

Drawn From Life

animated documentaries inspired by the lives of the people around us

Made in the UK, these short films celebrate the intimate and the epic - reflecting the lives of the people around us. Thought provoking and inspiring, using a variety of animation styles, the works shine a light on the creativity of filmmaking in the UK today.

This special compilation of short animated documentary, and semi-autobiographical works, is presented by MediaActive Projects in partnership with Animate Projects and Film Hub Midlands.

Special thanks go to our in our community curators, and to Dr Sally Pearce and the BFI's Animation Curator Jez Stewart, who offered additional advice on the selection.

PLEASE NOTE: a number of the works deal with challenging moments in life. These experiences are represented with care and consideration towards the contributors and audiences - details are outlined per film in the text below. We consider this programme is suitable for those aged 15 years and over.



1. Follow The Dogs - Directed by Isabel Garrett

running time: 6.5 minutes

A short, part-animated film made in creative collaboration with, and featuring, Warren Hastings. The film explores and celebrates Warren's resilience, imagination and creativity as he faces the challenges of recovering from major surgery.

2. Jeremy, my Father - Directed by Miranda Peyton Jones

running time: 8 minutes

Jeremy, my Father, is a film which attempts to navigate a daughter's bereavement, following suicide. Through animation, archival footage, and sound, the director sensitively guides us to the heart of her grief, love and loss. The voices of her family and her father's music underscore this deeply personal, powerful, and poignant film.

3. Pripyat Horse - Directed by Sally Pearce

running time: 2 minutes

Sally Pearce: "*Pripyat Horse* is a tribute to my friend, Marianne Kuopanportti Fennell, who died far too young. It is a splinter from Chernobyl Journey, a film project we had worked on together for ten years, and also inspired by this famous quote: 'a sparrow flies swiftly in through one door of the hall, and out through another...even so, man appears on earth for a little while...' (Bede, 673-735 AD.)"

4. DAWTA - Directed by Jessica Ashman

running time: 7 minutes

Dawta tells the story of a young Black woman, running away from a pivotal moment in her family history. Guided by two elders, she discovers a safe, future utopian planet for Black women through a mysterious superpower. Inspired by the artist Jessica Ashman's own family history of migration and trans-racial fostering, *Dawta* explores the idea of inherited cycles of trauma within Black women and asks the question: can the energy this trauma brings be harnessed? Can this power be used to discover new dimensions of hope and a future that pushes past the colonial and imperial histories intertwined in Black consciousness?



Drawn From Life - Programme Notes...continued

5. That Yorkshire Sound - Directed by Marcus Leonard Armitage

running time: 2.5 minutes

Marcus grew up in Pontefract, West Yorkshire and wanted to reflect his experiences of the diverse landscapes and cultures on his doorstep. Over several months he worked with animators Ana Stefaniak and Matthew Armitage to produce the animation using a mixture of watercolour, oil pastel and digital techniques. Thousands of drawings make up this two-minute documentary using colour and sound to move between many different perspectives.

Marcus recorded sound from multiple locations in Yorkshire focusing on different landscapes and the rhythmical aspects of life in Yorkshire. Working with sound designer Marian Mentrup they edited these recordings into a piece that moves quickly between locations and people living life throughout Yorkshire.

6. On Hannah Fields - Directed by Lewis Heriz

running time: 3 minutes

On Hannah Fields responds to a community garden in Littleover, north of Derby city centre. Lewis was struck by Hannah Fields' principle of acceptance - of whoever comes in through the gate: "Everyone's welcome. And you also accept what the garden itself is offering up; you look at it, and you sort of evaluate how it fits in, but you don't reject it." Lewis' film includes celluloid film hand-processed in nettles weeded from Hannah Fields, and phytograms - images made through a chemical reaction between plants and photographic emulsion - made as part of a workshop - and the soundtrack includes voices from members of the Hannah Fields community.

7. Departing - Directed by Mary Martins

running time: 7 minutes

Departing is a short experimental documentary that reflects on the themes of migration, the forced displacement and removal of people. Expressed through music, interviews and poetry, the film uses 16mm filmed footage layered with a collage of mixed media animation and 35mm photography to question the immigration laws within the wider context of the current economic and political climate across the world.

8. Green Lung - Directed by Simon Hamlyn

running time: 3 minutes

Green Lung responds to Derby Arboretum, Britain's first public park, which was commissioned by mill owner Joseph Strutt, and opened in 1840. Simon's film makes connections between the nature of the park, and the industrial working lives of those it was intended to benefit. Animating screen-printed images, he was keen to avoid the waste that's often part of this process, using acetate sheets which were scanned, cleaned and re-used, paper stencils and water-based ink.

Simon: "I started to realise I could use natural materials directly, so that involved collecting and gathering plant material and pressing it and then scanning it and using that imagery, which was really exciting. It got me outside! And had me looking for textures and patterns that were just naturally available, to incorporate into my work".



9. And Granny Would Dance - Directed by Maryam Mohajer

running time: 10 minutes

Six year old Marmar observes how the adult women in her life navigate their relationships with their loved ones and each other. She listens in on her grandmother's friends laughing about their partners as they play an illicit game of cards. Based on the director's memories of her childhood in Iran, *And Granny Would Dance* is a tale of love, grief and resilience across generations. At its heart, it is a tribute to the solidarity of Iranian women.

Drawn From Life - Programme Notes...continued



10. Regarding Gardens - Directed by Carolina Melis

running time: 2 minutes

Regarding Gardens is inspired by both the historic gardens of National Trust property Ham House and Garden, and the estates 17th century owner Elizabeth Dysart, who held the vision for the garden. The film presents a living portrait of the historic garden of Ham House. The film is supported by the research of Garden History specialist Michael Ann Mullen and is accompanied by an original poem by Simon Barraclough and music by Julia Kent.

11. I'm OK - Directed by Elizabeth Hobbs

running time: 6 minutes

Following the end of a stormy love affair, Expressionist artist Oskar Kokoschka enlists in the First World War. After suffering serious injuries in battle, he experiences a series of memories and visions as medics transport him through the forests of the Russian front. Playful and imaginative, handmade using paint and ink drawings, *I'm OK* explores the wounds of heartbreak and trauma.

12. Cesspit of Freedom - Directed by Oran O'Sullivan

running time: 2 minutes

"The police's consistent harassment of a popular gay bar heralds the UK's first national (non-London-based) Gay Pride March, taking place in the textiles town of Huddersfield, 1981. A short documentary made up of archive interviews, animated by screen printing layered ink on cotton."

13. A Taste For Music - Directed by Jordan Antonowicz-Behnan

running time: 5 minutes

A Taste For Music is a personal documentary inspired by Jordan's memories and the record collection of his late father. The film is about a mutual love of music and being with a loved one during their illness, expressing the difficulties and the special moments that are shared in these times. Much of the animation was drawn onto paper recycled record sleeves thus creating a distinct film language for the film. **Please note** - this film contains flashing images.



14. Visible Mending - Directed by Samantha Moore

running time: 8.5 minutes

Emotional repair through wool. *Visible Mending* reclaims the role knitting plays in many peoples' lives; helping them face adversity, calm anxiety, and make crucial social connections. A group of stop motion knitted objects tell stories shared by crafters, about how they have used knitting to mend themselves, even if the repair is temporary.

To find out more about the filmmakers please visit: www.mediaactive.org/drawn-from-life

Please help us by completing this short audience survey - accessed via the QR code
The survey should take no more than 5 minutes to complete

