Audience of the Future

The only awards dedicated to arts and humanities research through film

The number of entries in 2017 from UK universities

The number of nominated films 2015–2017

Facebook posts about the 2017 awards reached over 60,000 people

The number of judges assessing the submissions

Through winning in 2017 Beth Singler guested on BBC Radio 4’s Start the Week

More than 50 news items in print or online covered last year’s awards

The number of guests attending the awards ceremony in 2017

The £ amount awarded in prize money 2015–2017

“...The award has extended the reach of the project ... to an audience beyond academics and policymakers [making] the work meaningful to the wider world – and that is a rare and wonderful thing!”

Pollyanna Ruiz (University of Sussex), winner, Best Research Film 2016
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Welcome to Andrew Thompson

Welcome to the 2018 Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Research in Film Awards (RIFA).

The awards’ aim is to celebrate the best in academic filmmaking. Since its launch in 2015, RIFA has energised the academy and inspired researchers from all over the UK to think more deeply about the ways in which they communicate their work with the public.

The subjects that filmmakers have chosen to cover this year have been as broad as their ways of exploring them have been varied. We’ve seen films looking at issues around memory, protest, loss, the lives of refugees and the role of the arts in healing and recovery, utilising a whole range of creative techniques, including drama, animation and reportage.

This year we have invited submissions responding to the theme of migration with the ‘People on the Move’ category and we have seen some incredible films exploring the contribution and impact of migration to our world.

In addition, for the first time we are recognising the importance of social media to filmmaking with our Social Media Short award.

We are hugely excited about the future of the RIFA awards. We hope this publication gives a sense of what’s possible when you turn the camera on your research – and acts as an invitation to get involved in this pioneering new field.

Professor Andrew Thompson
Chief Executive, Arts & Humanities Research Council
@ProfAThompson
Programme outline

The AHRC’s Research in Film Awards is taking place at the home of British Academy of Film and Television Arts – BAFTA 195 Piccadilly located in the heart of London’s West End.

THURSDAY 8 NOVEMBER
@ahrcpress #RIFA2018
@artsandhumanitiesresearchcouncil

PROGRAMME

6.30
REGISTRATION AND DRINKS IN THE FOYER BAR

7.00
EVENT STARTS (PRINCESS ANNE THEATRE)
HOST – DANNY LEIGH
WELCOME: JAN DALLEY, CHAIR OF THE JUDGING PANEL

7.10
THE AWARDS
BEST DOCTORAL OR EARLY CAREER FILM
PEOPLE ON THE MOVE AWARD: STORIES OF NEW BEGINNINGS
SOCIAL MEDIA SHORT AWARD
INSPIRATION AWARD (PUBLIC CATEGORY)
BEST RESEARCH FILM OF THE YEAR
CLOSING KEYNOTE: PROFESSOR SIR DRUMMOND BONE, SENIOR INDEPENDENT MEMBER, AHRC COUNCIL

8.15
DRINKS AND CANAPES IN THE DAVID LEAN ROOM

9.30
CLOSE OF EVENT
Moving pictures

Cinema has the power to make us feel the world around us more deeply and spread empathy and understanding. At a time that seems to be defined more and more by conflict and a return to tribal thinking, we need bold filmmakers now, more than ever says Jan Dalley, chair of the judging panel.

When cinema was born, not much more than a hundred years ago, people immediately realised its ability not just to tell stories but to tell the truth. Or rather to show us the truth, in a way that words couldn’t.

One of the first brilliant proponents of documentary film, the director Dziga Vertov, working during the Russian Revolution, believed that the camera is an instrument just like the human eye, which explores the realities of life around us: his work was central to the “cinema verite” movement of the 1960s.

These days we are a bit more cynical. We’ve come to believe that the camera can lie, and often does. But at the same time, the past century has taught us that images, especially images on film, have an impact that words alone can seldom match. This belief in the power of film to convey information - and perhaps also the truth, or at least truths - is one of the reasons behind the AHRC’s Research in Film Awards.

The AHRC’s role is to promote research into the most important issues of our time, across a very wide range of subjects in the arts and humanities. We are also aware that it is vital to showcase that research, and to bring its fascinating findings to the widest possible audience. From this grew the idea of rewarding the best short films based on research. We decided to open the prizes to documentaries of not more than 30 minutes, on any subject, based - even if loosely - on research.

The awards are about to celebrate their fourth edition, and even over this short timespan we have been amazed by the richness and variety of the entries. From conventional forms to digimation, from the testimony of experts to the voices of displaced and homeless people, from an African rapper to an exploding Scottish hillfort, from issues such as immigration and people-trafficking to the question of whether robots should be taught to feel emotion . . . All these, and many more, have been among our shortlisted documentaries.

We look forward to announcing another brilliant set of prizewinners this year.

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www.broadcastnow.co.uk
“Winning RIFA 2017 gave us much more confidence in our abilities.”

DR BETH SINGLER, PAIN IN THE MACHINE

Research in Film Awards 2017 Winners: where are they now?

25 films across five categories have been selected by our judging panel comprising filmmakers, journalists, broadcasters, digital professionals and academics from household names such as Aardman, Channel 4, BBC, National Film & Television School and the Financial Times to name just a few.

As we gear up to announce the winners of this year’s awards, we wanted to catch up with the winning filmmakers from RIFA 2017 to find out what they’ve been up to over the last year, how the award has boosted their filmmaking – and what their future plans are.

BEST RESEARCH FILM WINNER
Dr Beth Singler, Pain in the Machine

“Winning RIFA 2017 gave us much more confidence in our abilities, and we went on to use more ambitious creative elements in our subsequent films,” says Beth, who used the prize money to part-fund the second film in the series of four.

“In Friend in the Machine and Good in the Machine, the sequels to Pain in the Machine released so far, we produced much more complex fictional narratives - including an adaptation of Nick Bostrom’s Unfinished Fable of the Sparrows, which involved working with child actors from a local drama club.

“The award gave us a huge boost in publicity and enabled us to get even more people involved in the funding, production and dissemination of our films. The following films have been much larger projects, and that has been really well managed by DragonLight Films, with my help.

“We are currently working on Ghost in the Machine, a very ‘unambitious’ short that will consider the problem of conscious Artificial Intelligence (AI) in under 15 minutes!”

BEST DOCTORAL AWARD OR EARLY CAREER FILM WINNER
Sarah Butler, Unearthing Elephant

“I gave birth (six weeks early) to a baby boy two days before the awards ceremony last year, so my filmmaking has been on hold! I am now emerging from the fog of having a new baby and starting to think about future activities.”
Since winning the award, I’ve felt more confident about spending as much time on research as possible before making a film.

Kate Baxter, Co-Director, Whirpool

“I am currently in conversation with my collaborators about creating a film documenting the demolition of Elephant and Castle shopping centre, which was the focus of our award-winning film.

“This new work will act as an epilogue to the existing film and an elegy to the shopping centre.

“It is exciting to be thinking about expanding and developing the work I have done so far, and further exploring the relationship between the visual and textual elements of the film.

“Winning the award has given me the confidence and inspiration to push my practice further.”

INSPIRATION AWARD WINNERS
Kate Baxter, Co-Director, Whirpool

“My work has given me the confidence and inspiration to push my practice further. Whether it’s developing content for a formal publication or just preparing my film, it’s clear that full research of contexts, histories and characters will remain vital to the authenticity – and therefore the validity – of media content.

“As well as improving my thoroughness and confidence in the research phase of storytelling, I’ve also become more focused and clear about which projects I want to take on. Being recognised by the AHRC helped me see that if you want your film to have an impact, you must consult with experts to ensure it’s an accurate and authentic portrayal of the individuals and groups your film is about.

“I’ve since organised a writers’ lab called Type Tank, under my production company Five Fifty Five. Our 16 writers on five continents all have a set of research phases when they approach a script, and create work with experts seeking to include accurate and non-harmful information.

‘Whirlpool’ is now being made into a feature film which Elizabeth Dixon and I are also co-directing. We hope that people with sight loss or blindness will better experience the art of film through a prototype of a new technology we are creating with the Dyson School of Design Engineering at Imperial College. We will release the film and technology in 2019/2020.”

Elizabeth Dixon, Co-Director, Whirpool

“As a new filmmaker, winning was hugely validating. It really highlighted how research pays off. As a writer and director there are so many details that you find in research that really enrich the story, the drama and inspire the conception of the film. To short cut this process would be robbing yourself of the real gems you find there.

“The award has really served to bolster the film onto platforms and festivals where we can get more attention. It also gave weight to Kate and I as filmmakers, writers and directors, which is hugely important especially when collecting finance to develop the project further.

“|I am continuing to write and direct on other projects; continuing to hold research as an imperative part of the filmmaking process. I love how filmmaking serves as a telescope into the past, into others’ lives and other cultures. Without research as part of that process we are doing a massive disservice to ourselves.”

“Since winning the award, I’ve felt more confident about spending as much time on research as possible before making a film.”
“Winning RIFA 2017 meant that we were able to significantly extend our work in this area by using the award money to fund a mini film series, where residents of Duaripara informal settlement ... convey their own stories and experiences.”

DR JOANNE JORDAN, THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

INNOVATION AWARD WINNER:
Iris Zaki, The Shampoo Summit

"Since receiving the award I have been working on my third documentary project, in which I continue to capture societies by embedding myself into a community; this time, Jewish Israeli settlers in the West Bank. I moved to a settlement for over a month in order to meet settlers for the first time.

"Being a left wing Israeli from Tel Aviv with three cameras in the middle of a settlement created a lot of tension, but after a tough start I managed to film some very interesting conversations with people who live there. The film is called Unsettling and it’s going to have its UK premiere at London Film Festival in October, which makes me very proud.

"I think that societies these days get more and more polarised; politics, social issues and religion divide people into groups. In terms of media, the more extreme voices get heard as they are the loudest ones. I want to keep making films about the more nuanced voices that usually don’t attract media and filmmakers.

"I won the award for my film while doing a PhD at Royal Holloway, University of London, and this meant a lot to me, due to the academic context of the award and its recognition within academia. The fact that it was the Innovation Award gave me a lot of motivation to keep coming up with my own original concepts to film and to represent people."

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARD WINNER:
Dr Joanne Jordan, The Lived Experience of Climate Change: A Story of One Piece of Land in Dhaka

"Central to The Lived Experience of Climate Change project is its focus on building awareness and action on climate change through film. Winning RIFA 2017 meant that we were able to significantly extend our work in this area by using the award money to fund a mini film series, where residents of Duaripara informal settlement in North-west Dhaka directly convey their own stories and experiences in the series Living on the Frontlines of Climate Change.

"The mini film series funded by RIFA 2017 [which has been viewed over 75,000 times] are also a core component of teaching resources that I recently developed to give secondary school geography teachers in the UK and Ireland support to teach pupils about climate change. It will also help young people develop the knowledge and skills to think critically about climate change in an urbanising world.

"In terms of my future plans, I would like to hold an immersive multi-sensory exhibition for six months or so that brings all components of the project together at a larger scale.

"The idea would be to engage with diverse, intergenerational audiences in an accessible and engaging manner that merges science and art through a series of films, interactive performance theatre, digital installation, and photos via large-scale projectors and graphics."

AHRC RIFA 2018 AWARDS
What are commissioning editors looking for?

So you’ve made a film, but what’s next? Richard Davidson-Houston, Head of All 4, Channel 4 Television, and RIFA 2018 judge, gives his top five tips on how best to approach commissioning editors.

1. Don’t fake it, feel it

A tiny percentage of ideas actually get commissioned. However brilliant it is, your film won’t sell itself. You need to bring personal passion and energy to the table whilst avoiding being zealous. The quality of your treatment, the snappiness of your top line and your ability to connect, engage with and meet the needs of a decision-maker all make a difference.

The ideal approach is to mix confidence in your idea or story with the humility to listen and engage with the commissioning editor. The chances are that she or he will say they’ve heard a similar idea before (because they hear 1000s of ideas) and will start shaping things from the first meeting. Behind closed doors, most commissioning editors will say that fully-formed, commissionable ideas never just ‘walk in through the door’.

Leave more than half of the available time for discussion. That’s where the creativity often happens.

2. Do your homework #1: Audience

Unfortunately, good stories are necessary but not sufficient to get a commission. Commissioning editors are trying to meet the needs of specific audiences which might be young or old, broad or narrow, upmarket or not so. Every commissioning editor is engaged in a struggle to command attention. Find out what slots are available, what tariffs are available, what has worked and not worked. If you’re new to this and don’t know... ask. Otherwise you’re trying to pin the tail on the donkey while blindfolded.

3. Do your homework #2: Strategy

One handy thing about most people who work in TV is that they love to talk. There is a very good chance that the person you are meeting or their boss will very recently have made a public announcement as to what they are looking for or trying to achieve. Hunt it down. But don’t try and hold their strategy against them... things can and do change very quickly.

4. Where’s the Telly in it?

Not every great story makes great TV. Many commissioning editors will ask you a version of the question “What is there to watch?” It may sound daft at first but it’s a critical question. Imagine you’ve found a story about a potent but invisible force that changes deep ocean currents in some imperceptible but significant way. On the one hand: wow. But what is there to watch? You need an answer.

5. Do take NO for an answer

Like everyone, some commissioning editors can find it hard to say no. But you need to drive for a decision. If you don’t think it’s going to happen, get that confirmed so you can spend your energy elsewhere. And try to avoid the temptation to pitch the same idea to several people at the same organisation. They do talk to each other and it can also reflect badly on you.

“So you’ve made a film, but what’s next?” It may sound daft at first but it’s a critical question.”
From screen industries and digital storytelling to fashion and videogames, some of the UK’s best performing and world renowned creative businesses are receiving a major boost thanks to the Creative Industries Clusters Programme, a new funding initiative led by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Part of the UK Government’s Industrial Strategy, the Creative Industries Clusters Programme comprises nine R&D partnerships based around clusters and a new Policy and Evidence Centre. The programme brings together world-class research talent with companies and organisations from across the UK in a first-of-its-kind research and development investment.

The funded projects will accelerate growth in a range of creative sectors including the broadcast and screen industries, fashion textiles and technology, fashion design innovation, data and design, animation and videogames, digital storytelling and creative audiovisual.

The aim of the Clusters Programme is to create jobs and drive the creation of companies, products and experiences that can be marketed around the world, significantly contributing to UK economic growth both regionally and nationally.

Creative Industries Clusters Programme offers support to the UK’s globally important creative industries, which are already worth over £92 billion to the UK economy and export an estimated £46 billion in goods and services each year.

“Combining world-class arts and humanities researchers with our globally renowned creative industries will underpin growth in this vibrant and rapidly expanding sector within the UK economy.”

PROFESSOR ANDREW THOMPSON, EXECUTIVE CHAIR OF THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH COUNCIL

1 The Industrial Strategy sets out a long term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK. It sets out how the UK Government is building a Britain fit for the future – how it will help businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure.

2 All industry statistics sourced from the Creative Industries Federation: www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/statistics
These pioneering partnerships between industry and universities are providing a huge vote of confidence for a sector that is vital to the future prosperity of the UK.

PROFESSOR ANDREW THOMPSON, EXECUTIVE CHAIR OF THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH COUNCIL

The nine Research and Development (R&D) partnerships

1 UNIVERSITY OF ABERTAY, DUNDEE
2 CARDIFF UNIVERSITY
3 UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
4 UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS
5 ROYAL HOLLOWAY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
6 UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS, LONDON
7 UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER
8 UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND
9 UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Bristol and Bath Cluster (B+B)XR+D
University of the West of England

Clwstwr Creadigol: Research and Development for a high performing creative cluster in Wales
Cardiff University

Creative Informatics: Data Driven Innovation for the Creative Industries
University of Edinburgh

Creative Media Labs: Innovations in Screen Storytelling in the Age of Interactivity and Immersion
University of York

University of Leeds

Future Screens Northern Ireland
University of Ulster

InGAME: Innovation for Games and Media Enterprise
University of Abertay, Dundee

StoryFutures: Gateway Cluster Partnership for Audiovisual Digital Creativity
Royal Holloway, University of London

The Business of Fashion, Textiles and Technology Collaborative R&D Partnership
University of the Arts, London

Policy and Evidence Centre
Nesta

StoryFutures Academy*
National Film and Television School

*Audience of the Future is part of the UK government’s Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. It seeks to create new, immersive experiences for people, using augmented, virtual and mixed reality technologies. A new £10 million centre, The StoryFutures Academy, will support the development of cutting-edge creative training and research programmes in immersive storytelling. It will be part-funded through the Creative Industries Clusters Programme.
The modern movie business in Britain is a huge success – thanks largely to a steady stream of well-qualified and ambitious young technicians able to take on challenging roles in the sector.

The National Film and Television School (NFTS) is helping fuel the success of Britain’s booming digital sector by training the next generation of digital artists, according to RIFA 2018 judge John Rowe.

John is the head of digital effects at the NFTS and runs a two-year Digital Effects Masters programme that boasts an impressive 97% graduate employment rate.

“In fact, since 2013 it’s been 100%,” he says. “Every person who passes the course has gone on to find work in the sector.”

This success is testament to both the quality of the teaching at the NFTS and the health of the industry.

“Digital effects is a growing industry in the UK and the effects sector is worth £1 billion to the economy,” says John.

“It adds a number of things to filmmaking – for example if you are trying to go back in time, most of the environments you will be filming in will have elements of the modern world,” and just as one example, John explains how they can take out electricity pylons and wires, which would look at odds in a historical setting.

“The key to success is that, whatever we take out or put in, no-one can see it. Our work should be invisible.”

NFTS Digital Effects MA alumni have gone on to work on multiple award-winning films all over the world – including as the lead artists on Star Wars.

“We have won the British Short Animation BAFTA five years in a row, and the school itself was honoured with a BAFTA this year too for Outstanding British Contribution to Cinema,” adds John.

**NFTS STUDENT AND ALUMNI AWARDS**

Films with NFTS graduate involvement grossed over $13,000,000,000 at the worldwide box office in 2017.

NFTS students won the British Short Animation BAFTA for the fifth year in a row for **Poles Apart** directed by Paloma Baeza and produced by Ser En Low.

NFTS graduates have won 10 Oscars and received 49 Oscar nominations.

NFTS students and alumni have won an incredible 132 BAFTAs.
“When we recruit we are looking for individuals who will really drive the industry and be ambitious.”

John says that he “really enjoyed” judging RIFA 2018 and felt the quality of the films was very high and the range of subjects was impressive.

“At the NFTS we’re all about the story, obviously. But I’m also very interested in quality, and the look and feel of a film – final post production is our thing, after all – and the standard here was very high as well,” he says.

“Our congratulations to all the filmmakers that entered the AHRC Awards.”

More information about the NFTS Digital Effects MA can be found at www.nfts.co.uk/dfx

DID YOU KNOW?

Together with Royal Holloway, University of London, the NFTS have been awarded £10 million funding to run a national centre for Immersive Storytelling. The centre is a key element of the Audience of the Future programme, part of the government’s Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, and will be known as the StoryFutures Academy, which will help to ensure that the UK’s creative workforce is the most skilled in the world in the use of virtual, augmented and mixed reality technologies.

“NFTS Digital Effects MA alumni have gone on to work on multiple award-winning films all over the world – including as the lead artists on Star Wars.”
Understanding the UK movie industry

The British Film Institute (BFI) is an Independent Research Organisation (IRO) – a title that recognises the organisation’s pioneering academic research which entitles it to apply for AHRC funding.

The BFI supports and conducts original research into the contemporary UK film industry.

As part of its ‘BFI 2022’ strategy, the organisation announced a plan to invest £3 million in research to March 2022.

Areas of study include the examination of contemporary and historical film production, industry and audiences; along with archival research into the organisation’s film, television and other collections.

Becoming an IRO is key to delivering this ambitious goal. It means the organisation joins a network of museums, galleries, libraries and other UK heritage bodies recognised by the AHRC.

"Over the last decade, the AHRC’s support for the IROs has led to a wide range of benefits: for the organisations themselves, including in-house researchers; the university-based researchers who work with them and crucially for the general public and the UK as a whole,” says Professor Andrew Thompson, Chief Executive of the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Julia Lamaison, Head of Research and Statistics, says, "Being recognised as an IRO is incredibly important to the BFI because of the opportunities in being able to collaborate with academic partners and other IRO organisations to work on AHRC-funded projects as well as being able to host placement students who can bring their knowledge and expertise to a research project.

"Other cultural organisations have demonstrated that a well-organised IRO department can enable the museum to set their own research agenda and can more than pay for itself through funding applications. "Research and data is key to developing evidence-based policy. As an official statistics provider we publish a range of statistics regularly which offer us a bedrock of core data around content production and audience behaviour, all of this we freely publish. However, we also develop and commission deeper dive research projects working with an Advisory Group of industry practitioners, academics and peers from sector leading organisations."

Over the last year the BFI has been fully involved in the AHRC’s Creative Industries Cluster Programme (CICP). This scheme has resulted in successful bids for nine
R&D Clusters across the UK, led by joint partnerships between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and local creative industries. Several of these clusters will be focusing on film and the wider TV and screen sectors. The BFI has played a key partnership role in supporting the successful University of York bid, in conjunction with Screen Yorkshire.

Recently the BFI published *Screen Business*, the first comprehensive analysis of the economic impact of the screen sector tax reliefs in growing the sector; research examining the impacts of leaving the EU on the UK screen industry and workforce diversity in the screen sector. Future research projects include the cultural impact of film and international analysis among other subjects. Last year the BFI launched the *BFI Filmography*, the world’s first complete and accurate living and constantly growing record of UK films open to academics, researchers, students and film fans to search and explore.

“As an official statistics provider we publish a range of statistics regularly which offer us a bedrock of core data around content production and audience behaviour, all of this we freely publish.”
THE SHORTLIST

DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE 25 REMARKABLE FILMS SHORTLISTED FOR THE AHRC’S FOURTH ANNUAL RESEARCH IN FILM AWARDS.
SHELF LIFE
Dr Mariana Lopez, University of York

Shelf Life explores the way that Enhanced Audio Description and sound design techniques can be used to rethink accessibility to film and television for visually impaired audiences. Research included the application of surround sound and first person narration. The project stemmed from the idea that accessibility should not be an afterthought, it should be an intrinsic part of the creative workflows. Another technique employed includes the use of binaural audio (3D audio through headphones), which allows listeners to identify the positions of characters and objects in space, and as a result reduce the number of verbal descriptions.

SITTING ON A MAN
Onyeka Igwe, University of the Arts London

Sitting on a Man is the second part of a larger body of work, titled No Dance, No Palaver, which attempts to revision the Aba Women’s War of 1929. This was the first major anti-colonial uprising in Nigeria where thousands of women came together to protest the collection of taxes from women and the corrupt District Officer system through an Igbo practice, known as ‘Sitting on a Man’. This involved gathering at the man’s compound, sometimes late at night, dancing and singing songs that detailed the women’s grievances. The film features an interplay between two contemporary dancers who re-imagine this Igbo practice.
THE SAVING TREE
Dr Brett Matulis and Dr Jessica Moyer, University of Leicester

Inspired works of nature writing can be traced through nearly all facets of conservation policy and practice – from the creation of national parks to bans on toxic chemicals, but with a few notable exceptions, the most esteemed nature writers throughout history have been white, Western, upper-middle-class men. This ‘video essay’ offers a unique depiction of nature – as written, choreographed and narrated by Filipina women. It works to tackle the current global environmental crisis, and its underlying social causes, by amplifying the valuable local knowledge and, most importantly, the voices of Filipina women.

ARTICULATING ARCHIVES
Sophie Everest, University of Manchester

Articulating Archives asks how film can be used to produce new kinds of knowledge about museum collections, practices and audiences. The project involved working with a group of Year 8 students where they studied a collection of taxidermy objects at the Manchester Museum, along with archival film and hunting diaries produced by Maurice Egerton, the 4th Baron of Tatton Park, Cheshire, during a safari in Northern Sudan in 1928-29. Inspired by these materials, the students created fictional diary accounts written from the imagined perspectives of the hunted animals and the Sudanese men and boys that were employed on safari. In the second workshop, the students performed their finished pieces to camera.

CORRESPONDENCE O
Ilona Sagar, Royal College of Art

Correspondence O was developed through research and collaboration with scientific advisors, community groups and archives. This multi-faceted work explores the overlooked history of the Pioneer Health Centre in Peckham and its subsequent conversion into a gated community. Sagar’s moving image installation expresses the complex, changing landscape of public health and social shift away from group mindset to a more egocentric, user-focused, technology-infused understanding of wellness. Using Ilona’s research-practice as a tool to test and question this, Correspondence O antagonises underlying reasons for such social reconfigurations.
TO BE HERE
Sam Jury, University of Hertfordshire

To Be Here is a film that examines the long-term displacement of Sahrawi refugees living in camps in the Sahara desert region of Algeria. The Sahrawis were displaced from their Western Sahara homeland after the 1975 war with Morocco (one of the longest refugee crises to date). Filming and research was carried out as part of a residency, driven by dialogue with local people who later took performative roles within the film. For the last six years, Sam has been working with the themes of loss, displacement and what she terms ‘suspended trauma’. The film focuses on the female experience of displacement conveyed through the words of a young female Sahrawi translator, talking of loss, both past and future.

AMUKTA
Dominique Unsworth, University of West London

This film was produced as part of the ‘Silver Screens of Southall’ project, which explores the artistic contribution of British Asians that had migrated to Southall and its surrounds, with particular emphasis on cinema, and involved the co-development of a film script written by Southall local and British Indian Tarun Thind. Tarun worked with students from his old school to inspire the story development, while local young people were trained up to serve as crew trainees on the film. The film was shot in and around Southall and focuses on modern day slavery.
BLOOD SUGAR
dr Susanne Seymour, University of Nottingham

This co-produced poem-based film represents the fundamental importance of the lives and work of African people enslaved and trafficked through the transatlantic slave trade. With African Caribbean people at its heart as interpreters, writers, illustrators, filmmakers and performers, it draws on archive-based historical interpretation, and the lived experiences of enslavement and racism handed down through song and other oral traditions, to recreate the link between Newstead Abbey in Nottinghamshire, which was restored in the early 19th century by a sugar plantation owner, and the group’s enslaved African ancestors.

UNTOLD STORIES: A DOCUMENTARY OF KENT’S BLACK HISTORY
Helen Curston, University for the Creative Arts

The Untold Story of Kent’s Black History is a documentary and museum installation film which charts Kent’s multi-cultural history in relation to Afro-Caribbean communities in Kent. It seeks to influence viewers’ experience and understanding of hitherto untold narratives and histories from both high profile and less well-known figures. Told through interviews and presenter-led pieces to camera, viewers are able to learn more about these stories through expert and personal testimony, with the aim to raise the profile and awareness of Kent’s black history and to connect communities with a shared history of the area.

CHE FANG/EDGE TOWN
Austin Williams, Kingston School of Art and XJTLU universities

This 30-minute research documentary explores the urban fringe of the emerging city of Suzhou SIP in Jiangsu Province, China. The project arose from a design research question looking at the quality of life of urban migrants and those who have been displaced. The film tells the story of the social and economic changes taking place on the edge of the city, and features interviews with a range of people of differing ages and socio-economic status. The film explores how people’s perceptions and relationship to urban development affects their community memory, their sense of place, and their thoughts about the past, their concerns about the present and their hopes for the future.
MOBILITY, MOOD AND PLACE
Professor Catharine Ward Thompson, University of Edinburgh

The animation is one of a number of practical, non-academic outputs from Mobility, Mood and Place (MMP), a project which explores how places can be designed collaboratively to support outdoor activity, health, wellbeing and community engagement as people age. Promoted through social media, the animation has been widely admired and shared. Moray Council’s Principal Planning Officer described it as “interesting and inspiring” and the council have already been showing it to stakeholders as part of a series of short films on planning issues and to groups on better aligning land use planning with healthcare objectives.

THE BORN-FREE GENERATION, PHENDULANI’S STORY AND ME
Professor Paul Cooke, University of Leeds

This film trailer was part of a social media campaign to raise awareness of the project that formed the basis of The Born-Free Generation, Phendulani’s Story and Me (shortlisted for Best Research Film). The film highlights the story of Phendulani, one of the project participants, and his view of the legacy of apartheid in South Africa. It was distributed on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and specifically marketed at relevant stakeholder groups (e.g. UNICEF, Hope and Homes for Children, National Film and Video Foundation, Comic Relief, etc.).
OUR HOME
Dr Brett Matulis and Dr Jessica Moyer, University of Leicester

This ‘video essay’ offers a unique depiction of nature, and was written, choreographed and narrated by Filipina women who took a leap of faith into an artistic medium they had little or no experience with – subsequently showcasing their hidden potential. The stories they shared were full of insight, emotion, and detail, and above all, were deeply sincere. The women’s unique perspectives as well as vivid imaginations were the subject matter; and they were the experts.

MISSED CALL
Victoria Mapplebeck, Royal Holloway, University of London

Missed Call explores filmmaker, Victoria Mapplebeck’s relationship with her son as they try to reconnect with his absent father. The film begins with the last email his father sent in 2006 and ends with the first phone call to him over a decade later. The film was shot on an iPhone X and explores the ways in which we can collect, curate and share digital memories, reflecting on how our lives are lived and archived via the phones we hold so close. Situated in a body of research that explores how emotions and digital technology converge, Missed Call raises important questions about the nature of our digital selves, relationships and archives.

GEORGE HARRISON: THE STORY OF THE BEATLES AND INDIAN MUSIC PERFORMANCE
Chen-Yu Lin, University of Liverpool

On the night of the 9th June 2017, a concert titled ‘The Last Untold Beatles Story’ took place in the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Hall. The performance was led by the research of Dr Mike Jones, from the Department of Music, University of Liverpool, and identified four Indian musicians who had recorded with the Beatles but were not credited or recognised in the past. In this concert, the musicians were introduced to the audience for the first time.
The film was commissioned as the creative focal point of an arts programme, *Walking In Others Footsteps*, that sought to reveal the extraordinary content of one of the UK’s most important collections of oral history testimonies. Collected in the 1970s, the Elizabeth Roberts Archive is a unique and important source for the history of working-class life in north-west England. It is a celebration of people’s memories from the archive, providing the ‘connection mechanism’ that links the past to the present.

**EDWARD WOODMAN**

*David Bickerstaff in collaboration with Art360 Foundation*

This short film, shot in a single morning, captures photographer Edward Woodman in the intimate space of his home and studio, a rich resource for art historical enquiry. Each frame provides a unique view into the world of one of Britain’s most significant photographers whose story is told through the memories of artist collaborators. The film is interspersed with the voices of Cornelia Parker, Anya Gallaccio, David Ward, Damien Hirst and Richard Wilson, who each reflect on Woodman’s extraordinary ability to document art.
**THEIR RANCID WORDS STAGNATE OUR PONDS**

*Andrew Kötting*

The film was inspired by Samuel Beckett’s writing, Hattie Naylor’s play *Ivan and the Dogs* and Joseph Conrad’s character Kurtz as played by Marlon Brando in the film *Apocalypse Now*. The lone wanderer from *Their Rancid Words Stagnate Our Ponds* also references the character of Ridley Walker from Russel Hoban’s novel. In the words of the filmmaker, “The film attempts to create a ‘hinterland’ within an ‘elsewhere’ in which a ‘somebody’ meanders in search of meaning and understanding. As in Samuel Beckett’s work, this might perhaps be seen as a metaphor for both the human condition and the creative process, but more importantly as an ongoing research investigation.”

**BLACKBIRD**

*Dr Jamie Chambers*

*Blackbird* is a tale of belonging and loss. It tells the story of aspiring young bard, Ruadhán, who despairs as the fabric of his Scottish hometown begins to change. Featuring legendary performers Norman Maclean and Sheila Stewart, *Blackbird* brings Scotland’s most loved folk heroes to the big screen, while exploring a central question of how forms of Scottish folk culture (and orality in particular) might be translated into cinema: what aspects can cinema re-articulate, what elements are lost, and what elements are transformed? Arising from semi-ethnographic research processes undertaken in close collaboration with the communities depicted in the film, *Blackbird* narrativises the processes of oral transmission upon which community-embedded traditions in Scotland rely.

**SINGING WITH NIGHTINGALES**

*Katie Stacey and Luke Massey*

Sam Lee is a Mercury Prize nominated folk singer and on the 19th May 2014 he performed *The Tan Yard Side* to the accompaniment of a nightingale on Radio 4 in honour of the 90th anniversary of the first-ever outside broadcast. Since then Sam has led a series of magical events in woods around the UK, involving stories by the campfire about man’s legacy of making music with nightingales – a bird steeped in historical and cultural importance. Despite this, they are on the verge of extinction in the UK. Through *Singing with Nightingales* Sam Lee’s aim is to re-connect society using deep cultural listening to the nightingale, a bird that is ingrained in our musical cultural DNA and, a bird that is now in desperate need of our attention.
THE BORN-FREE GENERATION, PHENDULANI’S STORY AND ME
Professor Paul Cooke, University of Leeds

This film is a reflection on the South African strand of a ‘participatory action research’ project, which used community filmmaking practices to engage vulnerable young people living in townships on the outskirts of Johannesburg to explore the legacy of apartheid and its impact on their place in society today. Many of the children involved in the project live on their own or in child-led households, their parents having died from the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The film tells the story of Phendulani, one of the project participants, who was central to the filmmaking process throughout, and also instrumental in impacting Professor Paul Cooke’s practice as both a filmmaker and researcher.

BLACK SNOW
Professor Stephen Andrew Linstead, University of York

On December 12, 1866, 361 men and boys were killed in an explosion at the Oaks Colliery in Barnsley, South Yorkshire. Despite being the world’s worst industrial loss of life in the 19th century, this tragedy remained relatively unremembered until 2015, when a group of ex-miners, trade unionists, and local historians attempted to raise money to erect a memorial for its 150th anniversary. The film tells three interlocking stories: the story of a historical community devastated by the disaster, struggling to survive; the story of a contemporary community, decimated by the loss of industry, rediscovering itself in the struggle to remember; and the story of a sculptor, struggling to make one last masterpiece.
THE FACES WE LOST
Dr Piotr Cieplak, University of Sussex

The Faces We Lost is a film about how Rwandans use personal, private, family-album photographs to remember and commemorate the loved ones they lost in the 1994 genocide. In the film, survivors, relatives of victims and professional memory-makers guide us through their stories and share their experiences and images. The film draws on almost ten years of research into image-based representations of the Rwandan genocide. This nomination is particularly poignant as next April marks the 25th anniversary of the genocide.

NOW CIRCA (1918)
Professor Redell Olsen, Royal Holloway, University of London

Now Circa (1918) is a film essay in dramatic form that quotes original archival research undertaken at John Rylands Suffrage Collection, Manchester and The Women’s Library, LSE. It embodies historical detail and texture relating to the material culture of the suffragettes: such as the handwritten inventory of costs for a march. The film contrasts debates in 1918 with similar debates in 2018 through synoptic encapsulations of the #MeToo movement, the 2018 Women’s March, Time’s Up and opposing female voices. In addition, Now Circa (1918) offers stylistic homages to the neglected oeuvre of 1940’s filmmaker Maya Deren.

GRENFELL TOWER AND SOCIAL MURDER
Dr David Scott, The Open University

This film is an account of the lead up to the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017 and provides testimonies from survivors of the fire and their families. It provides a direct intervention in contemporary debates and valuable sources of information about the fire from ‘the view from below’. The filming was undertaken after extensive research with survivors, survivor families and academics who are exploring the fire from a social harm perspective, and provides an important contribution to debate of the most controversial and politically significant events of the last decade.
RIFA 2018
Your presenters this evening

Catherine Mallyon was appointed as Executive Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company in 2012 and she is a member of its Board. She is also currently a Board member of the National Council, the non-executive Board for Arts Council England, and of the Society of London Theatres (SOLT), as well as a council member of the AHRC.

Kim Longinotto is a British documentary filmmaker. She has been acclaimed for making films that highlight the plight of female victims of oppression or discrimination. Longinotto has made more than 20 films, including *Dreamcatcher* and *Love Is All*.

Sophie Morgan is a British television presenter. She is the lead presenter for Channel 4’s TV coverage of all Paralympic Sport, and her reportage has been broadcast on the BBC and Channel 4.

Sir Peter Bazalgette is Chairman of ITV. He was Chair of Arts Council of England from 2012 until 2016 and has also served as President of the Royal Television Society and Deputy Chairman of the National Film School. He was knighted in the New Year Honours for 2012 for services to broadcasting. Sir Peter is also a member of the UK Research and Innovation board, which brings together nine partners, including the AHRC, to create an independent organisation with a strong voice for research and innovation.

Roger Graef OBE is a theatre director and filmmaker. He was a founding board member of Channel 4; News International Visiting Professor of Media and Communications at the University of Oxford, and is Visiting Professor at the Mannheim Centre for Criminology at the LSE.

Danny is a writer and broadcaster and the author of two novels. In 2017, following a career in film journalism spanning more than 20 years, Danny took up the position as senior curator of fiction in the BFI National Archive. Danny also co-hosted BBC One’s Film programme for several years.
The RIFA 2018 Judges

The AHRC would like to thank our expert panel of judges for their hard work in whittling down the shortlist for this year’s Awards and selecting this evening’s winning films.

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

**MATTHEW REISZ**
Books Editor, Times Higher Education

**PROFESSOR LUCY MAZDON**
Head of Film, University of Southampton

**STEVE EVANSON**
TV producer

**RICHARD DAVIDSON-HOUSTON**
Head of All 4, Channel Four Television

**LORD STEVENSON OF BALMACARA (WILF STEVENSON)**
Former Director of the BFI

**LINDSAY MACKIE**
Co-founder of Film Club

**CATHERINE MALLYON**
Executive Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company and AHRC Council member

**ISLAM ISSA**
AHRC New Generation Thinker 2017

**JOANNA NORMAN**
Head of the V&A Research Institute (VARI)

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

**JOHN ROWE**
Head of Digital Effects, National Film and Television School

**DAVID HENDY**
Professor of Media and Cultural History (Media and Film), University of Sussex

**DOROTHY BYRNE**
Head of News & Current Affairs, Channel 4 News

**JEMMA COLE**
Campaigns Officer, Cardiff University
Some of the highlights from last year’s glamorous awards ceremony at the home of BAFTA, which saw five incredible films taking the honours, all showcasing the breadth and value of research in the arts and humanities.
Back for the fifth year – the Research in Film Awards (RIFA) showcases the best short films inspired or linked to arts and humanities research.

£2,000 PRIZE MONEY TO FUND FUTURE FILMMAKING PROJECTS

FIVE CATEGORIES – INCLUDING ONE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

A TOP LINE UP OF JUDGES

ZERO ENTRY FEE

RIFA offers a unique platform - putting emerging filmmakers into the spotlight and inspiring researchers to think more deeply about the ways in which they communicate their work with the public.

If you’re a researcher with a story to tell, visit www.ahrc.ukri.org and follow us on Twitter for updates on #RIFA2019