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| Submission Form | |
| **Contributor’s name:** | ALISTAIR OLDHAM |
| **Contributor’s email:** | Alistair.Oldham@uwe.ac.uk |
| **Institution:** | University of the West of England, Bristol |
| **Details for publication:** | **Author/s: Alistair Oldham**  **Format: Online Gallery**  **Running Time: 90 mins** |
| **Vimeo URL or website:** | [www.wreckedontheintertidalzone.co.uk](http://www.wreckedontheintertidalzone.co.uk) |
| **Vimeo Password:** |  |
| **Permission:**  *Please refer to the [Vimeo compression guidelines](https://vimeo.com/help/compression) and ensure your video is downloadable.* | ximage2.png**I have made the film downloadable for review, future publication and archiving.**  ximage11.png**I give permission for you to embed the above URL in the Screenworks.org.uk website.**  ximage13.png**I take responsibility for ensuring the work adheres to [UK copyright guidelines.](https://www.gov.uk/topic/intellectual-property/copyright)** |

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| **Criteria**   * What criteria would you suggest that reviewers use in order to assess the research (these might most easily be derived from the initial research questions)? |
| How does the project explore the documentation of a multi-layered investigative arts project, both in terms of its methods and its outcome ? |
| **Viewing Conditions**   * Please indicate if there are any specific viewing conditions you would like the work to be seen in i.e. screen resolution, size of image, etc., etc.: |
| The work has been designed as an online video gallery of fifteen short films (that can be viewed on a computer, mobile phone or tablet ), but elements of the work have also been viewed as a gallery installation, as a presentation to a live audience and individual films have been shown at film festivals and conferences. The best way into the work is probably to watch the short film “Introduction : Wrecked on the Intertidal Zone”, followed by the sequence of films suggested in the statement below. |
| **Review Responses**  Review responses are likely to fall into the following categories :   1. Accept work and statement for DVD and web publication. 2. Accept work but require revision of statement. 3. Invite resubmission with re edit of work and/or statement. 4. Reject both work and statement.   **Formative and Summative Responses**  Clearly the question of re-editing finished work for many researchers will not be possible – e.g. where film prints have been struck or online edits locked off. However in some cases researchers may want formative peer review at ‘rough cut stage’.  In the case of e.g. smaller scale digital productions it may be possible to re-edit the work in order to resubmit.  Please tick (or underline) whether you would like a image6.pngformative or image5.png summative response.  The video work is complete but at the point of submission for the deadline, the text is only likely to be a rough draft. |

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| Supporting Research Statement  (Expand text boxes as necessary, but limit yourself to a maximum of 2000 words long)  We are looking for evidence of Originality, Significance and Rigour and “contribution to new knowledge and understanding” in your chosen field of practice. |
| **Research Questions**   * Be as specific as you can in articulating what you were trying to achieve. * What were your starting points? * How do these questions relate to the field as a whole? |
| My starting point was being invited by the artists YOHA and arts organisation Arts Catalyst to document the project, “Wrecked on the Intertidal Zone”, an investigative arts project into the environmental destruction of the Thames Estuary. The work was funded with a £2000 grant from London based Arts Catalyst and was not part of any doctoral or university funded research programme.  As I began to research the project in preproduction, I realised that a conventional documentary narrative (which I am accustomed to as a filmmaker) was unlikely to work, so I had to think of new and different approaches to production, in order to find a form and a process that would adequately represent the complexity of the overriding arts project and the landscape in which it was embedded. The research question that I used to define this approach, was how to best use the documentary form to represent a multilayered investigative arts project.  The arts project itself deals directly with the Anthropocene, particularly in the central piece “Graveyard of Lost Species”, which documents the excavation of a forty foot, twelve ton cockle fishing boat out of the Essex mud, and turning it into an ‘anti-monument’ to all the lost species and ways of life of the Thames Estuary ( please see ‘Refloating the Souvenir’, ‘Epitaphs of the Common Mud’, ‘Anti-Monument’ and ‘Final Resting Place’). Other aspects of the project also document the impact of the Anthropocene on the Thames Estuary, through the impact of industrialisation on the environment and the communities that it has traditionally supported, for example through rising water temperature, deep water dredging, food scarcity, species extinction and loss of livelihood.  My own process of investigation at the early stage of the project was to discover the most appropriate method of documentation and to design a screen format to most effectively represent it. An open ended methodology was important, to accommodate the complexity of the arts project itself, which involved multiple layers of exploration into local community, landscape, boats, tides, marshes, species extinction, land contamination, tactical media, citizen science and anti-monuments, which would not all together tidily fit into a conventional linear narrative. The emerging form of the gallery also seemed to be the best way to represent the amorphous nature of the Thames Estuary itself, with its concurrent themes of flows, currents and ideas that seep across the boundaries of the different films. |
| **Context**   * What work already exists in the relevant fields of practice? * How do you expect to be able to advance on work that already exists? * How does this work fit into your own personal research trajectory? * Is it part of a body of work? * Please include a bibliography / filmography at the end. |
| The work fits into my own personal research (or filmmaking practice) in terms of exploring the relationship of environmental sustainability and creative process, adding to an ongoing body of work that deals with these areas : the films The Bristol Bike Project (2011), Bonnington Square (2012) and The Gardens of St George (2014) all deal with environmental sustainability, and Invisible Airs (2013) and Drawing on Topolski (2015) both document the work of artists’ creative process. “Wrecked on the Intertidal Zone” adds to that body of work by combining those themes, while simultaneously moving toward a more interactive form.  This project was not funded as research and it was not part of any doctoral or post doctoral activity, so I had no particular obligation to present a literature review before embarking on production. However, in the course of my own production research I revisited interactive documentaries such as Out my Window (Cizek, 2016), Bear 71 ( Allison, 2012) and Journey to the End of Coal (Bollendorff & Segretin, 2008), as well as referring to the theoretical positioning of interactive documentary from the i-Docs conference, held at the Watershed, Bristol and the recent edited collection “i-Docs : the Evolving Practices of Documentary”. Another source of inspiration has been the film and installation work of John Akomfrah, particularly for the qualities of creative montage that his work displays, deploying fragmented imagery across multiple screens to create different possible readings and interpretations. Also, since the project's completion, a reviewer has directed me to the short film Ain’t Got No Fear (Karikis, 2016), which is an interesting reference in terms of adopting a participatory and performed response to a similarly post industrial estuary landscape.  These various influences led me to consider strategies of how to best represent meaning that emerges from a distinct geographical space, how to editorially map across different subjects and themes, how to engage different collaborative voices within the production of one documentary project, and how to address considerations of audience that depart from conventional linear story telling. I also researched previous examples of work from both YOHA and the Critical Art Ensemble, to understand some of the principles of tactical media, the notion of the technical object, and of the idea of the anti-monument as a means of cultural resistance.  BIBLIOGRAPHY  Aston.J, Gaudenzi.S, Rose.M (2017) : i-Docs, The Evolving Practices of Interactive Documentary. Wallflower Press.  Aston.J, Gaudenzi.S (2012) : Interactive documentary : setting the field. In : Studies in Documentary Film. Vol.6 Issue 2.  Critical Art Ensemble (2001) : Digital Resistance, Explorations in Tactical Media. New York, Autonomedia.  Lichtenstein.R (2016) Estuary : Out From London to the Sea. Hamish Hamilton.  FILMOGRAPHY / Installations and Interactive Documentaries.  Vertigo Sea (2016) dir. John Akomfrah. Smoking Dog Films.  Purple (2017) dir. John Akomfrah. Smoking Dog Films.  Out My Window (2010) dir. Katerina Cizek. National Film Board of Canada.  Bear 71 (2012) dir. Leanne Allison. National Film Board of Canada.  Journey to the End of Coal (2008) dir. Samuel Bollendorff & Abel Segretin. Honkytonk Films.  Evil Media Distribution Centre (2013) dir. Graham Harwood & Matsuko Yokokoji.  Ain’t Got No Fear (2016) dir. Mikhail Karikis |
| **Methods**   * Which disciplinary fields do your methods derive from (e.g. Fine Art, Graphics, Industrial TV production , Video art, Experience Design etc., etc.)? |
| The primary methods of the project derive from conventional documentary filmmaking but also from some of the conventions of interactive documentary. The project has also evolved from observing the work of undergraduate students on the multiplatform documentary module that I teach at UWE, Bristol, where filmmaking is combined with an interactive approach to documentary production. In recent years this has involved the students working with Klynt software to create fluid and non linear approaches to documentary narrative.  The work has also adopted new methods in its collaboration with other artists and filmmakers, with footage coming from a range of different filmed sources. Some of the films were produced and directed by James Ravinet, a postgraduate student from the Royal College of Art, (“Epitaphs of the Common Mud” and the sequence of ‘Conversation” films with local historian and author Rachel Lichtenstein), some of the footage was shot by Graham Harwood and Fran Gallardo (a Phd student from Kings College, London), and other films were made with UWE Filmmaking graduates, Jim Smith and Zander Mavor. I personally took on the role of overall producer and director, designing the interface and arranging the content across the fifteen different films, including directing individual sequences and conducting interviews. Some footage was shot entirely on GoPro cameras by people who would not describe themselves as filmmakers. Some of the most interesting sequences were shot in this way, with cameras mounted on paddles, on the bow of a boat, and on top of someone’s head, in situations where it wasn’t even envisaged to end up being in a film (eg the films “Refloating the Souvenir”, Foraging and Hadley Ray). This principle of adopting a participatory approach to production was partly inspired by previously viewed collaborative interactive work such as ‘Out of my Window.’  A lot of the method of the project was collating and gathering footage together in this way from disparate sources, and then adding to it and shaping it together into individual films with a coherent and overarching editorial strategy, that represented the broader concerns of the “Wrecked on the Intertidal Zone” project. This selection and arrangement of the material, deciding what stories to follow and then deciding how to best organise them in relation to each other, was a core element of the project’s design. The gallery’s organisation is built around the central project ‘The Graveyard of Lost Species’, and this forms the narrative spine of the material, which can be followed through the films ‘Refloating the Souvenir’, ‘Final Mud Day’, ‘Epitaphs of the Common Mud’,’Anti-Monument’ and ‘Final Resting Place’. But the wider themes of the overall project are also picked up and expanded on in the Introduction window, and in the edited interview sequences with local author Rachel Lichtenstein, whose book ‘Estuary’ features two chapters on Wrecked on the Intertidal Zone, and who comes to act as a very useful mediator of some of the more complex ideas in the project overall. |
| **Outcomes**   * What might other practitioners in the field learn from the work? |
| The gallery format has enabled a different means of representing the sense of place of the Thames Estuary, not just in the very specific location photography of ‘Hadley Ray’ and ‘Canvey Island’, but also in the way in which a deeper mapping of landscape emerges across the different spaces of the films, for example through the walking sequences of ‘Foraging’,’Hadley Ray’ and ‘Citizen Science’, and in the edited visual sequences of the interview sections and ‘Thames Estuary’. The ‘open ended methodology’ referred to earlier has in this way allowed a deeper texture of space to emerge through the films, and often from the nonhuman perspective of GoPro cameras, which manage to capture something of the intertidal zone of the Thames Estuary, a space without real edges or boundaries, and where stories and ideas can seep across the different elements of the gallery space.  A further outcome of the project is to show that the documentation of an arts project like this, can do much more than just record its process, and can actually add discursive value and reflection to the project’s original activity. So although themes that relate to the Anthropocene such as the impact of industrialisation, environmental damage to the Thames Estuary and species extinction are all central to the arts project itself, their expansion through interview, voiceover and filmed montage and juxtaposition is given added value in the interactive documentary. The documentary has given the artists space to speak about a range of more detailed issues related to the Anthropocene (for example, the shipping industry, necro-capitalism, and the post industrial landscape) that would otherwise remain unrecorded in the arts project by itself. Some of the films, such as ‘Hadley Ray’, ‘Canvey Island’ and ‘Thames Estuary’ are not even part of the original arts project, but have been included in the interactive documentary to substantiate and expand on it, and in this way the documentary project can be argued to have added additional layers of meaning to the arts project itself, so that the documentary and the arts project start to feed off each other, rather than one being simply the record of the other.  Practitioners in other research disciplines might also gain inspiration from the possibility of breaking a subject down into multiple strands in terms of its filmic representation, rather than being tied to a more conventional linear narrative . This online gallery based approach has been designed to represent an investigative arts project, but the same model could be applied to similar explorations that deal with historic or geographic representation, where the act of documentation can offer added value beyond the simple recording of process. In this respect, the medium of film and then also of interactive documentary can enable a much more expansive investigation of a project’s principal themes, in this case locating the investigative arts project very much into the environment from which it has evolved. Film can take you out into the field in a way that other mediums might struggle to do. And the format of the interactive gallery can then expand that field of vision even further, allowing a variety of viewpoints and perspectives much in the same way as you might experience being in an actual landscape. |
| **Dissemination**   * How was the work funded? * Where has the work been shown?  Was this in competition? * Has it been recognised through curatorial selection, distribution, festival exhibition, prizes or awards?  Are there any reviews? * What other dissemination has there been (e.g. conference presentations, website documentation, etc.)? |
| Since completion the work has been shown in different contexts, particularly in galleries, conferences and festivals, as well as online, where it can be viewed on smartphones and tablets, as well as on a computer.  Individual films have screened at the Crossroads of Art & Science conference (Hermitage, St Petersburg), the Voices from the Waters Film Festival (Bangalore, India), the Ostrava Environmental Film Festival in the Czech Republic, at the large outdoor screen of the Focal gallery (University of Essex, Southend), and at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences in Sydney, Australia. The work has also been shown as a gallery installation at the launch of Arts Catalyst’s Centre for Art, Science & Technology (Kings Cross, London) in an exhibition called ‘Notes from the Field : Commoning Practices in Art and Science’ , as a conference presentation at the annual NAHEMI Talking Shop conference at the London College of Communication, and most recently at the i-Docs conference at the Watershed, Bristol (March 2018), and it is also due to be presented at the Avanca Film Conference in Portugal (July 2018).  These varied forms of dissemination have enabled the work to be tested out and received in different ways, for example by a more autonomous audience led navigation in an installation or gallery based setting, compared to being guided through the material in a conference setting, or the more traditional narrative form of conventional film festival screenings. The Arts Catalyst installation and the Hermitage screening have both enabled the work to be experienced in the specific context of the convergent fields of Arts and Science. These differing contexts of distribution have in themselves been an unexpected outcome of the project’s design and I would like to explore further how and where audiences might experience the work. As previously mentioned in the Outcomes section, the dissemination of the project into various settings, is enabling me to gain more insight into my own practice, particularly as a traditional filmmaker trying out a different way of working for the first time. |
| **Impact**   * what demonstrable contribution has your practice made to the economy, society, culture, national security, public policy or services, health, the environment, or quality of life, beyond contributions to academia. |
| Screenings (for example at the Voices from the Waters Festival in Bangalore, at the Ostrava Environmental Film festival in the Czech Republic, and at the Museum of Arts and Applied Sciences in Sydney ) and conferences ( for example at i-Docs, at the Focal Point Gallery in Southend, at the Arts Catalyst gallery, and at the Crossroads of Art and Science conference in St Petersburg) have facilitated discussions around issues of environmental destruction, particularly in tidal estuary areas. Other screenings, for example at i-Docs and the NAHEMI Talking Shop conference, have opened up discussion about working in the interactive documentary form. The project has also been used for teaching documentary at UWE, Bristol and on the MA Digital Cultures course at Goldsmiths College London. |
| **Additional Information**  Please note that I have not uploaded the work onto Vimeo, as that platform cannot properly accommodate this kind of gallery based approach to film distribution.  The work can instead be seen at [www.wreckedontheintertidalzone.co.uk](http://www.wreckedontheintertidalzone.co.uk) |

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| **Submission Check list**:  image8.pngI’ve uploaded my screenwork / video documentation onto Vimeo  image7.pngI’ve included the URL  image10.pngI’ve included the password (where necessary)  image9.pngI’ve completed all sections of the supporting statement  image12.pngI’ve saved this document as lastname\_statement.doc |
| Please save your statement as a word document with the following title structure:  **lastname\_statement.doc** and return by email to: [admin@screenworks.org.uk](mailto:admin@screenworks.org.uk) with “Screenworks Submission” in the subject line. |