

PHOTO LONDON

FILM @ Screening Room

Your Eyes and Love in Grain and Shadow

Wednesday, May 13, 13:00 — 13:20

Thursday, May 14, 14:00 — 14:20

Friday, May 15, 15:00 — 15:20

Saturday, May 16, 14:00 — 14:20

Sunday, May 17, 15:00 — 15:20



Your eyes AND Love IN grain AND shadow

NEW DOCUMENTARY ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHER MELISSA SHOOK

In the 1960s, long before selfies and iPhones, New York photographer Melissa Shook (1939–2020) was a white single mother living within a close-knit, multi-ethnic artist community on the Lower East Side. Quietly and urgently, she set about documenting the everyday life of her mixed daughter, Krissy. This short documentary weaves together Shook's rarely seen photographs with only recently developed Super 8 footage, revealing an intimate memento of a mother-daughter bond.

While many male photographers of the 60s and 70s focused on more public, political themes and subjects they often didn't know personally, Melissa Shook's lens was up close and relational, feminist and domestic. Her photographs and snippets of film recordings were not only a way for her to navigate her private compulsions, and her profound experiences of love and loss; they were also a medium for her to preserve a vibrant living record of Krissy, her chosen family and community. Over time, Shook's relentless urge to capture life became an unspoken artistic collaboration with Krissy, and we see how together they created a mosaic of tender, quirky, funny, painful and joyful moments. *Your Eyes and Love in Grain and Shadow* is a glimpse of girlhood, a vanished New York City era, and the early experiments of a remarkable female artist.

Release February 2026 **Run Time:** 16 mins

Featuring: Melissa & Kristina Shook **Narration:** Kristina Shook

Photographs & Super 8: Melissa Shook

Director: Sarah Feinbloom

Producers: Sarah Feinbloom, Kristina Shook, S.C. Smith, Goro Toshima

**FOR INQUIRIES
AND BOOKINGS CONTACT:**

MIYAKO YOSHINAGA

www.miyakoyoshinaga.com

miyako@miyakoyoshinaga.com

Instagram: [youreyesloveingrainshadow](https://www.instagram.com/youreyesloveingrainshadow)

SHORT SYNOPSIS

In the 1960s, long before selfies and iPhones, New York photographer Melissa Shook (1939–2020) was a white single mother living within a close-knit, multi-ethnic artist community on the Lower East Side. Quietly and urgently, she set about documenting the everyday life of her mixed daughter, Krissy. This short documentary weaves together Shook's rarely seen photographs with only recently developed Super 8 footage, revealing an intimate memento of a mother-daughter bond.



SARAH FEINBLOOM, DIRECTOR STATEMENT

I met my friend Kristina Shook in Boston when we were 14. I knew she'd grown up in New York, and I knew that her mother, Melissa Shook, was a photographer, but I didn't know the extent of their story, or of their artistic relationship until we got much older. In high school Krissy and I danced with abandon to punk and reggae in our bedrooms. She did theater, I did ballet. We yearned for boys and talked about our insecurities, shared the same outrage for all kinds of injustice. Krissy always defended me and did her best to shield me from hurt and loss. She had a New York toughness and a disarming vulnerability all at once that made all her friends feel both protected and seen.

We are still friends to this day and I am still so grateful for her fierce loyalty. When her mother Melissa passed away in 2020, I wanted so much to ease Krissy's sorrow. We spent hours on the phone. Krissy told me that as Melissa was dying, she promised her she would find a wider audience for her photographs and that she wanted me to make a film about her mother.

Melissa Shook left behind an extraordinary body of work including self-portraits, photo essays of women in shelters, studies of the backside of the Suffolk Downs horse racetrack, and her most intimate series of all: a collection of photographs of Krissy from birth to age 18, known as The Krissy Series (1965-1982). This series documented a mother's deep and urgent love for her daughter over time, and predates and overlaps with much of her subsequent creative work.

As an adult, Krissy shared how frustrating it was that Melissa's work never received the recognition it deserved. I was startled to learn of Melissa's early success, write ups in the Village Voice, gallery showings and photographs purchased by the New York Museum of Modern Art in the early 1970s featuring my friend Krissy. I didn't know any of this. I had only seen a few of Melissa's photographs.

Despite these early accolades, the momentum stopped. Sexism, sexual harassment, and Melissa's own constant self-doubt, on top of poverty and the strains of single motherhood kept her work largely out of public view. Now, thanks to Krissy and a devoted circle of her mother's friends, Melissa is finally being recognized for her artistry and her place in the canon of American documentary photography. Krissy is working with gallerist Miyako Yoshinaga, who now represents the Melissa Shook estate, and together they are placing Melissa's work in museums around the world. At Krissy's request, I agreed to direct this film about The Krissy Series, titled *Your Eyes and Love in Grain and Shadow*. It is my gift to her and to her mother.



A huge box of 150 photos from The Krissy Series arrived at my door in the beginning of 2025. As I began sorting through them, I was all at once overwhelmed and deeply moved by the extent and breadth of them. I knew Melissa had photographed Krissy, but I was not prepared to see all of these - photos and contact sheets, snapped all the time, every day, and all so achingly beautiful. And I hadn't understood how active a collaborator Krissy had been in their creation. To my astonishment I learned that this box of 150 photos is only a fraction of the full archive. How would I choose what to include?

Even with so much visual material, I found myself asking Krissy if there were any moving images, films or videos by her mother. I

knew Melissa had worked in lots of formats and mediums. Krissy knew of just two Super 8 reels labeled "Krissy." These were from the early 1960s and nobody had ever seen them. After we watched them together over FaceTime, I got so excited. I asked Krissy for more. I wanted more. Krissy was sure there wasn't anymore, but after a month-long search to her surprise, she uncovered eighteen Super 8 reels in all, hidden at the bottom of mislabeled boxes.

Melissa's footage was fragmentary and poetic, glimpses out of a New York window, waves crashing, shadowy interiors, Krissy dancing and learning to walk. None of this footage had ever been seen by anyone but Melissa. With each new roll, our team — Krissy, Alex Regalado and producers S.C. Smith and Goro Toshima — felt we were unearthing Melissa's restless experimentation with not just still but also moving images as a young artist. And through these images and footage I also started to see Krissy's own voice and artistry emerge, in the dialogue and give and take, revealed in this unique process of a mother and daughter creating together.

The creative vision for the film came tumbling out of my head almost immediately. Within two days, I had the structure, tone, and rhythm mapped out. I wanted to follow the chronological arc of the photographs and let Melissa's vision guide the rest. One night, the narration poured out of me, written in the imagined cadence of my dear friend Krissy's voice. The voice I have listened to for so many years, that has so much wisdom and emotion. Krissy and her writing partner, S.C. Smith refined it further, adding more depth, poetry, and personal details; we bounced it back and forth until it was just right. In the film, we only hear Krissy. She is speaking directly to her mother who is gone, bridging time and loss and love. There was no other way to tell this story but through Krissy's voice.



Our team — S.C. Smith, my long-time editor Alex Regalado, and long-time filmmaking partner Goro Toshima — has poured our love into this film. It has been a journey filled with grief, joy, and many unexpected moments of grace. We wish Melissa were still here to witness this renewed recognition of her work. But we are honored to share this film with audiences. Melissa Shook was doing something groundbreaking starting in the 1960s, photographing her child and herself in feminist, personal, and intersectional ways. She did this long before many others who received more credit than she did, for similar work. In many ways, she anticipated the self-documenting obsessions of our current culture by decades.

Just as Krissy has always protected me, I hope this film protects both her legacy and her mother's. It is a memento of the fragility and necessity of art, and a reminder to see, remember, and love.

TEAM BIOS

PHOTOS & SUPER 8: MELISSA SHOOK (1939-2020) was an American photographer, videographer, writer, and teacher based in NYC and Chelsea, MA, best known for her self- and family portraits and documentary-style photography humanizing marginalized people such as immigrants, the elderly, and the homeless, Shook's practice expanded throughout her career to include writing, bookmaking, drawing, sculpture, video art, and social practice. She was a pioneer in exploring identity, motherhood, and interracial families, channeling the spirit of creative freedom and attending the rise of feminism in the 1960s and 1970s.

NARRATOR, CO-WRITER & CO-PRODUCER: KRISTINA SHOOK is a multiethnic, multimedia, emerging self-taught artist who grew up on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, and has been creating art for twenty years. Her eclectic work deals with themes of unique identities, freedom, mental health, discarded people and objects through photography, abstract paintings, collages, videos and solo shows. One of her main inspirations has been her late mother, the American documentary photographer Melissa Shook, with whom Kristina collaborated from one to eighteen on a groundbreaking series of photographs that are in the permanent collection at the MOMA (NY), the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, among others. She graduated on full scholarship from Sarah Lawrence College and holds a Master's degree in screenwriting from the American Film Institute.

DIRECTOR, WRITER, PRODUCER, CO-EDITOR: SARAH FEINBLOOM is the founder and the former executive director of GOOD DOCS - a leading educational documentary distribution company specializing in human rights and social issue documentaries. She is also an award-winning director, producer and editor whose film work includes documentaries, dramatic narratives and advocacy films. Sarah has a long and varied career as a documentary filmmaker and much of it has involved practicing a collaborative-filmmaking approach, partnering with individuals and communities to center their stories and experiences. As early as 1991, while a middle school teacher in Boston, she put cameras into the hands of her students to co-create *YOUTH TO YOUTH - A Video About Violence*, becoming one of the very early independent filmmakers who fostered and promoted youth-led storytelling. In 2005, Sarah directed and produced *DAUGHTERS AND SONS - Preventing Child Trafficking In The Golden Triangle*, featured on the BBC, which raised over \$200,000 for Friends of Thai Daughters, a Thai American NGO working to protect Thai, Hmong, Karen and Vietnamese children. Some of her other credits include *EARTH, WATER, WOMAN* (2013) about a Rastafarian Trinidadian woman and her community combating climate change in the Caribbean, which premiered at the Trinidad & Tobago Film Festival, and *MANY LOVES, ONE HEART* (2017) championing LGBT activists and their straight allies in Jamaica which premiered at Frameline Film Festival. One of her latest projects, *WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE NOW?* (2019), follows up with the spiritual and religious lives of a diverse group of young people whom she first profiled in her celebrated 2002 documentary, *WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?*. Both films premiered at the Mill Valley Film Festival. *WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?* aired on PBS in 2003 and screened internationally at venues including the National Association of Multicultural Education and the American Academy of Religion. It was voted "One of the Ten Best Videos for Young Adults in 2003" by the American Library Association and has been shown at over 2,000 schools and colleges. She recently served as a jury member for Jewish Story Partners 2024 granting cycle, and is a former member of New Day Films. Sarah has received funding in the past from the California Council For The Humanities, Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media Film Grant, The Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, The Pacific Pioneer Fund, The Marin Community Foundation and Hartley Film Foundation.

EDITOR: ALEX REGALADO is an editor and post producer, and most recently the Head of Post Production for Duplass Brothers Productions. While she began her career working on shows for HBO (Room 104) and Showtime (Ray Donovan), she has since specialized in supervising indie film and TV. Prior to producing, Alex worked as a freelance editor on documentaries and social justice projects. She is proud to have worked under some game-changing women, including Oscar-Nominated Director Amy Berg, Co-Author of the Inclusion Rider - Fanshen Cox, and GOOD DOCS Founder Sarah Feinbloom. Her web series *Full Disclosure* was awarded the AHECTA Best Documentary Lifestyle Piece in 2014, and her piece *This Part of Me* was named the winner of #TheFWord in 2016. Alex was panelist at BlogHer '16 and a speaker at the HPA Tech Retreat in 2022.

CO-PRODUCER, CO-WRITER: S.C. SMITH co-wrote and associate produced the Val Kilmer-narrated documentary, *The Seventh Man*. The story chronicles 2 years in the life of the best 6-man football team in Texas, the Panther Creek Panthers. He wrote, directed, and produced the award-winning animated short *Love Life of Cromwell Rogers*, which claimed the top prize at Best of Boston's Open Screen Film Festival and premiered at the Brattle Theater in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Expanding his creative reach, Smith ventured into fiction writing, debuting with the thriller *Mexican Hit Girl* in 2010. The novel climbed to number six on Amazon's bestseller list for political thrillers. To date, he has authored four novels, including two in the Mason Church series and three standalone works, blending his knack for compelling narratives with cinematic storytelling.

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER & CO-EDITOR: GORO TOSHIMA is an award winning director-cinematographer based in Los Angeles. His films have received the jury award for best feature documentary at the South by Southwest Film Festival, a best short nomination from the International Documentary Association, as well as best film awards at numerous top-tier film festivals. His work has screened/broadcast widely, from PBS to HBO to the Sundance Film Festival. Of recent note, he was the cinematographer of the award winning Sundance film, *City of Gold*. In addition to his documentary work, Goro also directs branded content and commercials. Goro received a Masters Degree in Documentary Filmmaking from Stanford University.

FULL CREDITS

dedicated to the memory of

**Melissa Shook
1939 - 2020**

photographs and super 8 by
Melissa Shook

narrated by
Kristina Shook

directed by
Sarah Feinbloom

edited by
Alex Regalado

produced by
**Sarah Feinbloom
Kristina Shook
S.C. Smith
Goro Toshima**

executive producer
Nancy Lutz

written by
**Sarah Feinbloom
Kristina Shook
S.C. Smith**

additional images by
**Kristina Shook
S.C. Smith**

music by
Caroline Shaw
courtesy of Warner Music Group

Hum and Hit
written and produced by John
Montgomery
John Montgomery Music

Rise
written and produced by John
Montgomery
John Montgomery Music

Adolescence
written and produced by John
Montgomery
John Montgomery Music

Silent Shield
music by Yeonsuk Jung and Kaitlin
Miller

Farewell
music by Yeonsuk Jung and Kaitlin
Miller

Forever
music by Yeonsuk Jung and Kaitlin
Miller

sound recording
**Jose "Chipi" Estrada
Andrei Zinca
Voxx Studios**

re-recording mixer
Max Braverman

consultant
Jarreth Merz

additional consultants
**Caroline Libresco
Jonathan Skurnik**

honorary thank you
**Sally Stein
Miyako Yoshinaga
Nancy Lutz
Miyako DeRose
Lorie Novak
Paul Tucker
Maggie Moss-Tucker**

special contributors
**Linda and Chuck Swartz
Jane and Eric Peterson
Paul Kafka-Gibbons
Roberta Grossman**

*with recognition of cherished and
beloved family and friends*
**Beulah Clegg (stepmother/
grandma)
John Clegg (Granddad)
Darryl Clegg (father)
Jeanne Lee
Madeline Lee
Naima Hazelton
Cavana Lee-Hempel
Stephen (cousin)
Richard Samms (Uncle)
Lenore Jaffee
Sarah Phillips
Will Faller Jr.
Hillary
Ezekiel Kisling
Karleton (cousin)
Darryl (cousin/namesake)
Nicole Haynes
Dallas Haynes
Maria Giese
Cheryl (Mitchell) McLaren
Josh Peterson**

additional thanks
**Doug Blush and Lisa Klein,
Kimberely Browning, Michael
Carmichael, Myriam Casimir, Lois
Charles, Heather Courtney, Fanshen
Cox, Pat Harris Di Leva, David
Feinbloom, Deborah Heller and Ann
Sanders, Emily Hsiang, Jane and
Michael Kelly, Royston Langdon and
Antony Langdon, Sienna Lee, Erik
Long, Linda Lu, Ben Murphy, Klara
Nilsson Grunning, Kiren Shoman,
Peter Wishinski, Susan Wolfson, and
Kenzie Woodrow**

fiscal sponsor
From the Heart Productions

Production Companies
**SarafinaProductions
Almont Media**

copyright
**Shook Performances and the estate
of M. Melissa Shook**