WALKING WITH GHOSTS

Folkestone Harbour Arm Station & Fourth Wall Folkestone

11-14 November 2022

A new multimedia artwork and programme of walkshops, interweaving past and present to explore the impact of war on Folkestone over the last 100 years.

Created in partnership with Imperial War Museums 14-18 NOW Legacy Fund.
On Armistice Day 1928, the Vice Chairman of the Imperial War Graves Commission, the body responsible for commemorating the war dead of the British Empire, asked BBC radio audiences to imagine the dead of the Great War ‘moving in one long continuous column, four abreast’. He then continued:

“As the head of that column reaches the Cenotaph the last four men would be at Durham. In Canada that column would stretch across the land from Quebec to Ottawa; in Australia from Melbourne to Canberra; in South Africa from Bloemfontein to Pretoria; in New Zealand from Christchurch to Wellington; in Newfoundland from coast to coast of the island, and in India from Lahore to Delhi. It would take these million men eighty-four hours or three and-a-half days, to march past the Cenotaph in London.”

It was this powerful image, of an army of ghostly soldiers marching ever onwards, that inspired us to create ‘Walking with Ghosts’. We knew immediately that the only place for an artwork exploring the legacy of war could be Folkestone: the site from which countless thousands crossed to and from the battlefields, and which has long been the home to soldiers, refugees and witnesses to war.
On a cold November afternoon last year, as we stood listening to the relentless pounding of the waves, the myriad ghosts of the past felt almost palpable. We saw long-dead soldiers marching past us and we heard their final farewells to loved ones. Intermingling with the jingle of bridlery, the whistle of steam trains, and the crunch of hobnail boots, we also heard the echoes of refugees arriving from Belgium in 1914. Looking out to sea on this penetratingly cold afternoon, the appalling continuity with our own time was unavoidable. Last November it was Syrians; within a few months it would be Ukrainians.

‘Walking with Ghosts’ provides a glimpse of the stories, lives and experiences of the ghosts we encountered in November and many more. As you walk with the ghosts of the past, the artwork invites you to reflect on the legacy of war over the last hundred years and to consider those who live with war’s lingering touch today.

**Professor Helen Brooks and Professor Mark Connelly**
Gateways Partnership
University of Kent

‘Walking with Ghosts’ is a new multimedia artwork and programme of walkshops, interweaving past and present to explore the impact of war on Folkestone over the last 100 years.

The whole programme takes place over 84 hours: from 11am on Friday 11 November to 11pm on Monday 14 November 2022. It begins with a two-minute silence, marking the moment when the Great War came to an end, 104 years earlier in 1918.

The immersive artwork at Folkestone Harbour Arm Station lasts exactly 30 minutes and then repeats.

You are welcome to join at any point, to sit and experience the whole piece, or to move through the installation in your own time.

Working with our partners at Palm Deaf we have embedded British Sign Language interpretation and subtitles, to make the experience Deaf Friendly.

Stream the ‘Walking with Ghosts’ soundtrack and download the script, for free, at www.gatewayspartnership.org.uk/walking-with-ghosts

Howard Griffin testing the projection mapping
Elspeth Penfold demonstrating rope-making
Our programme of walkshops is hosted by Fourth Wall Folkestone and can be booked by searching ‘Walking with Ghosts’ on www.eventbrite.com.

Friday 11 November 2022
12-2pm         Mapping a Scriptorium

Saturday 12 November 2022
12-2pm         Falling between the Cracks (Deaf Friendly)
2pm             Indoor Walk
6.30-7.30pm     Women Came Out: A Night Walk

Sunday 13 November 2022
12pm            So It Goes: Writing Workshop
2-3pm           Walking with Poetry

Monday 14 November 2022
12-4pm          Timeless Walkshop
1-2pm           Timeless Walk

We value your feedback and would be grateful if you could take a moment to comment on your ‘Walking with Ghosts’ experience either via our website (please scan the QR code below) or using the feedback forms available.
Cast

Greg Miller Burns
Elliott Francis
Emma Gregory
Pradip Gurung
Ashrin Gurung
Jessica Hynes
Michael Knighton
Capt (Retd) Gyan Limbu
Kuiehang Limbu
Jess Nesling
Alex Phelps
Sarita Rana
Sarah Thurstan
Alina Vinnichuk

British Sign Language interpretation by Jason Tennant
Creative Team

Creative Production and Dramaturgy by Helen Brooks
Historical Production by Mark Connelly
Walkshops curated and led by Elspeth Penfold in partnership with Sarah Carpenter and Fourth Wall Folkestone
Visuals and Projection Mapping by Howard Griffin
Documentary Filming and Photography by Ross Barnwell
Artwork Filming and editing by Joey Quan Hui Lin and Alex Newe
Oral History workshops by Jayne Thompson

Accessibility by Palm Deaf BSL Training

Costume supplied by Andy Robertshaw
Security provided by Gurkha Security Services
Promotional material by Kent Design and Print Centre.


Excerpt from ‘Our Lady of the Harbour’ with kind permission of Tony Quarrington.

Images and film footage with kind permission of Imperial War Museums, Step Short and the Gateways Partnership Collection.

Music composed by Thom Robson
Music mixed by Olly Shelton
Music mastered by Cicely Balston
Violin & Viola by Natalia Tsupryk
Cello by Fraser Bowles
Double Bass by Rory Dempsey
Sound Design by Thom Robson
Soundscape mixed by Ian Marriot-Smith
Walking with Ghosts: Exploring History through Art

‘Walking with Ghosts’ has been in development since summer 2021 and is the result of collaboration between numerous artists, community members, and schools. It is part of the IWM 14-18 NOW Legacy Fund, a national programme of 22 artist commissions inspired by the heritage of conflict.

Everything you see and hear in the artwork is taken directly from original IWM film and photographs, newspaper accounts, postcards, interviews, poetry, memorials, letters and diaries. The original score, which plays throughout and accompanies the images and voices, was inspired by these historic sources and by the sounds and sights of Folkestone Harbour and its historic station. We are grateful to Folkestone Harbour Arm, who enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to support and stage this immersive experience.
The Artwork

Over thirty minutes the six movements of the artwork take you on a journey through time, whilst the great army of ghosts marches ceaselessly out to war along platform one. As you turn to platform two, photographs give brief snapshots of the men, women, and children whose lives have been shaped by war over the last hundred years: the selection reflecting the theme of each movement. Meanwhile the number of Great War dead steadily rises.

Our first movement, which takes the same title as the artwork – ‘Walking with Ghosts’ – is a collage of Siegfried Sassoon’s poetry. It opens with ‘Picture Show’ read by Folkestone resident and internationally-renowned actress, director and writer, Jessica Hynes. The only poem featured in its entirety in the artwork, ‘Picture Show’ prompts you to contemplate the inherent ghostliness of film, with those captured on screen suspended permanently between life and death. They do not grow old, while we do.

From here we invite you to go back in time to the First World War. In movement 2 ‘Departures’, extracts from letters, diaries, and postcards, written by those who found themselves at Folkestone Harbour Arm station during the conflict, are interrupted by the official sailing schedule from March 1915. Throughout the music, the atmosphere of wartime Folkestone and the anticipation of departure is driven by the rhythm of the station’s work. Movement 2 ends with an extract from May Wedderburn Cannan’s First World War poem ‘Quiet Night-Time over Rouen’, reminding us that the experience of those at Folkestone echoed across the channel.

The parallels between the experiences of war in different times and places are picked up in Movement 3 ‘Displaced’. Here, the experience of three different refugee communities, from 1914 to the present, speak to each other across time. The dangers of escape and the perils of journeys across the waves are infused throughout Robson’s soundtrack. Two accounts are those of observers, reflecting the difficulty experienced by many refugees in recounting their experiences. The third is a first-person account from one of Kent’s first Ukrainian arrivals. It is read by Alina Vinnichuk, a Ukrainian actress who fled the country in March 2022.
Vinnichuk also reads the extract from Dunya Mikhail’s poem ‘I Was In A Hurry’ which ends Movement 3. Mikhail is the first contemporary Iraqi woman poet to be translated into English and her work addresses themes of war, exile and loss.

The theme of loss leads us into Movement 4, which takes the word as it’s title. ‘Loss’ was inspired by, and features extracts from, conversations with Gurkha veterans and their families at the Folkestone Nepalese Community Centre. The experiences shared spanned multiple conflicts, from the Brunei revolt and Indonesian Confrontation in 1962-3, to the Falklands War in 1982 and most recently, the War in Afghanistan from 2001. Here the artwork encourages you to confront the reality of war and its legacy for those who experience it first hand as combatants.

Conversations with Folkestone Nepalese Community group members also played a key part in shaping Movement 5: ‘Folkestone’. As a site-specific artwork, we were always going to have a track which focussed on Folkestone as a place. It was, however, only through historical research and conversations with community members and residents, that it took form. Movement 5 takes you on a journey from pre-war ‘peacetime’ Folkestone, to the home front of Folkestone during the Great War. It ends with a reflection on the importance of Folkestone as home to the Nepalese community. At the heart of this movement is a powerful statement of Folkestone’s welcome to those cast out of their homelands in 1914.

The artwork ends with our sixth movement, ‘Remembrance’. The twenty-six names chosen for Movement 6 include a number of those killed in the Tontine Street bombing of 25 May 1917, as well as representatives of each of the nationalities buried in Shorncliffe Military Cemetery.
Walking with Ghosts

These include Jules Emiel Oosterlinck (Belgian) who died at the start of the First World War, George Melbourne (Australian) who died aged 20 in 1917, and three men who died in 1918: Carlos Acucio (Portugese), Busack Mvinjelwa of the South African Native Labour Corps who died aged 52, and Yang Chi Chu of the Chinese Labour Corps. From the Second World War, we remember Herbert Bliss MacDonald (Canadian) who died in July 1944 and Freyderyk Marszal (Polish) who died after the conflict’s conclusion in 1946. Those commemorated from the Tontine Street bombing include the youngest victim, Annie Beer, aged 2, who was killed along with her two brothers, aged 11 and 9, and her mother, aged 28. Also named are Lily Bowbrick who died in 1925 after eight years paralysed in hospital; and Agnes McDonald, a Canadian stenographer waiting to go to France for ambulance work. The final name is of the oldest victim, Isabelle Wilson, who was eighty when the bomb hit in 1917.

The Walkshops

As well as experiencing the artwork you can take part in our walkshops, curated by Elspeth Penfold and hosted by Fourth Wall Folkestone. Inspired by the idea of ‘walking’ with ghosts and the renewed interest in walking during lockdown, we wanted to explore walking as a physical, mental and emotional experience. Using poetry, rope-making and storytelling the walkshops explore themes of time and timelessness, conflict and remembrance. Taking place both in the day and at night, and with a range of community groups and artists, the walkshops are open to all and provide a space for sharing, learning and reflecting.
I Was In A Hurry

Dunya Mikhail

Yesterday I lost a country.
I was in a hurry,
and didn’t notice when it fell from me
like a broken branch from a forgetful tree.
Please, if anyone passes by
and stumbles across it,
perhaps in a suitcase
open to the sky,
or engraved on a rock
like a gaping wound,
or wrapped
in the blankets of emigrants,
or canceled
like a losing lottery ticket,
or helplessly forgotten
in Purgatory,
or rushing forward without a goal
like the questions of children,
or rising with the smoke of war,
or rolling in a helmet on the sand,
or stolen in Ali Baba’s jar,
or disguised in the uniform of a policeman
who stirred up the prisoners
and fled,
or squatting in the mind of a woman
who tries to smile,
or scattered
like the dreams
of new immigrants in America.
If anyone stumbles across it,
return it to me please.
Please return it, sir.
Please return it, madam.
It is my country...
I was in a hurry
when I lost it yesterday.

Our Lady of the Harbour

Tony Quarrington

No fey fairy tale figure this Folkestone maid
But mature, full-bodied, strong and wise
Rooted firmly on the East Cliff rocks
Staring intently out on Channel skies.
Some try to clothe her in pity, some in fun
Hats, bikinis, scarves, have all adorned her form
But she is perfect as she is – broad, naked, deep
Impervious to pounding waves and winter storm.

Her hair forever drenched from tidal spray
Slicked back and sweeping down along her spine
Her lusty feet replace the mermaid’s tail
Resist and spurn the bitter lapping brine.
To the dogs released from summer servitude
On Sunny Sands she’s just another stone
Their ball might bounce upon from owner’s throw
Or where they can relieve themselves alone.

A bare six summers has she settled there
Yet it seems to have been so many more
As if she’d witnessed history’s changing tides
Declining fish trade and the road to war.
When packet steam trains trundled down the hill
Into the harbour station and France bound ships
When English tommy first tasted foreign food
Snails, mussels, garlic, frites instead of chips.

I trudge across still slippery lower rocks
To reach the stone she's made her coastal home
And sit at her feet to see what she might see
While thwarting tourists with their camera phones.
Could she be looking to France or Belgium's shore?
But rather her gaze looks upwards to the sky
As if in thanks this piece of Heaven should be
Where Cornelia Parker chose that she should lie.

Oblivious to the sights and sounds around
The squawk of seagulls or wave smashed shores
Mindless of games that gleeful children play
Upon the drying beach when tide withdraws.

Unheeding of the dirt and noise of building sites
Coronation Parade and Harbour Arm are now
She sits serene, majestic 'midst the rush
A friend and confidant to all that vow.
Margate may have its Turner, Blackpool its Tower
Brighton its i360, St Iwe's its Tate
But none sing of the sea like our Folkestone girl
Stately and brave at England's coastal gate.

I rise from the rocks with wave washed, creaking knees
While hers are as fresh and smooth as first she came
Two hours have passed since I joined her on that rock
A better use of time I could never dare to claim.
Two ferries cross each other in Dover's strait
As the sun slides down over a silvery sea
Over her shoulder through darkening clouds
The coast of France gleams and bids bonne nuit.
Community Partners

‘Walking with Ghosts’ is the result of creative collaboration with a number of partners. More information on each can be found on our website www.gatewayspartnership.org.uk/walking-with-ghosts

Folkestone Nepalese Community UK
Fourth Wall Folkestone
Herne Bay Day Resource – East Kent
Mencap
Folkestone Academy
Folkestone School for Girls
Turner Schools
Palm Deaf BSL Training
Virginia Fitch
Michał Kamil Piotrowski

Folkestone Nepalese Community UK, Senior Citizens Group

Gurkha veterans
The Gateways Partnership began life as Gateways to the First World War, a centre for public engagement with the centenary of the First World War, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and based at the University of Kent. The Gateways Partnership was launched in 2021 to continue and develop this work, with a particular focus on creative engagement with history and heritage.
Walking with Ghosts

The Gateways Partnership is based in the School of Arts and School of History at the University of Kent. Its creative directors are Helen Brooks, Professor of Cultural and Creative History and Mark Connelly, Professor of Modern British History.

IWM 14-18 NOW Legacy Fund

Walking with Ghosts is part of the IWM 14-18 NOW Legacy Fund, a national programme of 22 artist commissions inspired by the heritage of conflict and created in partnership with Imperial War Museums and 14-18 NOW, the official UK arts programme for the First World War centenary. Further information can be found on the website:

www.iwm.org.uk/partnerships/subject-specialist-network/14-18-now-legacy-fund

Folkestone Harbour Arm

Folkestone Harbour Arm was originally the railway terminal for the Folkestone-Boulogne Ferry and the departure point for soldiers on their way to the Western Front. Folkestone Harbour was sold in the 1980s, together with the ferry company Sealink, as part of the Government’s privatisation programme. Since 2014 Folkestone Harbour Arm has been re-imagined and repurposed as a place where people come to promenade, enjoying magnificent views, a wide choice of good food and drink, live music, arts events and other entertainment.
(Gurkha) Army service record and medals
Acknowledgements

Numerous friends, colleagues and collaborators have contributed to ‘Walking with Ghosts’. Not all can be named here but our thanks go to each and every one, including:

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The team at Imperial War Museums

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For casting support, to Marie Kelly, Secretary of Equity Kent General Branch; and Phillipa Brown of Voicecall.
Sources

Movement 1, Walking with Ghosts


Movement 2, Departures

‘Cross-Channel Services’, Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate and Cheriton Herald, 6 March 1915; Ella Bickersteth, ‘The Bickersteth Diaries’ (Pen & Sword, 1996); Folkestone Pier postcard from ‘Charlie Boy’ to Mr & Mrs T.F. Baxter, Southampton, dated 3 December 1918 (www.Kentww1.com); Radnor Park postcard from Malcolm to Mrs J Hartley, Bolton, dated 9 August 1918 (www.Kentww1.com); Harry Lauder, ‘A Minstrel in France’ (Andrew Melrose, 1918); Guy Chapman ‘A Passionate Prodigality’ (Nicholson and Watson, 1933); Herbert Howard Cooper, IWM 9424. Reel 2; Aubrey Smith, ‘Four Years on the Western Front, by a Rifleman’ (Odhams, 1922); May Wedderburn Cannan, ‘Quiet Night-Time Over Rouen’ (‘In War Time’, 1917).

Filming with Jason Tennant, Joey Quan Hui Lin and Alex Newe
Movement 3, Displaced


Movement 4, Loss

Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate and Cheriton Herald, 14 November 1914; oral history conversations with members of Folkestone Nepalese Community Group, June-July 2022; Sir Herbert Read, ‘To A Conscript of 1940’.

Movement 5, Folkestone

Harry Lauder, ‘A Minstrel in France’ (Harry Melrose, 1918); Letter from Wilfred Owen to his mother, Susan Owen, dated 4 January 1917 (The First World War Poetry Digital Archive); ‘Treat to Wounded’, Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate and Cheriton Herald, 12 January 1918; ‘Wilfred Owen: Selected Letters’, edited by John Bell, (Oxford University Press, 1998); oral history conversations with members of Folkestone Nepalese Community Group, June-July 2022; ‘Copy of a letter sent by Belgian refugees in Folkestone to His Worship the Mayor’, Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate and

Visual sources

A full list of images and film footage featured in each movement can be found on the Gateways website. Images and film footage with kind permission of Imperial War Museums; Step Short, Folkestone; and the Gateways Partnership Collection. Photo of Siegfried Sassoon by George Charles Beresford (1915).