



Credit: Screen Argyll

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Credit: Glasgow Short Film Festival

**Greetings from Film Hub Scotland! With spring at last approaching, we're gearing up for the launch of our new funding streams in line with the BFI's Screen Culture 2033 strategy.**

At our Exhibitors Day event during Glasgow Film Festival, Film Hub Scotland Manager **Nicola Kettlewood** outlined our various new funding opportunities, several of which have particular relevance to working with younger audiences.

We'll be releasing guidelines for these funds very soon. As Nicola explained, there are two cross-cutting principles underpinning all of our funds: **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion** and **Environmental Sustainability**. There are also four priority outcomes, the first of which states that:

*"Children and young people are empowered to develop their own relationships with a wider range of screen culture."*

The BFI's broadening of its focus to include children as well as young people, recognises the important role that early cinema visits have on the health of the exhibition sector both now and in the future. By engaging with children, families and young people, organisations can introduce new audiences to their work and foster future generations of cinemagoers.

Film Hub Scotland is especially committed to nurturing these young audiences. Our main **Film Exhibition Fund** (with awards of up to £10,000) now welcomes projects that actively engage children and families. The BFI's three-year cycle (as the first section of its broader ten-year strategy) also means that we are now in a position to think longer-term with our support, so members with more established track records are encouraged to discuss with us their proposals for lengthier, sustainable projects.

Meanwhile, we have established a separate fund called **Adventures in Cinema** to specifically stimulate work with younger audiences. With awards of up to £2000, this has been created to boost the number of smaller scale projects engaging children, families and young people and to support members who may be exploring this side of things for the first time.

Finally, we have created an additional scheme called **Distribute**, through which exhibitors across Scotland will be able to access a wider range of films suitable for children and young people. Each year (2023-26) the project will support two programmes of films for children (2 features or 2 programmes of shorts) which will be made available with marketing support and activity resources. We are currently speaking to potential partners to curate the Distribute programmes in 2023-24.

Delivering activities for families and young audiences is an adventure in itself. It requires perseverance, but there can be great rewards in seeing young people discover the magic of cinema and helping parents and other caregivers share in that experience.

Starting out – and continuing – can be daunting, and so we hope that some of the features in this issue of the Gazette can provide inspiration and encouragement. Our interviewee this time (page 3) is **Jen Skinner**, whose work with **Screen Argyll** is a real beacon in the sector.

Spreading the net wider, a section on **Family Programming** (page 6) looks at the work of **Small World Cinema**, which is based in Bromley, South East London, while our feature on **Wildscreen** celebrates the remarkable work of this Bristol-based natural world film festival, which will very shortly be visiting Scotland for its first Roadshow weekend.

And closer to home, we welcome new member **RIG Arts** (page 8) and highlight various education and youth engagement projects being delivered by FHS members across **Ayrshire** (page 9), before rounding things off with a quick overview of some exciting upcoming festivals and the launch of a new webpage from **Into Film** for schools to contact cinemas about booking paid-for screenings (page 12).





Jen Skinner on Tiree. Credit: Screen Argyll

**Jen Skinner** has over 20 years' experience in film exhibition and education, from managing Hebden Bridge Picture House to developing the film education programme at the National Media Museum. Jen is an ambassador for Into Film and has created resources and led sessions on engaging young audiences for organisations including Into Film, the ICO, the BFI FAN Network, Europa Cinemas and the CICAIE (The International Confederation of Art Cinemas).

Jen relocated to the Isle of Tiree in 2014 and set up **Screen Argyll**, with four other directors. Screen Argyll supports all forms of film exhibition, promotion and engagement throughout Argyll and the Isles, through screenings, festivals, film education, and community projects.

For our latest interview, we spoke to **Jen Skinner, Director of Screen Argyll.**

**What came first for you, education or film?**

They were entwined from the start for me. I began working at the Hebden Bridge Picture House when I was still at Art School and worked on their Kids Club as well as being a duty manager. I went on to do an MA in Animation, after which I managed the Picture House, until I had my son, who is now 17 years old! After that I became a lecturer and delivered family workshops at the Whitworth Art Gallery. I did this until I went to the National Media Museum, to coordinate the Film Education programme. In this role, I worked across the festivals, including Bradford Animation Festival, which I loved as a student and later brought

my own students to as a lecturer. I remained there until we were all made redundant, just after delivering Bradford Animation Festival in 2014.

**Any particularly strong film memories from when you were growing up?**

I lived in Plymouth from ages 5-11. That was where I had my first cinema experiences.

*I remember watching Raiders of the Lost Ark for my Mum's birthday. We went to a Chinese restaurant afterwards, which was all red, and it felt like we were still in the film.*

My folks are from Dumbarton and loved the pictures. They were brought up going to see films every Saturday and passed this enthusiasm on to me.





A 'drive-through' screening. Credit: Screen Argyll

Tell us a little bit about how Screen Argyll became established.

After being made redundant (it is such a horrible word!), I worked as a freelancer mainly in film education, making toolkits and resources for the ICO and Into Film. We had the opportunity to relocate my family to my grandparents' house on the Isle of Tiree. Once here, we continued working freelance (my husband had delivered the Animation and Filmmaking workshops at the National Media Museum) and slowly developed work on Tiree, mainly through the support of Into Film. They made a great wee film about us at the beginning:

[www.intofilm.org/news-and-views/articles/june-leader-of-the-month](http://www.intofilm.org/news-and-views/articles/june-leader-of-the-month)

As this work grew out to different islands, we connected with **Alasdair Satchel** on Mull and created Screen Argyll. We now support a network of cinemas across Argyll and the Isles, deliver film education programmes, and run a festival called Sea Change, which includes a development lab for women working in film.

Any advice for those wanting to work more with young people and film?

*Consistency is key, commit to 6 to 12 months of regular screenings, get everyone in the team onboard and find external partners to work with, such as schools or youth organisations — they can really help to bring you an audience.*

Tell us about Screen Argyll's BFI Film Academy programme.

We've delivered the course since 2019 and specialise in animation. We moved online following COVID-19 and this has been great in terms of access, as many of the young people we work with are island-based or live in remote locations. Thanks partly to one of our company directors, **Jim Parkyn** from Aardman Animations, we have access to a brilliant range of practitioners and speakers from the world of animation.



Animation workshop. Credit: Screen Argyll



I know you also developed an online screening platform in response to COVID-19, can you tell us about that?

We use it to support our festival online and any touring programmes, so you can join in wherever you live! We filmed a fantastic theatre piece by the Whalley Range All Stars called *Godzilla and the Fatberg*, which we used with a workshop during our BFI Japan Season:

<https://stream.screenargyll.co.uk/film/godzilla-v-the-fatberg/>

We also had an illustrated talk as part of our BFI Dreams and Monsters, called *It Came From the Deep*, which we all watched at the same time across the islands, either from our community halls or in ours home via the site. We then joined on Zoom to discuss the illustrated talk and the films in the season. Having some content online has been a great way of connecting remote audiences, as well as accessing some amazing speakers.

We now also run a weekly online film club using our site, called Watch Along Wednesdays. We have a different practitioner lead the discussion each week who picks one of the films off the site. From November through to February this year they were all by female directors.

Being based in Tiree and working with communities across a wide area must offer its own unique challenges, can you say a bit more about these?

Travel and weather are never guaranteed; this is challenging during the festival and can affect screenings on the island too. This winter we had to cancel a few because of ice on the roads.

And what about the rewards?

*Sharing the magic of film within our local communities — seeing the conversations or sharing experiences within our communities are what makes it worthwhile for me.*

Any particularly memorable events over the years?

I once introduced Germaine Greer by saying 'Please give Germaine Greer a warm (pause) hand!!!'. I've had so many wonderful film experiences and met some amazing people.

*I love the Il Cinema Ritrovato. Watching films in the open, late at night, and eating Italian ice cream is my happy place. Once when watching Jean Vigo's L'Atalante we saw several shooting stars! It was heavenly.*

Bringing **Chris Davies** to Tiree to perform his score for *Prince Achmed* was special. We had commissioned him to compose a soundtrack for the opening night of the last Bradford Animation Festival and he did an incredible job. Bringing Jim Parkyn up to the Islands and helping the kids make animations has also been wonderful and the start of lots of collaborations.

And starting our Sea Change Development Lab and bringing lots of brilliant women in film together here on the Isle of Tiree — it fills my heart with joy to see their faces as they come off the wee plane!

If you could change something about the sector what would it be?

3 – 5 year core funding would enable us to plan and develop a strategy, create pathways for young people across Argyll and the Isles, and allow us to have a member of staff dedicated to supporting them.

And what, if anything, gives you cause for optimism?

The fantastic network of brilliant, supportive people we have working across the sector in Scotland, the UK and Europe!

*We have amazing young people; we are creative and film is the most accessible art form. It is magical!!*

Normally, you have to ask people to imagine they're on a desert island, but seeing as you live on a sandy, sun-kissed isle, this last question should be a doddle: you're stuck on a desert island with a group of young people and (miraculously) a cinema projector. What film do you choose to screen?

Depending on their age, *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* or *Ponyo* — they are both wonderful.



Sea Change Development Lab participants. Credit: Holly Tarquini





Credit: Small World Cinema

Those of you who were able to attend our Exhibitors Day at Glasgow Film Festival will have heard **Jen Skinner** (interview page 3) take part in a panel on family programming.

She was joined by **Matt Lloyd** of **Glasgow Short Film Festival** and **John Cunningham** and **Carys Knox** of **West Coast Cinemas**. For several years, GSFF has included a Family Shorts programme, as well as delivering various workshops for children. You can check out their latest shorts selection at the 2023 festival later this month (see page 12).

At Greenock Waterfront Cinema, the films on offer tend to the more commercial. But as Carys explained, from their silver screen programme (where £3 tickets include a hot drink and a biscuit) to their Fun Film Club screenings for little ones, the cinema aims to cultivate the kind of warmth and familiarity more commonly

associated with community cinema venues. With sustained effort, this approach has been rewarded with a loyal local audience and screenings often sell out. The Fun Film Club takes place at 11am every Saturday morning with additional 11am Tuesday morning screenings during school holidays. Tickets are £2.50.

Jen's own presentation gave us a whistle-stop tour of the wonderfully creative range of activities and immersive environments that the team at Screen Argyll have created over the years to accompany their screenings for families and young ones.

To complement these Exhibitor Day contributions from our FHS members, for this issue of the Gazette we looked a little further afield for inspiration and reached out to **Saskia van Roomen** and **Laura Kloss** of Bromley Library-based **Small World Cinema**.

Like Jen, Saskia and Laura emphasised the value of attaching screenings to hands-on activities as a way of growing and maintaining an audience. Here they tell us about their experiences establishing Small World Cinema and offer advice for exhibitors looking to work more with children and families:

*"Small World Cinema organises film events and festivals for children and their families in Bromley, South East London. We started in 2015 as a Saturday afternoon Family Film Club to introduce children and young people to films from around the world and to offer creative activities that enhance their viewing pleasure.*

*"Not every venue has space available for children to be creative but if you do, we would encourage you to hold a creative film event.*



*"Initially we screened films that were easily available through Filmbank, but in the past few years we have started to source films straight from filmmakers or distributors and sales companies abroad.*

*"There's such a wide variety of films in Europe alone as the subsidy system often stipulates that a certain percentage of national film subsidy must be spent on children's cinema. Unfortunately, we do not have this system in the UK and there isn't much diversity in terms of films where children see their lives or indeed the lives of children in other countries reflected on the big screen.*

*"There is an understandable trepidation for UK cinemas to show unknown films or films in a foreign language for family audiences. Introducing interactive, creative elements to a programme is a way of offering something different whilst the familiarity of the activity greatly encourages parents and young people to try a film they haven't seen before.*

*"Parents especially trust these kinds of activities and know their children will enjoy them even if they are not sure about the film. Often, the whole family comes away feeling surprised that they have actually enjoyed watching a foreign film with subtitles, some experimental animations or a heritage film.*

*"Past events have included: silent slapstick films with live piano accompaniment; animation activities; sound effects workshops; colouring film reel and playing it back through a 16mm projector; origami; flipbooks; junkmodelling; shadowplay, and more.*

*"We have recently developed a curated film event in-a-box scheme to expand our offer to other venues in the UK.*



Credit: Small World Cinema

*"The box includes a film with screening licence and ready to use materials for the creative activities. For example, the box may include a programme of animated shorts and prepared materials to make zoetropes and thaumatropes.*

*"These early modes of animation demonstrate the illusion of moving images and teach the origins of moving image technologies, whilst providing an activity that is hands-on, interactive and creative. The box also includes posters, instructions, feedback cards and some badges.*

*"As any parent will know, it is hard to go to the cinema when you have small children and these events are a great way to reach this audience. Even a few such events per year can build a loyal following of future cinema goers if it feels like a special treat that can be enjoyed by children and parents alike.*

*"Feel free to get in touch for further tips and advice or to enquire about our film event in-a-box package!"*

[smallworldcinema@gmail.com](mailto:smallworldcinema@gmail.com)

We also asked **Barbican Family Film Programmer, Susie Evans**, for some general advice on programming for children and families. Here's a summary of her recommendations:

- **Shorts are a great way in.**
- **But it's not just about film content on-screen.** Think about the whole experience.
- **Have someone ready to welcome audiences as they arrive. And make the space as welcoming and relaxed as possible.** How can you make it an enjoyable space before and after the screening? Do you have space for board games or activity sheets? Could you have bean bags laid out? Do you have child-friendly snacks available? Can you put out free tap water?
- **Trust that there is a local audience — families are desperate to find things for kids to do!** But don't expect instant success. Developing that audience takes time.
- **If you've got screenings for different age groups, consider scheduling them so that there's some overlap with arrival/ departure.** It allows you to 'advertise' the next stage in a viewing journey.
- **And take risks — kids are endlessly forgiving!**



*Sitting Tight: The Story of the Lee Jeans Sit-In* (Dir. Chris Fallen, 2022)

Inverclyde-based **RIG Arts** became a Film Hub Scotland member towards the end of last year and we're very happy to have them as part of our Education in Cinema Network. We enjoyed learning from Project Manager, **Lauren Grech**, about their wide range of education projects and were delighted that Administration & Fundraising Assistant, **Beth Duffy**, was able to join us for our network event at **Cumbernauld Theatre at Lanternhouse** in January. Here's some more information about RIG Arts' mission statement and the exciting work they've been doing.

*"RIG Arts is an award winning, socially engaged arts charity based in Inverclyde bringing artists and the community together in a collaborative and creative way.*

*"We design and deliver a dynamic programme of visual arts and film projects, workshops, public artworks, exhibitions, community spaces and events. RIG Arts uses creativity to work with people to affect change in Urban Regeneration, Climate Challenge, Heritage, Mental Health and it helps young people with Autism to build better social & communication skills."*

Amongst the varied cross-arts projects that RIG Arts have delivered, Lauren highlighted a number of film-focussed initiatives. In particular, RIG Arts is now embarking on the second year of its **Film School**. Funded by Young Start, this three-year project offers young people aged 12-25 the opportunity to learn a whole range of filmmaking skills from industry professionals, including working on a professional film set.

Meanwhile, the **Reflections Project**, funded by NatureScot, has involved a collaboration with Clyde Muirshiel's Ranger Service to deliver filmmaking activities to local primary schoolchildren, culminating in the creation of a film inspired by the Greenock Cut aqueduct, the local coastline and Lunderston Bay. To tie in with the project, RIG Arts held several Poetry Walks during the 2020 Galoshans Festival.

The 2022 Galoshans Festival saw a screening of a documentary produced by the RIG Arts team. Directed by film tutor **Chris Fallen**, *Sitting Tight: The Story of the Lee Jeans Sit-In* tells the remarkable story of a seven-month-long stand-off between factory workers in Larkfield, Greenock and the American-owned VF Corporation.

After being informed in February 1981 that the factory was closing, the 240-

strong mainly female workforce barricaded themselves inside the factory and remained there for another 7 months until it was announced that their jobs were being saved.

*"In an attempt to preserve and honour the enigmatic voices of this successful industrial action and those surrounding it, we began a heritage project that created research materials for the documentary team, as well as engaging community members across Greenock in an important piece of local history."*

The project was funded through the National Lottery Heritage Fund and involved holding workshops with local schools, writing sessions with local musicians to create the music and creative writing workshops with local groups to build a script. The festival screening took place at the **Greenock Waterfront Cinema**, which is part of **West Coast Cinemas**, another Inverclyde FHS member.

Having joined FHS, RIG Arts is now looking to increase its exhibition activities and we look forward to benefitting from their creative expertise and imaginative community and education engagement work.

Find out more at [www.rigarts.org](http://www.rigarts.org)





Ayr Student Film Festival at Ayr Town Hall

Another new member of our network is Kilmarnock-based **Ayrshire Film Company** who joined FHS last month. Having run film and media training workshops for several years, they are now looking to develop the exhibition side of their work. We already have a handful of other Ayrshire-based members delivering excellent projects and this seemed a timely moment to highlight some of that work.

One of the findings from our [Education in Cinema survey](#) was that although Glasgow and Edinburgh have a wide range of film education and youth screening provision (though the latter has sadly been weakened by the loss of Filmhouse), significant parts of the surrounding Central Belt area remain underserved.

While large habitations such as Kilmarnock may seem within striking distance of Glasgow, we know that, in practice, transport and other considerations frequently limit opportunities for young people to commute in. Consequently, young people in these heavily populated

areas — often areas of multiple deprivation — frequently lack easy access to film learning opportunities and cultural cinema screenings.

The development of Ayrshire Film Company's exhibition offering will, therefore, be a particularly welcome addition to the landscape. It will create new provision within Kilmarnock and strengthen our members' presence within the wider Ayrshire area.

Across the border in South Ayrshire, **Ayr Film Society** is an award-winning community cinema, which is this year celebrating its 50th anniversary. We were pleased to learn that Ayrshire Film Company had recently been in touch with the team at Ayr Film Society to draw on their experience in delivering a vibrant screening programme.

As committee members **Ron Currie** and **Katherine McNab** explained, screenings take place in Ayr Town Hall and offer audiences an eclectic range of classic and contemporary films. Their mantra is "world cinema on your doorstep". In addition to their regular

season of films, a number of their events have specifically engaged with young people, including screenings for pupils from Mar College in Troon and autism friendly screenings.

A particular recent success was the **1st Ayr Student Film Festival**, which took place last October. The festival was a collaboration between Ayr Film Society and students from the Filmmaking and Screen Writing course at the University of the West of Scotland (UWS), which took place last October.

As current Festival Director **Chris Kelly** told us:

*"The Ayr Student Film Festival was founded in 2022 to give UWS students a platform to showcase their talents and to screen their short films and documentaries to a live audience, receiving direct feedback from a panel of industry guests. Our motto is 'By Students, For Students' and we hope that by providing an accessible event for our fellow UWS students we can shine a light on the wonderful talent that we have here at UWS."*



Judges at the festival included FHS' own Cross-Fan Member Support and Development Coordinator **Siobhan Fahey**, a film producer whose credits include the acclaimed documentary feature, *Rebel Dykes*. Siobhan herself studied on the MA Filmmaking course at UWS.

The winning selection was *InsoMania*, the MA graduation project by **Valerie Theuns**, a fiction inspired by the director's own personal experience of having insomnia due to bipolar mania. Valerie told us that the festival had been a really positive and confidence-building experience for her. She is now submitting *InsoMania* to other festivals and applying for film-related jobs as she develops ideas for her next projects.

Festival co-founder **Andrea Costa** told us that the festival was started with the hope that it could become "an established reoccurrence for the next generation of young filmmakers." With the new committee in place and a second edition confirmed for Saturday 30 September 2023, the future of the festival looks encouraging. In the past, student engagement with Ayr Film Society had been somewhat limited, so this new collaboration is heartening and we hope it goes from strength to strength.



A family screening delivered by The Iris Ayr  
Credit: Ross Hunter

Another FHS member based in South Ayrshire is the **Iris Ayr**. The Iris' film offering, led by Creative Director **Ross Hunter** and his colleague **Kelly Craig**, has a strong focus on skills training, youth engagement and outreach work. For Ross, working with young people and film has always been at the heart of The Iris' mission:

*"The screen provides us with an opportunity to better understand the world that we live in. By helping children and young people contextualise what they are watching and tell their own stories through making their own films, we believe that they grow in confidence, can easier express themselves, communicate effectively and engage meaningfully in their surroundings."*

Their screening programme includes monthly free family screenings delivered in Wallacetown, one of the most socially deprived areas in the whole of Scotland.

With funding from the local council, the Iris also delivers a Screen Education Programme in schools, working with children from P1 level up to school leaver age. Classes have been offered in practical filmmaking skills, film adaptation and animation. At screenings, young people also take on front of house duties and learn about the business of exhibition. Over the years, Ross estimates that the Iris has worked within every school in South Ayrshire.

A recent highlight was the creation of a film called *The Weekend*. Commissioned by South Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership and South Ayrshire Council's Thriving Communities team, the project involved nine young carers aged 15–17. *The Weekend* was developed, written and filmed by the carers themselves.



Valerie Theuns,  
Ayr Student Film Festival winner

More information at:

[www.ayrfilmsociety.co.uk](http://www.ayrfilmsociety.co.uk)

[www.ayrstudentfilmfestival.com](http://www.ayrstudentfilmfestival.com)





An Into Film screening of *Raya and the Last Dragon* at Dunlop Community Cimea  
Credit: Sue Scott

The film tells the story of three young carers and how their caring roles impact them in different ways over the course of a single weekend. It received its premiere last month and will be shown at awareness-raising sessions in secondary schools across South Ayrshire.

More information about The Iris Ayr can be found at:

[www.theirisayr.com](http://www.theirisayr.com)

**Dunlop Community Cinema**, is based in East Ayrshire and their focus is on exhibition. The cinema has three strands: mainstream, film club (with more diverse offerings) and children's screenings. Children's screenings take place on Sunday afternoons and typically happen every six weeks.

**Sue Scott**, of Dunlop Community Cinema, explains that the recent cost of living crisis has seen a slight shift in this schedule, with the hall offering 'warm space screenings'. With funding from East Ayrshire Council covering licence costs, Dunlop has been able to offer six free screenings. Most of these have been aimed at children and families (*Ratatouille*, *Minions*, *Zootropolis* and *The Greatest Showman*), but some titles (such as an upcoming screening of *Singing in the Rain*) have been chosen equally to appeal to older audiences using the hall as a warm space.

While a core local audience exists for the screenings within Dunlop,

Sue has been delighted also to have attracted some viewers from places somewhat further afield such as Nielston. Their largest audience ever was for a screening of *The Lego Movie*, which attracted around 200 people. Covid distancing measures mean that capacity is now reduced to around 80 and there have been a number of sell outs for Dunlop's wider programme. The warm space screenings themselves have been getting healthy turnouts between 55-75% capacity.

Dunlop has also partnered with **Into Film** on its recent Spring Screenings, to provide three school screenings. For primary schools, they've shown *Raya and The Last Dragon* and will shortly be screening *WALL-E*. The secondary school selection is French-language title *April and the Extraordinary World*.

Our presence in East Ayrshire is strengthened with the arrival of **Ayrshire Film Company** as a new member. Their exhibition plans are still developing, but the intention is to have regular screenings at Kilmarnock Library. Although the screening side of their work is a new venture, they have existed for several years as a film and media training company and undertake a significant amount of work with young people.

As Project Coordinator, **Becca Lewis**, told us, they have recently been offering fortnightly screen skills workshops with funding from East Ayrshire's Communities Mental Health

and Wellbeing Fund. In addition to camera skills training, there have also been prop making and makeup workshops, and they will shortly be running a session on Inventing a Film Festival, led by GFT's Youth Programme Coordinator, **Callum Neeson**.



A prop making workshop  
Credit: Ayrshire Film Company

Enthusiasm for engaging with young people came through strongly in conversations with our various Ayrshire members. But several also noted the challenge of maintaining consistency with this engagement. Attendance at longer courses can often be sporadic and it can be difficult to retain participants as they grow older.

There's no overnight solution to this, but there is a recognition both from Screen Scotland and the BFI of the need to develop more coherent and robust pathways for young people as they learn about film and develop their own passion for watching it. At FHS, we will continue to support and advise our members in strengthening these pathways and we are pleased that our new funding will help facilitate this.





*Whales in a Changing Ocean* (Dir. Richard Sidey, 2021)

Based in Bristol, the global capital of natural history programme making, **Wildscreen** is a member of Film Hub South West. In addition to its world-leading film festival, focused on natural world storytelling, Wildscreen also delivers a range of education, training and networking initiatives. This year, with National Lottery funding support from Creative Scotland, Wildscreen is taking its festival on the road for the first time and heading to Glasgow.

The **Wildscreen Roadshow** takes place on **18 – 19 March at Glasgow Science Centre**. Ahead of this, we caught up with **Georgia Torres** (Outreach & Sustainability Coordinator) and **Millie Watts** (Events & Festival Manager) to learn more about the varied education and youth engagement work being done by Wildscreen.

Founded as a wildlife festival in 1982, Wildscreen has evolved over the years into a conservation charity with global impact. Today it is a female-led organisation, which *"envisions a world where natural world storytelling is inclusive, accessible and impactful and where nature is protected and thriving."* Their mission is to connect people with nature through storytelling, and democratise the creation of and

access to nature's stories.

As Millie and Georgia explained, Wildscreen's ethos looks to platform authentic and diverse storytelling and to alleviate barriers to entry into the wildlife film industry which have historically disproportionately impacted groups who are already under-represented within the environmental narrative. The digital age has given more people access to natural world storytelling tools, empowering storytellers globally to document the important issues and hopeful actions happening in their local environments.

In 2015, as part of its efforts to help empower budding storytellers, the organisation launched Wildscreen Exchange, an online library of 25,000+ free and affordable nature images. Wildscreen also has 60+ free educational resources, many featuring films and photos, which have reached over 30 million school children globally. They can be accessed at: [wildscreen.org/community/teachers-kids/](https://wildscreen.org/community/teachers-kids/)

Wildscreen Network, launched in 2019, *"is an international community that supports and brings together members of the natural world storytelling industry."* Targeted support

is further offered through Internships and a Mentorship scheme.

A great example of the kind of talent being nurtured by Wildscreen is Scottish filmmaker, **Libby Penman**, from Kirkcaldy, who was one of 22 mentees selected for the the ScreenSkills and Wildscreen Mentorship Scheme 2021.

More recently, Libby teamed up with legendary wildlife filmmaker Doug Allan (also from Fife and with credits including *Frozen Planet*), for the 'Wildpitch' section of the 2022 Wildscreen Festival. They successfully pitched a programme called *The Animal Kingdom of Fife* to a panel of leading commissioners and senior executives, receiving £6000 to help realise the project.



Libby Penman  
Credit: Lars Isaac





The event is championed by **Gail Robertson**, Screen Education Officer at Screen Scotland. She notes that:

*"This event addresses a continued and vital need to provide young people with an opportunity to engage with climate change issues, natural filmmaking, and the screen industry. We hope it encourages their future involvement in all these arenas and tells them that their presence and voices in this area are not just welcome, but a necessity."*

We wish the team at Wildscreen best wishes for this exciting new chapter and hope that the screenings and workshops can help energise the conversation around environmental conservation and inspire future generations of Scottish wildlife filmmakers.

Full details of the public programme, featuring a fantastic lineup of screenings and talks can be found at:

[wildscreen.org/wildscreen-roadshow/](https://wildscreen.org/wildscreen-roadshow/)

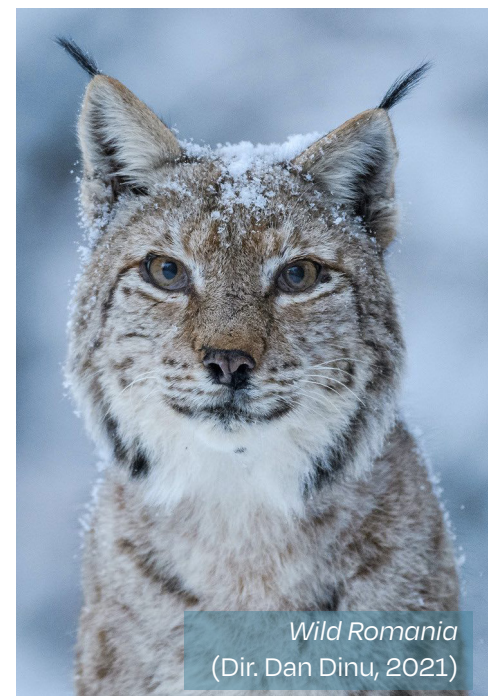
Libby will be contributing to the Glasgow Roadshow as part of the Young Programmers selection panel, which also features Scottish artist and Wildscreen Comms Assistant **Hazel Irons**, together with **Nancy Holt** and **Rebys Hynes**, who are both students on the Glasgow University MSc Film Curation course. The panel has chosen a selection of shorts from Wildscreen Festival's Official Selection 2022. The programme, screening on the Sunday afternoon of the Roadshow, includes a special introduction to the films.

Festival Manager Millie Watts was able to establish a link with the Glasgow University MSc Film Curation programme having completed the course herself, before pursuing a PhD on Scottish director Bill Douglas at Exeter University. Millie also has strong links to several of our own FHS members — while studying in Glasgow she volunteered for a number of festivals, including GSFF, DOCUMENT Human Rights Film Festival and Havana Glasgow Film Festival.

In addition to these links, Glasgow's status as the home of natural history filmmaking in Scotland made it the ideal destination for the first Wildscreen Roadshow. A number of leading film and television production companies are based in the city, including Wildscreen Network members **Hello Halo** (*Scotland: My Life in the Wild*) and **Maramedia** (*Hebrides: Islands on the Edge*).

Creative Scotland's support for the Roadshow is specifically directed at engaging underrepresented young people in the area. Wildscreen is connecting with local community groups to distribute 30 free tickets per day of the Roadshow to underserved groups, in addition to a large number of heavily discounted tickets.

There will also be a free storyboarding workshop for young people aged 16-25 on the Sunday morning. The session will be led by Libby Penman and **Wendy Rattray**, Managing Director of Hello Halo.



*Wild Romania*  
(Dir. Dan Dinu, 2021)





*Warsha*  
(Dir. Dania Bdeir, 2022)

It's a busy time of year with lots of festival activity taking place this month. Here's a selection of upcoming highlights.

## Glasgow Short Film Festival

Scotland's leading short film event returns for its sixteenth edition with an invigorating programme of international shorts, industry programmes, homegrown talent and live performances. Get inspired by the latest films across competitions, genres and countries while learning directly from some of the most exciting filmmakers on the shorts circuit.

The programme includes a range of industry panels and masterclasses, including a session with Lebanese-Canadian director Dania Bdeir. There's also a showcase of family shorts.

**The festival runs from 22-26 March**

For more information visit:

[glasgowshort.org](http://glasgowshort.org)

## Hippodrome Silent Film Festival

The wonderful, one-of-a-kind HippFest is back, combining carefully curated silent films with cutting-edge live music performances. Packed full of public talks and workshops, the festival has also engaged local schools through various activities including its popular New Found Sound project and a series of animation workshops.

They have also organised a visit for students from the Glasgow University Film Curation MA course to spend a day at the festival on 22 March.

**The festival runs from 22-26 March**

[www.hippodromecinema.co.uk/silent-film-festival](http://www.hippodromecinema.co.uk/silent-film-festival)



*The Blue Bird*  
(Dir. Maurice Tourneur, 1918)

## Cromarty Film Festival

There's a superb programme on offer at this year's Cromarty Film Festival, including a number of family friendly screenings, such as the French animated feature *Dragon Princess*.



*Dragon Princess*  
(Dir. Jean-Jacques Denis, 2021)

There's also a one-shot filmmaking workshop, two free outdoor graffiti workshops led by artist and filmmaker Allana James, a creative movement workshop and a Screen Machine screening for the whole of Cromarty Primary School.

We can't wait to hear how it all goes!

**The festival runs from 24-26 March**

[www.cromartyfilmfestival.org](http://www.cromartyfilmfestival.org)

## Into Film have launched a new page for schools to book paid-for screenings.

Into Film partners with cinemas to offer free screenings to schools, mainly during the Into Film Festival (November) and Spring Screenings (March). For schools looking to organise their own

paid-for cinema visit outside of these events, the new search page compiles a list of cinemas and their details so that schools can contact them directly.

Currently the page is light on contact details for independent exhibitors, especially in Scotland, so the team at Into Film would love to hear from FHS

members interested in connecting with new schools through this page:

[intofilm.org/events/cinema/enquiry](http://intofilm.org/events/cinema/enquiry)

If you'd like to have your organisation's details added, send a request to:

[cinemabookings@intofilm.org](mailto:cinemabookings@intofilm.org)