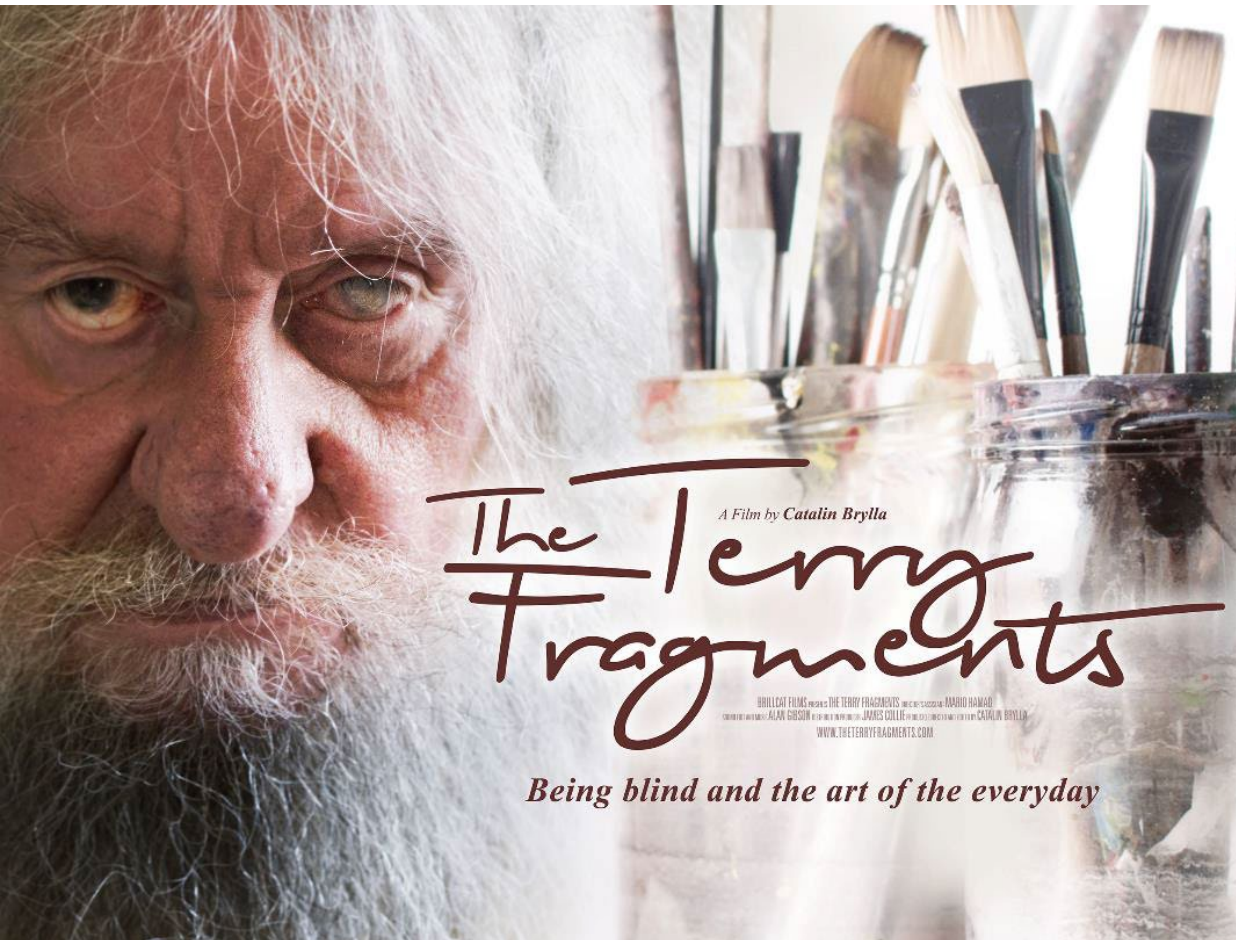# Advocacy and Challenging Stereotypes: A Case Study

Dr. Catalin Brylla
Principal Lecturer in Film and TV
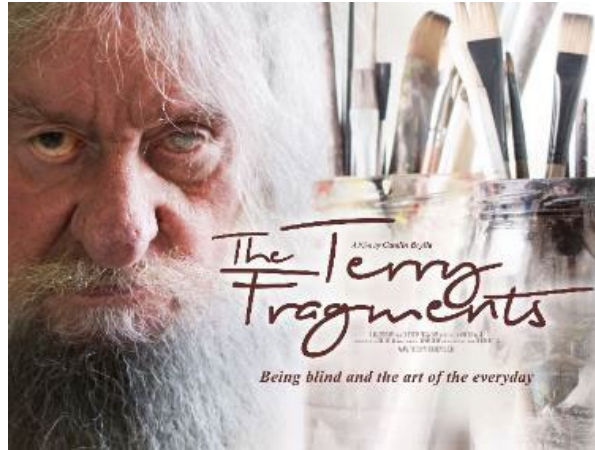Deputy Director of the Centre for the Study of Conflict, Emotion and Social Justice (CESJ)

Blindness Project

Public Communication Campaign

1. **Identify target audience (blindness stereotype holders)**

2. **Identify blindness stereotypes**

3. **Conceptualise ways of challenging stereotypes through narrative and aesthetic representations in my own films**

4. **Exhibit films to target audiences and monitor impact**

Clips: Terry trailers

Media Stereotypes of Blindness (Narrative)

Scent of a Woman (1992), Martin Brest

Blue Velvet (1986), David Lynch

Blindness (2008)

Zatoichi (2003),
Takeshi Kitano

The Boy who sees without Eyes (2007)

Black Sun (2005)

High Ground (2012)

The Colour of Paradise (1999)

Dancer in the Dark (2000)

Window of the Soul (2003)

Daredevil (2003),
Mark Steven Johnson

Emotion: Fear of Loss

Dame Shirley Bassey

" If I couldn't see the people, I could not imagine myself singing.

Dame Shirley Bassey

See the need | Dame Shirley Bassey

1:24 / 2:00

- Dame Shirley Bassey Video Transcript (Word, 13.36KB)

Media Stereotypes of Blindness (Aesthetics)

Ordinary Everyday (perspective-taking)

- **Chemel:** focus on the ordinary

- **Corbella and Acevedo:** rare to see blind people doing housework, go shopping, or travel - everyday tasks that are common to all people" (2010: 76)

- **Markotic:** through the ordinary the (disabled) body ceases to be a narrative symbol but is a vehicle for everyday experience (2012)
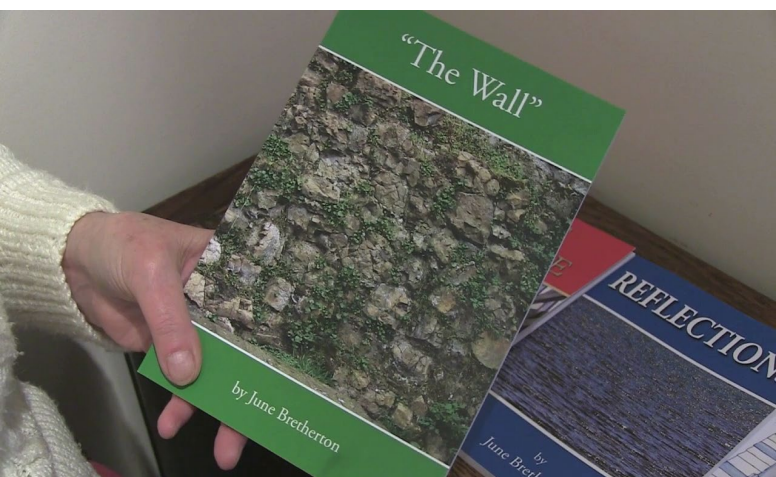
Everyday/ordinary objects

Clip: wall
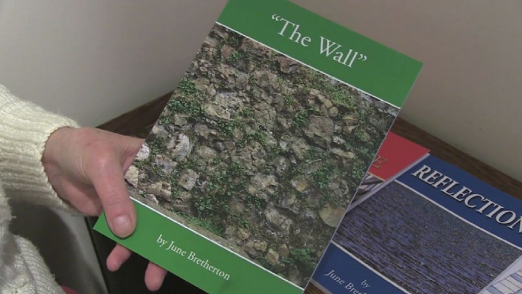
epetitions

Everyday disruptions and improvisations (reflexivity)

Clips: switch off music, bumping into camera (exposing power imbalance and his everyday life, agency to resist)

Dissemination - Target Audiences

1. **Visual impairment groups: service users, support workers, charities**

   - Being aware of stigmatising media representations and stereotype threat

   - Empowerment through taking up arts and crafts

2. **Clinical organisations: clinicians, therapists, rehabilitation workers**

   - Increasing empathy towards the patient's voice and experience

3. **Research organisations**: researchers in visual impairment and disability contexts

   - Identifying underrepresented areas for further research

   - Encouraging knowledge exchange with stakeholders outside the academy

Dissemination - Target Audiences

4. Media practitioners: commissioning editors, producers, writers, film directors, film students, etc.

- Acquiring critical media literacy to understand media stereotypes and social stigma
- Using media to break stigmatising stereotypes

5. General public

- Reconfiguring stereotypes and reducing overall public stigma
- Adjusting prejudice and behaviour towards blind people

Public Engagement

- **Screening "The Terry Fragments"**

  - Virtual Ability (Second Life community)

  - Beyond Sightloss (charity)

  - RIIVE (charity)

  - Croydon Vision (charity)

- **Screening "June's Patchwork"**

  - Age UK

  - Beyond Sightloss

- **Podcast series:** "Breaking Blind Stereotypes in Life and Media", RNIB Connect Radio

Public Engagement – Monitoring Impact Pathways

Pre-screening Questionnaire   **Post-screening Questionnaire**   **Focus Groups**

⑤ Do you have any first-hand experience with (other) individuals who are visually impaired? ✳
Required

○ No
○ Family member or close friend
○ Work colleagues or acquaintance
○ Both of the above
○ Other

⑥ How do you think blindness (or disability in general) is represented in mainstream media (TV, cinema, newspapers, advertising, etc.)? ✳ *Required*

○ Generally, in a diverse (non-stigmatising) way.
○ Generally, in a stereotypical (stigmatising) way.
○ None of the above.

⑦ Have you ever experienced any stigmatisation first-hand or through someone close to you?
✳ *Required*

○ Yes
○ No

① What have you learned from today's event? ✳ *Required*

② What might you do differently as a result? ✳ *Required*

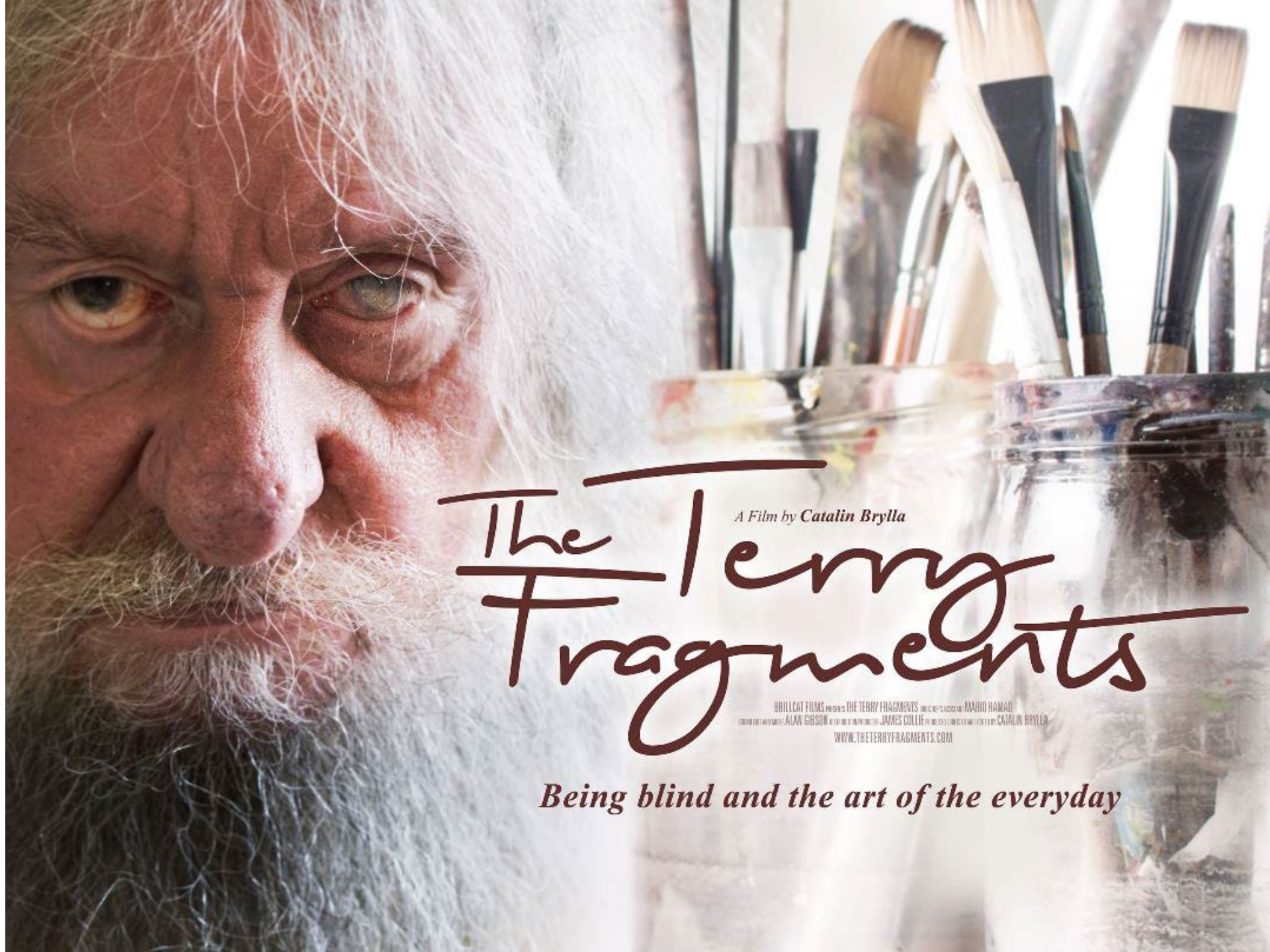③ What did you like about the film? ✳ *Required*

④ What did you NOT like about the film? ✳ *Required*

Necessary Stereotypes?

A Film by *Catalin Brylla*

The Terry Fragments

BRILLCAT FILMS presents THE TERRY FRAGMENTS directed & edited by MARIO HAMAD
co-directed and written by ALAN GIBSON original music by JAMES COLLIE produced directed written and edited by CATALIN BRYLLA

WWW.THETERRYFRAGMENTS.COM

Being blind and the art of the everyday

Asante kwa kunisikiliza