this leads to: vagrancy, poverty, loneliness, crime, attacks from gangs and the huge risk to life and well being. In Khmer culture, ghosts are very much believed in, and feared. The message is clear: glue can destroy your life in many ways.

**Sketch (Canada, 2005, 10 min)**

Sixteen-year-old Gabriela Reuben is an aspiring filmmaker with a story about addiction. It's a personal experience that began when she was just fourteen years old. Gabriela grew up in a middle class household in Victoria, but she started to hang out with girls taking crystal meth to keep slim and be cool. Soon she was hooked, dropped out of school in grade 9, and left home. To get her daughter away from the wrong crowd, Joanne sent her to film school on Galiano Island. "Being at the film school actually saved my life.

Truthfully, if I didn't come here at that point last year I don't know where I would be," says Gabriela. Her journey helped her create "Sketch", a film about crystal meth addiction. Created by a young, recovering addict, this film delves into the daunting world of methamphetamine use as teens speak out about their experiences.

**I Want to Go Home** (Netherlands, 2007, 15 min)

This is a film about 12 year-old Jaymie and her brother John, who is ten. They are living with a foster family because their mother is a drug addict and their father has problems with aggression. The foster family is nice to them, but Jaymie wants to go home, despite everything. Before they can go home, her mother has to go to a clinic. Childcare services will then decide if Jaymie and John can live with their own parents again.

**An Absolute Angel (U.K., 2007, 14 min)**

Written by a former drug dealer local residents, and graduates of Salford's innovative social inclusion program 'STASH', this crime and redemption story is resonant with authenticity.

Sean leaves prison with the intention of giving up a life of crime, heroin and crack dealing and to make one final attempt keep his marriage together. This film follows Sean through his first few hours as he tries to reintegrate within a suspicious and hostile community.

Even with the best motivation it looks as if all the cards are stacked against our hero. 'An Absolute Angel' explores the barriers that drug users face, graphically exploring the personal struggles and the social prejudice that prevents many people from truly finding a way back into the mainstream.

**Saving Jackie (U.S.A., 2005, 35 min)**

An intimate portrait of a middle class family destroyed when both parents became addicted to crack cocaine. Made by Jackie's eldest daughter, Selena A. Burks, this film was featured at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival. "The film is about my sister Lorita, my mother Jackie and I," Burks says. "It's about the process of learning how to forgive someone who has made major mistakes for many years because of a disease."

Through the course of the film Jackie begins to acknowledge and accept responsibility for the deterioration of her relationship with her two daughters. Foster care intervened for Selena and Lorita. At age 19, Selena reconnected with her mother, after being apart for six years. This is Burks' first film, and it is highly recommended.