

WET LOUNGE #4

6PM 15TH JAN 2020 - TENT ROTTERDAM

ABOUT US

WET is a Rotterdam-based production and distribution cooperative for experimental film and video, founded by Anna Łuczak, Erika Roux, Marta Hryniuk, Nick Thomas and Sophie Bates in 2018. We come together to pursue a mode of production based on collaboration and mutual support, assisting each other through the exchange of labour, equipment and expertise. WET is also a platform for distribution, curating and programming with a focus on works which question existing film orthodoxies, and which propose alternative (social, historical, political and aesthetic) perspectives on the medium. We host an online screening platform at wetfilm.org. You can contact us at info@wetfilm.org.

ABOUT WET LOUNGE

WET Lounge is a series of five expanded screenings. The events take place between mid 2019 and early 2020, and are hosted by TENT Welcomes. During each Lounge, we will showcase works by artists operating in the gaps between video art and cinema, somewhere between the communality of cinema and the architectural experimentation of contemporary art.



Still from Kevin Jerome Everson - IFO; courtesy the artist; Trilobite-Arts DAC; Picture Palace Pictures

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Communities are often contingent, existing without a fixed set of rules, operating through aesthetics, myth and a collective imaginary. It takes work to articulate such imaginaries, whether in the case of a neighbourhood, a ferry, a family. Some are temporary heterotopias, with people occupying problematic spaces for a short period of time; others have a longer lifespan, taking place over the course of decades. The films presented for WET Lounge #4 visit and move through such communities. Artists enter into dialogue with their protagonists - not just human, but animal, machinic, urban - and through the films give voice to communities of people and provide portraits of particular places. Listening, questioning, observation and juxtaposition become poetic tools; ways of not only portraying, but participating in the lives of these communities, retelling their stories and creating new narratives through empathic intervention.

The films point towards and explore different literary and filmic forms. Margaret Salmon takes on the mantles of street photographer, wildlife documentarian and avant-garde filmmaker in her musical portrayal of Gibraltar; Inas Halabi employs a form of magical realism in her retelling of the history of a Palestinian family; Kevin Jerome Everson employs a poetic combination of reportage and lo-fi science fiction; while Nick Thomas and Sophie Bates produce a talking heads montage. Rather than producing a critique of 'conventional' narrative and filmic techniques, these artists ask what we can do if we reroute such methods to alternative ends.



Still from Margaret Salmon - Gibraltar

SCHEDULE

Doors open 18:00

18:15-18:45

Nick Thomas and Sophie Bates - Nordzee/
North Sea
29'
2020

18:45-19:00

Margaret Salmon - Gibraltar
17'
2013

19:00-19:15

Break

19:15-19:30

Kevin Jerome Everson - IFO
9'
2017

19:39-20:00

Inas Halabi - Like a String of Beads
26'
2019

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ARTISTS & WORKS

Margaret Salmon is an American artist based in Glasgow. Trained as a photographer, she takes an approach which is part documentary, part ethnography - exploring and experimenting with different aspects of 'realist' film-making. She works closely with her subjects, often within a specific community, creating intimate settings in which her filmic realities unfold. Her films often examine the gendered, emotive dynamics of social interactions and representational forms. Alongside her practice, Salmon works as a cameraperson for fellow artists.

Gibraltar merges some of the key ingredients of Margaret Salmon's practice, demonstrating the artist's love of portraying animals through formal experiments. Shot on 16mm, in black & white and colour, it follows a mostly observational approach, recording the monkeys and humans of Gibraltar as they interact and mirror one another. The film's soundtrack features Max Roach's percussive jazz, which gives a vital and mystical rhythm to this observation of animals, tourism and spectacle on the famous rock.

Nick Thomas and Sophie Bates are artists based in Rotterdam, and are both members of WET film. They have previously worked together on a radio show, a performance and a quiz, but also maintain solo practices alongside occasional collaborations.

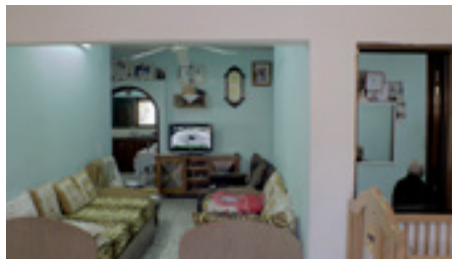
In Nordzee/North Sea, Nick Thomas and Sophie Bates take on the role of roving interviewers on an overnight ferry between the Netherlands and the UK. Passengers on the ferry muse on their journey, daily worries and the role of friendship in their lives, producing a snapshot of a temporary community created by their enforced proximity to one another. The use of the 'talking heads' format to create a portrait of a place takes inspiration from examples of interview-films made by Krzysztof Kieślowski, Pier Paolo Pasolini and Sharon Hayes.

Kevin Jerome Everson is an artist working predominantly in film. He makes shorts and features about the working-class culture of black Americans, particularly in the Midwest and the South, often depicting his hometown of Mansfield. Traversing between visions of labour and leisure, Everson's films often evoke the forces through which communities are formed and through which they sustain themselves, including violence, music, myth, governance and displacement. Everson also teaches a film class at the University of Virginia, and his teaching forms an important part of his practice.

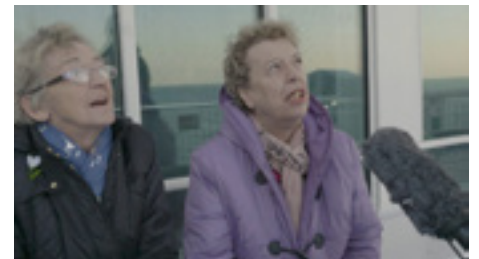
Mansfield, Ohio, USA (the artist's hometown) is a place of multiple reported UFO sightings. In IFO, firsthand accounts are evoked through memory and report, while abstract imagery interweaves with depictions of suburban youths looking up into the sky. The poetic proximity of the film's documentary and sci-fi elements takes shape in the youths' silent acts of raising arms in a striking gesture of surrender.

Inas Halabi is a Palestinian artist based between Palestine and the Netherlands. She works primarily with film and archival material to examine historical and political narratives of national identity, collective memory, and myth-making. Her practice merges observation with site specific research and is concerned with how social and political forms of power are manifested.

Like a String of Beads tells a story of a family of nine siblings who live in the village of Ibilin in northern Palestine. Family ties are expressed through nomenclature, with each given the name of an animal as symbolic protection from harm. This naming gives the viewer an oblique way into a reality of extended warfare which is not overtly tangible in the film; instead, it casts a spell on the patterns and textures of daily life. The film weaves a magical realist tale, tracing the mythological while simultaneously portraying the quotidian aspects of the siblings' lives.



Still from Inas Halabi - Like a String of Beads



Still from Nick Thomas and Sophie Bates - Nordzee/North Sea

WET LOUNGE #5

Our fifth event will take place on 14th February 2020, also at TENT.
Save the date!

WET Lounge is supported by the Subsidie Visuele Kunsten from Gemeente Rotterdam, and by TENT Rotterdam.