



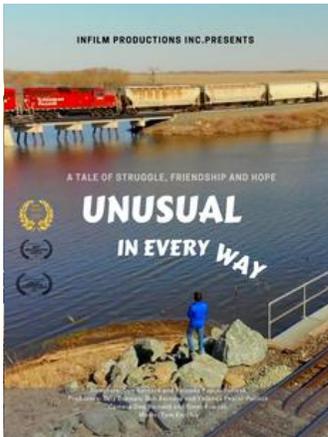
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YOLANDA PAPINI-POLLOCK AND DON BARNARD SPEAK FOLLOWING SCREENING OF THE FILM 'UNUSUAL IN EVERY WAY'

Penny Jones Square, June 6, 2022

Despite the relentless rain and anxiety over Covid, about 100 people attended, in person, the premiere screening of Yolanda Papini-Pollock and Don Barnard's documentary film *Unusual in Every Way* on May 29, 2022. The audience's reception of the film was very enthusiastic. Attendees were clearly moved by Don Barnard's emotionally affecting responses during the Q & A, following which they honoured the directors with a standing ovation. A reception, courtesy of the generosity of Larry and Tova Vickar, followed during which attendees were able to chat with both Papini-Pollock and Barnard. The film and the directors were selected as semi-finalists for the Alternative Film Festival 2021, and the film was chosen to be screened at the Rady Jewish Community Centre's Winnipeg International Jewish Film Festival as an "Added Attraction: A Manitoba Moment," a very special tribute.



Yolanda Papini-Pollock



Don Barnard with Orly Dreman

The film documents the struggles of Barnard, an Indigenous man living with disability and ravaged by the intergenerational trauma plaguing his people, and it shows how his unusual friendship with Solly Dreman, an Israeli



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Solly Dreman



Larry and Tova Vickar

professor of clinical psychology who was born and grew up in Winnipeg, and a visit to Israel opened him to the possibility of hope for himself and his people. The film is an adept interweaving of Don’s story of abuse, disability, and discrimination—interspersed with commentary by medical specialists in autism and psychotrauma, clinical psychologists, and a genocide expert—with the story of Israel’s founding and survival told through commentary by first- and second-generation Holocaust survivors.

Barnard’s surprising friendship with Solly and Orly Dreman led to his being invited to stay with them in their home in Israel to tour the country and experience for the first time what Dreman called “some tender loving care.” This proved to be a transformative experience for Barnard as he learned what it means to have a real family after having only known abuse in his own home and later in 30 foster homes. The visit also clarified Barnard’s “vision” of Israel, the unknown place he dreamed of visiting as a child. After witnessing firsthand the miracle of Israel’s remarkable recovery from the trauma of the Holocaust, Israel comes to exemplify for Barnard the very real possibility of recovery both for himself and his people, affirming as it does the astonishing growth that may unfold from catastrophe when commonalities overcome differences and mutual responsibility is accepted as a moral obligation. Barnard’s hope resides in his own people coming together as Jews have done, defying victimhood, denying despair, and uniting as a people.

Before the film was screened, Barnard introduced his “adopted father” Solly, who was virtually present on his cell phone, to the audience and had everyone say hi to him.

Larry Vickar opened the Q & A asking the audience how the film might be used for the betterment of viewers. One audience member suggested it be made available to the Ministry of Education and to the Canadian Museum of Human Rights (CMHR). Papini-Pollock informed the audience that schools in Canada and the US are showing the film that has been made available through two educational distributors. She also expressed how she has met resistance from a broadcaster that stated it was “too political.” In truth, the film is not at all political, and that was Papini-Pollock’s conscious intent. Unfortunately, the rejection may be the result of a prevailing reluctance to promote a “pro-Israel” story.

Another audience member thanked Barnard for “making himself so vulnerable,” to which he responded: “Sharing is vital to the healing process.” Five generations of his family have suffered post-traumatic stress, and now his children do as well. Papini-Pollock pointed out that “recovery from trauma takes time” and that the film will help people understand “it is not easy, but it will happen.”

And Israel holds out the promise it will happen as Barnard learned

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during his stay there, and as the film shows. For Barnard, Israel is the beacon of hope; it epitomizes the resilience of post-traumatic growth that trumps post-traumatic stress. For Israel reveals how the energy of trauma can be harnessed for survival, for life, and for creation, but it also alerts to the need for a people to stay united in the struggle to bring justice to all.

When someone asked what might be added to the film given the opportunity, Barnard answered: "Two more films," which would be "darker and harder." "Their goal would be to promote the idea that Indigenous people need a strong nation-to-nation relationship with the government," and that there needs to be unity amongst the vast diversity of nations. The new films would convey "we need our post-trauma growth period."

Larry Vickar was moved by the film *Unusual in Every Way* and impressed with the film-makers. As he expressed to the *Winnipeg Jewish Review*: "The passion that Yolanda Papini has for the subject matter both on screen and in Israel showed through, and in the answers and commentary after the fact. This in addition to Don Barnard's articulate description of his childhood trials and tribulations that led to him having some of the baggage that was evident in the film, was a suburb combination for those of us in the audience who had the pleasure of viewing the film and listening to the film-makers."

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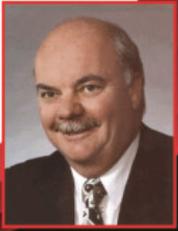


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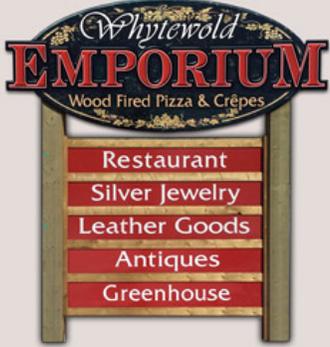


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