

LIGHT IN SHADOW

A Digital Film & Photography Show Celebrating Refugee Week



Studio Theatre
Riverfront Arts Centre, Newport
Saturday 18th of June - 7.30 pm



What is Refugee Week?

Refugee Week is a UK wide festival that celebrates the great contribution made by refugees to UK life and promotes understanding of why people become refugees. Every year hundreds of arts, cultural and educational events are organised across Wales and the UK.

Refugee Week was first held in 1998 and was developed in response to the increasingly negative perceptions of refugees and asylum seekers held by the general public. Refugee Week has become the largest public and educational event in Wales promoting understanding about refugee issues.

The purpose of Refugee Week is to deliver positive educational messages that counter fear, ignorance and negative stereotyping of refugees, through arts, cultural and educational events that celebrate the contribution of refugees to the UK and promote understanding about why people seek sanctuary.

Refugee Week Wales is a partnership between a range of agencies including: Amnesty International, British Red Cross, Displaced People in Action, Refugee Voice Wales, Save the Children, Show Racism the Red Card Wales, the Welsh Local Authorities Consortium for Refugee and Asylum Seekers and the Welsh Refugee Council.

www.refugeeweekwales.org 029 2043 2985



Other FREE Refugee Week events in Newport

- Thurs 23rd June – ‘Safe: A Haven for World Music’
Meze Lounge, 6 Market St – FREE – 8PM–2AM
- Mon 20-Fri 24 - Weeklong exhibition of artwork
Enterprising Art, Market – 9AM-5PM

Film and Photography Show

Light in Shadow is a free event showcasing local film and photographic talent that explains the issue of displacement. Most of the artists are students from the University of Wales, Newport. They are all from different ethnicities and backgrounds and this is reflected to their work. Some of them are refugee themselves or people who are concerned about the asylum issue. All of them decided to come together to create this evening in order to celebrate Refugee week in Newport, a place with diverse culture and over 500 asylum seekers, hoping that this will be the starting point for something different, creative and positive. We hope you enjoy the evening.



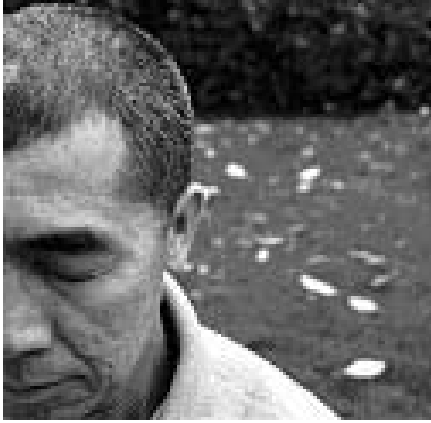
- Programme compiled and created by Alexandros Konstantaras, Golkou Parhizgar, Maryam Ashrafi, Juan Reina, Anastasia Taylor-Lind and Aled Singleton
- This is an event of the Newport & District Refugee Support Group www.newport-refugees.org.uk. To volunteer or for info call Sarah Codling on 0191 425164.

Thanks to the Riverfront for providing the venue and technical equipment and to the Refugee Week Wales team in Cardiff.

The Artists

1. Falun Gong

A photographic project by Stephen Kelly in China



Over a period of four months, Stephen spent some time in the company of a community who are practitioners of a banned cultural movement in China known as Falun Gong. The practice of Falun Gong was made public in 1992 and is a unique way to improve the body, mind and spirit. It consists of exercise, meditation and teachings that are rooted in ancient Chinese culture.

In 1999, the then communist party leader Jiang Zemin launched the crackdown as it is believed that he could not tolerate the popularity of Falun Gong and regarded the large number of practitioners as a potential threat to his political authority. Jiang utilized the state machinery under his control to carry out the persecution and in the past five years it has been documented that over 1,200 practitioners have died from torture and more than 100,000 were been thrown into forced labour camps without trial and over 6,000 have been imprisoned for up to 18 years. Each individual in Stephen's project has his or her own story of immense trauma, suffering and loss.

2. Limbo – 9min

A film by Solange Welch & Kristian Helgesen

Two asylum seekers find themselves in Newport. Although their stories are completely different they are both in limbo, waiting for decisions to be made about their lives. This film gives an insight into what it is like to be in this position and how they cope with this displacement. One of them protests by stitching his mouth closed, and the other keeps himself busy by getting involved in his new community.



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3. Children of the Wall

A photographic project by Guy Martin in Kurdistan



Kurdish people were internally displaced from Turkey's south-eastern provinces during the 1984-1999 conflict with the Kurdish PKK and the Turkish military. This subsequent displacement was accompanied by massive human rights violations and the destruction of property. Following on from the PKK'S declaration of a ceasefire in 1999 and the lifting of a state of emergency in the South East, return has been made possible but only on a very limited scale. The photographs in this project reflect the everyday life of a small group of displaced Kurdish people living within the walled city of Diyarbakir, an ancient town deep in Turkey's south-eastern provinces. With overpopulation in the slums a huge issue, the children often find imaginative and fun pastimes to do to escape from the confines of the wall. They are all too young to remember the war that gripped their part of the world little less than 10 years ago but are constantly reminded by the huge military presence that patrols the city daily; it neither scares them nor intimidates them.



4. Night Commuters: Children of Northern Uganda – 10min

A film by Marc Hoferlin, Justin Purefoy & Ashley Jenkins

Gulu town is the hub of Northern Uganda. Every night thousands of young children enter Gulu's streets. They walk for miles along mud tracks through dark bush land to seek safety in protected shelters. They fear a rebel movement whose terror has kept the Northern regions in turmoil since 1986. If abducted by the rebels, they will be forced to become child soldiers. They have known nothing but war. Jan Egeland (United Nations under-secretary general for humanitarian affairs) has said that the situation is "the largest neglected humanitarian emergency in the world".

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5. Alienated Childhood

*A photographic project by
Maryam Ashrafi in Iran*

Everyday the world is becoming a more horrific place for children to live in, and one of the biggest concerns for many of us is the anxiety of child labour that many nations have. According to official government figures there are about 20,000 street children in Iran. However NGOs say there are at least 35,000 alone in the capital city, Tehran. Most of these children believe to be Afghan refugees and economic migrants whose generation have been fleeing to Iran since 1979. This project is a work in progress which looks at a life of a 12 year old Afghan girl who lives in the slums of south Tehran and travels to the affluent suburbs of north Tehran to sell an assortment of junk and oddities; chewing gum, pens, fortune poems and raiser.

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6. Light in Shadow – 11 min

*A film by Alex Konstantaras,
Juan Reina & Golkou Parhizgar*

Wales 2005. NADIFA, a young asylum seeker, gets her refugee application rejected. As she can not return to her country in Africa, because her life was in threat, she hides from the authorities finding shelter in an empty caravan park. In order to survive the present, NADIFA daydreams of her happy childhood, with the help of a view master toy.

The “Light in Shadow” group consist of 3 members; Alexandros Konstantaras (28), from Greece, Juan Reina (27), from Finland and Golkou Parhizgar (21) from Britain originally Iran. The group were established in October 2004 upon meeting at the University of Wales, Newport, and quickly developed a good working ethos which has since been reflected in their work and subsequently gained them a good reputation within the International Film School of Wales where they recently won ‘best direction’ award.

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7. Kablare Camp

*A photographic project by
Ivor Prickett in Kosovo*



When the war in Kosovo ended in July 1999 thousands of returning Albanians began to carry out reprisal attacks on anyone they believed had aided the Serbs during their reign of terror. Among those people were the Roma gypsies of Kosovo some of whose ancestors had been in the Balkans since the 14th century. Although they claim to be neither pro-Serb nor pro-Albanian they are now either refugees in surrounding countries or internally displaced all over Kosovo along with what's left of the Serbian population. Kablare Roma Camp is one of the three on the Northern side of Mitrovica. Vebbi Selimi and his family moved to Kablare camp 2 years ago, originally from Prishtina they fled for Serbia after the war and then return to Kosovo only because they expected to find a better standard of living there.



8. The Wait – 14 min

A film by Golkou Parhizgar, Mariana Conde, Justin Purefo & Ashley Jenkins

The wait is an investigation led by a group of filmmakers trying to understand what drove Abbas Amini, an Iranian Kurd asylum seeker to stitch his lips, eyes and ears and what the fortune holds for him. Abbas' action was a desperate measure to protest against the Home Office's decision to take action in order to deport him back to Iran where he would have been exposed to arrest, torture and probable execution. The film seeks to present some of the complexity of the experience of becoming a refugee in Britain through a personal portrait of an individual. It explores the human side of a group of people who the media often show as being mere numbers and aims to be an alternative to the stereotypical bias of documentaries about refugees and asylum seekers.

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9. Life under occupation- the west Bank, Palestine

*A photographic project by
Dave Wyatt in Palestine*



Since the beginning of the second Intifada the Palestinian people living in East Jerusalem, the west Bank, and the Gaza Strip have faced the Israeli policies of repression, closure, blockage of streets, confiscation of agricultural lands, repeated attacks against Palestinian people, including women and children not involved in any resistance activities by the Israeli army and settlers, and finally by the construction of the Apartheid wall. Since the 1948 handover of Palestine to Israel by the British, vast numbers of Palestinians have been either had parts or all of their land confiscated to make way for Israelis to settle. Many of these men, women and children have been forced to move into neighbouring Jordan or Lebanon. This work tries to show the plight of the people caught in between the religious fanaticism on both sides in the hope that the futility of the conflict becomes more apparent. It is only through education that more can be done to bring about Peace.

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10. Between A Mountain And A Sea – 5 min

A film by Rupert Rand, Nick Davies & Oskari Korenius

Eric is a thoughtful, intelligent, award-winning poet, and loving father. He is also an asylum seeker. In this documentary he reflects on finding solace in his daughter, his poetry, and the landscape of Wales. The film aims to build a sense of empathy amongst the audience and shows Eric as a valuable individual and not simply a negative stereotype.

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