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Difference Screen



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Difference Screen presents a diverse programme of international artists' moving image that reflects on changing political geographies through people and places. The programme embarks on a world-wide journey, travelling across 20 countries over 2 years, interpreted by an evolving dialogue between artists, curators and audiences.

The worldwide spread of artists' moving image practice over the past 30 or 40 years has coincided with global events of historical magnitude: from the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the 9/11 attack on New York and subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the world financial crisis of 2008 and ongoing economic tremors in Europe, and more recently, to the Arab Spring movements for democratic change. At the same time, the use of the internet and social media has become an increasingly important element both in artistic practice and social change. With a sense of a massive shifting in social, political and economic tectonics, the previous old order is challenged by the rising economies of China, India and others. We live in an age of uncertainty and change, but also of promise in the unknown. Human endeavour through science probes the boundaries of the world as we know it. New possibilities for creative potential have emerged, exploited by artists in places once overlooked, exposed to view like overturned stones to wider audiences wired into global social and media networks.

Landscape in its broadest sense is a common reference point and inextricably connected over millennia with conflict and change. Not landscape as an idealised pictorial view, but one where human intervention is always present, a dynamic and continuous landscape, hinting of recent extinctions of previous social orders, the fault-lines of interminable social conflict, or the aspirations of new communities.

Difference Screen begins and ends in the UK, commencing at Clearwell Caves, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire, in July 2013 and concluding at Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol, in December 2015. By then it will have gathered the experiences and impressions of many people in different countries – with its own history providing fuel for new considerations and thoughts.

Difference Screen is curated by artist Bruce Allan and curator/facilitator Ben Eastop, Co-Director of Difference Exchange. The programme has been developed with Difference Exchange through a unique and extensive network of international artists, curators and arts organisations, its routes and resources mapped and made public through this international journey.

