



Documentary as Archival Database

A Montage Approach to Reading History

Daniel Rudin

I chose images of archives and vinegar-syndrome afflicted film as a metaphor to represent reification and memory loss in my research “Counter/Public: The Politics of Committed Film in the Philippines.” The research focuses on the “new cinema” (the 1970s-1980s) and required conversations with archivists, journalists, actors, editors, filmmakers, and activists. These “social history” accounts were lit and filmed with two cameras, then preserved and published in an interactive database documentary. I broke down the material into roughly one-minute edits consisting of tightly intercut, differing, and even contradictory recollections of two interviewees. The “script” for these edits was “written” using qualitative analysis software (f4analyse)—revealing patterns and topics that might not otherwise have surfaced. The viewer can access said edits in the interactive documentary (made in Klynt) by clicking on either COUNTER/PUBLIC or COMMITTED/FILM. The long-form interviews are available from a drop-down menu linked to a YouTube channel. The idea is not only to preserve the excess footage but publish the informant interviews (here, as “social history” integrated into and standing alongside an interactive documentary) for viewers who either reconstruct the research process themselves or—if they prefer—perform their own research. I invite the reader to experience this process at counterpublic.net.

Daniel Rudin is an artist and scholar focused on the role of the “Left” and “state” in cinema, including democratization and the “new cinema” in the Philippines and twentieth-century avant-garde film. His art practice explores dividing lines between the documentary and the experimental through multi-channel installation, while his journalistic work has focused on labor issues. He currently lectures on video at the University of California, Merced.



(Top-Bottom): Bobby Garcia, Boy Vinarao, Joey Clemente, Nathan Quimpo

Opposite page: Images from *Counter/Public: The Politics of Committed Film in the Philippines*, courtesy of author



A scene from *Augusto Buenaventura's Sa Kuko ng Agila* (JE Productions, Richfilm, V Rich Film, 1989)

Rez Cortez in *Bangkang Papel sa Dagat ng Apoy* (Edgardo Reyes, Cine Suerte, 1948)



(Top-Bottom): Maloy Tionson, Rose Roque, Randy David

(Top-Bottom): Rez Cortez, Sylvia Mayuga, Nick Deocampo



Bangkang Papel sa Dagat ng Apoy



Joseph Estrada in *Bangkang Papel sa Dagat ng Apoy*