UCONN CATTLE AUCTION RETURNS

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A cow in a pen at the Cattle Resources Unit in Storrs, CT. The UConn Department of Animal Science hosted a cattle auction event on Oct. 18.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL JEFFERS, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

The University of Connecticut Department of Animal Science held its annual beef cattle sale at the Cattle Resource Unit on Sunday, Oct.18.

The sale featured Angus bulls, Hereford steers, heifers and a pregnant Hereford cow. While the event was hosted by UConn's Animal Science Department, the auction was done by the Wolf Auction Group, a specialized auction and fundraising consulting firm that provides auctioneers and emcees.

The event drew in various attendees from ranches and farms.

"We have some very loyal customers that have been coming here for decades," Mary Margaret Smith, the organizer of the auction and Executive Program Director for the Dairy and Livestock Units at UConn wrote in an email. "Our buyers are local farmers and 4-H or FFA members."

Before the auction, cattle with yellow ear tags, some as young as a few months old, were available to view. The cattle were grazing hay while attendees looked to see which of them they would like to bid on.

"We've come here for 10 years, and pretty much buy one animal a year," Archer Jennings, a hobby farmer looking to buy a Hereford steer, said.

Jennings said he primarily uses the animals for beef but gives its other contents to his friends and family, adding that Hereford steers are useful for their hides and lards.

"It's the best garden I've ever had; I'll tell you that," he said.

While Hereford steers are often a popular breed for beef production, other types of cattle were bid on the most.

"The Angus bulls will probably bring the most money," Smith wrote ahead of the event.

In fact, many attendees wanted to buy Angus bulls for the increased function, size and growth rate that they may introduce to a herd.

"We breed bulls for the young ones," Pete Utz, an attendee that has been ranching for more than 60 years, said. "We want to grow our herd."

Utz said that he would spend around $8,000 depending on which of the available animals met his price range and needs. At one point, an 815-pound Angus bull was sold for $3,600.

Though the exact amount of money made from the auction was not disclosed, the proceeds go toward supporting and strengthening UConn's Department of Animal Science. The money especially helps maintain the operations and care of the livestock and cattle units and supports educational experiences tied to the animal science curriculum.

Students are heavily involved with the auction each year, taking care of and halter training the cattle, Smith wrote. Some students even lead the cattle to the center of the resource unit for bidders to view.

'YOU CAN SEE EVERYTHING'
REDEFINES WHAT A DOCUMENTARY CAN BE

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If you think you know what a documentary is, then you haven't seen "You Can See Everything."

The A24 documentary takes place 34 days before Elizabeth Holmes, the fraudster who founded the scam health technology company Theranos, is set to begin her over-11-year prison sentence. Holmes invites the movie's co-directors, Nathan Fielder and Lance Oppenheim, into her home to document her and her husband Billy Evans' lives leading up to her imprisonment.

In the documentary, Holmes says she hopes it will help people sympathize with her when they see who she really is. However, throughout the movie's gargantuan three-hour runtime, a sinking feeling begins to form in Fielder that Holmes is keeping something from him.

What unfolds over the next three years is encapsulated in the movie as an ever-growing black hole that slowly swallows itself in layers upon layers of deception, and it becomes impossible for the audience to tell where the deceit is coming from.

To put it simply, "You Can See Everything" is a one-of-a-kind masterpiece that doesn't feel like something that should be possible. The movie is riveting from start to finish, and it quickly becomes impossible to look away as you're pulled in deeper and deeper. It completely redefines what a documentary can be. You enter looking for answers, and you leave with even more questions as the barrier between truth and fiction becomes increasingly blurred.

That's entirely because of the shared vision between the two directors, Fielder and Oppenheim.

Fielder remains in front of the camera as the interviewer of Holmes and Evans, but he does more than just ask questions. He plays a direct role in the documentary, poking and prodding at his subjects and questioning if they're being truthful with him. Both the audience and Fielder study the reactions that he gets from them, but Fielder doesn't often give his input on those reactions. It's left up to the audience to interpret what they're seeing.

Fielder's role becomes larger as the scope of the movie expands, and you soon have no idea who to trust. The audience's suspicions turn inward on Fielder, who has no reason to lie, yet the audience is left with the same sinking feeling that Fielder develops at the beginning of the movie. You even start to wonder if anyone is lying in the first place or if they even know they're lying. This leads to a completely unsettling watch where distrust engulfs everything, and every subsequent moment prompts doubt.

To talk more about Fielder's role would spoil the many twists and turns that "You Can See Everything" takes, but it's fair to say that Fielder completely shatters the boundaries of what documentary filmmaking is. He refuses to simply be an observer and lets himself become a subject alongside Holmes and Evans. He asks the audience to engage with more than just the story that they're seeing, but how the story is being shown to them. Through this unique approach, Fielder questions the very idea of what truth is and if we can ever truly see everything.

But while Fielder masterfully reinvents the documentary genre in front of the camera, Oppenheim is doing it from the other side. Oppenheim is rarely seen in the documentary, but what he brings is a unique vision as to what a documentary can look like, sound like and feel like.

The documentary's look is singular, with tight close-ups, beautifully composed wide shots and a warm, vibrant look that makes you wonder how they were able to shoot all the footage they got.

As Fielder interacts with Holmes, everything in the background falls away as the lens gets so close that you can see every pore on their faces. The camera invites you to analyze every movement to see if they're lying, from the smallest twitches of Holmes' unnaturally blue eyes to her soft smile that evokes a feeling of uncanny valley. The conversations are edited to make it feel like a back-and-forth battle where as soon as someone finishes speaking, they pass it back to the other person so they can study them.

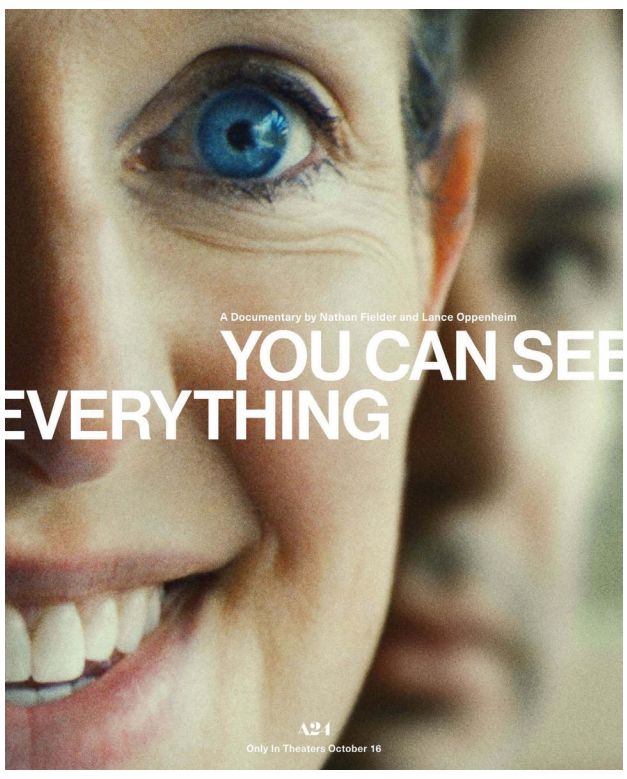
David Bolen specifically needs to be shouted out as the film's cinematographer. Documentary filmmaking creates a unique challenge where you never know what's going to happen next, and if you miss something important, it's gone forever. If this is an issue that Bolen struggled with, it's impossible for the audience to tell. He captures every spontaneous moment with perfect precision that completely entrances you into "You Can See Everything." Whenever something is happening, it feels like you're focused on the most important thing, and sometimes that's the bowl of eggs that Holmes' is missing or the beef jerky that she's eating.

On top of the visuals, the film incorporates its score into its storytelling. While most documentaries utilize music, "You Can See Everything" uses it in a completely unique way. Throughout interactions and conversations, uneasy music plays underneath it all, creating this sense of dread that makes you feel like it's always going to culminate in something — but you never know what. The score, composed by Ari Balouzian, feels straight out of a mystery or horror film. It tells the audience that they should constantly doubt what they're seeing, and trust no one, amplifying the anxiety they feel throughout.

All of this culminates in an experience like no other. The movie doesn't feel like a documentary, it feels like a psychological horror movie where you never know what's coming next. There isn't another movie like "You Can See Everything," and there probably never will be. The movie is lightning in a bottle, and Fielder and Oppenheim were there to catch it.

"You Can See Everything" is a movie where you need to see it to believe it. And even then, you just might not.

Rating: 5/5



A poster advertising A24's new documentary "You Can See Everything." The film focused on Elizabeth Holmes who founded the scam health technology company, Theranos.

PHOTO COURTESY OF YOU CAN SEE EVERYTHING ON FACEBOOK