

Press release for immediate release 7 August 2017

'Changing Places' exhibition of contemporary video art arrives at National Waterways Museum, Ellesmere Port



Changing Places in its previous staging at **The House Mill, London**. Courtesy of Film and Video Umbrella.
Photographer: Anna Arca. (Still: *Residue*, Desire Machine Collective)

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Changing Places is Film and Video Umbrella's national tour of contemporary artists' video, and its coming to the National Waterways Museum in Ellesmere Port, 11 August - 17 September. The tour comprises a series of exhibitions inside historic structures across the country, including mills, warehouses and museums, to present an international perspective on one of the biggest catalysts for change in recent times: industrialisation. The National Waterways Museum Ellesmere Port is the third of nine participating venues, and shows three artists' films projected amongst its exhibits within the Island Warehouse and on board Bigmere, a cargo vessel moored in the Victorian docks.

Each stage of the tour is different, with a specially curated selection of artworks showing at each venue to draw out threads of local history. The featured artists all live in, work in, or retain a connection to Bangladesh, India or Pakistan. The placing of these contemporary artworks into the historic structures at Ellesmere Port aims to connect the transformations happening in South Asia today with the history of places in Britain where the blueprint for industrialisation began.

National Waterways Museum shows *The Distance From Here* by Bani Abidi, *Residue* by Desire Machine Collective and *Away From Home* by Yasmin Jahan Nupur, which will invite visitors

to consider Ellesmere Port's history from a new perspective. In the Island Warehouse, Desire Machine Collective's large-scale video projection *Residue* portrays the crumbling, forgotten, yet monumental space of a disused power plant outside the artists' hometown of Guwahati, India. As the surrounding forest begins to envelope the abandoned building, the drive to preserve Ellesmere Port as a site of historic significance sits in stark contrast to the fate of the industrial building featured in the artwork.

Climb on board Bigmere, a cargo vessel moored in the docks, to watch Bani Abidi's film *The Distance From Here*. Appropriately, it shows people waiting to travel. Focusing on process and bureaucracy, it brings to mind one of the major topics of current political debate: the free movement of people. As we watch papers being filled in, and people filing into demarcated areas, we are reminded that while these discussions go on, people's lives hang in the balance.

Away From Home by Yasmin Jahan Nupur, also showing on board Bigmere, presents the reality of a group of workers who have travelled to a new location and now work under globalised conditions. The film highlights the regulations and restrictions that apply to the workers' professional and private lives, and the compliance necessary for them to maintain their positions. Exhibited in close proximity to the retail areas developed nearby, *Away From Home* bridges the gap between the items we buy locally and the people who produce them located further afield.

Mariam Zulficar, Curator, Film and Video Umbrella:

"The bringing together of these particular works at Ellesmere Port offers a different perspective on the intertwined histories of Britain and South Asia, in the hope that we are armed with better tools with which to comprehend our current circumstances."

The 70th anniversary of Indian independence is an ideal opportunity to consider some of the industrial architecture that sprung up in the boom years of trade with the Indian subcontinent, and how a model of industrial production that was forged in the Britain of the 19th century has been transported to other parts of the globe. By siting moving-image works by artists in a number of venues that embody Britain's imperial industrial heritage, we want to illuminate this experience of change: in the change of use of the buildings themselves, or in the wider urban environments in which they are located. Changing Places is a reflection on how places transform, and how people move between them and transform them."

Tim Eastop, Executive Producer at the Canal & River Trust:

"The Trust is proud to be a key partner in this innovative tour of contemporary films curated by FVU. Changing Places is helping to address fascinating concerns for the Trust around the changing roles of the unique and historic canal side buildings that we look after across England and Wales. The tour is helping the charity to inspire people to engage with their local canal in a new way, through the lens of international contemporary film, and realise the opportunities to enjoy tremendous high-calibre cultural activities on our waterways."

Notes to Editor:

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Changing Places in its previous staging at The House Mill, London

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(Still: *Residue*, Desire Machine Collective)



The Distance From Here, Bani Abidi (video still)

Courtesy of the artist and Film and Video Umbrella.



'Bigmere' at National Waterways Museum

Notes to Editor, continued:

Title: *Changing Places*
Exhibiting: *The Distance From Here*, Bani Abidi; *Residue*, Desire Machine Collective; *Away From Home*, Yasmin Jahan Nupur
Dates: 11 August - 17 September 2017
Address: South Pier Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH65 4FW
Opening times: Daily, 10am - 5pm
Admission: No additional charge to visit the exhibition areas, but an entry ticket to the museum is required. Please see the National Waterways Museum [website](#) for more information on admission prices.

Please be aware that two of the works are installed on board a boat, which is not wheelchair accessible.

Full national tour dates for *Changing Places*, and details of all artworks on the tour available [here](#).

Film and Video Umbrella commissions, curates, produces and presents artists' moving-image works that are staged in collaboration with galleries and other cultural partners. Since the late 1980s, FVU has been at the forefront of this vibrant and expanding area of practice, promoting innovation through its support of some of the most exciting figures on the contemporary scene. During this time, the organisation has commissioned and produced nearly 200 different artists' projects, ranging from ambitious multi-screen installations to shorter film and video pieces, as well as numerous online commissions. fvu.co.uk

The National Waterways Museum Ellesmere Port is run by the Canal & River Trust. Its seven acre site has 19 Grade II listed buildings housing the UK's national collection of historic inland waterways vessels. A working forge, workers' cottages, locks, docks and warehouses tell the story of the Port and its significance to the region and nation. It is also home to the National Waterways Archive, the country's single biggest collection of documents and photographs chronicling the history of Britain's inland waterways. canalrivertrust.org.uk/nwm

Audio visual installation courtesy of award-winning systems integrator, Feltech. feltech.co.uk

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A Film and Video Umbrella touring exhibition, supported by Arts Council England, Canal & River Trust, National Trust, City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, Hastings Museum & Art Gallery, Phoenix Leicester, Feltech, Links Signs and Heritage Lottery Fund. Curated by Mariam Zulfiqar.



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