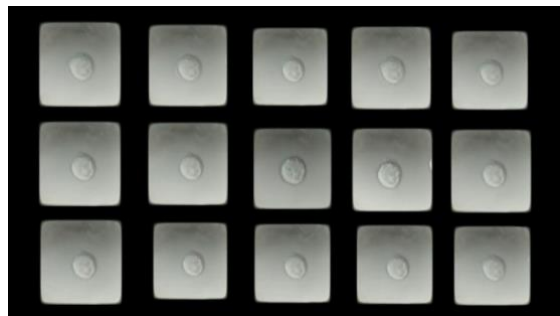




UPROOTED

Spoken word poet and LYRA Poetry Festival co-director Lucy English, and poetry filmmaker Sarah Tremlett, co-directors of Liberated Words CIC Poetry Film festival and workshops will be presenting Uprooted – a touring screening of short films by international poetry filmmakers on the refugee crisis and migration. Our aim is to show how artists can provide a different, more empathetic view than is portrayed in the media. We have films from artists such as: Ghayath Almadhoun and Marie Silkeberg, Jan Baeke, Alfred Marseille, Maciej Piatek and poet Hollie McNish, as well as our own work, so please drop by, all welcome.

Previous screenings: North Cornwall Book Festival; Bath Spa Empathy Conference, 2018.: ‘Wonderful’ Patrick Gale, North Cornwall Book Festival. ‘Thought provoking and so many different types of film’; ‘Really revealing’; ‘We really support what you are doing’; ‘Powerful – and giving artists a voice’ ‘How do you make poetry films?’ The films generate a big response; the audience all cheered at Holly McNish’s film: *Mathematics*. www.liberatedwords.com





UPROOTED

Poetry Film Screening

Uprooted – curated by Sarah Tremlett, is a poetry screening from poetry filmmakers around the world, that reflects on the lives of refugees and the crisis in the Middle East. The films will be divided into three parts: War Zones; In Transition and In a New Country.

Liberated Words was set up to screen poetry films by top international filmmakers alongside films made by people from the community, who are often in some way unable to make their own voices heard. Poetry films are short films where poetry or text is spoken and/or written alongside the moving image and music. They are an ideal form to explore individual issues, and develop audio-visual communication skills. Since then we have worked with all types of groups from the elderly with dementia, to a unique project connecting English and Media departments with a dance college. One of the memorable projects that Sarah created and managed, and run by ecopoet Helen Moore and digital artist and musician Howard Vause was with autistic teenage group Butterflies Haven. When they saw their children's films at a presentation organised by Banes, their families were astounded to discover how their children felt about the subject, and thanked us for helping them understand more about autism. It is in this spirit that we bring these films to show you today.

POETS AND POETRY FILMMAKERS

War Zones

In Damascus (4:00, 2014)

Poet: Mahmoud Darwish (Palestine, 1941–2008)

Poem: 'The Damascene Collar of the Dove' from *The Butterfly's Burden* (2007)

Filmmaker: Waref Abu Quba (Syria)

In Damascus is a poetic film about Damascus, an 11,000-year-old city; the most ancient and precious of cities, set to the poetry of the world famous Palestinian poet / author Mahmoud Darwish.

Waref Abu Quba is a Syrian filmmaker, he was born in the city of Al-Tall, which is only 14 km from Damascus. He has a bachelor in Graphic Art from the Faculty of Fine Arts - University of Damascus (2008). Since then he worked as a freelancer filmmaker and motion graphic designer with major companies nationally and internationally. Early in 2014 he sought asylum in Germany, and has been settled there since then. Waref won the Robert Bosch Stifting Film Prize for international cooperation in 2016.

Filmmaker's comments: 'I've always wanted to make a film about Damascus but I didn't have the experience nor the tools at the time. I wanted to make a film that shows the world an absent side of Damascus, maybe absent from some Syrians also. As the saying goes "Sometimes you need to distance yourself to see things clearly" maybe my time staying abroad helped me finish this film. I have never seen any well-made films about Damascus like those on other cities, so I said to myself maybe it's my responsibility to make one. The life of this project took more than three years; it was my companion during staying abroad. I left Syria in September 2011, taking the footage with me, waiting for things to settle down; but every time I tried to work on it, I had that feeling of fear, fear of nostalgia mostly, and also a fear of doing mediocre work. Every time I felt myself going in the direction of mediocrity I stopped working immediately, and left it maybe for months until I felt enthusiastic again. I was also working as a freelancer and time was hard to find. I was inspired during those years from so many bits and pieces I've seen over the web. One stuck deeply in my mind: *Fragments of Time* by Daniele Manoli. I didn't want to make a crystal-clear image for two reasons: firstly, I didn't have the tools for that, secondly, I wanted to make something like a dream sequence not like a documentary. I wanted to give that fantasy feeling you get while walking the streets of Damascus. I wanted to make it as if we are looking through a witch ball, or stained glass which Damascus is famous for.'

The Last Days (3:33, 2017)

Poet: Lucy English (Great Britain)

Filmmaker: Marie Craven (Australia)

Footage: 1942 film by Joseph Losey and John Ferno, the Prelinger Archives. 'A Child Went Forth'.

Music: Kevin MacLeod, Creative Commons license.

A lullaby and elegy for dark times.

Lucy English on the Book of Hours project: 'The Book of Hours is my current PhD in digital writing project and is an attempt to create a contemporary secular digital version of a "Book of Hours". I want to explore the notion that our electronic devices are not just for distraction but can also be used as tools for reflection. Rather than the traditional reading experience of a book *The Book of Hours* can be experienced during moments of down time, such as waiting for a bus, or during the coffee break at work. The content of *The Book of Hours* will be a loose replication of the original Books of Hours. In the digital *Book of Hours* the choice will be generated digitally but will reflect the time the viewer accesses the site.' Marie Craven assembles short videos from poetry, music, voice, stills and moving images by various artists around the world. Created mostly via the internet, the pieces are collaborative in essence. Since 2014, Marie has made over 60 videopoems, and has had screenings at many poetry film festivals around the world.

Filmmaker's commentary: 'In 2016, I saw on social media a call-out for new film collaborators for The Book of Hours. Excited at the prospect of being involved in this awesome project I contacted Lucy and sent over a first draft assembly of images from a 1942 film by Joseph Losey and John Ferno, found in the public domain at the Prelinger Archives. This film, *A Child Went Forth*, was distributed at the time by the US National Association of Nursery Educators. Among other things, it dealt with the potential problem of wartime evacuation of city children. The images are sensitive portraits of children in various activities at a summer camp. I coupled selected images from this film with an

audio recording found at ABC Radio National, of Lucy reading an earlier poem she had written. Lucy liked what I had done with this first draft of the film, but felt she wanted to write a new poem taking the images as inspiration. We went through a few more drafts of the film. I re-edited the voice and footage to three separate music pieces, giving a very different tone to each draft. We chose to go with a gentle piece by Kevin MacLeod, found on Creative Commons license. These three elements comprise the film, a lullaby for dark times and a call to the future.'

Your Memory is My Freedom (5:40, 2012)

Poet: Marie Silkeberg (Sweden)

Direction and Camera: Marie Silkeberg and Ghayath Almadhoun (Sweden/Palestine) and Syrian Revolution films From the Internet

Poem: "Your Memory is My Freedom" Sola Scriptura, Norway 2012; translation from Swedish: Agneta Falk-Hirschman

Reading: Marie Silkeberg

Music: Stolen from the Internet

Ghayath Almadhoun is a Palestinian Poet, author and journalist born in the Palestinian refugee camp of Yarmouk in Syria in 1979, and living in Stockholm since 2008. His poetry translated into numerous languages has been recognized in Syria, published by the Ministry of Culture, and he was in a selected collection winning the ALMAZRAA prize. Marie Silkeberg is a poet, translator and non-fiction writer. She has published seven collections of poetry including *Material* (2010) and with Almadhoun on *Till Damaskus* (2014). They are known for making poignant, often arresting and heart-rending films on the war in Syria. In relation to their book *Till Damaskus* (which references both the conversion of Saint Paul on the road to Damascus and the play by the Swedish playwright August Strindberg) they say that poetry films have helped to combine their geographical and cultural differences and 'create something new from the encounter' as well as living outside Syria. 'The struggle to write something true without the fear of having your expression invaded and erased would have been too hard without it.' Silkeberg notes that she takes Damascus as a focal point from which to think about the world; whilst Almadhoun says the civil war has affected his writing, and notes that 'Damascus was the first city of the world', which all other cities have followed, and so the anguish of what is happening is even more poignant.

In Transition

At The Border (3:56, 2016)

Poet: Jan Baeke (Netherlands)

Direction: Alfred Marseille & Jan Baeke (Public Thought)

Screenplay: Jan Baeke & Alfred Marseille

Film & sound editing: Alfred Marseille (Netherlands)

Poetic reflection on the ambiguities of the refugee crisis, media coverage, extremist propaganda and EU politics by multi-award-winning Public Thought – poet Jan Baeke and media artist Alfred Marseille.

At the Border

The scenery cannot be here
without our understanding and so can't love.

Deep in the night where the roads end
the supplication shrinks as does the question

how another one can help us
the same us who in the flat beaten silence

of a shaky forest, hear mice
and martens rustling as well as border guards

the us who in spite of cold and rain
have to regain silence on the crying

of their drenched children.
The scenery is an idea that's spread

around all those shopping bags.
Love is the question lying next to the bread

and the piece of sausage that's
tucked between the children's shirts.

Numbers (3:45, 2016)

Poet: Lucy English (Great Britain)
Concept and Filmmaker: Maciej Piatek (Poland)
music by Grupa Otwock

'Numbers have life; they're not just symbols on paper'.
Shakuntala Devi

Filmmaker's Comments: 'A second short film made in collaboration with poet Lucy English as part of her PhD project *The Book of Hours*. *Numbers* is our second collaboration, and changes the traditional way of working where a poem initiates a film. In our case, it was my film with no sound, no words associated to it that acted as a starting point to our collaboration. I asked Lucy to write a poem specifically to my piece, giving her only some vague clues related to what I think the film I made would represent or what kind of association I had in mind when I was making it. I put an individual in the centre of that visual story, either in society or someone who could possibly be oppressed in some way; or someone who's trying to find their way in society. Lucy took it from there.

The video footage I used was a short lab film by Australian and US scientists who captured each stage of the death of a human white blood cell, revealing the dying cells apparently try to alert their immune system allies that they are dying. I looped the same section of white cell found footage and delayed in time each section to make it look almost like a disease outbreak. At the end of the film one can see in the top left-hand corner the cell is actually disappearing, ending the whole film. What struck me in this footage was its biological sense: the association of cells and chemicals with primal instincts which appear to dominate our lives in the twenty-first century. It's something which scares me, something that very much reminds me of Auschwitz and many other atrocities and crimes against humanity.' Technical note: the voiceover fading at the end of the film is intentional.

Snow (3:31, 2015)

Poet: Marie Silkeberg (Sweden)

Poem: Snö by Marie Silkeberg, 2014

Filmmaker: Ghayath Almadhoun (Sweden/Palestine) and Marie Silkeberg with films from the internet

English translation: Frank Perry

Arabic translation: Ghayath Almadhoun

Music: Hanna Hartman

An arresting and emotive film about being in a refugee camp in the cold and snow. (See earlier film by Silkeberg and Almadhoun for artists' details.)

In a New Country

From My Cars Window (4:00, 2014)

Poet: Nizar Qabbani (Syria)

Filmmaker: Hala Georges (Syria)

Music: Syrian Folk by Lena Shamamyan

Filmmaker's comments: 'This film is a personal and nostalgic response to my home's suffering. From inside my car I observe the streets of London while listening to Syrian folk music and remembering my home town: Damascus. It is a nostalgic personal response to my reality as an exiled artist who can't visit home anytime soon and who is constantly worried and wondering about her family's future.'

Mathematics (2:40, 2013)

Poet: Hollie McNish (UK)

Filmmaker: Julian Hills (UK)

Celebrated spoken word poet Hollie McNish channels the voices of those who resent immigrants to 'our country'.

Letter to Syria (6:20, 2015)

Poets: Cristiano (Syria) and Lukas Rackwitz (Germany)
Filmmaker: Tom Roelecke (www.Roeler.com) Germany
Drawings: Mehrdad Zaeri
Animation: Dirk Frömmer
Sound design + Mix: Tonik Studio Musik: Lion-Audio

In the spring of 2015, Cristiano leaves his war-torn home country Syria. In the summer of 2015, he arrives on the shores of the Elbe River at Wedel near Hamburg. There he meets Lukas. Cristiano writes a letter to his homeland Syria. Together they translate the text into German so that people in both countries will understand the message. At the wedel-schaedel.de poetry slam they presented their text for the first time. The audience was left speechless – listening not only to a Syrian and a German, but to two young men, two friends.

Words (5:38, 2012)

Poets: Polish immigrants to the UK from Kobieta (Women in the UK) kobietawuk.info
Written, directed and produced: Maciej Piatek (Poland) and FFP
Photography: Karol Wyszynski
Project Manager: Dorota Kordecka
Visualisations by Vj Pietrushka youtube.com/user/theskipper22222
Voiceovers: Anna Jasinka-Piatek, Wojciech Nowak
Music: FTDrop soundcloud.com/ftdrop; intro soundtrack 'I fall in the grandad bus' by Whizz Kid elegirl.net/label/archives/207

Words is based on poems of Polish immigrants. It's an artistic interpretation of images and lyrics about life of immigrants, their loss and gain, their reality and dreams, their wanted and unwanted stories. It is also a short story about homesickness and life in-between.

Night Bus (5:00, 2018)

Poet, Director and Filmmaker: Sarah Tremlett
Editor: James Symonds

The voice of a refugee on a night bus relates how they are trying to forget a different dawn, and build a new safe life with the one they love.

Filmmaker's comments: '*Night Bus* came about from two sources: I had overheard parts of a conversation by an English-speaking Syrian on a late-night bus, and from reading about the war in the Middle East: about being detained, torture, cluster bombs, snipers, being isolated in homes without water. Ultimately what registered the most was that missiles are often launched just before dawn– with a horrible precision for ending life, rather than a glorious defining moment bringing the new day. Whilst the media might talk of 'there' and 'here' the mind knows no geographical borders, particularly when memories are so horrific. I wanted to show that being surrounded by peace, even

in the relative calm of a night bus, can help block those memories and let love exist for a couple. As an artist light is particularly important for me in poetry films. As such I have been working on a series of films around time and light – three of which are on *The Book of Hours – Mr Sky*, *Solstice Sol Invictus* and *Summer Solstice*, and now *Night Bus*: visually contrasting the colours of a natural dawn with the white light of the missile attacks.

I had already collected some footage on another night bus, and the verbal concept of a circle came from doodling on an iPhone as I created the narrative. I often choose interesting music, but here I wanted the ‘real’ bus sound to be included to counterpoint the projected thoughts including subdued explosions. Overall my aim was to imagine having such horrific memories that you are managing to suppress, through normal everyday existence.

End of Screening

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To help us with Future Events, please fill in below, tear off and hand in to the organizers. Thank you.

I would like to receive further information about Liberated Words poetry film events and workshops

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Or: email us at our website www.liberatedwords.com