

Call for Papers

Refugee Filmmaking

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The challenge of the global collapse into conflict and authoritarianism is stark, and the work of refugee filmmakers, documentarists and of witnesses, and indeed those who use scholarship to draw attention to their efforts, is serious and important at this time. In this project, a curated collection of essays, films and reviews, we seek to question the nature and extent of refugee filmmaking. What is its history and where are the precedents in earlier periods of massive mobility and displacement? Who counts as a refugee filmmaker and what are the characteristics of intent and aesthetic approach that characterise his / her work? Where are the boundaries drawn or understood between witness, the immediate documentation of experience, and visual note-taking on the one hand, and the development of a cinematic poesis or dramatic narrative structure, of refugee experience, on the other? How and on what grounds – for example – are we to judge and compare the samizdat filmmaking of an exiled journalist and poet against the storytelling of a director working in an established system with a production team and distribution system in hand? Or, is such distinction invidious and irrelevant to the quality of narration and image? Those of refugee background will often say that their stories are personal and that their status as refugees should not be a life sentence of self-display for the curiosity of others. Post-WW2 historians have also noted that survivor, perpetrator and victim guilt and trauma is inherited across generations, whilst the prison of complicity and silence can enshroud perpetrators of violence and those close to them. Indeed, in civil war, who is not close to the violence and how few are not at once both perpetrator and victim? In situations where elected democratic governments and elected autocracies alike support violence with weaponry and military intervention, who is not complicit? Respecting the protective silences of those still proximate to their own trauma, whilst revealing one's own story or the structural conditions in which refugees are created, embraced or abandoned, is a conundrum and a thematic we hope to explore in this issue of *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*.

Call for Papers and Film Essays:

1) Academic Papers

The main section of the collection will consist of academic papers covering a) the history of refugee filmmaking as pertains to current day questions and practices; b) ethics and

philosophical protocols in filmmaking about refugees and refugee experience; c) the poetics, sounds and narratives of refugee filmmaking; d) the relationship between witness, activism, drama and documentary in refugee filmmaking and e) the politics of intervention and assisted filmmaking as research practice.

Potential contributors are invited to submit a 300-word abstract and a 200-word biographical note by 15 May 2018 to the Issue Editors at Stdonald@lincoln.ac.uk. Authors will be notified by 7 June 2018. Following acceptance, completed articles of 5,500–6,500 words, adhering to *Alphaville* Guidelines (MLA 8th edition and House Style), will be due by 30 September 2018.

2) Dossiers: Contemporary Filmmakers

- a. Dossier One. *Refugee Filmmakers: Statements of Intent*. In this section we will invite and include short essays (500-1500 words) accompanying *film essays* (3–7 mins – details to be discussed in line with *Alphaville* guidelines) *by or with contemporary refugee filmmakers or those making films about refugee experience*. We will be particularly interested in a) films made by women with recent or current refugee experience, or women filmmakers looking back on the refugee experience; b) films made by professional filmmakers whose work has been reformulated through the experience of conflict and exile.
Contact: Stdonald@lincoln.ac.uk (deadline 15 May as above)
- b. Dossier Two. (Curated by Omid Tofighian) A special collection of writings and reviews (1,500 words per contribution and up to 5 contributions plus a possible film-essay as above) concerning the Offshore Detention experience and the response by Behrouz Boochani, with particular reference to his 2017 film, *Chauka, Please Tell Us the Time*. The dossier is already developed but please contact Dr Tofighian if you have a particular idea for his consideration. Contact: Omid.Tofighian@sydney.edu.au and cc'ing StDonald@lincoln.ac.uk

3) Reviews and Reports section

Potential contributors are invited to contact the *Alphaville* Reviews Editor at reviews.alphaville@gmail.com with ideas for book reviews and reports on recent events (conferences, festivals, exhibitions) on the themes of the Issue. Commissioned submissions in MLA 8th edition and *Alphaville* style will be due by the end of September 2019 at the latest. Reviews and reports should be 1,500–2,500 words in length and should be original, unpublished in print or electronically, and not under consideration elsewhere.