6 types of documentary films

Poetic

Poetic documentary includes genre of literature, music and film that uses avant-garde techniques to evoke a certain mood and feeling through linear narrative structure.

Expository

Expository documentary gives the narrator the role to explain or to argue the film’s rhetorical content. The stories and statements are given through voiceover with images to illustrate the tone of the film. The filmmaker collects footage that justify to build up and strengthen the spoken narrative.

Reflexive

The reflexive documentary mainly focuses on the relationship between the filmmaker and the audience. They also encourage viewers to reflect on their perceptions and re-analyse their views and ideas of the truth.

Observational

Observational documentary is a type of documentary filmmaking that aims to record realistic, everyday life without intrusion.

Performative

Performative documentary films mainly focus on the filmmakers involvement with their subject. This means using their personal experience or relationship with the subject so that they can explore for the subjective truths about politics, history or groups of people.

Participatory

Participatory documentary is a sub-genre of documentary filmmaking in which the filmmaker is included in the film’s narrative and directly interacts with the film’s subjects.