



Immediate Release

IWM Contemporary: part of major IWM London relaunch

To mark the start of the First World War Centenary, IWM London is opening new permanent [First World War Galleries](#) that tell the story of the war - how it started, why it continued and its global impact – as well as a dramatic new [Atrium space](#) featuring iconic objects from our collections. Opening as part of this major relaunch, ***IWM Contemporary: Mark Neville*** showcases a new body of work by the artist created in response to the war in Afghanistan.

IWM Contemporary is a programme of contemporary art and photography in response to war and conflict.

IWM Contemporary: Mark Neville

19 July – 25 September 2014

Press View 16 July 2014, 12 – 2pm

Free admission

British artist Mark Neville was commissioned in 2010 as part of a unique collaboration between IWM's Art Commissions Committee and arts organization *firstsite* Colchester, to spend two months with 16 Air Assault brigade in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, as a war artist. Offering a rare insight into modern warfare, Neville was taken out on patrol and allowed to experience the war at an unusual level. Avoiding the conventions of media reporting, Neville filmed and photographed British soldiers and Afghan civilians using a variety of innovative approaches. These included slow motion filming, and the use of a series of backdrops made with resonant images of past wars. On show for the first time at IWM London, Neville's works present an arrestingly direct and yet poetic view of British troops and the Afghan people he encountered.

Neville's show begins with ***Growing up in Helmand***, a photographic series of portraits of Afghan children encountered while out on patrol alongside images of strikingly young looking British soldiers deployed in Helmand. Over 60% of the population in Afghanistan is under-25 and some of the British soldiers serving are undoubtedly still in their late teens, although under-18s are not permitted on operational duty. Both young Afghans and young soldiers alike are growing up in the context of conflict.

The seven photographs on show are: ***Child, Jacket, Slaughtered Goat, Sweets, Painted Nails, Xmas Day, Helmand; Firing Range; On Patrol in Gereshk, 1; On Patrol in Lashkar Gah, 2; On Patrol in Nad Ali, 1; On Patrol in Sangin, Supplies for 2 Scots Regiment.***

The series of films, includes ***Bolan Market*** a silent 6 minute slow-motion film shot from an armoured 'Husky' vehicle as it moved through a market renewed following Taliban withdrawal. Once a heavily-guarded Taliban area and now a neutral zone, Neville has captured Afghanistan on the verge of change. ***7.62mm*** (11 mins) was filmed during the same drive, but creates a timeless quality through the use of

black and white film; the effect disrupted only by the relentless shadow of the vehicle's gun on the ground. In **Backdrops** (9 mins, 46 secs), Neville filmed British soldiers and Afghan civilians performing slow choreographed actions against a series of large backdrops ranging from John Burke's photographs of Britain at war in 19th century Afghanistan to iconic First and Second World War paintings by Paul Nash and John Piper.

The three films on show are: **Bolan Market** (6 mins), **7.62mm** (11 mins), **Backdrops** (9 mins, 46 secs).

About Mark Neville

Artist Mark Neville (born 1966, London), lives and works in London. He works at the intersection of art and documentary, engaging at an extraordinary level with working communities facing difficult circumstances. Neville has had solo exhibitions at The Photographer's Gallery, London (2013), Kuntshaus Essen, Germany (2010), Reg Vardy Gallery (2010), Mount Stuart, Isle of Bute, Scotland (2008), Holden Gallery, Manchester (2006), Dick Institute, Kilmarnock (2006), Hunterian Museum, Glasgow (2006), Street Level Gallery, Glasgow (2006). His work has also featured in group shows at IWM North (2013), The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh USA (2012), Jeu de Paume, Paris (2009), Dean Gallery, Edinburgh (2009), Haus Der Kunst, Munich (2008), Modern Art Oxford (2006), Tate Britain (2004) amongst others. In 2013 Neville was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize by the New York Times for his project 'Here is London', and is currently working towards a solo show at the Alan Cristea Gallery, London opening November 2014.

Quotes

"I am interested in exploring the social function of art, looking at how films and photographs can impact upon the real world; most of my work is made in a collaborative process intended to be of direct, practical benefit to the subject. For me, *Bolan Market* was the most successful piece I made during the commission to Afghanistan. I filmed it as we drove through the market on an armoured vehicle. The slow motion film reveals the complex emotions on the faces of the locals we passed as they reacted to both tank and camera, as well as conveying my own deep sense of unease – each moment those faces gazed at me and the camera seemed extended, prolonged, infinite..."

"I am pleased to be showing my work at IWM London and hope that it will invite and provoke questions and reactions from the audience about what our presence in Afghanistan really means"

Mark Neville

– Ends –

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*Please note, the image database is best viewed on Internet Explorer

Once you are logged in, simply click the IWM London link on the left, and then click IWM Contemporary in the Picture Library section.

For further press information including interview requests and images, please contact:

Rosie Linton, Press Officer: 020 7416 5436 rlinton@iwm.org.uk

Events

Mark Neville: The Image and Experience

13 September 2014, 2.30pm

Artist Mark Neville discusses his work and how his experiences with different working communities have shaped his practice. Starting with 'The Port Glasgow Book Project' and culminating with his experience

as a war artist – including the project featured in *IWM Contemporary: Mark Neville* – this talk will feature screenings of previously unseen works and will give a rare insight into Neville’s methodology and process.

New Art Exhibition

[*Truth and Memory*](#) (19 July 2014 – 8 March 2015) IWM London presents the largest exhibition of British First World War art for almost 100 years. This major retrospective comprises over 120 artworks and will feature the most iconic images to emerge from the First World War, including paintings by Paul Nash, Percy Wyndham Lewis, CRW Nevinson, Stanley Spencer and William Orpen, as well as lesser known, yet significant works, by artists such as Anna Airy, George Clausen and Gilbert Rogers.
Free Admission

Notes to Editors

IWM Contemporary

IWM Contemporary is a programme of exhibitions and events by leading artists and photographers whose work is a response to war and conflict. Upcoming exhibitions include a new film installation by *Jane and Louise Wilson*, commissioned for IWM by Film and Video Umbrella; the Wilson twins explore perspectives on truth and technology during the First World War. A display by *Hew Locke*: will feature new beaded wall drawings and work reflecting on shipping and war at sea. A major artist intervention also by *Hew Locke* takes place on board HMS *Belfast* during summer 2015.

IWM London is **temporarily closed until 19 July 2014** as we transform IWM London. The museum will re-open with the new major exhibition [*Truth and Memory: British Art of the First World War*](#), our brand new [First World War Galleries](#), a [new Atrium](#), new shops and a park-side café.

From 19 July 2014

Open daily from 10am – 6pm (except 24 - 26 December)

IWM London, Lambeth Road, London, SE1 6HZ.

T: 020 7416 5000

iwm.org.uk

IWM

IWM (Imperial War Museums) tells the story of people who have lived, fought and died in conflicts involving Britain and the Commonwealth since the First World War.

Our unique Collections, made up of the everyday and the exceptional, reveal stories of people, places, ideas and events. Using these, we tell vivid personal stories and create powerful physical experiences across our five museums that reflect the realities of war as both a destructive and creative force. We challenge people to look at conflict from different perspectives, enriching their understanding of the causes, course and consequences of war and its impact on people’s lives.

IWM’s five branches attract over 2 million visitors each year. [IWM London](#), our flagship branch, is transforming with new First World War Galleries and a new Atrium with large object displays which will open on 19 July 2014 to mark the Centenary of the First World War. Our other branches are [IWM North](#), housed in an iconic award-winning building designed by Daniel Libeskind; [IWM Duxford](#), a world-renowned aviation museum and Britain’s best preserved wartime airfield; [Churchill War Rooms](#), housed in Churchill’s secret headquarters below Whitehall; and the Second World War cruiser [HMS Belfast](#).

First World War Centenary

2014 - 2018 marks the centenary of the First World War, a landmark anniversary for Britain and the world. IWM will mark the centenary by leading a vibrant, four year



programme of cultural activities across the country, including the opening of brand new First World War Galleries at IWM London in 2014. For more information visit www.1914.org