

## DOXA 2013: Rose Colored Glasses captures one of the art world's greatest weirdos

by Janet Smith on May 8, 2013 at 1:37 pm



There is eccentric, and then there is Nicholas Treadwell. The Brit art dealer/provocateur flies his freak flag in a whole different stratosphere from the world's other weirdos.

SFU contemporary-arts grad and director Sonia Suvagau travels to Austria, where her perennially optimistic subject runs a gallery he dubs the Pink Prison. It's an actual former jail where he's painted the walls fuchsia and lives alone, surrounded by the boobs, bums, and grotesque faces of his campy-kinky collection of art. The 75-year-old Treadwell is always dressed to match his surroundings, from his dyed-pink thinning hair down to his bubblegum-hued sneakers.

Suvagau plays with a wealth of fun subject matter here, flashing back to Treadwell's storied history. He starts by shilling art for the masses out of a van, and later a doubledecker bus, in England in the '60s, becomes a celeb art provocateur in the '70s and a major gallery owner in the '80s. Sneering critics, failed relationships, and financial mismanagement dog him all along the way. A host of colourful interviewees and visual artists also weigh in on the mad collector and his flaws, from Tiger Lilies lead singer Martyn Jacques to Treadwell's own late mother (well, that's actually Treadwell in hot-pink lipstick and angel wings).

Throughout, we see Treadwell romping about his flamingo castle, dressing up in drag, and singing with his accordion. It's not till later in the movie, when he tours us through his astonishing life's collection, that we really start to appreciate his genius when it comes to art, and his passionate but utterly unpretentious approach to it. The art world could use a little more silliness—and a lot more pink.

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Watch the trailer for *Rose Colored Glasses*.

***Rose Colored Glasses screens on Wednesday (May 8) at the Vancity Theatre at 8:45 p.m.***

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