J.P. SNIADECKI

# EXPERIENCE

**Assistant Professor** 2015 – present

**Northwestern University – Department of Radio, TV, and Film**

**Assistant Professor**  2013 – 2015

**Cornell University – Department of Performing and Media Arts**

**Teaching Assistant**  2009–2009

**Harvard University – *Facing Reality: History of Documentary*** (Instructor: Scott MacDonald)

**Teaching Assistant** 2007

## MIT – *Documenting Culture*, Anthropology Dept. (Instructor: Chris Walley)

**Assistant Director / Instructor** 2004–2005

## Working Classics Leadership Program – Grand Rapids, MI

Mentor inmate participants in innovate prison education program; collaborate with university faculty to form a program of instruction in the Humanities; work closely with prison administration and staff to ensure healthy classroom environment; execute program administration and outreach.

# EDUCATION

**Harvard University** – **Cambridge, MA** 2007–2013

Ph.D. Social Anthropology with Media

Secondary PhD Field in Critical Media Practice

**Tsinghua University – Beijing, China** 2010–2011

Certificate: Inter-University Program for Chinese Language Studies

**Harvard University** – **Cambridge, MA** 2005–2007

M.A. Regional Studies: East Asia

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**East China Normal University** – **Shanghai, China** 2000–2001

Certificate: Chinese Language Studies

**Grand Valley State University** – **Allendale, MI** 1998–2002 B.A., Double Major: Philosophy & Film/Video, graduated *Magna Cum Laude*

**LANGUAGE**

Fluent in Mandarin Chinese; intermediate level in Classical Chinese; beginner French

# ORGANIZATIONS & COMMITTEES

2015 – 2016 Sound Lecturer Search Committee, RTVF, Northwestern

2015 – 2016 Sound Studies Faculty Search Committee, RTVF, Northwestern

2015 – 2016 Sound Curriculum Subcommittee, RTVF, Northwestern University

2015 – present Affiliate Faculty, Asian Studies Program, Northwestern University

2015 – present *Cinema on the Edge Film Series*, Co-Founder and Co-Organizer

2014 – 2015 Johson Museum of Art, Faculty Advisory Committee, Cornell

2014 – 2015 Planning and Events Committee, PMA, Cornell University

2014 – 2015 Schwartz Center Aesthetics Committee, PMA, Cornell University

2014 – 2015 Graduate Field Faculty, Film and Video Studies, Cornell University

2014 – 2015 Affiliated Faculty, Southeast Asian Program, Cornell University

2014 – 2015 Graduate Field Faculty, School of Art, Architecture and Planning

2014 – 2015 Graduate Field Faculty, Anthropology Department, Cornell

2014 – 2015 Graduate Field Faculty, Performing and Media Arts (PMA), Cornell

2013 – 2014 Performing and Media Arts Curriculum Committee, Cornell University

2013 – 2015 Core Faculty, East Asian Program, Cornell University

2013 – 2014 Faculty Search Committee, Cornell PMA

2008 – 2013 *Emergent Visions Screening Series,* Founder and Chief Organizer

2008 – 2009 *Art, Aesthetics, and Anthropology*, Committee Member

2006 – 2007  *Ethnographies Without Texts,* Committee Member

2006 – present Harvard Sensory Ethnography Lab

2005 – 2006 Harvard East Asia Society, Alumni Chair

2005 – 2006 *Harvard Asia Quarterly,* China Area Editor

# AWARDS, GRANTS, HONORS

2016 URGC Grant for *El Mar (in-progress),* Northwestern

2015 “Best Feature Film” Award, L’Alternative International Film Festival, *The Iron Ministry*

2015 “Special Mention” Critics Award, L’Alternative International Film Festival, *The Iron Ministry*

2015 Open Society Grant for *Cinema on the Edge: the Best of the Beijing Independent Film Festival*

2015 VPIA Internationalizing the Cornell Curriculum Grant, *China-Cornell Media Arts Exchange*

2015 Jury Award – Ann Arbor Film Festival, *The Iron Ministry*

2014 “Special Mention,” Camden International Film Festival, *The Iron Ministry*

2014 “Special Mention,” Valdivia International Film Festival, *The Iron Ministry*

2014 “Best Asian Experimental Film” Taiwain International Documentary Festival, *Yumen*

2014 “Best Chinese Film Award,” Taiwain International Documentary Festival, *Yumen*

2014 Ein Audi Seed Grant, *Performing Modernity*, Cornell University

2014 Whitney Biennale – Invited Artist (screening five films in total)

2014 Shanghai Biennale – Invited Artist, *People’s Park*

2014 Shenzhen Biennale – Invited Artist, *People’s Park*

2014 Headlands Center for the Arts, Artist-in-Residency invitee

2014 LEF Post-production Moving Image Grant, *The Iron Ministry*

2014 Riviera Maya Film Festival “Work in Progress” Jury Prize

2013 “Best Experimental Film” – Beijing Independent Film Festival, *Yumen*

2013 “Special Mention” Jury Award – FICUNAM, *Yumen*

2013 “Special Jury Award” – Split Film Festival, *Yumen*

2013 “Cinema Guerilla” Award – Lima International Film Festival, *People’s Park*

2013 LEF Foundation Preproduction Grant, *Rainbow Farm*

2013 LEF Foundation Production Grant, *The Iron Ministry*

2013 Harvard Film Study Center Fellowship

2013 “Best Cinematography” Award – Ann Arbor Film Festival, *People’s Park*

2012 “Best Anthropological Film” Award – Festival dei Popoli, *People’s Park*

2011 “Grand Prize” – Punto de Vista Documentary Film Festival, *Foreign Parts*

2011 “Best Film” Award – DocsBarcelona, *Foreign Parts*

2010 “Best Ethno-Anthropological Film”– Festival Dei Popoli, *Foreign Parts*

2010 *“*Cine Cinema Special Jury Award” – Locarno Film Festival, *Foreign Parts*

2010 *“*Opera Prima Jury Award” – Locarno Film Festival, *Foreign Parts*

2010 “Most Innovative Film” Award *–* Sardinia Ethnographic Festival, *Chaiqian/Demolition*

2010 “First Prize” – Contro-Sguardi Anthropological Film Festival, *Chaiqian/Demolition*

2009 Distinguished Visitor, Rosenberg Institute for East Asian Studies

2009 Distinguished Alumni-in-Residence, Grand Valley State University

2009 “Joris Ivens Award” – Cinéma du Réel Film Festival, *Chaiqian/Demolition*

2009 Blakemore Foundation Fellowship

2008 Jury’s Pick Award– PLATFORMA Video Festival, *Songhua*

2008 “Honorable Mention” – Eyes & Lenses Ethnographic Film Festival, *Songhua*

2007 *“*Jury’s Pick Award” – Negotiated View Film Festival, *Songhua*

2007–2013 Film Study Center Fellowship, Harvard University

# FILMOGRAPHY

***The Iron Ministry (2014)*** Filmed over three years on China’s railways, *The Iron Ministry* traces the vast interiors of a country on the move: flesh and metal, clangs and squeals, light and dark, language and gesture. Scores of rail journeys come together into one, capturing the thrills and anxieties of social and technological transformation, and immerses audiences in fleeting relationships and uneasy encounters between humans and machines on what will soon be the world's largest railway network. Premiered at the Locarno Film Festival’s International Competition, and selected for the New York Film Festival, Vancouver, AFI, Chicago International Film Festival, San Francisco International Film Festival, CPH:DOX, DocLisboa, VIENNALE, RIDM, Torino International Film Festival, Cork International Film Festival, FIFE Il de France, BAFICI, Mostra Indie Brazil, Camden International Film Festival, Ann Arbor Film Festival, Athens Avant-Garde Film Festival, Ambulante, Zagreb HRFF, among many others. Featured in New York Times as A.O. Scott’s “Critics Pick” during a theatrical run at the MoMA in New York, as well as in Los Angeles, Seattle, San Francisco, San Diego, Philadelphia, and Chicago. Reviews found online at: www.theironministry.com

***Yumen (2013)*** Set in the quasi-ghost town of Yumen that once thrived with oil production in China's arid northwest, *Yumen* is a haunting, fragmented tale of hungry souls, restless youth, a wandering artist and a lonely woman, all searching for human connection and a collective past among the town's crumbling landscape. One part "ruin porn", one part ghost story, and shot entirely on 16mm, the film brings together narrative gesture, performance art, and socialist realism into a crude and radiant collage that not only plays with convention and defies genre, but also pays homage to a disappearing life-world and a fading medium. Premiered at the 2013 Berlinale, and selected for the MoMA’s Modern Mondays, Whitney Bieannale, the Punto de Vista Documentary Film Festival, Film Anthology Archives, FICUNAM (*Special Mention* Jury Award), Split Film Festival (*Special Jury* Award), Beijing Independent Film Festival (*Best Experimental Film* Award), Edinburgh International Film Festival, RIDM, Indie Lisboa, Torino International Film Festival, Festival dei Popoli, Lima International Film Festival, China Independent Film Festival, and Yunfest. Co-directed with Xu Ruotao and Huang Xiang, and winner of “Best Asian Experimental Film” and “Best Chinese Film” at the Taiwan International Documentary Film Festival.

***People’s Park (2012)*** A 78-minute single shot documentary that immerses viewers in an unbroken journey through a famous urban park in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. The film explores the dozens of moods, rhythms, and pockets of performance coexisting in tight proximity within the park’s prismatic social space, capturing waltzing couples, mighty sycamores, karaoke singers, and buzzing cicadas in lush 5.1 surround sound.A sensory meditation on cinematic time and space, *People’s Park* offers a fresh gaze at public interaction, leisure and self-expression in China. The film, which premiered at the 2012 Locarno International Film Festival and had its US premiere at the New Directors/New Films festival at the MoMA in New York, is the winner of the 2012 “Best Anthropological Film” at Festival dei Popoli, “Best Cinematography” at the Ann Arbor Film Festival, and “Cinema Guerilla” Award at the Lima International Film Festival. It has also screened at the Vancouver International Film Festival, the Viennale, DocLisboa, Mar de Plata, Toronto Reel Asian Film Festival, RIDM, Edinburgh International Film Festival, Cinema du Reel, It’s All True Documentary Film Festival, Riviera Maya International Film Festival, Lima Independent Film Festival, and the Munich International Film Festival, among others. Acquired by San Francisco Museum of Modern Art for its permanent collection. Co-directed with Libbie Cohn.

***Foreign Parts (2010)*** Tucked between the new Citifield baseball stadium and the Van Wyck overpass lie a ramshackle collection of auto-body repair shops and other small businesses, staffed by an extraordinarily multicultural cast of characters. But New York City has other plans: the area has been targeted for development, complete with apartments, malls, and parks, and this commercial shantytown may soon be a memory. *Foreign Parts* is a revealing and tender portrait of Willets Point, Queens, that captures the many roads the American dream has taken. Winner of *Best First Feature* and Special Jury Prize at the Locarno Film Festival, the *Best Ethno-Anthropological Film* at Festival Dei Popoli, *Grand Prize* at Punto de Vista International Documentary Film Festival and *Best Film Award* at DocsBarcelona, it screens around the world, including the New York Film Festival, Vancouver International Film Festival, Melbourne International Film Festival, San Francisco International Film Festival, Ann Arbor Film Festival, True/False Film Festival, HOTDOCS, RIDM, Cinema du Reel, and VIENNALE. Its theatrical release began at the MOMA and has been featured in the NY Times as AO Scott’s Critics Pick. Co-directed with Verena Paravel.

***The Yellow Bank (2010)*** Watching, waiting, and traversing: a portrait of Shanghai at the confluence of tempestuous weather, looming architecture, and murky waterways during a total solar eclipse. *The Yellow Bank* premiered at the Beijing Independent Film Festival (DOCHINA 2010) and has screened at the 2010 Vancouver International Film Festival, Migrating Forms (New York Film Anthology Archives), MoMA PS1, Buenos Aires Documentary Film Festival, and Jeunjo International Film Festival.

***Sichuan Triptych (2010)*** The three parts of *Sichuan Triptych* are cinematic essays on three major events of 2008 in China: the March uprisings, the May earthquake, and the August Olympics. Portraying how these events ripple into everyday life, the film focuses on three locations of Sichuan Province: Tagong, Qingchuan, and Renshou. In Tagong, two young Tibetan girls play in the grasslands as the shouts of military drills reverberate through the town. In Qingchuan, three women burn paper money and light fireworks to mourn their lost loved ones on the 49th day after the earthquake. In Renshou, a migrant worker working on the demolition of a disaster area returns home during the Olympics to spray his rice fields. Through these three vignettes, *Sichuan Triptych* interrogates the relationship between national events and everyday life. *Sichuan Triptych* premiered at DOCHINA 2010 and has screened in Buenos Aires.

***Chaiqian/Demolition (2008)*** This award-winning nonfiction film is a portrait of migrant labor, social space, and ephemeral relationships in the center of Chengdu, the capital city of Sichuan province in western China. It has been screened at the 2008 VIENNALE, the 2008 Shadow Festival, the 2008 Beijing Independent Film Festival, the XIX International Festival of Ethnological Film, the 2010 Sardinia International Ethnographic Film Festival, the 2009 Doc Buenos Aires festival, RIDM, the 2010 Punto de Vista festival, and was selected for the *Joris Ivens award* by the international jury at the 31st Cinéma du Réel in Paris, France. Most recently, it received the *Most Innovative Film Award* at the XV Sardinia International Ethnographic Film Festival, 2010 and *First Prize* at the Contro-Sguardi Anthropological Film Festival.

***Songhua (2007)*** This nonfiction video depicts how city residents and rural visitors create meaning and identity through leisure and labor in an urban space of Harbin, where the Songhua River meets Stalin Park. It was awarded a Jury’s Pick award at the 2008 PLATFORMA Video Festival in Athens, at the 2007 Negotiated View Film Festival, and at the Eyes and Lenses Ethnographic Film Festival in Warsaw. *Songhua* has also been screened at the 2008 VIENNALE, the 2007 Shadow Festival, RIDM, the 2009 PDX Film Festival, the 2007 SIGGRAPH festival, *Public Space Films* series at the Harvard School of Design, *Chiaroscuro Film Series* at the Urban Institute for Contemporary Art, and the UC-Santa Barbara’s *Media Fields* Conference.

# CURATING & JURYING

***Cinema on the Edge: the Best of the Beijing Independent Film Festival***

**Founder and Co-organizer**

A high profile screening series of 29 new Chinese independent films — shorts, animations, documentaries, and features — co-organized with Karin Chien and Shelly Kraicer in collaboration with the Beijing Independent Film Festival. Press includes features in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Filmmaker Magazine, Art Radar, Screen Daily, Brooklyn Magazine, Screen Slate, Twitch Film, Fandor, National Public Radio, and Public Radio International. Venues include Film Anthology Archives, Asia Society, Union Docs, Maysles Documenary Center, and Museum of Chinese in America in New York City, as well as the Toronto International Film Festival Cinematheque, Typology Projects, San Francisco Cinematheque, Center for Asian American Media, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Diego Asian American Film Fetival, Concordia University, Shadows Film Festival, and Tromso International Film Festival

*2008 – 2013 Emergent Visions Film Festival and Screening Series*

**Founder, Curator, and Key Organizer**

I established this unique curating and exhibition program with the financial support of Harvard’s Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies and Asia Center as an ongoing film series that continues to bring innovative films from China to the Harvard community and New England area, as well as hold post-screening discussions and forums. Many of our screenings introduced new films to scholars, festival programmers, and spectators that, due to this showcase, enjoyed wider distribution, academic consideration, and audience appreciation. Highlights include U.S. premieres of Zhao Liang’s *Petition*, Zhao Dayong’s *Ghost Town*, Xu Ruotao’s *Rumination*, Wu Wenguang’s Memory Project films, and Huang Ji’s *Egg and Stone*.

2015 Recontres Internationale de Documentaire de Montreal (RIDM) Jury Member

2015 Chicago International Film Festival Jury Member

2013 Festival dei Popoli International Documentary Film Festival Jury Member

2013 Punto de Vista Film Festival Jury Member

2013 Communications University of China Student Film Festival Jury Member

# ACADEMIC INVITATIONS, MASTERCLASSES, LECTURES, PANELS

4/2016 Masterclass & Film Screening, *The Iron Ministry*, CPH:DOX, Copenhagen

4/2016 Masterclass, Critique, and Film Screening, *The Iron Ministry*, University of California – Santa Cruz

3/2016 Masterclass and Film Screening, *Chaiqian/Demolition*, Union Docs

3/2016 Masterclass and Film Screening, *The Iron Ministry*, Rutgers University

3/2016 Masterclass and Film Screening, *The Iron Ministry*, Purchase College

3/2016 Masterclass and Film Screening, *The Iron Ministry,* University of Michigan

2/2016 Film Screening and Seminar, *The Iron Ministry*, University of Chicago Film Studies Center

11/2015 Invited Mentor Session, *Creative Doc Lab*, National Film Board of Canada and Canadian Film Centre

11/2015 Panel Discussant*,* *Documentary Turn: the Convergence of Art and Documentary,* RIDM Talent Lab

10/2015 Seminar and Film Screening, *The Iron Ministry*, University of Washington, Seattle

6/2015 Artist Talk/Field Session: “No Ideas But In Things,” Headlands Center for the Arts

5/2015 Masterclass and Panel Discussion with David MacDougall, Freiburg Film Forum

4/2015 Masterclass and Film Screenings, University of California, Berkeley & Pacific Fillm Archive

4/2015 Panel Discussion, Conference Presentation, and Film Screenings, Emory University

2/2015 Masterclass, Universidad Autonoma del estado de Morelos, Mexico

2/2015 Masterclass and Film Screenings, *People’s Park* and *Demolition*, UCLA Urban Studies Center

2/2015 “Sensory Landscapes” Workshop, Leader/Instructor, Ambulante Film Festival & UNAM

11/2014 Masterclass, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada

10/2014 Masterclass, University of Fine Arts, Lisbon, Portugal

10/2014 Documentary Panel, *People/Places*, Chicago International Film Festival

9/2014 Documentary Panel, University of Maine and Camden International Film Festival

9/2014 F.I.L.M Series, Hamilton College, *The Iron Ministry*

4/2014 “The City and Its Moving Images” seminar and film screening, University of California, Berkeley

2/2014 Visual Anthropology of China Seminar and Film Screening, Duke University

2/2014 Clockshop Screening & Discussion, *Songhua* and *Demolition (Chaiqian)*

2/2014 Los Angeles Film Forum, *People’s Park*

2/2014 Redcat Theater (CalArts) Screening & Discussion, *Yumen*

1/2014 Guest Lecture, Stanford University

11/2013 Retrospective and Sensory Ethnography Panel, RIDM and McGill University, Montreal, Canada

10/2013 University of Wisconsin, Madison – Visual Studies Conference panel discussant and film presenter

10/2013 Closing Address and Retrospective, Nordic Anthropological Film Association Conference - Bilbao, Spain

10/2103 Masterclass and Film Screening, Doc Buenos Aires and Fundación PROA

7/2013 Caochangdi Workstation – Retrospective and Masterclass, Beijing, China

5/2013 Conference and Screening, *People’s Park* – University of Milan

4/2013 F.I.L.M. Screening and discussion, *People’s Park* – Hamilton College

4/2013 Workshop and Screening, *Yumen* – Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University

3/2013 Screening, *People’s Park –* Harvard Film Archive

11/2012 Guest Lecture and Screenings, *Foreign Parts* – Amherst College

10/2012 Guest Lecture and Screenings, *Foreign Parts* – St. Mary’s College

4/2012 Guest Lecture and Screening*, Chaiqian (Demolition) –* University of Kentucky

3/2012 Conference: Society for Cinema and Media Studies, Boston – Panel Member: *Cineglobalities*

3/2012 “Forbidden No More” Conference, screening *Chaiqian (Demolition)* – Haverford College

9/2011 Film Screening and Discussion, *Chaiqian (Demolition) –* Yale Film Studies Program

4/2011 Guest Critic and Film Screening, *Foreign Parts* – California Institute of the Arts

4/2011 Film Screening and Discussion, *Foreign Parts -* Colgate College

2/2011 Film Screening and Discussion, *Foreign Parts –* University of Washington, Seattle

2/2011 Guest Critic and Film Screening, *Foreign Parts* – University of Eastern Washington

12/2010 New York University Conference: *DV-Made China: Digital Objects, Everyday Subjects*

Paper Title: “Intersubjectivity, Interobjectivity, and the Cruelty of the Social”

10/2010 Guest Lecture and Film Screening*, Chaiqian,* China Studies Symposium, University of Washington, Seattle

4/2010 USC Conference: Cultural Dimensions of Visual Ethnography: US-China Dialogues

Paper Title: “Witnessing and Testimony in Chinese Documentary”

11/2009 Film Screening and Discussion, *Chaiqian,* Rosenberg Institute for East Asian Studies, Suffolk University

10/2009 Guest Lecture and Film Screenings, *Distinguished Alumni-in-Residence Event,* Grand Valley State University

8/2009 Guest Artist Talk and Workshop, “*Cinema as Experience and the Aesthetics of*

*Ambiguity in Ethnographic Filmmaking*” – Li Xianting Film School, Beijing, China

5/2009 Film Screening and Discussion, *Chaiqian* and *Songhua,* Harvard Film Archive

12/2008 Guest Artist Talk*“Ethnography as Artistic Practice”* and Film Screening, *Chaiqian*, Hamilton College

11/2008 Guest Critic and Film Screening, *Chaiqian –* California Institute of Arts

11/2008 Guest Artist Talk, *”The Intersection of Ethnography and Art”* and Film Screening, *Chaiqian* at UCSB

10/2008 Guest Critic and Film Screening, *Songhua* – Massachusetts Institute of Technology

5/2008 Keynote Address, *Honors College Commencement –* Grand Valley State University

3/2008 Film Screening and Discussion, *Songhua –* Emerson College

4/2007 *Media Fields* Conference, Panel on Sensory Ethnography and *Songhua* screening, UCSB

# PUBLICATIONS

“Jem Cohen” in *BOMB Magazine: Artists in Conversation,* ed. Sabine Russ, Issue 134, Winter 2016.

<http://bombmagazine.org/article/11521124/jem-cohen>

“Intersubjectivity, Interobjectivity, and the Cruelty of the Social” in*DV-Made China: Digital Objects, Everyday Bodies,* ed. Zhang Zhen and Angela Zito, Hawaii University Press, May 2015.

https://muse.jhu.edu/books/9780824854317

“Chai-Qian/Demolition: Reflections on Media Practice” in *Visual Anthropology Review,* eds. Brent Luvaas and Maris Gillette. May 2014.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/var.12028/abstract>

“Documentary Is Just One of My Tools: the activist cinema of Ai Weiwei” in *Cinema Scope* ed. Mark Peranson, Issue 49, Winter 2012.

http://cinema-scope.com/cinema-scope-magazine/interviews-documentary-is-just-one-of-my-tools-the-cinematic-activism-of-ai-weiwei-by-j-p-sniadecki/

“Beyond the Frame: Personal Testimony as Counterdiscourse,” in *Media Fields Journal, vol 2: Media, Labor, Mobility*, eds. Hyejean Chung and Athena Tan, University of Santa Barbara.

http://www.mediafieldsjournal.org/beyond-the-frame/

“Everyday is a Holiday: Li Hongqi on Winter Vacation,” in *Cinema Scope,* ed. Mark Peranson, Issue 45, Winter 2011.

http://cinema-scope.com/wordpress/web-archive-2/issue-45/interviews-every-day-is-a-holiday-li-hongxi-on-winter-vacation/

“A View from Songzhuang: Intersubjectivity and Witnessing in Chinese Independent Documentary,” in *Cinema Scope*, ed. Mark Peranson, Issue 42, March 2010.

“Interview with Arthur Kleinman” in*Anthropology News*, eds. Jennifer Hubbert and Gordon Mathews, Volume 50 Issue 5, 2009, Society for East Asian Anthropology (SEAA)