2019 RESEARCH IN FILM AWARDS

Arts and Humanities Research Council
Programme outline

6:30PM
REGISTRATION AND DRINKS IN THE BFI BAR & KITCHEN

7:00PM
RESEARCH IN FILM AWARDS 2019 CEREMONY IN NFT1

8:00PM
DRINKS AND CANAPÉS IN THE BFI BAR & KITCHEN

10:00PM
CLOSE OF EVENT

@ahrcpress    #RIFA2019
Welcome from Jan Dalley

Welcome to the 2019 Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Research in Film Awards (RIFA).

RIFA celebrates the best in academic filmmaking. Since 2015, it’s inspired researchers from all over the UK to think more deeply about how they share their work with the wider world. Film has an ability to make distant people, places and ideas immediately, visually accessible. The four years of RIFA have led to fascinating work that has connected a broad audience with exciting arts and humanities research, telling new stories about the human condition. Four years of turning the camera on research has resulted in some highly original films, and I’m very excited to see what the future of RIFA has in store.

For 2019, in addition to our usual categories we’re inviting submissions for our special ‘Mental Health and Wellbeing film’ award. Arts and humanities research has countless applications for our mental health and wellbeing, from designing arts-based interventions to understanding the fundamental nature of mental health, from improving access to historic places, to participation in sport and dance. Importantly, this category, along with our returning ‘Inspiration Award’, is open to the public. I hope that entries in this special category for 2019 will share this important work with a wider audience.

Winning a Research in Film Award is a significant accolade in itself, but it can often lead to great other things. Previous RIFA winners have gone on to win BAFTAs and other awards, been screened at film festivals, or gone on to secure funding and further achievements. RIFA is often just the beginning – much like the research that RIFA seeks to explore.

As the AHRC’s Research in Film Awards reach their fifth edition, their message and their relevance seems more urgent than ever.

Five years ago we launched the awards, for documentary films of not more than 30 minutes based – however loosely on research, as an innovative way of showcasing the AHRC’s central aim of promoting world-class research across a wide range of topics.

At the time, some were surprised. Why film? Wasn’t the medium rather informal, in relation to more conventional products of academic endeavour such as text, charts, graphics, footnotes?

Far from it, in our view. Film is not only a powerful tool for conveying information in succinct form, it can make us truly feel the impact of a complex and nuanced argument: it can help us to weigh the reality of a topic, to take in the truth of a situation viscerally as well as intellectually. A shot of a Holocaust survivor’s ravaged face, of the blank expression of a young girl in the hands of traffickers, of the vibrant joy of an African rapper cheerfully using blobs of toothpaste for her make-up – these are things that bring home, to our pulses, what that word “humanities” actually means.

It’s also the accessibility of film that makes it so important. Through the AHRC’s website and many other forms of social media, these awards have brought the brilliantly varied selections from our shortlists and winners to a much wider audience. Another important goal – to promote the careers of emerging filmmakers, who are so essential to the UK’s creative industries – was triumphantly fulfilled last year: we are extremely proud that Victoria Mapplebeck, winner of 2018’s ‘Social Media’ category, went on to win a BAFTA award with her short film Missed Call.

In the past year the media, including the medium of film, have faced some serious challenges. The concept of ‘fake news’ has entered our vocabulary and, lethally, our thinking. All information, it seems to say, is suspect; truth and facts are malleable commodities; there’s no such thing as objectivity. Research itself, misquoted and shorn of context, has been co-opted into this unhappy way of thinking. All of this makes the work of the AHRC even more essential. Touchstones of quality and honesty matter more than ever.

The documentaries in our five categories are excitingly varied, full of originality and fascination, of insight and analysis, laced with devotion to their subject matter.

Not one of them is fake news.

Jan Dalley
Chair of the judging panel and Arts Editor of the Financial Times

Welcome from Andrew Thompson

Welcome to the 2019 Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Research in Film Awards (RIFA).

RIFA celebrates the best in academic filmmaking. Since 2015, it’s inspired researchers from all over the UK to think more deeply about how they share their work with the wider world. Film has an ability to make distant people, places and ideas immediately, visually accessible. The four years of RIFA have led to fascinating work that has connected a broad audience with exciting arts and humanities research, telling new stories about the human condition. Four years of turning the camera on research has resulted in some highly original films, and I’m very excited to see what the future of RIFA has in store.

For 2019, in addition to our usual categories we’re inviting submissions for our special ‘Mental Health and Wellbeing film’ award. Arts and humanities research has countless applications for our mental health and wellbeing, from designing arts-based interventions to understanding the fundamental nature of mental health, from improving access to historic places, to participation in sport and dance. Importantly, this category, along with our returning ‘Inspiration Award’, is open to the public. I hope that entries in this special category for 2019 will share this important work with a wider audience.

Winning a Research in Film Award is a significant accolade in itself, but it can often lead to great other things. Previous RIFA winners have gone on to win BAFTAs and other awards, been screened at film festivals, or gone on to secure funding and further achievements. RIFA is often just the beginning – much like the research that RIFA seeks to explore.

Professor Andrew Thompson
Chief Executive, Arts & Humanities Research Council
@ProfAThompson
The RIFA 2019 judges

The AHRC would like to thank our expert panel of judges for their hard work judging this year’s Awards.

**JAN DALLEY**
Arts Editor of the Financial Times and chair of the judging panel.

**PETER BAزال.getText()GETTE**
President of the Royal Television Society, Deputy Chairman of the National Film and Television School and Non-Executive Director of ITV.

**STEVE EVANSON**
TV Producer and well-known as Co-Creator and Series Editor of BBC Coast and author of the companion book Coast and Beyond.

**SUSANNAH HALL**
Head of Arts at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

**STEVE HARDING-HILL**
Creative Director in Commercials and Short Form, Aardman Animations.

**DR JAMES LEGGOTT**
Lecturer in Film and Television, Northumbria University.

**KIM LONGINOTTO**
Award-winning documentary film maker.

Presenters this evening

We are delighted to introduce your host and presenters for the evening.

**HOST**
**DANNY LEIGH**
Danny Leigh is the senior curator of fiction in the BFI National Archive. Danny came to the BFI in 2017 after a career in film journalism, writing for the Financial Times and the Guardian over more than 20 years.

**BEST DOCTORAL OR EARLY CAREER FILM**
**IAIN ROBERT SMITH**
Iain Robert Smith is a Senior Lecturer in Film at Kings College London, and author of books such as The Hollywood Meme, Transnational Film Remakes and Media Across Borders. Iain is also a AHRC/BBC New Generation Thinker.

**MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING AWARD**
**JACKIE LONG**
Jackie Long is Channel 4 News Social Affairs Editor and presenter. She joined the programme in 2011, following more than two decades at the BBC. Most recently she was Correspondent at Newsnight, and she previously worked on The World at One, PM and Five Live.

**SOCIAL MEDIA SHORT AWARD**
**VICTORIA MAPPLEBECK**
Victoria Mapplebeck is a BAFTA winning Producer and Director. She is also Professor in Digital Arts at Royal Holloway, University of London and judge of the Arts and Humanities Research Council Research in Film Awards 2019.

**INSPIRATION AWARD**
**AYESHA TAYLOR-CAMERA**
Ayeha Taylor-Camera is a PhD Student at the University of Nottingham exploring the role and value of public service media in the digital media economy. She is currently working within audience research for BBC One and BBC Drama.

**BEST RESEARCH FILM**
**HOLLY TARQUINI**
Holly Tarquini is the Executive Director of FilmBath (previously Bath Film Festival), founder of the F-Rating, a Fair-Trade stamp for every film written and/or directed by a woman. Holly is an Astanga Yoga student, parent and intersectional feminist.

**BEST DOCTORAL OR EARLY CAREER FILM**
**IAIN ROBERT SMITH**
Iain Robert Smith is a Senior Lecturer in Film at Kings College London, and author of books such as The Hollywood Meme, Transnational Film Remakes and Media Across Borders. Iain is also a AHRC/BBC New Generation Thinker.

**MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING AWARD**
**JACKIE LONG**
Jackie Long is Channel 4 News Social Affairs Editor and presenter. She joined the programme in 2011, following more than two decades at the BBC. Most recently she was Correspondent at Newsnight, and she previously worked on The World at One, PM and Five Live.

**SOCIAL MEDIA SHORT AWARD**
**VICTORIA MAPPLEBECK**
Victoria Mapplebeck is a BAFTA winning Producer and Director. She is also Professor in Digital Arts at Royal Holloway, University of London and judge of the Arts and Humanities Research Council Research in Film Awards 2019.

**INSPIRATION AWARD**
**AYESHA TAYLOR-CAMERA**
Ayeha Taylor-Camera is a PhD Student at the University of Nottingham exploring the role and value of public service media in the digital media economy. She is currently working within audience research for BBC One and BBC Drama.

**BEST RESEARCH FILM**
**HOLLY TARQUINI**
Holly Tarquini is the Executive Director of FilmBath (previously Bath Film Festival), founder of the F-Rating, a Fair-Trade stamp for every film written and/or directed by a woman. Holly is an Astanga Yoga student, parent and intersectional feminist.

**HOST**
**DANNY LEIGH**
Danny Leigh is the senior curator of fiction in the BFI National Archive. Danny came to the BFI in 2017 after a career in film journalism, writing for the Financial Times and the Guardian over more than 20 years.

**BEST DOCTORAL OR EARLY CAREER FILM**
**IAIN ROBERT SMITH**
Iain Robert Smith is a Senior Lecturer in Film at Kings College London, and author of books such as The Hollywood Meme, Transnational Film Remakes and Media Across Borders. Iain is also a AHRC/BBC New Generation Thinker.

**MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING AWARD**
**JACKIE LONG**
Jackie Long is Channel 4 News Social Affairs Editor and presenter. She joined the programme in 2011, following more than two decades at the BBC. Most recently she was Correspondent at Newsnight, and she previously worked on The World at One, PM and Five Live.

**SOCIAL MEDIA SHORT AWARD**
**VICTORIA MAPPLEBECK**
Victoria Mapplebeck is a BAFTA winning Producer and Director. She is also Professor in Digital Arts at Royal Holloway, University of London and judge of the Arts and Humanities Research Council Research in Film Awards 2019.

**INSPIRATION AWARD**
**AYESHA TAYLOR-CAMERA**
Ayeha Taylor-Camera is a PhD Student at the University of Nottingham exploring the role and value of public service media in the digital media economy. She is currently working within audience research for BBC One and BBC Drama.

**BEST RESEARCH FILM**
**HOLLY TARQUINI**
Holly Tarquini is the Executive Director of FilmBath (previously Bath Film Festival), founder of the F-Rating, a Fair-Trade stamp for every film written and/or directed by a woman. Holly is an Astanga Yoga student, parent and intersectional feminist.
LIFE ON THE MOVE
Migration Leadership Team, SOAS University of London

Through stop-motion animation, Life on the Move explores the complex reasons behind migration. It features 3D printed scans of real people and explains their divergent reasons for crossing borders. The film explores how researchers can collaborate with artists in innovative ways to generate new kinds of knowledge and engage wider audiences in debates about complex social and economic issues. It showcases the research themes and creative partnerships emerging from the London International Development Centre Migration Leadership Team, an AHRC/ESRC funded initiative aimed at developing a new strategy for migration research.

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT SHUTB?
Ilona Regulski, The British Museum

Have You Heard About Shutb? is a short video produced by local people from a rural village in Upper Egypt. It is designed to create pride, ownership and a platform to express the value that they found in their own community. The film was produced as part of a research project aimed at reconstructing the deep history of the Asyut region and uses film and storytelling as a strategic tool to explore various ways of connecting the local community with its heritage. The film is scripted, presented and produced by members of that community, and sends a positive message to the wider Egyptian audience that local people should and can be involved in sharing their history and identity with the wider world.

WE ARE CHILDREN OF THE WORLD
Katrin Kohl, University of Oxford

We are Children of the World is designed to demonstrate the creative potential of languages and show that there is more to languages than their practical benefits for communication. Languages are, in fact, our key medium for self expression and at the heart of individual and collective cultural identity. The film includes snippets of folk songs sung by children in seven different languages: Arabic, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Swahili and Urdu.

GOLDSMITHS RESEARCH QUESTIONS: WHAT SECRETS DID VICTORIAN CYCLISTS HIDE IN THEIR WARDROBES?
Ashley Simpson, Goldsmiths, University of London

The film explores the work of Goldsmiths, University of London, sociologist Kat Jungnickel around Victorian women’s cyclewear, and the ways in which that subject allows us to explore issues such as gender politics and the changing nature of public space in late 19th century Britain. What secrets did Victorian cyclists hide in their wardrobes? was created with social media in mind, striving to explain research in an engaging and accessible way, to a wide audience, in under five minutes. The film allows a non-academic audience to understand and feel part of an area of research which they might not otherwise be aware of, and aims to showcase the merits of research in the humanities more generally.

WANDERINGS AND MEANDERINGS OF THE MIND AND BODY
Dr Kai Syng Tan, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, King’s College London and Manchester Metropolitan University

Wanderings and meanderings of the mind and body is a film poem that draws on themes and materials from an art-science project #MagicCarpet, which explores mind-wandering and how that relates to Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and the creative process. Fragmented, and with no linear plot, viewers can dip in and out, but equally ‘journey along’ with the haunting soundtrack. The film’s theme is further heightened and performed when enjoyed on mobile devices by viewers on the move. The film is a gentle invitation for people not in arts and humanities to learn more about research.

WE ARE CHILDREN OF THE WORLD
Katrin Kohl

We are Children of the World is an edited version of a longer film that forms part of a package of resources available for teachers and community choirs to encourage them to perform the song.
**THE GOLDEN WINDOW**
Shreepali Patel, StoryLab, Anglia Ruskin University
The Golden Window explores the unconscious and conscious journey experienced by new-born babies undergoing therapeutic cooling following traumatic asphyxia. The film considers the neural basis of human consciousness and investigates how to engage an audience with complex scientific and emotional themes through the creation of a framework and language using the audio-visual representation of this state of stasis. In making The Golden Window filmmakers forged new links between the arts and healthcare by exploring the use of immersive storytelling and multi-platform digital space to encourage reflective practice and wider public engagement.

**AND IT WAS THE SAME WITH MY SON**
Noemi Varga, Community Group
And it was the Same with my Son is a short experimental documentary about British Muslim mums who have lost a child to radicalisation. Nicola Benyahia is a Welsh woman who converted to Islam after marrying an Algerian man. Her son, Rasheed, disappeared in 2015. At the time he was 19 and doing an engineering apprenticeship at a local garage. Ten weeks after he went missing he contacted his mother from Syria where he had joined ISIS as a fighter. Within four months of his arrival he was killed in the desert. Nicola’s bravery sets a precedent for other trauma survivors and the filmmaker believes And it was the Same with my Son could inspire others to come forward and share their experience.

**FASHION IN THE DARK**
Emily Ford-Halliday, Edinburgh University
Clothing is fundamental to our identity and how we dress allows us to form non-verbal connections with others. But what if you are blind or visually impaired? Fashion in the Dark is a creative documentary project that aims to visually and audibly interpret the experiences that people with impaired vision have of fashion. The film explores the impact that losing sight has on mental health, well-being, confidence, sense of identity and ability to choose the clothes independently. It explores participants growing confidence and independence, but also how fashion is one of the least accessible arts for people who are visually impaired or blind.

**OPEN DOORS: STORIES FROM A VERY DIFFERENT SALFORD**
Caroline Swarbrick, Lancaster University
The Open Doors Research Group was founded in 2015 to give people affected by dementia the opportunity to develop their own cultural heritage project, that would be led, designed and undertaken by group members. To date it has involved over 50 people in its research activities. One output has been Stories from a very different Salford, a collection of biographical narratives showcasing what life was like growing up in Salford (Greater Manchester) during the 1940s and 1950s, before the dawn of the technological era and urban regeneration. Keen for their project to be both visual and creative – as well as appealing to a younger audience – the group worked in collaboration with a Salford-based animation company to blend each biographical narrative into a collective journey.

**MIND=FULL**
Sarah Day, DaybyDay Productions
Mind=Full is a powerful experimental film that explores the phenomena of ‘hearing voices’ through the voice of the character ‘Chatty Cathy’, and encourages the audience to develop a sense that they can control the voices and tell them to stop. The use of subtitles shows what someone with anxiety hears in their head set against the reality of what is actually being said. The continuous movement of the camera and rhyme in the narration gives a feel of being unable to escape one’s thoughts, which demonstrates how it feels to have depression and anxiety.
12

2019

BEST DOCTORAL OR EARLY CAREER FILM SHORTLIST

WOLVES FROM ABOVE
Demelza Kooij, Liverpool John Moores University
Wolves From Above is a short film that challenges the way wolves are commonly depicted in wildlife film as ferocious hunting animals and is a response to the question: ‘how can we understand wolves better using new recording technologies?’ To answer this, the research methodology consisted of filming using a steady, still drone. The resulting film reveals that wolves are actually quiet and tranquil. Thanks to this new approach the animals appear near and seeing them on film becomes an almost sensory experience.

DANZE
Dr Katie Donington, University of Nottingham
Danze was produced as part of the ‘Decomposing the Colonial Gaze’ strand of the AHRC-funded Antislavery Usable Past project. The film takes as its starting point an archive of photography produced by the British missionary Alice Seeley Harris during her time in the Congo Free State in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It uses the images as a basis for exploring the history and legacies of colonialism. The film is concerned with issues of representation and the ways in which past antislavery visual culture sustained damaging racialised tropes that continue to persist within NGO culture today.

EXCHANGE & FLOW
Dr Joanna Griffin, Transtechnology Research, University of Plymouth
What do audiences do with artworks? Exchange & Flow documents a five-day writing workshop held at the Kochi-Muziris Biennale in Fort Kochi, India, that explored this question by bringing creative artists and audiences together. Through an open call, twenty-five writers were brought together to examine reciprocity between artworks and audiences. The film shows their journey through creative workshops that aimed to stimulate speculative thinking and elucidate the experiential, embodied and shared nature of viewing.

INTRANQUILLITIES: FROM HAITI
Edward Owles, University of Leeds
Intranquillities explores the defiance and energy of the contemporary Haitian art world. A polyphonic exploration of creativity and representation, it sets the work of various Haitian artists in the context of ‘postcolonial disasters’ such as the 2010 earthquake. The featured artists include writers, painters, photographers and performers, all united by a desire to use their creative practice to reframe how the country’s history and culture are perceived and understood. The film is inspired by the work of the late academic Dr. Anthony Carrigan and was initially funded through his AHRC Leadership Fellowship, entitled Representing Postcolonial Disaster: Conflict, Consumption, Reconstruction (2013).
**14**

**AHRC RIFA 2019 AWARDS**

**NORTH STAR FADING**

Benjamin Dix, PositiveNegatives

North Star Fading is based on the testimonies of three Eritrean women who made the journey from Eritrea to the UK between 2006 - 2012 overland through Ethiopia, Sudan, Libya, the Mediterranean, Europe and to the UK. Two of the women were sent back to Eritrea after failed asylum cases and one of the women made the journey again and was successfully granted asylum in the UK on her second attempt. The film 'stitches' together illustrations to produce a 'continuous zoom' effect that draws audiences in to their extreme, relentless journey. The soundtrack is provided by the British Eritrean spoken word poet, Lula Mebrahtu.

**LIFE ON THE MOVE**

Osbert Parker, Director, Animator & Co-Producer

Through stop-motion animation, Life on the Move explores the complex reasons behind migration. It features 3D printed scans of real people and explains their divergent reasons for crossing borders. The film explores how researchers can collaborate with artists in innovative ways to generate new kinds of knowledge and engage wider audiences in debates about complex social and economic issues. It showcases the research themes and creative partnerships emerging from the London International Development Centre Migration Leadership Team, an AHRC/ESRC funded initiative aimed at developing a new strategy for migration research.

**INTRANQUILLITIES: VOICES FROM HAITI**

Edward Owles, University of Leeds

Intranquillities explores the defiance and energy of the contemporary Haitian art world. A polyphonic exploration of creativity and representation, it sets the work of various Haitian artists in the context of 'postcolonial disasters' such as the 2010 earthquake. The featured artists include writers, painters, photographers and performers, all united by a desire to use their creative practice to reframe how the country’s history and culture are perceived and understood. The film is inspired by the work of the late academic Dr. Anthony Carrigan and was initially funded through his AHRC Leadership Fellowship, entitled Representing Postcolonial Disaster: Conflict, Consumption, Reconstruction (2013).

**SPIRIT**

Ross Harrison and Dr Jane Dyson

Spirit explores what it takes to feel at home in a remote Himalayan village. The film tells two interwoven stories. The first follows Saraswati, who married into the village 20 years ago as the first educated daughter-in-law to join her new family, and wondered how she would ever belong. A parallel story explores the entire village as it pours time and energy into the Pandav Lila festival, a ten-day re-enactment of stories from the Hindu epic, the Mahabharata. Spirit reveals how belonging cannot be assumed, but is the slow alchemy of work, friendship, love, loss and belief. It tracks the contours of individual lives and is tested by the rapid social and economic change that is transforming rural areas.

**FACES | VOICES**

Paul Basu, SOAS University of London

FACES | VOICES is an experimental film created as part of Museum Affordances / [Re:]Entanglements, an AHRC-funded research project exploring the remarkable ethnographic archive assembled by the colonial anthropologist Northcote Thomas in West Africa between 1909 and 1935. The archive is full of photographs of men, women and children. But what were they thinking as they being photographed? FACES | VOICES invited people to reflect on the pictures. But while some see coercion, others see boredom, optimism or even resilience, and their diverse responses reveal something of the complexity and ambiguity of the colonial legacy.

**INSPRIATION AWARD SHORTLIST (PUBLIC CATEGORY)**
SOUNDINGS
Gair Dunlop, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, University of Dundee

Soundings explores how sound, music, film and different kinds of listening are useful as tools in the process of public engagement. In particular, it focuses on helping people to think about how the North Norfolk coast is changing, how people’s lives are changing with it, and how they might respond. Made for the AHRC-funded project Sounding Coastal Change, the film presents snapshots of the ongoing ‘crisis of identity’ in and of Europe. In portraying the tensions around the different experiences and understandings of Europe today, Who is Europe? raises critical questions for our times and was made as part of a Europe wide EU funded research project, ‘CoHERE’, about Heritage and ‘Europeanness’, led from Newcastle University.

WHO IS EUROPE? A FILM IN THREE ACTS
Ian McDonald, Newcastle University

Who is Europe? is a split-screen documentary in three acts. Shot in Dresden, in Melilla (a Spanish exclave in Africa), and on the Hungarian/Serbian border, the film presents snapshots of the ongoing ‘crisis of identity’ in and of Europe. In portraying the tensions around the different experiences and understandings of Europe today, Who is Europe? raises critical questions for our times and was made as part of a Europe wide EU funded research project, ‘CoHERE’, about Heritage and ‘Europeanness’, led from Newcastle University.

THE POOR MAN OF NIPPUR
Martin Worthington, Dept of Archaeology, University of Cambridge

Acted by students under their teacher’s direction, The Poor Man of Nippur is a dramatisation of an ancient comic folktale, and the world’s first ever Babylonian language film. The Poor Man of Nippur explores how a story known only from cuneiform tablets can be dramatised to engage live audiences. As if preparing a traditional scholarly text edition, the filmmakers had to decide exactly what the story’s wording meant, and how to restore lacunae. Comments under the YouTube release of The Poor Man of Nippur show that the film resonates with communities that have heritage links to ancient Mesopotamia as well as other groups.

NEW INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE TAHTIAN MOURNER’S COSTUME
Carl Heron, The British Museum

This film documents a programme of research carried out at the British Museum on a Tahitian mourner’s costume, one of only a small number remaining in the world today, in preparation for the exhibition Reimagining Captain Cook: Pacific Perspectives (2018-19). Captain Cook almost certainly collected the costume on his second voyage, when Tahitian chiefs agreed to receive highly-valued red feathers from Tonga in exchange for costumes. Cook and later missionaries witnessed the costume on his second voyage, when Tahitian chiefs agreed to receive highly-valued red feathers from Tonga in exchange for costumes. Cook and later missionaries witnessed the costume as being worn by a “chief mourner” during elaborate funerary rituals. The film features researchers from across the British Museum as well as a visiting researcher and former Director of the Musée Tahiti.
Research in Film Awards 2018 winners: where are they now?

What happened next after last year’s winners won at the Research in Film Awards?

A BAFTA
Victoria Mapplebeck, Professor of Digital Arts in the Department of Media Arts, Royal Holloway, London University, won a RIFA for Missed Call.

“Winning The Best Social Media Short Award in 2018 was a lovely surprise and led to some impressive publicity for the project.

“The highlight of 2019 was Missed Call winning Best Short Form Programme at the 2019 BAFTAs. I also received the Women Film and TV Network development bursary to develop Motherboard, a smartphone feature documentary which brings to life the stories archived in the phones I’ve owned since 2000.”

A national day of rememberence
Stephen A. Linstead, Professor of Management Humanities, The York Management School won a RIFA Award for his film, Black Snow.

“Winning the RIFA Best Research Film Award gave us massive exposure on radio, TV and even a centre-spread in a national daily – tracking estimates indicate upwards of 7 million total reads/views to date!

“This has helped to develop a public campaign for a national Workplace Day of Remembrance, arising from issues raised in the film, about which an MP has raised a question with the government.”

An ambitious arts and heritage programme
George Harris, a trustee at Mirador Arts was one of the filmmakers who won a RIFA award for Walking in Others Footsteps.

“Winning the AHRC Inspiration Award 2018 helped us to feel confident in developing a hugely ambitious arts and heritage programme, Viking Superhighway.

“This multi-million pound, five-year programme will tell the history of the River Ribble from source to sea. Working with historians from Lancaster University and UCLan, the Ribble Rivers Trust and other partners, it will be an epic programme - a kaleidoscopic experience of 2,000 years of life along the river. We are exploring a new form of documentary filmmaking to help tell the story in a unique way.”

Multiple exhibitions
Ilona Sagar, Royal College of Art, London, won a RIFA for the film Correspondence O.

“Since winning the Best Doctoral or Early Career Film Award 2018, I have exhibited at the Wellcome Collection in Living with Buildings and launched a major solo film Commission at S1 Art Space Sheffield, which runs until the 14th December 2019, and will then go on to tour other venues across the UK. Forthcoming solo commissions include the Serpentine Gallery Radio Ballads, London, and a residency at Uniarts, Helsinki.

“I am now in my final year of an AHRC TECHNE funded PhD at the Royal College of Art, London.”

A new film project...
Sam Jury, University of Hertfordshire, won a RIFA for the film To Be Here.

“’I’m currently in the post-production phase of a film project about the Caucasian state of Abkhazia, started in 2017 and due to be completed mid-2020. I invested my RIFA award into the second phase of production, undertaking a series of film shoots and voice performances with local actors and participants in Abkhazia during June 2019.

“Consisting of film footage, interviews, audio and photographic archives, the project focuses on memories of place and event drawn from citizens living in a country that has been isolated from the international community since civil war in 1992.”
Missed Call: from RIFA winner to BAFTA winner

One of the RIFA 2018 winners went on to win Best Short Form Programme at the 2019 British Academy Film and Television Awards (BAFTAs).

Victoria Maplebeck was given the award for her short film Missed Call in the BAFTA ‘Short Form Programme’ category.

Filmed on an iPhone X, the film explores the filmmaker’s relationship with her teenage son, as they discuss how to go about reconnecting with his father who has been absent for over a decade.

“The award came completely out of the blue!” she says. “I wasn’t expecting it at all, and I’m really pleased Missed Call was in the BAFTA’s because they are primarily television awards and I think this is a sign that they are beginning to make a gesture towards the fact that there are different ways of making and commissioning films, and different audiences.

“I do suspect Missed Call was the lowest budget film in the running!”

Victoria, who is Reader in Digital Arts at Royal Holloway, University of London, has spent years experimenting with smartphone film production.

“Missed Call begins with the last email my son’s father sent in 2006 and ends with the first phone call to him over a decade later,” she says.

The film explores the ways in which we can collect, curate and share these digital memories, reflecting on how our lives are lived and archived via the phones we hold so close.

“The photos, videos and texts archived in our phones, provide a road map of our digital past,” says Maplebeck.

But along with an increased level of intimacy with audiences, smartphone filmmaking also encourages a DIY, do-it-now attitude that Maplebeck finds liberating.

“The smartphone has transformed how we document the world we live in, both inside and outside the home and I find the increased access and spontaneity of filming with the iPhone X completely liberating.”

Exceptional and fascinating times

We’re living in an era of unrivalled opportunity for the documentary film, says Shaminder Nahal, commissioning editor at Channel 4 and RIFA 2019 judge.

“Exceptional and fascinating times with extraordinary events and changes going on around us constantly. The way the political scene is changing every day and the questions being raised about democracy, fairness and accountability mean there is so much to analyse and unpack.

“I think we are living in exceptional and fascinating times with extraordinary events and changes going on around us constantly. The way the political scene is changing every day and the questions being raised about democracy, fairness and accountability mean there is so much to analyse and unpack.

“I’m not sure we’ve had the definitive documentary that speaks to how Brexit and the debate around is changing us – but it is exciting and challenging to think about what it could be.

“And it’s not just Britain in the grip of change – from America under Donald Trump to the crisis in Syria and everything in between, documentaries have given an outlet to stories we know little about or which have been hard to access and often dangerous to try and tell.

“For Sama, made by Channel 4 News and ITN Productions for Channel 4 by the film-maker Waad al-Kateab – about her life living under siege in Aleppo during the Syrian Civil War and giving birth to her daughter – is a heart-breaking and unique film giving an utterly exceptional perspective on war from a female perspective.

“The power of all these stories to reach people show how important and relevant documentaries are to people’s lives and the bigger questions we are all facing in the world.

“Exceptional and fascinating times with extraordinary events and changes going on around us constantly. The way the political scene is changing every day and the questions being raised about democracy, fairness and accountability mean there is so much to analyse and unpack.

“I’m not sure we’ve had the definitive documentary that speaks to how Brexit and the debate around is changing us – but it is exciting and challenging to think about what it could be.

“And it’s not just Britain in the grip of change – from America under Donald Trump to the crisis in Syria and everything in between, documentaries have given an outlet to stories we know little about or which have been hard to access and often dangerous to try and tell.

“For Sama, made by Channel 4 News and ITN Productions for Channel 4 by the film-maker Waad al-Kateab – about her life living under siege in Aleppo during the Syrian Civil War and giving birth to her daughter – is a heart-breaking and unique film giving an utterly exceptional perspective on war from a female perspective.

“The work showcased at RIFA is exciting because it is precisely about stories and how to tell them – but stories that have a real truth about them, a backbone of research and detail - which in this complex world we are living in – feels more important than ever.”

Shaminder Nahal
Commissioning Editor, Arts & Topical Specialist Factual, Channel 4. Former deputy editor of Channel 4 News and Newsnight.
@shamindernahal
The films being honoured at the Research in Film Awards tonight represent some of the best examples of cross-pollination between the research and filmmaking communities.

But the awards themselves are only one of many ways in which the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) works to advance careers in film, extend our understanding of film art, use film to share and understand the work in the other disciplines the organisation funds – and ensure our creative industries are ready for the future.

The UK is already a world-leader and pioneer in the new technologies of virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and mixed reality (MR) filmmaking, and the AHRC is helping to develop the talent that will go on to take the sector further by funding the UK’s National Centre for Immersive Storytelling, StoryFutures Academy, which is run by the National Film and Television School and Royal Holloway, University of London.

The funding comes as part of UK Research and Innovation’s Audience of the Future industrial strategy challenge fund, and the Academy will develop cutting-edge creative training and research programmes to ensure the UK creative workforce is the most skilled in the world.

The Academy also co-produced the incredible VR documentary, Common Ground, which demonstrated what was possible with cutting edge production techniques as a way of exploring the Aylesbury Estate, a concrete monument to the history and legacy of social housing in the UK, and home to a community affected by forces beyond their control. The film was selected for exhibition at Tribeca and DocFest.

For example, Leanne Dawson, a lecturer at the University of Edinburgh, specialising in LGBTQI+ and working-class representation, has just received funding for a two year project exploring how LGBTQI+ working-class identities have been demonised, patronised, and romanticised onscreen.

Elsewhere researchers from Central Saint Martins/University of the Arts London and Winchester School of Art/University of Southampton have just completed an AHRC-funded project that was the first to investigate the hidden history of fashion film, going back to the beginnings of cinema. transformative effects of film on the fashion industry, the project forged a new understanding of film as a ‘fashion medium’ and as a ‘fashion object’, and explored what legacy this new history may have for the rapidly changing field of fashion communications today.

And it’s in this position between the past and the future that the AHRC’s strategy sits.

We will continue to support our research community and help ensure our creative industries are ready to take advantage of the opportunities new technology offers – but we will also ensure that they can do so informed and engaged with the lessons from the past.
Earlier in 2019, the Arts and Humanities Research Council teamed up with the UK Space Agency to create the ‘Moon Landing Memories’ project, where members of the public were invited to share their memories of the Apollo 11 Moon landing, 50 years on.

As part of the project, Dr Iain Robert Smith (King’s College London, AHRC New Generation Thinker and RIFA 2019 judge) took a look back at some highlights of cinema’s gaze upon the Moon, ranging from relatively realistic depictions of the US and Soviet space programmes through to more fantastical tales.

**Le Voyage dans la Lune / A Trip to the Moon** (Georges Méliès, 1902) (France)
Widely regarded as the very first example of science fiction cinema, Georges Méliès’s *Le Voyage dans la Lune* depicts a team of astronomers who fly to the moon in a capsule fired by a giant cannon.

**Frau im Mond / Woman in the Moon** (Fritz Lang, 1929) (Germany)
While the film contains some elements that are less believable from a present-day perspective – such as the far side of the Moon having a breathable atmosphere – the film includes many ideas that would later be adopted in real spaceflight, such as the use of multi-stage rockets and the reverse ‘countdown to zero’ before a launch.

**Kosmicheskiy reys / Cosmic Voyage** (Vasili Zhuravlov, 1936) (Soviet Union)
Partly inspired by the realism of *Frau im Mond*, director Zhuravlov hired the world-renowned scientist Konstantin Tsiofkovsky to be a technical advisor on the film, and the film attempts to depict a credible vision of spaceflight.

**Nude on the Moon** (Doris Wishman & Raymond Phelan, 1961) (US)
One of the more bizarre sub-genres of space travel films was a 1950s-60s cycle of US exploitation movies in which astronauts discover all-female matriarchal civilisations living on other planets.

**Chand Par Chadayee / Trip to Moon** (T. P. Sundaram, 1967) (India)
While the film features many of the expected sci-fi elements such as robots, jetpacks and rocketships, *Chand Par Chadayee* also integrates numerous local elements such as the elaborate musical sequences that are characteristic of the popular Indian cinema of the period.

**2001: A Space Odyssey** (Stanley Kubrick, 1968) (UK/US)
One of the key sequences in *2001* is when the astronauts visit the Moon and discover a mysterious black monolith. These sequences were sufficiently convincing that they inspired the conspiracy theory that the television footage from the Apollo 11 Moon landing was actually faked by the CIA.

**The Right Stuff** (Philip Kaufman, 1983) (US)
Widely acclaimed as one of the greatest films about the space race, and indeed one of the best films of the 1980s, *The Right Stuff* is renowned for the accuracy and authenticity of its scenes at Edwards Air Force Base and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

**A Grand Day Out** (Nick Park, 1989) (UK)
The first of the Wallace and Gromit series, *A Grand Day Out* took animator Nick Park six years to make and returned the genre to its fantastical Méliès-inspired beginnings, albeit with a distinctly British sense of humour.

**Apollo 13** (Ron Howard, 1995) (US)
Director Ron Howard managed to obtain permission to film the zero-gravity sequences using NASA’s KC-135 training aircraft, best known by its nickname the ‘vomit comet’, and the sequences are still hailed today as amongst the most convincing depictions of space flight ever filmed.

**Moon** (Duncan Jones, 2009) (UK)
Harking back to the grounded naturalism of 1970s science fiction films like *Silent Running* (1972) and *Alien* (1979), *Moon* inverts much of the romanticism of ‘Voyage to the Moon’ narratives by instead highlighting the bleak emptiness of the lunar surface.
Research in Film Awards in numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 YEARS OF SHOWCASING THE BEST SHORT FILMS INSPIRED BY ARTS AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 CATEGORIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 OPEN TO THE PUBLIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 ENTRY FEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 TOP JUDGES ASSESSING ENTRIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 UK UNIVERSITIES REPRESENTED IN THE 2019 AWARDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800+ FILMS NOMINATED 2015-2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£40,000 IN PRIZE MONEY AWARDED 2015-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 GUESTS ATTENDED THE AWARDS CEREMONY IN 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 THE ONLY AWARDS THAT RECOGNISE ARTS AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH THROUGH FILM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>