

Cultures of Film

**Thursday
10 Sept –
Thursday 1 Oct**

**Liz Garland, Sammy Holden,
Janine Sykes, Simon Woolham,
Paddy McEntaggart,
Anna Powell, Nik Taylor**

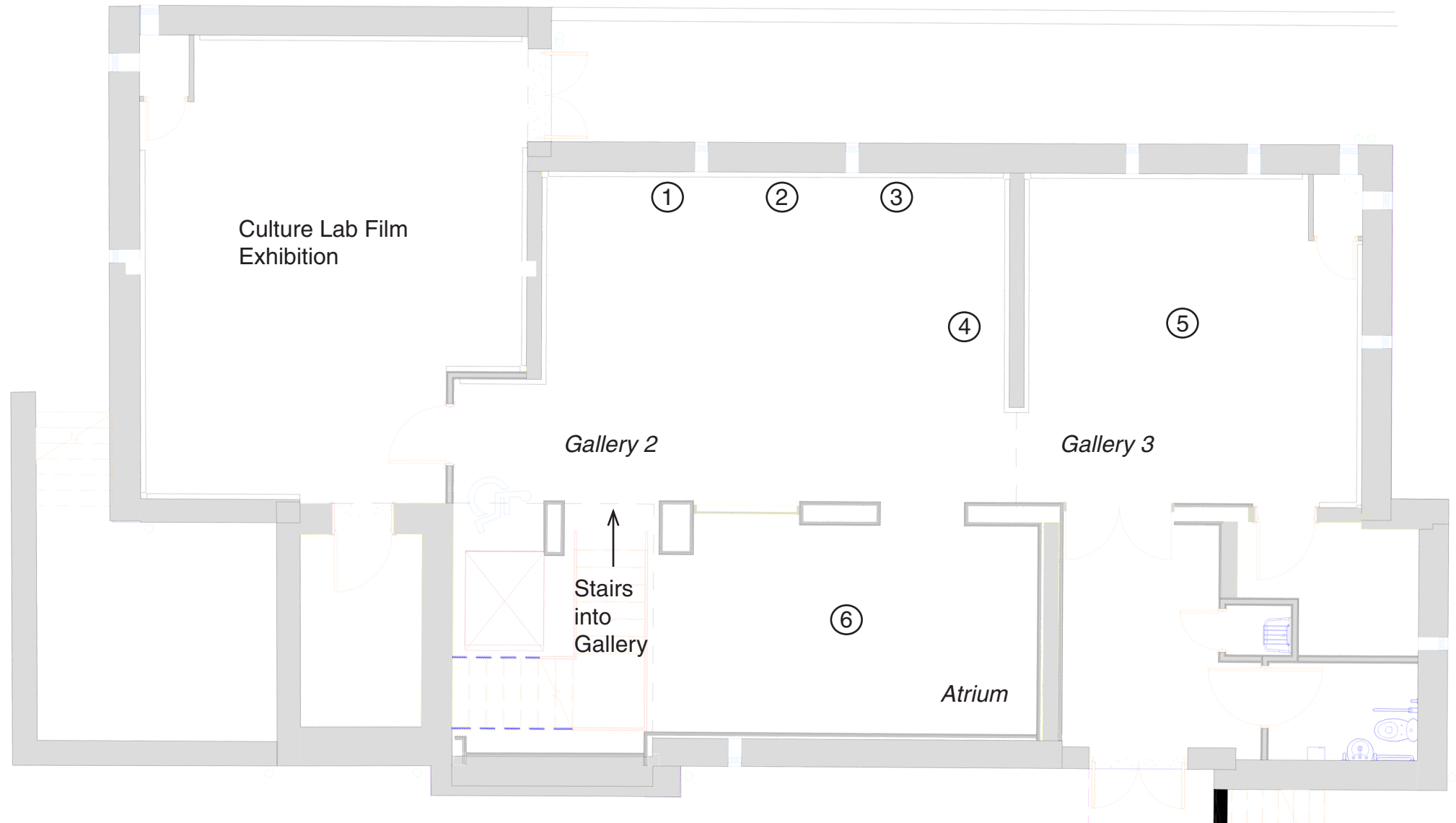
Cultures of Film Group Exhibition

**Galleries 2, 3 & Atrium
Bath House Gallery
Sovereign Design House
Huddersfield, HD1 3DR**

**Closing Event:
Thu 1 Oct, 4pm – 7pm**

**Mon – Thu, 10am – 3pm,
Fri, 10am – 2:30pm
Sat 26 Sept only, 10am – 3pm**

**@culturesof_
#culturesoffilm**



Henry & Celly

Sammy Holden

Henry + Celly (2026) is a science fiction short film produced in co-creation by University Practitioner at Huddersfield, Dr. Sammy Holden, and students across the 2025/26 cohorts in Filmmaking as part of the Huddersfield University Summer Filmmaking Project (HUSFP), an extracurricular opportunity for students. The film was written and directed by Sammy Holden and students developed visual aspects, made props and costumes, designed visual effects, and took on all other production roles. The HUSFP was devised as a three-month long project with production taking place on a single day after a month's development. Students were able to use their production skills and work with professional actors in a research environment and guided practice context.

The film follows two intelligent biological machines, played by Wenbin Guo and Willow Zhao, as they come to awareness in their artificial domestic environment. Over time, the machines learn more than they could have imagined about intelligence, art, life and love.

Based on student interest, inspiration and contributions and use of contemporary science fiction styling themes of artificial intelligence, machine learning, personhood, gender and identity are explored throughout the film.

The film was initially supported by artist's development from AI + AI and The Fire Within Wigan in 2018 and came to fruition through Cultures Of__ support and funding, as well as enthusiastic support from practitioners and researchers at the Smart House Research Facility, a unique research environment at Huddersfield which allows researchers to implement and investigate consumer smart technologies. The 'set' seen offers a curious audience glimpses of an active research facility and ongoing experiments, and was adapted and dressed through production design to enhance the more science-fiction elements. *Henry + Celly* speaks to students' understanding and concerns about smart technologies and the hope for a more positive future where the uses, values and possibilities of these technologies in relation to humanity are understood with the nuance they deserve.

A Costume Drama

Liz Garland

Doctoral research for ***It's not just sewing!*** An exploration of the hidden world of the theatre costume maker highlighted the hidden labour, passion, and skill of theatre costume makers, while also revealing the physical and environmental changes that occur in the costume workroom during the costume creation process.

Outside periods of active production, the workroom is a relatively calm environment devoid of colour. The arrival of a show initiates a steady flow of colour and increased activity within the room. Gradually, as production takes hold, the colours and textures of the designs permeate the environment, with 2D fabrics adorning dummies and transforming into 4D characterful costumes.

Reflecting these findings, this time-lapse film traces the changing life of the costume workroom during the making of costumes for a production of *King Lear* at Sheffield Crucible, a major UK repertory theatre.

This film celebrates the unseen work of the theatre costume department, placing the labour of the costume makers centre stage.

With thanks to Sheffield Theatres for their collaboration in the creation of this film.

Family Routes

Anna Powell | Louise Platt | Claire Bend

Family Routes is a 40 minute, 4-way split-screen film showing the walking experiences of different families. Captured using Go-Pro cameras, it aims to present both parent/carer and child's-eye perspectives to highlight their contrasting experiences, amplifying the physical and cognitive differences in how spaces are used and understood by different age groups.

The film is part of a project which aimed to explore the relationship between walking and well-being in families with preschool-aged children, focusing on a place-based context (Kirklees) by mapping their walking practices. Using creative mapping and mobile methods, we collaborated with young families to explore the relationships that are formed between bodies and spaces, reflecting on varying experiences and interpretations of localities. Eight families took us on a series of sensory ethnographic walks of their local area in Kirklees, and we recorded video footage from both parent and child perspectives. We aimed to record the varying experiences of participants in these walks in as unobtrusive a way as possible. Furthering this collaborative approach, we then worked with The Children's Art School (Huddersfield) who are experts in working with very young children in a creative capacity to help them explore their worlds. Participants created a visual outcome which translated multisensory memories of their walks into creative cartographic outcomes. Recognising the difficulty of soliciting feedback from young children - a challenge which had arisen in the early stages of the research when attempting, unsuccessfully, to interview preschoolers about their experiences - this approach was taken to provide a vehicle for the young participants to express memories of their walk in ways which were meaningful to them.

Remembering Film Fonts of the Future

Paddy McEntaggart

An interactive installation that re-mixes screen-based typography from science fiction films to give a transient but tangible experience to these artefacts of cultural collective memory.

The work comes out of a wider body of research that explores tensions in our relationship with technology, memory and forgetting.

Frog in the Park

[Duration: 50 mins]

Janine Sykes | Simon Woolham

Filmmaker Jay Zjawinski captures how The Frog, curator and public interact with artworks during a programmed exhibition event (25 April 2026). The exhibition, The National Gallery: Art On Your Doorstep in Kirklees (4 April – 30 Sept) is one of twelve around the UK, designed to increase accessibility and enjoyment of our national collections.

Research

Curator Dr Janine Sykes and artist Dr Simon Woolham – The Frog both work as lecturers and researchers at the School of Art and Humanities, at The University of Huddersfield. The Frog was invited to collaborate with Sykes during a curators' tour, to increase audience engagement through mime, and humour. The film documents a new intersection of research-practice; Sykes's 'Walking Curation' with Woolham's 'Walking as an artistic and research method'. Both researchers explore how movement through places generates meaning-making, memory, and narrative. The film captures the interplay of curator, visitor and frog and how this performance increases discussion and attention to details in the paintings– a type of participation Sykes categorises as 'Citizen Occupation' – which now extends to amphibians!

Landscape and Collections

The location is the outdoor exhibition The National Gallery: Art On Your Doorstep at Oakwell Hall and Country Park, Birstall. The film begins in the hall, a sixteenth century Elizabethan manor house, and proceeds into the park's beautiful landscape - an important green-space for communities in Kirklees. The exhibition consists of fourteen life-size reproduction paintings from the national collection, displayed around the estate. Sykes was keen to include Kirklees stories and voices in the interpretation accompanying the paintings and involved Batley Girls' High School, Ravenshall School, Dewsbury and a Dewsbury-based women's walking group, the Friday Wanderers, in co-authoring the text. QR codes provided by The National Gallery unlock more stories and films about the art. This is all part of 'Blended Curation' a model of practice Sykes developed, to increase knowledge exchanges about art and collections.

Personal

As The Frog, Woolham has no inhibitions. Reminiscent of the Dadaist performances of Hugo Ball at the Cabaret Voltaire, The Frog's playful performance is contagious and attention-grabbing. As the film progresses, the performance of mime, and humour become part of the live curation, sparking increased engagement from visitors. The creation of The Frog is Woolham's artistic response to overcoming a life-threatening illness and the transformation that occurred. This personal change is manifested in The Frog's provocative performances, reflecting a new attitude to life.

Supported by The National Gallery, University of Huddersfield (Cultures of Film) and Kirklees Museums and Galleries.

Hiding the Elephant in the Room

Nik Taylor

Performance magic is a live experience requiring co-presence between the magician and their audience. Attention needs to be successfully managed and the journey between doubt and belief carefully negotiated. When we add a camera to that space, something changes. The raw lens cannot be misdirected, and it is immune to suggestion. Its use in the performance space risks revealing what the live leaves deliberately ambiguous.

The original live work, *Hiding the Elephant in the Room*, is an autobiographical performance about class, identity, learning magic, and the cost of secrets. The show asks what it means to attempt to create an autobiographical performance when your very identity is built on misdirection.

The film, HEiR, does not attempt to document the live performance. Instead, it turns the camera toward the objects the show is made from: a matchbox, old playing cards, broken envelopes, the séance glass, the gaze of the magician. The entire film is silent.

Beside the screen, there is a vitrine which contains the magic objects used in both. They are presented as evidence.

