



A FILM BY JOHN ZARITSKY

REAL TO REEL PRODUCTIONS

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**A DIFFERENT DRUMMER : CELEBRATING  
ECCENTRICS**

**WORLD PREMIERE**

**Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF)**

**SHOWTIMES:**

Oct 08 07:00 pm - Rio Theatre

Oct 10 01:15 pm - SFU Woodward

**Canadian Images** (Canada, 2014, 87 mins, HDCAM)

**DIRECTOR:** John Zaritsky

**PRODUCERS:** Anne Pick, Bill Spahic

**WRITTEN BY:** John Zaritsky

**EDITOR:** Gord McClellan

**CAMERA:** Ryan Knight

**MUSIC:** TTG Music Lab

**PRODUCTION COMPANY:** Real to Reel Productions Inc.



Top row L-R: John Ward, Daniel Suelo, Laura-Kay Prophet  
Bottom row L-R: Lord Toby Jug, Darla Shaw, Gary Holloway

## **LOGLINE**

**ECCENTRICS**, a celebration of those who are truly different from the rest of us and according to a ten-year study are healthier, tend to live longer, and are happier. So how and why is dancing to the beat of our own drum good for us?

## SYNOPSIS

Academy award winning director, John Zaritsky, a bit of an oddball himself, answers that question and many others as he introduces us to a cast of weird and wonderful characters who celebrate being out of sync with society's norms, and enjoy many freedoms that most of us can only envy. He finds out why they seem to be physically and psychologically better off than the rest of us and in doing so, challenges the viewer's perspective of 'normal behavior'. John takes us on a journey into another way of living and joins, among others, Daniel who lives productively and happily without using money from his home base, a cave in Utah, and Laura who has a duck that can tell people's fortunes in Vancouver.

***“To me an oddball is someone who's on the sunny side of weird. It's someone who's an eccentric, a trailblazer, somewhat mistrustful of the tasteful and the restrained. Has an irresistible impulse to gild lilies, act 45 when they're 13 and 13 when they're 45, travels off the beaten path. Anyone who has ever been called a crackpot, an iconoclast, a cock-eyed optimist, or a tin-foil-hat-wearing kook... It's someone who's not afraid to do things, un-according to plan.”***

~ Hilary, a Hollywood based eccentric

Today there is endless talk about freedom yet few of us dare to step outside of conventional norms for fear of what other people might think, unlike eccentrics who bravely travel their own path and have such original minds that they simply cannot be conformed, and who relish being free to be who they are?

Dr. David Weeks, a clinical neuropsychologist and psychotherapist who spent 10 years studying eccentricity culminating in a book titled *'Eccentrics: A study of Sanity and Strangeness'*, has concluded that we all should emulate eccentrics rather than poke fun. His eccentrics evaluation matrix, underpins our filmic journey. Dr. Weeks believes we can all learn a thing or two from eccentrics.

***“I am exhilarated in their company, by their ideas and their creativity. I am far more outgoing, self-confident and rebellious than I once was.”***

~ Dr. David Weeks

*A Different Drummer* is a personal look at a particular group in our society that has been marginalized since man first gathered around the primordial campfire in a cave. There is no scarcity of eccentrics among us today, but John also looks at eccentrics throughout history including; Screaming Lord Such the original shock rocker, Sarah Winchester who built an 8 story, 158 room house for the ghosts of people killed by the Winchester rifle her husband's family created and Glenn Gould, Canada's premiere pianist. There have always been eccentrics among us and it's time to bring them in from the cold and the fringes of our society.

The film encourages viewers to enjoy their own healthy eccentricities and look with new more appreciative eyes at “Uncle Bob” who is just a bit different. *A Different Drummer* is a celebration of the more creative, more idealistic, more opinionated and bold among us.

## DIRECTOR BIO

John Zaritsky



**John Zaritsky is an Academy Award winning filmmaker** with a reputation for taking on the most impossible of topics and characters and turning them into compelling and entertaining stories. John has won more than 40 awards for his documentary films. Some of his major honors include an Academy Award® in 1982 for his documentary “Just Another Missing Kid”, a Cable Ace Award for “Rapists: Can They be Stopped”, a Golden Gavel Award from the American Bar Association for “My Husband is Going to Kill Me”, a Robert F. Kennedy Foundation Award for “Born in Africa”, and an Alfred Dupont Award from Columbia University’s School of Journalism in 1994 for “Romeo and Juliet in Sarajevo”.

John’s films have been broadcast in 35 countries and screened at more than 40 film festivals around the world, including Sundance, Toronto, Vancouver, the International Documentary Film Festival in Amsterdam, Hot Docs and South by Southwest. Zaritsky’s films have won awards at the New York Film Festival, the American Film Festival, Hot Docs, Vancouver Film Festival Banff Television Festival, Houston International Film Festival, Columbus Ohio Film Festival, Mill Valley Film Festival and the Sedona Film Festival. Three films, “Broken Promises”, “Born in Africa”, and “Romeo and Juliet in Sarajevo” were nominated for Emmy Awards. In addition, Zaritsky has won seven Geminis, Canada’s national television award, and been nominated 15 times. In 1995-96, he was an artist-in-residence at the graduate school of journalism, University of California at Berkeley. From 2002 to 2006, Zaritsky taught documentary film at the University of British Columbia as an adjunct professor. In 2011, he received a lifetime achievement award from the Whistler Film Festival.

Prior to entering the film business, Zaritsky worked as a newspaper reporter for seven years and received a Ford Foundation Fellowship to study at the Washington Journalism Center for six months. He won a National Newspaper Award in 1972 for his investigative reporting for The Globe and Mail.

### FILMOGRAPHY :

*Just Another Missing Kid, Tears Are Not Enough, Rapists: Can They Be Stopped, Broken Promises, Extraordinary People, Ski Bums, Men Don't Cry: Prostate Cancer Stories, College Days, College Nights, The Wild Horse Redemption, The Suicide Tourist Leave Them Laughing, Do You Really Want to Know?*

## REAL TO REEL PRODUCTIONS



Established in 1986, REAL TO REEL PRODUCTIONS INC. is a small, highly respected, award-winning Canadian independent specializing in factual series, documentaries, docu-dramas, and more recently 3D feature and multi-platform new media content. Regardless of format or whether the subject matter focuses on social issues, history, science, wildlife, lifestyle or the arts, Real To Reel, helmed by husband and wife team Anne Pick and Bill Spahic, promises engaging storytelling, strong characters and high production values.

Their latest documentary ANIMISM: PEOPLE WHO LOVE OBJECTS was launched at MIP and has already sold to the US, Europe, Japan, Israel and premiered on Global Television in Canada . They are in pre-production on a feature documentary with CBC's documentary channel on the worst drug scandal in history – Thalidomide; are now premiering a feature doc for Superchannel, directed by John Zaritsky, called ECCENTRICS, and are in production on three international co-productions with German and Australian partners.

Past award winning productions include: *Out in the Cold* series (Discovery Canada); *Iris Chang: the Rape of Nanking* (History Television & Cinema release in Asia); *The Prince of Pot: the U.S. vs Marc Emery* (CBC Newsworld) now available on iTunes; *Yours Al* a performance drama starring actor Gordon Pinsent (CBC); *Ronnie Hawkins – Still Alive and Kickin'* (CTV) and *Ryan's Well* (Vision) recently updated after 10 years by popular demand and re-released in both English and Spanish.

Visit [www.r2r.ca](http://www.r2r.ca) for trailers, filmography and bios.

## PRODUCER

Anne Pick



An award-winning independent filmmaker, Anne's passion for story telling began as a teenager writing for her father's country newspaper in South Australia. This led to a career in journalism with major Australian newspaper and television organizations, but during the obligatory Aussie world walkabout, ended up with a filmmaking career and family in Toronto, Canada. She has been producing, directing, writing, and story-editing docs and factual series for over 20 years, resulting in hundreds of hours of documentaries and television series, and won many awards, including a Canadian Gemini, Australian Film Institute award and nomination, top prizes from New York, Chicago and Houston and had her work screened at many international festivals. Anne's work has and continues to find appreciative

audiences around the world.

Under her company banner Real to Reel Productions, Anne has a reputation for engaging and popular films and series in a variety of genres. She says learning to write from the front to the back pages of a newspaper ingrained a broad interest in subject matter from social and political issues, to history, music, science, sports, wildlife and the environment. She has interviewed Prime Ministers, and world famous singers, actors and artists and many unsung heroes and survivors who continue to be an inspiration.

She has also been a strong advocate for the documentary community in Canada and is currently co-vice chair of DOC Canada and was a founding board member and former co-chair of Hot Docs. Anne also has a strong international presence and produced the first Independent Documentary Official Treaty Co-pro between Canada and Australia with "Helen's War: Portrait of a Dissident" and she continues to be the matchmaker between her fellow Aussie and Canadian filmmakers while nurturing her own current co-productions.

### SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY:

**Director, Producer & Story Editor** *Iris Chang: The Rape of Nanking, Ronnie Hawkins: Still Alive and Kickin', Notorious Mrs. Dick, The Bunny Years, Labour of Love: life and times of Buzz Hargrove, Jan Arden: a work in progress, Moe Norman: the King of Swing, Sandy Hawley: the Gentleman Jockey, Out of Sync: Racism in the media, Getting Out, A Poisoned Workplace: Racial Harassment, Speak Out*

## PRODUCER, STORY EDITOR

Bill Spahic



Bill Spahic is an owner/partner of Real to Reel Productions with a long, varied and successful career in the film industry as a First AD in feature films, TV Movies and Episodics, and for the past eight years as a director, producer and writer in documentary and factual series genres. He also serves as head of development for Real to Reel.

Although he had a science degree in his back pocket, Bill's ambition after university was to make films. He toughed it out in the fledgling indie film industry in Canada for a while, then honed his craft as a First Assistant Director in the drama department at the CBC, and then headed back out into the independent world to

be Gordon Pinsent's 1<sup>st</sup> AD on a Canadian drama feature JOHN AND THE MISSUS. His subsequent career has taken him around the world and allowed him to work closely with such talents as Terry Gilliam, John Woo, Jeff Bridges, Rod Steiger, Vincenzo Natali and of course Gordon Pinsent among many, many others. Working with such uniquely gifted individuals in the feature fiction world has richly impacted his approach to the documentary genre.

Bill directed ANIMISM: PEOPLE WHO LOVE OBJECTS which premiered on Global Television last Fall and has since sold to ten other countries including the UK, Australia, and Norway. It also recently garnered several festival nominations and awards, and he co-produced and story edited Real to Reel's latest documentary A DIFFERENT DRUMMER: Celebrating Eccentrics, directed by John Zaritisky.

Bill co-wrote and directed, YOURS AL, an arts performance drama reuniting him with Gordon Pinsent who portrays Canada's "People's Poet," Al Purdy. The film turned Purdy's evocative poetry into a moving piece of art. Bill followed that by co-directing the feature docudrama IRIS CHANG, THE RAPE OF NANKING. This feature length doc, screened on History Television and released theatrically in Asia, told the tragic and horrifying story of the Japanese assault on China in 1937 through the eyes of young Chinese American author Iris Chang with the original victims of the Rape of Nanking telling their own stories. *"Our objective was two-fold. To create a film that will impact the audience as a film. And secondly a film that reminds us that we all have the power to make a difference and speak out."*

As Head of Development at Real to Reel, Bill is working on more docs; one more with Academy Award winning Canadian director John Zaritisky on the final part of a trilogy on Thalidomide victims; a co-production with Germany on the boom in poaching in Africa; a WWII docudrama based on a Canadian book called TEN GREEN BOTTLES about one family's journey of hope and courage from Hitler's clutches in Vienna to Japanese occupied Shanghai, the only port open to European Jewish refugees in 1938; a natural history co-production feature in 3D plus TV 2D series and multiplatforms with Australian partners about the LEGEND OF THE ICE BEARS set at the edge of the arctic circle in the Yukon.

### **SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY as 1<sup>st</sup> AD - drama feature films:**

Tideland, Black Jack, Sing, Foolproof, Company Man, Three to Tango, Picture Claire, Renegades, Clearcut

## ABOUT DR. DAVID WEEKS

AUTHOR, “*Eccentrics – A Study of Sanity and Strangeness*”



Dr. David Weeks was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey. After high school, he joined the U. S. Navy, in which he served for eight years, primarily in the Submarine Service. Dr. Weeks graduated with honours from Strathclyde University in Glasgow, Scotland. He then went on to study Clinical Psychology and Neuropsychology at the University of Edinburgh, receiving an M. Phil. in the former and a PhD in the latter. Dr. Weeks also received an honorary research fellowship from the University.

Dr. Weeks has worked in several general and specialist hospitals, as well as in a large urban general practice. Subsequently, he became a Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologist at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital. While there he undertook research in the treatment of compulsive gambling, the use of psycholinguistics in the diagnosis of dementia, and loneliness in the elderly. For the latter work, he was awarded by the Carr-Gomm charity, becoming their first keynote speaker at a conference attended by HRH The Duchess of York and the charity’s founder, Richard Carr-Gomm.

Dr. Weeks has written a book on his pioneering research into human eccentricity, *Eccentrics*, published in 1995, and another book about people who look and feel significantly younger than their chronological age, *Secrets of the Superyoung*, published in 1998. He also works in private practice and has published a literary mystery thriller, *The Very Eye of Night*. A ten-year study of in Great Britain and the United States gives us reason to believe we should celebrate and appreciate the eccentrics among us.

## ABOUT THE STUDY

The film’s exploration of eccentricity is informed by the general findings of Dr. Weeks’ fascinating study and book, “*Eccentrics—A Study of Sanity and Strangeness*”.

*“[My] research has shown that certain types of deviant behavior can be healthy and life-enhancing. The condition of eccentrics is freedom: not for them the stifling habit of obedience. In an era when human beings seem more and more to be prisoners of their culture and their genes, eccentrics are a refreshing reminder of every person’s uniqueness.”*

Dr. Weeks’ study of 1000 Eccentrics and the evaluation metrics he created to determine who indeed is eccentric, underpins our filmic journey into bold but different lives. He has shown us the difference between normal and eccentric behavior, how gender effects eccentricity and where eccentricity sits between genius and madness.

So why should we celebrate eccentricity? Personal freedom is the answer to that question. Here rests the central thrust of the film: conforming to society’s norm has its personal costs just as breaking away from those norms has costs as well. The characters in the film searched inward to

discover who they really were and what kind of life they wanted to live – an existential journey many of us embark on but few complete.

But what can the rest of us learn from eccentrics? Dr. Weeks says his eccentric friendships have taught him a lot and ten years of working with eccentrics has rubbed off on him in many ways.

*“I am exhilarated in their company,” he says, “by their ideas and their creativity...I am far more outgoing, self-confident and rebellious than I once was.”*

Dr. Weeks’ study concluded that eccentrics are:

- Healthier and happier than the rest of us
- They see a doctor far less often
- Live longer than the rest of us
- And eccentrics such as Albert Einstein, Nicola Tesla, Alexander Graham Bell, William Blake, Glenn Gould and Dr. Patch Adams have made major contributions to mankind.

Dr. Weeks’ findings in his study of eccentrics garnered a matrix with fifteen characteristics that applied to most eccentrics, ranging from the obvious to the trivial. Eccentrics may be described in the following ways, more or less in descending order of frequency:

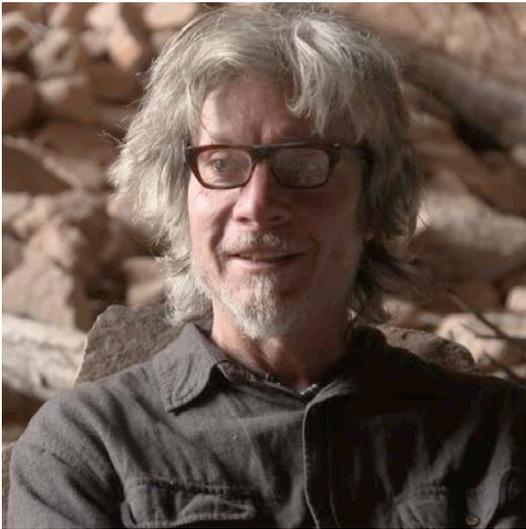
- Non-conforming,
- Creative,
- Strongly motivated by curiosity,
- Idealistic: he wants to make the world a better place and the people in it happier,
- Happily obsessed with one or more hobbyhorses (usually five or six);
- Aware from early childhood he is different,
- Intelligent,
- Opinionated and outspoken, convinced that he is right and the rest of the world is out of step,
- Noncompetitive, not in need of reassurance or reinforcement from society,
- Unusual in his eating habits and living arrangements,
- Not particularly interested in the opinions or company of other people, except in order to persuade them to the correct point of view,
- Possessed of a mischievous sense of humor,
- Often single,
- Usually the elder or only child,
- And a bad speller

*“Do eccentrics share any of the core characteristics of the genuinely mentally disturbed?” Even though eccentricity is not a form of mental illness, eccentrics have no special immunity from diseases of the mind...Yet, we found by administering standard diagnostic tests that eccentrics actually have a higher general level of mental health than the population at large. Original thinking, it seems, may be better for you than dull conformity.” – Dr. Weeks.*

Dr. Week’s study also revealed that eccentrics visit a doctor on average just once every eight years while the average English person visits a doctor two times a year.

## CHARACTER BIOS

### Daniel Suelo



A perfect example of how money doesn't buy you happiness is Daniel Suelo, who for the past 12 years has not earned, received, or spent a single dollar. When Suelo was 39, he was walking along a Pennsylvania highway when he had a strange epiphany. He pulled from his pocket his life savings - \$30 - laid it inside a phone booth and walked away. Since then he set up house in caves in the Utah canyon lands where he forages mulberries and wild onions, scavenges road-kill raccoons and squirrels, pulls expired groceries from dumpsters and is sometimes fed by friends and strangers: *"My philosophy is to use only what is freely given or discarded and what is already present and already running,"* he says.

Suelo however is not a typical hobo. He does not panhandle and he often works--declining payments for his efforts but will take a meal for his effort. While he is driven by spiritual beliefs and longings he is not associated with any church. And although he lives in a cave, he is not a hermit. He is relentlessly social, remains close with family and friends, and engages in discussion with strangers via the website he maintains from the public library. He also hosts a three-hour Sunday night community radio program. Suelo is steadfast, *"I know it is possible to live with zero money. Abundantly."*

### Gary Holloway



Holloway worked for the State of California as an environmental planner and frequently dresses in the habit of a Franciscan monk, an expression of his devotion to St. Francis of Assisi. But Holloway has other obsessions, including one for Martin Van Buren, the eighth president of the United States. Holloway explains why he founded the Martin Van Buren fan club 32 years ago. *"This man did absolutely nothing to further our national destiny, yet hundreds of people now follow me in commemorating him."* - an amazing comment on the politics in the US.

Holloway also has an obsession with the British Commonwealth and has renamed his home Falklands House over which he flies the island's flag. His bedroom still has everything in it that he had when he was boy. He calls it the Peanuts Room because of his huge collection of stuffed Snoopies and other memorabilia. He has slept on the same twin bed there for 40 years.

## Laura-Kay Prophet (a.k.a. Duck Lady)



'Lotus land' Vancouver is not nirvana for all. Imagine being down and out in Vancouver's Lower East Side (that's about as down and out as possible in Canada) and you happened to walk by a lady with a duck in a stroller who gives you a cookie to eat. Inside the cookie is money from \$1 to \$100 and an encouraging note. Wouldn't that make your day? Laura-Kay believes everyone is deserving of kindness and her service to her community is a way of honouring and respecting those less fortunate. But, why the duck? Well, her ducks apparently perform miracles and sustain her faith in mankind. Over the years she has given away over \$25,000 through her charity Duck Soup. She lives meagerly in a tenement flat (with her duck of course) in order to give to others.

Laura-Kay also has supernatural abilities and her specialty is spiritual readings that she does for free on the street.

## Darla Shaw



Professor Darla Shaw of Ridgefield received the 2012 Connecticut Higher Education Faculty Award for Outstanding Leadership in Community Service in the state. Soooo, let's bite, this is a good start - what else has she done? Well, Darla lives every part of her life in a nonconforming way: her portable shower doubles as a phone booth, she throws nothing out forcing her to buy an abandoned opera house to store all her 'stuff', she pushes a grocery cart loaded with lots of stuff and with headlights from one class to another when teaching at a university, she cooks badly and has organized large dinner parties where all the food came out of cans. And oh, she had a paper mâché mermaid that died (that's a story in itself), so of course she gave it a true Viking funeral on a lake with the boat and mermaid being set on fire...Is

this legal in Connecticut?

Darla leads her life in truly extra-ordinary way and gives in to spontaneity few would dare.  
*"I continually take risks, try different things. I guess I see the potential in things that to others seem very ordinary".*

And yes she does play in a Kazoo band

## Lord Toby Jug



Lord Toby is a British politician who was a member of the Official Monster Raving Loony Party formed by his mentor, Screaming Lord Sutch. The Raving Loony Party's objective is not driven by the need to receive votes on election day but to add humour and sanity to the election process, for example by proposing to alleviate the government's budget woes by issuing 'Loony Dollars'.

For many years Lord Toby was the lead guitarist with the shock rock band headed by Screaming Lord Sutch and of course took to politics following the lead of Lord Sutch.

## John Ward



If there were an award for eccentric inventor, John Ward would take the prize hands down or, hands up as John might say. He takes society's discarded refuse and makes machines and other creations that are useless but are beautiful, and fanciful. He says, *"There's so much waste in the world, I like to put rubbish to good use. A lot of people say I'm in my second childhood, but I don't think I ever got out of my first. Getting carried away is the bother of invention"*. He creates for it's purest reasons 'the joy of making something that no-one has thought to do before'.

A teacher told him when he was a young boy that *"the world has no place for silliness"* but John has proved him wrong. He lives a comfortable life creating such items as: a musical frying pan, safety net for yo-yos, silencer for the front door knocker when you don't want to be disturbed, a one person mobile BBQ, telescopic pool cue for reaching snooker balls on a large table, a radio controlled duck (don't ask - maybe he should talk to Laura-Kay) and of course the world famous woman's bra-warmer for those cold English mornings. He has been described as "possibly the best English eccentric inventor living today".