

# ST-HENRI THE 26<sup>TH</sup> OF AUGUST

A FILM BY SHANNON WALSH ORIGINAL MUSIC PATRICK WATSON

## THE FILM

Working with 16 other documentary filmmakers, Shannon Walsh has created a fascinating day-in-the-life portrait of this legendary community. In *St-Henri, the 26th of August*, Walsh paints a human picture of a working-class neighbourhood—one that has experienced its share of turmoil over the years. Shot in a 24-hour period on August 26, 2010, the documentary is an intimate profile of today's St-Henri.

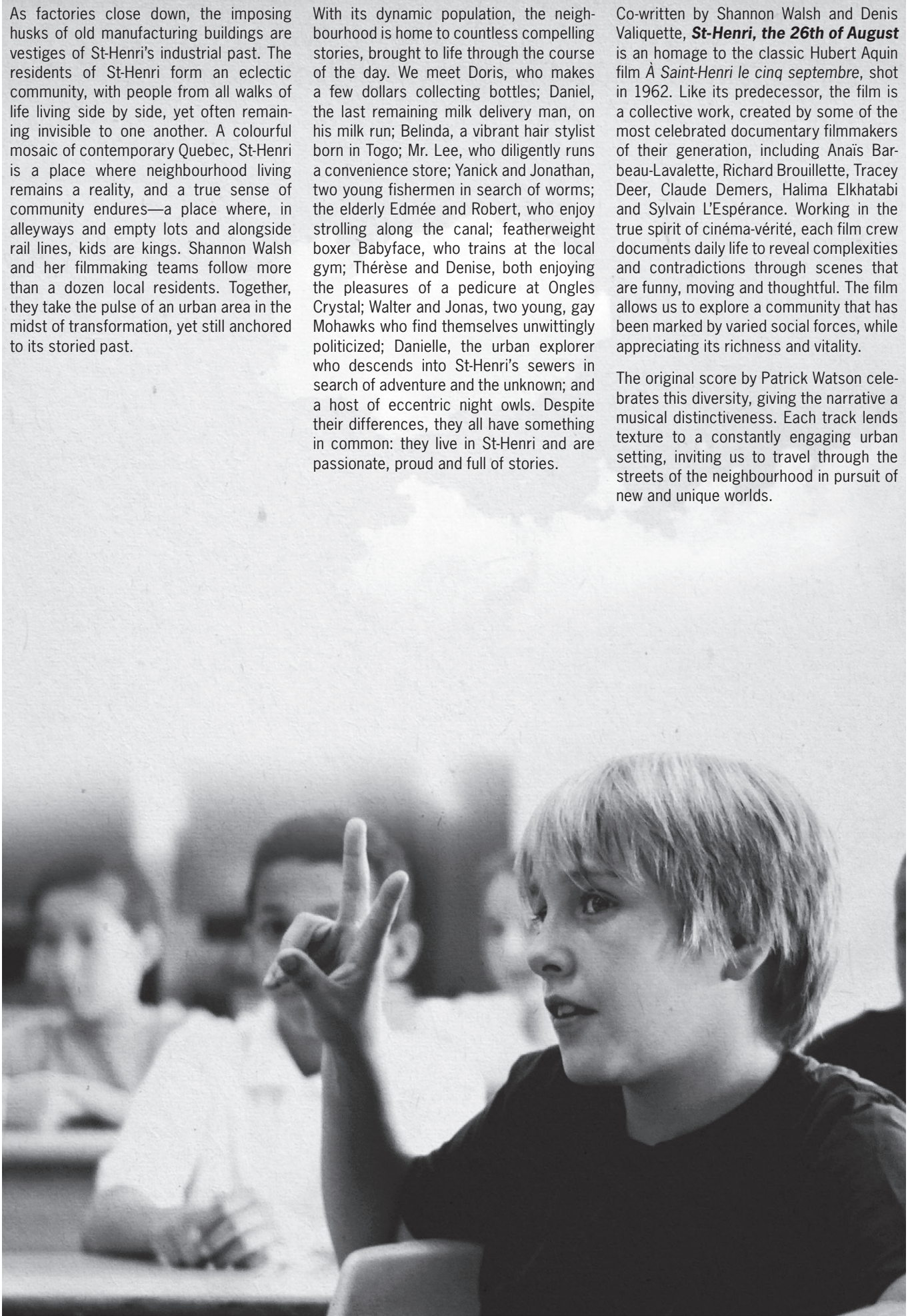
August 26th is the first day of school. The weather is hot and stormy...and a day in the life of St-Henri is about to play out in front of us. St-Henri is hemmed in by the infamous Turcot Interchange to the west, the Lachine Canal to the south, the Atwater Market to the east and the affluent Westmount neighbourhood to the north. While the face of St-Henri may have changed over the years, its unique character remains.

As factories close down, the imposing husks of old manufacturing buildings are vestiges of St-Henri's industrial past. The residents of St-Henri form an eclectic community, with people from all walks of life living side by side, yet often remaining invisible to one another. A colourful mosaic of contemporary Quebec, St-Henri is a place where neighbourhood living remains a reality, and a true sense of community endures—a place where, in alleyways and empty lots and alongside rail lines, kids are kings. Shannon Walsh and her filmmaking teams follow more than a dozen local residents. Together, they take the pulse of an urban area in the midst of transformation, yet still anchored to its storied past.

With its dynamic population, the neighbourhood is home to countless compelling stories, brought to life through the course of the day. We meet Doris, who makes a few dollars collecting bottles; Daniel, the last remaining milk delivery man, on his milk run; Belinda, a vibrant hair stylist born in Togo; Mr. Lee, who diligently runs a convenience store; Yanick and Jonathan, two young fishermen in search of worms; the elderly Edmée and Robert, who enjoy strolling along the canal; featherweight boxer Babyface, who trains at the local gym; Thérèse and Denise, both enjoying the pleasures of a pedicure at Ongles Crystal; Walter and Jonas, two young, gay Mohawks who find themselves unwittingly politicized; Danielle, the urban explorer who descends into St-Henri's sewers in search of adventure and the unknown; and a host of eccentric night owls. Despite their differences, they all have something in common: they live in St-Henri and are passionate, proud and full of stories.

Co-written by Shannon Walsh and Denis Valiquette, **St-Henri, the 26th of August** is an homage to the classic Hubert Aquin film *À Saint-Henri le cinq septembre*, shot in 1962. Like its predecessor, the film is a collective work, created by some of the most celebrated documentary filmmakers of their generation, including Anais Barbeau-Lavalette, Richard Brouillette, Tracey Deer, Claude Demers, Halima Elkhatabi and Sylvain L'Espérance. Working in the true spirit of cinéma-vérité, each film crew documents daily life to reveal complexities and contradictions through scenes that are funny, moving and thoughtful. The film allows us to explore a community that has been marked by varied social forces, while appreciating its richness and vitality.

The original score by Patrick Watson celebrates this diversity, giving the narrative a musical distinctiveness. Each track lends texture to a constantly engaging urban setting, inviting us to travel through the streets of the neighbourhood in pursuit of new and unique worlds.



## THE FILMMAKER

Photo: Wit Stryczniwicz



### SHANNON WALSH DIRECTOR AND WRITER

Shannon Walsh is a Canadian filmmaker, teacher and writer living in Montreal. Informed by a profound political consciousness, she sees film as a means of social engagement. Her personal and professional lives have eloquently brought together both creativity and activism.

Walsh studied at Concordia University, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in photography in 2000. In 2004, she was awarded a Master's degree through the university's Special Individualized Programs, combining education, sociology, film and feminist studies. She completed her doctorate in education and anthropology at McGill University in 2009, writing her dissertation on ethnographies of health in the shack settlements of post-apartheid South Africa. In 2001, she founded the Guava Collective project, which blends artistic practice with social change.

Film soon came to play a critical role in Walsh's career. After a first foray into the medium with the experimental short *Revisit* (2002), she co-directed the documentary *Sayeh* in 2003. The film, which centred on Mehran Nasseri, an Iranian refugee who had lived in Paris's Charles de Gaulle airport for more than eleven years, screened in Rio de Janeiro, New York and Montreal, providing Walsh with her first international exposure.

In 2004, she released the short documentary *Fire & Hope*, which focused on the fight against AIDS among young people in South Africa. The film toured the world, most notably with screenings in Thailand, South Africa, Canada, Cuba and Venezuela. Walsh fol-

lowed up *Fire & Hope* with three short documentaries on subjects close to her heart: Canadian immigration policy (*No One Is Illegal*, 2005), resistance movements among South Africa's poorest communities (*Inkani*, 2006), and the fight for land in that same country (*Home-less*, 2008). *The Space in Between*, released in 2007, marked her entry into the world of short fiction, with a personal story of a woman's search for meaning. Her 2009 feature-length documentary *H2Oil* premiered at the Hot Docs film festival in Toronto. The film, which explores the human and environmental costs of oil sands extraction in Alberta, won the Grand Prix du Festival at the Portneuf Environmental Film Festival, and Honourable Mention for the ÉcoCaméra award at the 2010 Rencontres internationales du documentaire de Montréal. The film went on to enjoy considerable success at major Canadian festivals, including Sudbury, Halifax, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver, as well as at international festivals in Rome, Istanbul, Scandinavia and the United States.

In 2010, Shannon Walsh joined Parabola Films and launched the ***St-Henri, the 26th of August*** project with the National Film Board of Canada. A collaboration between Shannon and 16 other directors, the documentary chronicles a 24-hour period in the traditional working-class Montreal neighbourhood of St-Henri.

Walsh now intends to return to South Africa, where she plans to finish a documentary and write a new work of fiction (entitled *Man-Bitch*), as well as undertake post-doctoral work at the University of Johannesburg as part of the Chair for Social Change. It's just the latest chapter in a journey that has consistently highlighted social action and the creative process—values that Shannon Walsh continues to promote in multi-faceted ways.

Photo: Production stills



# THE PRODUCERS

Photo: Parabola Films



**SARAH SPRING**  
Producer

Sarah Spring has produced the feature documentaries *Roadsworth: Crossing the Line* and *H2Oil*, the 16mm dance short *Transfert*, and the music video *The Lamb*, for Montreal artist Little Scream. Most recently, Sarah produced ***St-Henri, the 26th of August***, in co-production with the National Film Board of Canada and Canal D, in which Shannon Walsh and

16 other filmmakers documented a variety of stories over the course of one day. Sarah is the founder and President of Parabola Films and is on the board of DOC Québec.

Photo: Parabola Films



**SELIN MURAT**  
Associate Producer

At Parabola Films, Selin Murat has produced and directed several short projects, including the music video *The Lamb* for Montreal artist Little Scream and *Ginseng Empire*, which premiered at the 2010 Big Sky Documentary Festival, in competition for best mini-doc. Selin previously worked with the film collective Loaded Pictures, managing award-winning productions like *Roadsworth: Crossing the Line* and *H2Oil*. ***St-Henri, the 26th of August*** is her first feature project.

Photo: Dominic Morissette



**COLETTE LOUMÈDE**  
Producer (NFB)

After earning a law degree, Colette Loumède decided to work in cinema. Drawn to auteur films, she spent ten years with the Coopérative Vidéo-scopique de Montréal, occupying a variety of positions related to film creation and production. She then joined Les Productions du Regard and Synercom Téléproductions (a group of regional producers), following

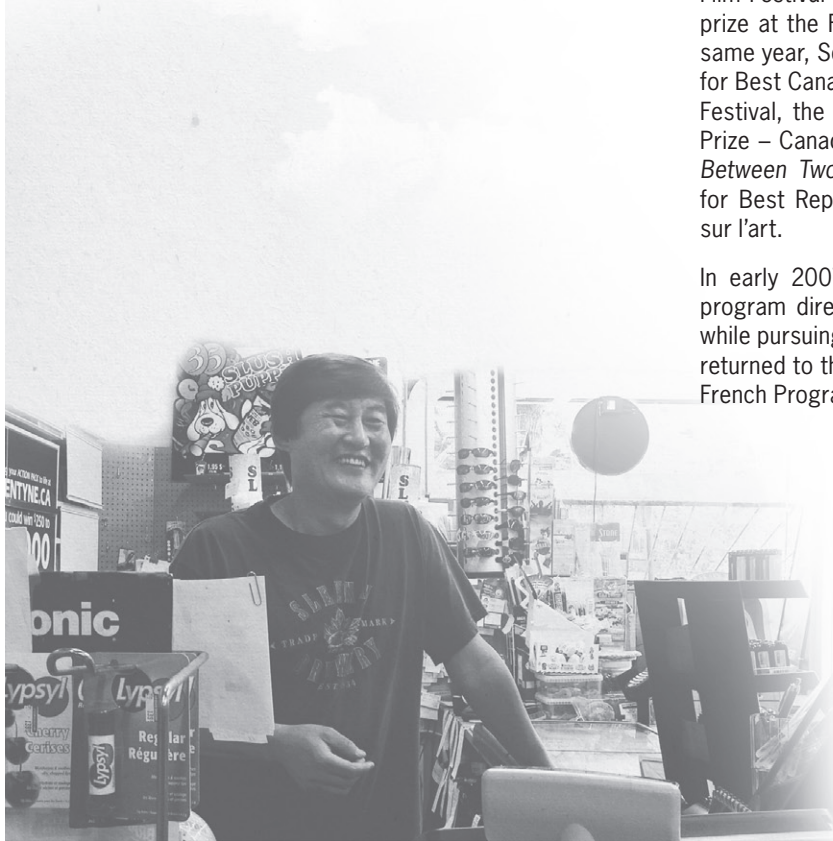
which she became project manager for SODEC (Société de développement des entreprises culturelles).

From 2002 to 2007, she was executive producer of the NFB French Program's Documentary Studio A. With her extensive experience and in-depth knowledge of the industry, she built numerous partnerships with national and international private production companies, produced or co-produced over 30 documentaries, and won numerous awards.

To mention a few: *The Memories of Angels* by Luc Bourdon won the Grand Prix Focus – Cinémathèque québécoise at the 2008 Festival du nouveau cinéma in Montreal and was a finalist at the 2009 FOCAL International Awards in London. The 2008 Géméaux Award for Best Documentary: Society and the 2008 Jutra Award for Best Documentary were awarded to *The Invisible Nation*, by Richard Desjardins and Robert Monderie. Two documentaries by Patricio Henríquez also garnered honours: *Under the Hood: A Voyage into the World of Torture* received the 2009 Jutra Award for Best Documentary; and *The Dark Side of the White Lady* won the 2006 Best Investigative Documentary Award at the Valparaiso Film Festival in Chile, as well as the 2007 Regards sur le crime prize at the Festival Visions du Réel in Nyon, Switzerland. That same year, Serge Giguère's *Driven by Dreams* won the NFB Prize for Best Canadian Documentary at the Calgary International Film Festival, the Jutra for Best Documentary and the Special Jury Prize – Canadian Feature Documentary at Hot Docs in Toronto. *Between Two Notes* by Florence Strauss garnered the Award for Best Reportage at Montreal's Festival international du film sur l'art.

In early 2007, Colette Loumède was appointed documentary program director at the Institut national de l'image et du son, while pursuing a parallel career as an independent producer. She returned to the NFB in February 2009 as senior producer at the French Program's Quebec Studio.

Photo: Production stills



## CREDITS

# ST-HENRI THE 26<sup>TH</sup> OF AUGUST

### Director

Shannon Walsh

### Unit Directors

Anais Barbeau-Lavalette  
Richard Brouillette  
Fabien Côté  
Tracey Deer  
Claude Demers  
Yanie Dupont-Hébert  
Halima Elkhatabi  
Sylvain L'Espérance  
Julien Fontaine  
Paul Kell  
Caroline Martel  
Amy Miller  
Kaveh Nabatian  
Brett Story  
Denis Valiquette  
Karen Vanderborght  
Shannon Walsh

### Written by

Shannon Walsh  
Denis Valiquette

### Editing

Sophie Leblond

### Sound Design

Daniel Lagacé

### Directors of Photography

Marie-Noël Arseneau  
Geoffroy Beauchemin  
Fabien Côté  
Boban Chaldovich  
Jeff Dorn  
Yanie Dupont-Hébert  
Julien Fontaine  
Katherine Giguère  
Paul Kell  
Philippe Lavalette  
Martin Leblanc  
Jacques Leduc  
Sylvain L'Espérance  
Jean-Pierre Saint-Louis

### Sound

Santiago Bertolino  
Fabien Côté  
Jose Garcia  
Simon Goulet  
Daniel Lagacé  
Marc LaRouche  
Olivier Léger  
Alexandre Lemouël  
Martine Morin  
Christophe Motte  
Kyle Stanfield  
Lynne Trépanier  
Catherine Van der donckt  
Sylvain Vary

### Assistant to the Producer

Samara Chadwick

### Production Managers

Bruno Dequen  
Simon Dragland  
Andrea Feder

### Gear Coordinator

Daniel Froidevaux

### Technical Coordinator

Alexandre Domingue

### Data Wranglers

Jonathan Durand  
Howie Pun

### Runners

Aisling Chin-Yee  
Juliet Lammers  
Marco Valiquette  
Joe Yarmush

### Craft

Mathieu Winnicki  
Salah Samghour

### Production Assistants

Manu Barbeau-Lavalette  
Pascal Bergeron  
Laetitia Bertolino  
Samara Chadwick  
Claire Chevalier  
Laurence Fauteux  
Tobie Fraser  
Jose Garcia  
Gaelle Janvier  
Tim Kelly  
Craig Knox  
Shahriar el Kosht  
Andres Livov  
Pablo Alvarez Mesa  
Gabrielle Provost  
David Widginton

### Assistant Editors

Amélie Labrèche  
Ariane Pétel-Despots  
Robby Reis  
Charles Verret

### Sound Mixer

Jean Paul Vialard, NFB

### Sound Assistants

Pierre-Yves Decoste  
Francesco Neri

### Post Services

Post-Moderne  
Alexandre Domingue

### Post Coordinator

Anne-Marie Bousquet

### Visual Effects

Guillaume Pelletier

### Online

Justin Lachance

### Colour Correction

Julien Alix

### Director, Original Programming - Canal D

Sylvie de Bellefeuille

### Production Services (NFB)

### Associate Producer

Maryse Chapdelaine

### Production Coordinator

Dominique Brunet

### Administrative Assistant

Lise Lévesque

### Editing Support

Danielle Raymond  
Isabelle Painchaud  
Pierre Dupont

### Marketing Manager

François Jacques

### Assisted by

Emilie Nguyen Ngoc

### Administrators

Johanne Dubuc  
Manon Provencher

### Technical Coordinators

Richard Cliche  
France Couture

### Consultant

Pepita Ferrari

### Research

Shannon Walsh  
Denis Valiquette

### Additional Research

Amy Twigge  
Claude Paquette  
Marco Valiquette

### Production Intern

Nisha Platzer

### Set Photographers

Rachel Granofsky  
Jessica Petunia  
Marie-Pierre Boucher

### Interim Financing

ACEM  
Filaction

### Legal Counsel

Remy Khouzam  
Caroline Jonnaert  
Kerry Williams

### Subtitles

Sabrina Leblond-Murphy  
Catherine Leroux

### Credits

Marc Rimmer

### Original Music

Patrick Watson  
With  
Guitar: Brad Barr  
Slide: GuitarJoe Grass  
Harp: Sarah Page  
Percussion: Stefan Schneider  
Saxophone: Colin Stetson  
Viola de gamba: Pierre-Yves Martel

### Producer

Sarah Spring

### Associate Producer

Selin Murat

### Producer (NFB)

Colette Loumède

### With the financial participation of

SODEC – Société de développement des entreprises culturelles – Québec  
Canada – Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit  
Québec – Crédit d'impôt cinéma et télévision – Gestion SODEC  
CALQ – Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec

### In collaboration with

CANAL D

### With the participation of

Rogers Documentary Fund

### ST-HENRI, THE 26TH OF AUGUST

French Program  
Quebec Studio

### Produced by Parabola Films

### In co-production with the National Film Board of Canada



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