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# Knots and holes

## Mattijs van der Port

Nets are all around us. They materialize such principles as connecting, filtering and patterning. Which is why we might want to have a closer look at what people do with them -- and what they do with people.

In Bahia, Brazil, I travelled to places where people work with nets. I recorded the conversations, emotions and sensations that occur in the presence of nets. I went on a fishing trip with Tico. I spoke with evangelicals, who sought to explain the biblical parable of the fishing net. I hung out with the boys from the Candomblé religion, who have their shirts made of lace. And I never stopped wondering how the principles of filtering and patterning play themselves out in my own life - as a filmmaker, as an anthropologist, as a gay-man-in-love.

Keeping alive the tension between openness and closure, knot and hole, grasping and caressing, this film invites its audiences to ponder the observation that all we humans ever do is to impose structures onto life and being, then to find out that neither life, nor being, follow our designs.

**Please see HTML version for accompanying video content**

**Mattijs van de Port** is a visual anthropologist and works at the University of Amsterdam and VU University. He did research in Serbia, The Netherlands and (since 2001) in Brazil. He is the author of three ethnographies and made several films, including *Saborear Frutas Brasileiras* (which premiered in 2013) and the essay films *The Possibility of Spirits* (premiere in 2016). *Knots and Holes* premiered at the Ethnofest film-festival in Athens in 2018, and has been selected for a great number of ethnographic film festivals. Currently Van de Port is finishing an film on Bahian magical-religious practices to 'close the body'.

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