



Now Reading

**EVENTS**

# Coal Miner's Granddaughter

*By Susie Tommaney*

It must have been an odd sight in 1991: avant-garde filmmaker staging reenactments of pivotal life moments with a Fisher-Price PixelVision toy camera, while her assistant trailed behind with a VCR.

“Someone told me you could plug [the camera] into a VCR and record...that way,” says filmmaker Cecilia Dougherty. “But the problem with that was that this little toy camera, you had to carry around a VCR. “I just really liked the way it looked; the image was beautiful, it has a lens that doesn’t really focus, it has one focal point,” says Dougherty. “If you pull away, the focus becomes really soft; it starts being more like a Xerox or something.”

The resulting film, — a murky semi-autobiographical story about a woman fleeing small-town Pennsylvania for a sexually awakened San Francisco — is anything but child’s play, however. The film, complete with amateur actors and improvised dialogue, is being screened at Blaffer Art Museum in conjunction with that venue’s “Time / Image” exhibit.

The film’s title comes from the fact that Dougherty’s grandfather was in fact a coal miner. “It’s a little fictionalized. I used my own story, but as we were shooting, even with people who didn’t look like my family, at the end of the day, it was psychodrama.[I thought] I can’t believe we actually re-created this scene. I got a little more than I bargained for.

“I just thought this idea of time, of temporality — the idea of queer is actually not always being about a person’s sexuality, but about doing or seeing something that is a little bit to the side of mainstream and using it as a way to look at the mainstream.”

Sponsored by 11th Annual AdvoCare  
V100 Texas Bowl DIRECTIONS

Coal Miner's Granddaughter | Blaffer Art Museum | Arts, Film -  
Repertory and Special Screenings | Houston Press

**DETAILS****Time:** Fri., Nov. 6, 6:30 p.m. 2015**Free****Arts** ▶**Film - Repertory and Spec****LOCATION INFO:****Blaffer Art Museum** ▶

4173 Elgin St.  
Houston, TX 77004  
713-743-9528

[Third Ward](#)<http://www.blafferartmuseu...>