

## Impact case study (REF3)

<b>Institution:</b> Sheffield Hallam University		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> UOA32 Art & Design: History, Practice & Theory		
<b>Title of case study:</b> <i>From Scotland With Love: a cultural touchstone, enriching lives in diverse communities</i>		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> June 2013 – June 2014		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b> Virginia Heath	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b> Professor of Film	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b> February 1996 - present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> July 2014 to December 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		

## 1. Summary of the impact

The BAFTA-nominated documentary *From Scotland With Love*, commissioned for the 2014 Commonwealth Games, has become a key touchstone of Scottish cultural identity with over 85 cinema and 10 BBC screenings. Cited as ‘a new kind of history’, the film is engaging diverse audiences: the geographically marginalized; older communities; school children; new migrants; and the Scottish diaspora. The film is used in hospitals and care homes to benefit the mental health of people living with dementia and is acknowledged with providing access to a powerful “emotional memory” of lived experience. *From Scotland With Love* is cited by the Scottish Moving Image Archive as their ‘go to’ educational tool for opening up public access and cultural participation. The film is disrupting traditional film/music distribution models and creating a transferrable methodology for new films.



## 2. Underpinning research

Heath’s research enquiry underpinning *From Scotland With Love* focused on how to use cinema as a research tool, specifically constructed archive film with original music scoring, in order to investigate questions of national identity, memory and culture. Commissioned by Creative Scotland, it was one of several projects specifically created to engage the Scottish public with questions of cultural identity in 2014, the year of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games and Independence Referendum (R1). Further funding was obtained from BBC Scotland (R5), and a collaborative partnership was formed with the National Library of Scotland Moving Image Archive (NLSMIA) with the aim of creating a landmark film to showcase their extensive archive to the public in this historic year (R2).

Heath’s research methods developed out of her past practice of repositioning and remixing historical archive footage to create new meaning in her documentary films. For example, in her documentary about South African Jazz, ‘Songs from the Golden City’ (1996) (R3), voice over narration from a white colonial perspective was stripped away to enable images of black musicians to be seen in a fresh narrative context. The process of making ‘From Scotland With Love’ drew on this method but presented a new challenge in that the entire 75’ feature film was created purely from archive images, music and sound design. As film director, Heath decided to exclude any narration so that visual images of ordinary Scottish people’s lives, woven together with music,

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would create an immersive cinematic space allowing audiences to bring their own memories to this poetic investigation of the past (R2)

Primary research was done during multiple visits to NLSMIA over a four-month period, viewing over 500 archive films: from personal family archives, to 'official' government documentaries, to protest films, to advertisements, to B movie fiction films. Over 4000 images were selected as source material and arranged thematically in the edit room, using the analogue tool of the Post-it Note. The film was structured according to the big themes of 20<sup>th</sup> century Scotland - community, love, loss, resistance, war, emigration, work and leisure - rather than by chronology or location. There was a focus on revealing the stories of ordinary working people (no politicians or celebrities), and particularly women's hidden experience, in a kind of "poetic history from below" (R4).

The research approach used was to devise an iterative method of 'writing' the film involving Heath (Project Lead) researching and constructing archive sequences in close collaboration with the music composer (King Creosote) and sound designer, so both processes shaped and affected the creation of the other. (R4) Exchanging rough sketches that became more and more refined, the visual editing and musical composition became a dynamic, interactive process. For example, a key image of girls doing a flapper dance on the beach inspired the composer to devise the jazz tempo of 'Largs', and evocative images of fisher-lassies inspired 'Cargill', a love song capturing the life of a fishing port from a female perspective. It was agreed that the song's lyrics, inflected with Scots language, needed to work at an oblique angle to the visuals, so music would add another layer of meaning and dimension to the images. The sound design was specially recorded to create "in between spaces" where the images meld with sound atmospheres, leaving a space for reflection. The old industrial sounds, the banter of ship workers, fishermen, women canteen workers and children playing were subtly painted in the silences, so the half-heard voices echo the sometimes ethereal images of past lives (R4).

During editing, Heath used the analytical discipline of dramaturgy, creating an 'Emotional Temperature Map' to shape the progression of themes, moods and feelings needed to create a 75' immersive cinematic journey for an audience. The aim was to maximize engagement with the grainy, flickering, characters in the footage, their struggles, hopes and dreams. As both independent film and music industries face major challenges from online piracy, the research also created ways to join forces with Domino (Record Label) to access audiences directly via multiple platforms: live performance events; cinema and television screenings; home entertainment (DVD and Online); vinyl, CD and digital music formats (R6). The iterative research process was captured in a 40 mins 'Making Of' documentary, 'Dreaming Without Sleeping', screened on BBC Scotland 9/5/2020 (R4).

### 3. References to the research

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*From Scotland With Love* is submitted in REF2 for REF2021. FSWL's funding followed rigorous commissioning processes by Creative Scotland and BBC Scotland. FSWL has frequently been selected for screenings at internationally significant venues and festivals.

- R1. World Premiere Screening of *From Scotland With Love* plus live performance of the score at the 2014 Commonwealth Games Cultural Festival.
- R2. BAFTA Nominated Film with soundtrack: Vimeo link to Prof Virginia Heath '[From Scotland With Love](#)' Feature Documentary film (available at Vimeo, [Text removed for publication])
- R3. '[Songs from the Golden City](#)' Documentary: previous example of re-positioning archive (available at Vimeo)
- R4. The 'Making of' FSWL 38 min documentary: "[Dreaming Without Sleeping](#)" screened on BBC Scotland on 9/5/2020: - [Text removed for publication]
- R5. [BBC Official Web Page for From Scotland With Love](#) - with list of screenings
- R6. Domino Recording Company [Youtube Channel FSWL Official Videos](#)

### 4. Details of the impact

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FSWL had its World Premiere Screening with a live performance of the score to an international audience for the 2014 Commonwealth Games Cultural Festival in Glasgow (R1). BAFTA

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nominated for Best Single Documentary (2014), the film has been released theatrically in over 60 UK venues with audiences of over 27,000; performed live at the Edinburgh International Festival, Barbican, Celtic Connections (E2); and received 10 BBC transmissions reaching around one million viewers to date (R5). The film has reached an international audience via film festivals including Vancouver; Hot Docs Cinema, Toronto; Dublin; Chicago; Buenos Aires; New Zealand; Lorient; Stockholm; The Netherlands, and Hanoi, Vietnam (R4). It was described in the *Radio Times* (E2) as ‘a new kind of history programme: immersive, lyrical and, in its way, beautiful’ and by *The Herald*: ‘Brilliantly evokes the flavour of 20<sup>th</sup> century Scotland (E2). Heath’s creative approach to telling the collective stories of ordinary people has led diverse audiences to actively engage with the film, creating a wide range of beneficiaries and impact in numerous different areas.

### Audience engagement, identity, culture & memory

When *FSWL* premiered at the 2014 Commonwealth Games Cultural Festival (R1), its cinematic use of archive and music encouraged its audiences to reflect on their 20<sup>th</sup> century past and interrogate contemporary questions of Scottish national and cultural identity (E1). The Scottish Culture Secretary tweeted the live performance was “simply outstanding” (E2). This use of ‘cinema as research tool’, engaging audiences in debate and discussion, deepened as *FSWL* went on the ‘To See Ourselves’ tour of culturally-defining Scottish films prior to the 2014 Independence Referendum. “What better way to warm up for the referendum than a season of films exploring, if not shaping, Scottish Identity?” *The Guardian* (E3). From city cinemas to remote community halls, the tour enabled audiences in over 20 Scottish regions from The Borders to the Highlands and Islands to participate in vital discussions about what it meant to be Scottish at this crucial time (E3). For example, in the Glenelg Community Centre (Highlands), the screening inspired an exhibition of photos and letters created by school children who interviewed their grandparents, collecting stories reflecting their own history (E3). To date the film has reached cinema audiences of over 27,000 in 60 different UK venues (E3) and feedback can be found on the *FSWL* Facebook page such as: “It was a real privilege to see how people lived and worked...they engaged much more in shared activities, and they all looked happy when racing out of work” (E2) “So good it should be part of the National Curriculum in Scotland.”

*FSWL*’s significance as a cultural artefact is demonstrated by screenings at culturally-defining events, including the opening of the new Forth Road Bridge by Queen Elizabeth II (August 2017); the National Museum of Scotland’s ‘Rip It Up’ exhibition (November 2018) on the history of Scottish popular music (E3) and repeated BBC screenings to mark Hogmanay or Burns Night (R5). *FSWL* has had international cultural reach via festivals to the Scottish diaspora in the US, Canada and New Zealand. For example, the NZ International Film Festival Director toured the film to six NZ cities in 2015, reaching audiences of over 3000: “I was moved and impressed by the potent combination of archival film and music and there are many more New Zealanders with Scottish heritage who will respond in similar fashion” (E4). When the film screened at Hot Docs Bloor cinema in Toronto (2016), comments posted on the *FSWL* Facebook page included: “Just saw this movie and absolutely loved it. Superb scenes and soundtrack. Thanks for paying homage to my fellow Scots in this way” (E4). In audience Q&As and social media comments, e.g. Domino YouTube channel with 591,000 views (R6), it is evident that the film’s reflection of ordinary people’s lives, rather than romantic “biscuit-tin-Scots” clichés, struck a chord: “Everyone at that time didn’t care what they looked like, what they wore or how much money they had, as long as they had each other” / “What a beautiful piece of film - making me feel all nostalgic even though I am not from Glasgow nor was I even born at that time!” (E2)

### Impacts on Education

The Education and Outreach team at NLSMIA describe the film as their go to “showcase for the emotive power of archive materials in increasing cultural understanding”. (E5) The film is used educationally with a wide range of age groups. Up to March 2020 the film was referenced at 56 Learning events at NLSMIA Kelvin Hall Access Centre, reaching 1225 participants. The ‘Film Detectives’ workshop uses the *Bluebell Cockleshell* sequence with school children to introduce them to a range of archive material and how films can be reused and remixed; the *Miserable Strangers* Emigration sequence shows how film and music can be used in an emotive way; and the ‘One Night Only’ dance sequence is used with College and University students learning the skills of Archive Research, Film Licensing and Curation. The film is also used to introduce Scottish

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culture and traditions to new migrants and asylum seekers “in a very light touch way” (Outreach Officer) (E5). The deliberate lack of dialogue ensures insights into Scottish culture and tradition, and the emotive aspects of the film are still accessible to those who do not yet have the vocabulary to express or discuss.

*FSWL* was also used by the Edinburgh International Festival’s Outreach Team in 2015 to inspire students from a deprived school in Edinburgh to make a film reflecting their own community, entitled *From Castlebrae With Love* (E5). This was screened at the EIF in relation to developing young talent, before *FSWL* screenings.

In 2017 Creative Scotland and Scottish Film Education obtained an educational license to use *FSWL* on the learning platform ‘Scotland on Screen’. A team of teachers, creative film practitioners from Creative Scotland, Scottish Film Education and NLSMIA collaborated to devise a series of creative activities to accompany the film clips. Up to December 2020 the resource was accessed 87,580 times with 38,060 sessions by users. (E6)

And now, in December 2020, a new Educational Resource ‘Raising Literacy through Scotland’s Film Archive’ is being launched for use in schools by NLSMIA, ‘Into Film Scotland’ (backed by the British Film Institute) and ‘Scotland on Screen.’ (E6). The resource explores issues of identity, heritage, culture, history and storytelling through archive sequences from *From Scotland With Love*. It is designed for teachers and young people to critically engage with their history and culture, appreciate the cultural value of archive, raise film literacy and, crucially, develop the skills to use film as an expressive medium to creatively represent their own communities. “The fact that it is a Scottish resource cannot be underestimated! The resource is exactly how the Curriculum for Excellence intended learners to meet the experiences and outcomes because it is relevant, Scottish, engaging, immersive and interdisciplinary. The film is tender and carefully curated and from this the children will pick up that our past should be cherished and can be used by them to tell their own story (Into Film Education Ambassador) “I like that is all Scotland because it is where we are from and it could be our family members in that crowd” (comment from pupil (E6)) Testing the resource has proved successful: “It’s clear that the children are learning that these narratives ARE constructed – by someone for a reason. That is a hugely valuable piece of knowledge, you can actually see the penny drop with some children as they switch from being passive absorbers of moving image to actively thinking...this has been made by someone to make me feel something.” (Into Film Education Ambassador) (E6)

#### Impacts on Mental Health and Dementia

A partnership between Screen Memories funded by the Life Changes Trust (a charity supporting people living with dementia), Alzheimer Scotland and the NHS has been recreating the cinema experience for people living with dementia, screening *FSWL* in over 70 Care Homes, Community Centres and Hospital Wards. In some cases, spectacular recall has left staff and family delighted: “It is a joy for staff to behold, driving us to ensure we are doing all we can for patients in acute hospital settings”. (Screen Memories report E7) *FSWL*’s non-dialogue, music and archive approach is cited as particularly conducive to recollection of personal memories, creating a sense of community and inter-generational sharing of experiences. Glasgow Film Festival 2020’s ‘Cinema For All’ strand programmed two ‘Movie Memories’ dementia-friendly screenings of *FSWL*. (E7) In Q&As, dementia campaigner, Agnes Hosten MBE, described viewing the film as ‘like dancing through time’, evoking a powerful “emotional memory” of lived experience. *FSWL* also inspired a community group with mental health issues in Govan to use film and music to represent their own community life, presented alongside a screening of *FSWL* with Q&A at the Scottish Mental Health Film Festival 2015 (E7).

#### Preservation of Cultural Heritage & Increased Access to Archives

In a campaigning film (E8) the Head of Scottish Moving Image Archive states that *FSWL* is one of the best projects she has worked on. Heath was interviewed about the value of preserving archives for cultural heritage and public access, along with prominent members of Scotland’s contemporary cultural scene such as Kirsty Wark, Brian Cox, Ian Rankin, Bill Paterson. *FSWL* inspired a British Council initiative in Hanoi, Vietnam, (E4) leading to supporting FAMLAB film projects delving into Vietnam’s cultural heritage. British Council Vietnam commented that *FSWL* opened up “new ways

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of thinking and new approaches towards both archival footage and the symbiosis between film and music.” (E4)

### Impact on Film Making & Film Industry – Disruptive marketing and distribution

The non-dialogue, music and archive approach for reflecting a nation’s history and identity has been recognized as a useful cinematic methodology. The underlying rights to this format have been licensed to a Norwegian company to produce *From Norway With Love* (License signed, June 2019). Similarly, *We Are All Migrants*, a film looking at European migration via the EU Screen Archive Portal, also used the non-dialogue, archive and music format as a good method for bridging linguistic and cultural barriers (E9).

*FSWL* was showcased at "This Way Up", Conferences for innovation in film exhibition (2015 & 2016), in the context of a crisis in cinema attendance posed by SVODS, Netflix et al (and online piracy). *FSWL* was presented as a cutting-edge example of innovative film exhibition (E10) due to successfully targeting niche audiences through a pioneering approach to marketing the film simultaneously through cinemas, live events, television and DVD, along with Domino Recording. Publicizing the film alongside the music soundtrack (CD, Vinyl and download) with poster campaigns, Q&As and live performances achieved sales of over 20,000 DVDs in a very challenging market for independent film. The *FSWL* record went to no 1 in the Official Record Store Charts in July 2014 and was performed live with the film at the BBC6 Music Festival (E3). This multi-platform approach was successfully repeated in March 2020 when a new tour of the film and live performance of the score sold out the Barbican and prestigious venues around Scotland to standing ovations, reaching audiences of over 10,000.

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

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- E1. [Evaluation of Glasgow 2014 Cultural Programme for the Commonwealth Games](#). *FSWL* clip is at 09.14 minutes in 'A celebration of the 2014 Glasgow Cultural Programme'.
- E2. **BAFTA Nomination, Film Reviews & Social Media comments:** PDF file of reviews, including for example Mark Braxton, [Radio Times Review](#): 'a new kind of history'.
- E3. **UK Cinema & Live Events:** corroborates, eg. [Live Performance at Edinburgh International Festival Aug. 2015](#) *To See Ourselves* Tour; Glenelg; and Park Circus Distribution to over 60 venues
- E4. **International Cinema & Live Events:** corroboration of screenings, including [Toronto Hot Docs Cinema](#), New Zealand IFF; British Council in Hanoi initiative.
- E5. **Education:** NLSMIA Outreach & EIF Outreach, eg. [From Castlebrae With Love](#)
- E6. **Educational Resources:** [Scotland on Screen](#) & Into Film Scotland
- E7. **Mental Health:** Corroboration of use in care homes, community centres etc (by Screen Memories); and dementia friendly cinema screenings (Movie Memories)
- E8. **Cultural heritage and archives:** corroborates [Campaign to support National Library of Scotland Moving Image Archive](#). *FSWL* at 4'06" -
- E9. **Transferable Methodology:** '[We Are All Migrants](#)' – 20 min music/archive documentary, [Text removed for publication]
- E10. **Disruptive Film and Music Distribution:** 'Remixing It' Event '[This Way Up](#)' 2016 + Music collaboration [Youtube Channel FSWL Official Videos](#)