Delve Deeper into "In the Realms of the Unreal"
A film by Jessica Yu

This multi-media resource list, compiled by Mary Cella of the St Charles Public Library in partnership with the American Library Association, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the upcoming P.O.V. documentary "In the Realms of the Unreal" that premieres on August 2, 2005 at 10 p.m. on PBS (check local listings at www.pbs.org/pov/).

Reclusive janitor by day, visionary artist by night, outsider artist Henry Darger moved through life virtually unnoticed. But after his death, a treasure trove was discovered in his one-room Chicago apartment: a staggering 15,000-page novel and hundreds of illustrations that continue to inspire artists around the world. With dreamlike animation, poignant narration by Dakota Fanning and a haunting musical score, Academy Award winner Jessica Yu fashions a bold and beautiful film. "In the Realms of the Unreal" immerses us in Darger's startling universe of innocence and pain, showing how he forged magic out of the bleakest of lives. A co-presentation with the Independent Television Service (ITVS).

ADULT NONFICTION


Hand, Elizabeth. Inside Out: On Henry Darger. In Ellen Datlow & Terri Windling’s (Eds.), The Year’s Best Fantasy and Horror (pp.447-453). New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 2002. This anthology provides an extensive selection of fantasy and horror stories that include poetry and essays.


Maizels, John. Raw Creation: Outsider Art and Beyond. London: Phaidon Press, 2000. Maizels, editor of Raw Vision, the international magazine on outsider and self-taught art, details the history of outsider art and its continued evolution towards recognition. The book also discusses the theories and definitions that have been created around the works of visionaries, the insane, and other extraordinary artists.

Oakes, John G.H. In the Realms of the Unreal: “Insane” Writings. New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1991. An international compilation of over 300 works of poetry and prose written by individuals who are labeled mentally unstable by society. Most of the contributors to the volume have never been published and most are institutionalized.

Rexer, Lyle. How To Look at Outsider Art. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2005. Provides the ground rules for understanding, appreciating, and evaluating outsider works of art. Includes works that have never been published, including those by Henry Darger.

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**ADULT FICTION**


Braverman, Kate. *The Incantation of Frida K*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002. Braverman enters the mind of artist Frida Kahlo as she lies on her deathbed at age 46. The novel reflects on people, places, and events from Kahlo's life, as well as discusses topics of art and philosophy.


Chessman, Harriet Scott. *Lydia Cassatt Reading the Morning Paper: A Novel*. New York: Permanent Press and Seven Stories Press, 2001. This novel imagines the life and times of impressionist painter Mary Cassatt and her sister, Lydia. Told in the voice of Lydia who is dying at age 41, the novel captures nineteenth century Paris and real life figures. Also includes five full color plates of Cassatt's paintings.


Maughan, Somerset W. *The Moon and Sixpence*. New York: Penguin Books, 1944. Follows a man, Charles Strikland, who abandons his wife and children to devote himself to painting, yet refuses to exhibit or sell his work. Tortured by illness and his own passion for art he travels around the world and ends up in Tahiti, where blinded by leprosy he produces his most astonishing artwork.


Urquhart, Jane. *The Underpainter*. New York: Viking, 1997. In Rochester, New York a seventy-five year old painter, Austin Fraser, paints a collection that chronicles individuals who have affected him, taking readers over seven decades and around the world as Fraser recalls his life.

**FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS**


Bucholz, Quint. *The Collector of Moments*, translated by Peter F. Neumeyer. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1999. A solitary boy is drawn to his mysterious new neighbor, an artist named Max. Max does not let anyone see his paintings until he embarks on a journey, leaving behind his paintings, which are beautiful but also strange and unpredictable. Readers join the boy in this picture book as the power of art makes the ordinary become the magical and unreal. Ages 9-12.


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Lowry, Lois. Gathering Blue. New York: Laurel-Leaf, 2002. Depicts an anti-utopian future society in which Kira is a girl who has lost both of her parents. Struggling to survive, her extraordinary talents with a needle and thread keep her alive and allow her to get close enough to the inner workings of her society to see its secret horror.

McPhail, David. Something Special. Boston: Joy Street, 1988. Sam is the only one in his family who does not have an extraordinary talent, until he discovers his amazing painting abilities. Told with expressive illustrations, ages 4-8.


Seidler, Tor. Brothers Below Zero. New York: Laura Geringer Books; HarperCollins, 2002. A tale of sibling rivalry, seventh grader Tim Tuttle is constantly overshadowed by his older brother, until he moves in with his Great-aunt Winifred who is an artist and inspires him to paint portraits of his family. Ages 8 to 12.


VIDEOS AND DOCUMENTARIES

“A Boy Creates.” Encyclopedia Britannica Educational Corporation. 1971. (10 min.) This video follows a young boy on his adventure to a place where things have been discarded. While there he sees many strange creatures that have been created out of the trash, and so sets out to create his own creature.


“Rare Visions & Roadside Revelations.” Randy Mason & Michael Murphy. KCPT. 1995. (60 min.) “Rare Visions & Roadside Revelations” is a television show that seeks out the world of the Visionary arts in a road show format, bringing the artists and the artwork to the viewers of Public Television www.kcpt.org/rare_visions


“Rivers and Tides: Andy Goldsworthy Working with Time.” Thomas Riedelsheimer. New Video. 2004. (90 min.) Scottish-German documentary about artist Goldsworthy, a Scotsman whose medium is nature and whose studio is the outdoors.

“Through a Glass, Lightly.” David Philpot & Kevin Orth. New Day Films. 1994. (21 min.) This program about "outsider art" profiles three, self-taught Chicagoans who search for discarded or abandoned objects. The film follows Mr. Imagination, David Philpot, and Kevin Orth as they search Chicago’s streets and alleys for raw materials. The artists reveal how other cultures have shaped their transformations and visions as artists.

www.newday.com/films/Through_a_Glass_Lightly.html

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES


WEB SITES

www.pbs.org/pov/pov2005/intherealms/index.html P.O.V.’s website for “In the Realms of the Unreal”

www.realmsoftheunreal.com/ Filmmaker Jessica Yu’s website

www.acer-access.com/~darger@acer-access.com/index.htm Realm of the Unreal: a page about Henry Darger

www.avam.org American Visionary Museum in Baltimore, MD

www.folkartmuseum.org American Folk Art Museum in New York City

www.hammergallery.com/Artist s/darger/Darger.htm The Carl Hammer Gallery in Chicago’s site on Darger. Includes works of the artist as well as those that are available for sale.

www.saraayers.com/darger.htm Site discusses the life of Henry Darger with examples of his art and links to information about the artist and Outsider Art.