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Asbestos

Sasha Litvintseva, Graeme Arnfield

2016, color, 20 min., English. **Producer** Sasha Litvintseva, Graeme Arnfield. **Production companies** Sasha Litvintseva (London, UK), Graeme Arnfield (London, UK). **Director of photography** Sasha Litvintseva. **Sound** Benjamin R. Taylor. **Music** Graeme Arnfield. **Editor** Sasha Litvintseva, Graeme Arnfield.

Sasha Litvintseva, born in 1989 in Russia, is a London-based artist, filmmaker, researcher, and curator.

Graeme Arnfield, born in 1991 in the UK, is an artist living in London.

Films

Sasha Litvintseva: 2013: *Alluvion* (31 min.). 2014: *Immortality, Home and Elsewhere* (12 min.), *Evergreen* (49 min.). 2015: *Exile Exotic* (14 min.). 2016: *The Stability of the System* (18 min.), *Asbestos*.

Graeme Arnfield: 2014: *I'm Sorry I Have to Run* (16 min.). 2015: *Sitting in Darkness* (15 min.). 2016: *Colossal Cave* (10 min.), *Asbestos*.

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Mined, extracted, and woven, asbestos was the magic mineral. Towns became cities under its patronage, Persian kings entertained guests with its fireproof nature, and centuries of industry raked in the profits of its global application. We now live in the remains of this toxic dream, a dream that with the invention of electron microscopes revealed our material history as a disaster in the waiting. Yet the asbestos industry has far from left us, with extraction from the soil transforming to extraction from our walls. We are now faced with two options: to remove this material from our homes and start anew, or to build upon its residue. Removal is a dangerous and costly operation. So often we choose to live amongst it instead, choking out our walls with plastic tarping: the failed promises of modernism literally entombed all around us. Shot in the mining township of Asbestos, Quebec, home to the world's largest asbestos mine that only stopped extraction in 2012, the film is a meditation on the entanglement of the fragility of bodies, the nonlinearity of progress, and the persistence of matter.