What in the World?  
RTÉ

Series 8
4 X 25 MINUTES (2014)

Broadcast Schedule

RTÉ One 11.15 pm

Monday 1 December - The Emperor’s New Clothes (Russia)
Monday 8 December - Jeju’s Aching Heart (South Korea)
Monday 15 December - Still Birth in South Sudan (South Sudan)
Monday 22 December - Body Talk in Togo (Togo)

Monique Anthony and her daughter, Shalom Kouévi

This hard-hitting television documentary series seeks to raise greater public awareness of global economic inequalities and human rights violations.
Russia – The Emperor’s New Clothes
Russia is close, closer than we think. But for most people in the West this vast sprawling country remains a mystery, a distant and undiscovered place. Russia covers eleven different time zones, stretches from Finland to Japan and has an uneasy border with Europe to the West. It was once the bedrock of both the reviled and revered Soviet Union, until it’s sudden and unexpected collapse in 1991. But the spectre of Cold War that hung over this place for so long has suddenly re-appeared. Russia’s might might be resurgent but how has the country changed from the inside? With a focus on human rights, this film explores the complexity of contemporary Russian life.

South Korea - Jeju’s Aching Heart
Against the seething anger of the people of Jeju, the construction of a naval base on what locals call sacred Gureombi Rock on Jeju Island now seems unstoppable. But equally unstoppable is the sheer determination of the people in this fishing village to continue their resistance. Primarily for use by the United States military, the base will extend US presence in the region. Neither the US nor the British defence departments deny that US presence in the Pacific region is aimed squarely at China. While the stated motive is to “protect freedom of navigation” in the Malacca Straits and the South China Sea, in reality it controls China’s strategic oil routes - vital in the event of escalating tensions.

South Sudan - Still Birth in South Sudan
There is almost an inevitability about countries birthed in violence disintegrating into further violence following independence and not just in Africa. The jubilation that marked the birth of the South Sudanese nation brought no respite to its people. Two million people died and four million people were displaced in the civil war with Sudan in the lead-up to the 2005 peace agreement. Formal independence came on 9 July 2011 following a referendum in which over 98% voted for independence. Then things fell apart.

Togo - Body Talk in Togo
Bodies. The perfect body, the normal body, the ideal body, the able body, the disabled body, the beautiful body, the named body. And then there is the gaze. And how the gaze shapes, names, denigrates and celebrates the human body. It’s not the body that disables but the gaze according to one participant in this documentary. And then there is the historical legacy. Stigma, discrimination, lack of adequate healthcare and rehabilitation services, inaccessible transport, buildings and information. Despite it all, there are those who refused to be named, held down or held back. Among those some people with disabilities in Togo.