



For immediate release 4th-SEPTEMBER-07

MOSNEY: Documentary about asylum seekers to premier at Irish Film Institute

Mosney - Feature Documentary

Directed by Nicky Gogan and Paul Rowley

Produced by Maya Derrington, Nicky Gogan and Paul Rowley

**World Premier Screening at Irish Film Institute 14th September 2007 5 PM
During the Stranger Than Fiction Documentary Festival.**

“A life of uncertainty, hopelessness. The life in Mosney is - you wake up and eat and then you are not sure of what will happen the next moment, or even the next day. So we just live as the day comes by”

“Do you know what it means to leave everything you have as a human being and come to a country where you are a total stranger? I mean, it’s not something you just wake up and decide to do.”

Mosney residents

This long anticipated film about asylum seekers living in a disused holiday camp, brings us intimate stories of trauma, hope, and fear of deportation. A unique view into a closed world - we meet the people who are waiting in the asylum process for years on end. The filmmakers spent time living at Mosney over the past three years, gaining unprecedented insight into the lives of this global village of displaced people.

The film is a collaboration between award-winning artist Paul Rowley, and Darklight Festival director Nicky Gogan. It is the debut film from new Dublin production company *Still Films*, who were also awarded development financing for a number of other documentaries and features films under the Irish Film Board’s ‘Multi Project Development’ scheme earlier this year.

Director Nicky Gogan says *“we’ve all spent holidays at Mosney and it’s incredible to see this familiar setting now used for a different purpose that still seems to resonate with so many of our pasts. The residents of Mosney each have their own story to tell, from the tragic to the heartwarming.”*

IMAGES AVAILABLE AT www.stillfilms.org/epk.html

CLIPS and DVD AVAILABLE ON REQUEST TO Nicky: +353879966777

info@stillfilms.org

Tickets available from the Irish Film Institute Box office, made with a credit card by telephone between 1.30pm and 7.30pm, Tel: (01) 6793477, or on their booking site: www.ifibooking.ie



MOSNEY LOG LINE:

Intimate stories of trauma, expectation, and fear of deportation, told from inside a shut-down Irish holiday camp - now a holding centre for asylum seekers.

SYNOPSIS:

North of Dublin, Ireland, lies a collection of colourful chalets and rusting fairground rides. This is Mosney, for fifty years a family holiday destination - today, a holding centre for asylum seekers. In this surreal global village, people wait years for decisions on their asylum claims. From their stories we gain unprecedented insight into lives spent in constant fear of deportation.

SUMMARY:

An hour north of Dublin beside the sea is a bizarre looking collection of grey cement buildings with brightly painted doors, and rusting fairground rides. Opened in 1948, Mosney was a Butlin's holiday camp, a place where Irish families would escape the daily grind for a week in order to relax, dance, enjoy themselves.

A visit to Mosney today presents a radically different picture, but still a picture of escape. This former holiday camp is now a camp of another kind, a holding center for asylum seekers from all corners of the globe. Here the residents wait for an unknown number of years for their asylum claim results.

Once brought here, how do traumatically displaced people adapt to their strange new environment? How does prolonged detention affect their aspirations, ambitions, their mental health? Living day-to-day in this global village of sorts, deportation is a constant fear - one never knows what the next moment will bring. Is this a place to begin healing, or do these anxieties create new forms of trauma? And how does the culture of hospitality carry over with staff, many of them working here for forty years?

Over three years, the filmmakers lived in Mosney, gaining the trust of the residents who share their stories. The film presents an intimate look into their lives. We are introduced to the camp by some of the long-term staff, touring cavernous, abandoned kitchens, and circling collapsing perimeter fences. We first encounter the residents framed on a CCTV screen. Their status is uncertain - who are these unidentifiable, voiceless figures milling within these enclosed spaces?

We move quickly to intensely close conversations, revealing individual stories of the residents, from the epic to the everyday. From Congo, Kurdistan, Nigeria, Somalia, Sri Lanka, we hear why people are forced to leave everything they have, and move to a country where they are total strangers. And we learn of the trauma of waiting - living in fear in this bizarre no-mans-land. The small physical details of Mosney become the subject of the camera's close scrutiny, adding to the mood of claustrophobia. The subjects are gradually revealed, building tension and uncertainty. Cautious movement through the garish campgrounds evokes an uneasy suspension, a hanging in limbo, and recalls the ghosts of holiday-makers long gone. Under this close microscope, universal insights emerge.

Character treatment was formed in response to Mosney itself, with the film's modular structure mirroring the architecture of the camp. Although Mosney is an enclosed space housing hundreds of asylum seekers, the uncertainty of their future and often



harrowing histories keeps residents separated, living parallel lives. We seldom see people interacting. Instead everyone is connected visually, each found in separate parts of the theme-park; ballrooms, kitchens, game-rooms, empty swimming pools.

There is no external voiceover and the pacing encourages contemplation. The soundtrack was recorded in the camp, and suggests an underlying unease, a state of long-term waiting. Waiting to be either accepted into Ireland, or sent back to the horror from which you fled.

ENDS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

STILL FILMS COMPANY PROFILE

Founded by Maya Derrington, Nicky Gogan, and Paul Rowley, STILL FILMS is a production company dedicated to producing work of artistic merit. The STILL FILMS team have been working together for over a decade on a wide variety of projects. Our collective experience as a team is far greater than the youthfulness of our company would suggest. Our work together began in 1999 with the founding of the Darklight Film Festival which was set up to support both digital filmmaking and animation in Ireland, and promote Irish filmmakers internationally. During this time we have worked on many new media productions, two features, a number of TV series and shorts, museum and gallery installations and of course run the film festival annually.

The mission of our company is to produce highly creative work using cutting edge technology, and to market our films to the widest audience possible taking full advantage of both traditional and new avenues of distribution. The company focuses on the production of artist films, animations and documentaries. Working on projects from cross platform productions to feature films, we are a forward-looking company that works at the cutting edge of digital technology. We are committed to pursuing new approaches to filmmaking in all genres: drama, documentary, horror, science fiction, and animation. We are dedicated to providing a framework for the development of emerging creative talents and local filmmakers that we have developed relationships with through our work with Darklight. Our work shows around the world, in museum and galleries, as well as at film festivals and cinemas.

PAUL ROWLEY DIRECTOR/PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY AND AWARDS

Paul Rowley is a filmmaker and visual artist. His early short film *Suspension* was awarded a Golden Spire at the San Francisco Film Festival in 1999. In 2000, in collaboration with American artist David Phillips, he won the Glen Dimplex Artists' award, which is the Irish Museum of Modern Art's annual prize for contemporary art. Paul recently won the Irish American Arts Awards, in both the under 35 category and the overall prize.

His projects have received numerous awards from the Irish Arts Council, The Irish Film Board, and New York State Council on the Arts since 1997, and he has made over 25 shorts films and video installations over the last ten years. His first feature film *As Láthair*, which examines colonial histories through re-working of the western genre, was completed in 2002. His first feature documentary *Mosney* was completed in 2007.



His work in commercial film and television production began in 1996 while working in the camera department on stop motion animation shows for Nickelodeon in San Francisco. He went on to work as producer and creative director on jobs for television networks including HBO, ABC, In Demand, Nickelodeon and Showtime. Dividing his time between Dublin and New York, he works regularly as an editor with The Criterion Collection in New York, the foremost distributor of foreign and art-house cinema on DVD in the United States. Recently completed projects include a half hour documentary on Michelangelo Antonioni's L'Eclisse, Tarkovsky's first feature Ivan's Childhood, and an hour long piece on Werner Herzog.

Paul has been artist in residence at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, Florida, with Gillian Wearing, and a fellow at the Macdowell Artist Colony in New Hampshire. A recent fellowship with the Bogliasco Foundation took him to Genoa last spring to work on a new series of videos. Recent gallery and museum exhibitions include Re:mote at the Photographers' Gallery, London, Videonale at the Bonn Kunst Museum, Bambi at the ICA in Philadelphia, and Gravity Loop at the Butler Gallery in Kilkenny Castle.

NICKY GOGAN DIRECTOR/PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY AND AWARDS

Nicky Gogan, a 1993 graduate of the National College of Art and Design, began her professional art career with a number of site specific performances and video works in the early nineties. Having a great interest in new media and the artistic use of technology, she trained at one of the worlds first multimedia companies in the world, Organa in New York, and returned to Ireland to become one of the first instructors in the creative use of technology on the web at Arthouse in 1996.

Nicky is co-founder of Sink Digital Media, a Dublin based new media production company. Sink is a cutting edge creative digital media company, one of the first multimedia companies to tap into the emerging web site and rich content markets. Since its inception in 1997 until 2003, Nicky worked as a new media producer on numerous web based and interactive productions, from brochure websites to 3D animated virtual sets for TV.

During this time Nicky collaborated on web based film and interactive art projects with award winning filmmakers Desperate Optimists. She designed the interfaces and produced the online elements of Map 50 and London Framed, the latter included a live web based version of the film project created in real-time at the ICA London.

Nicky was one of the first active advocates of digital filmmaking in Ireland. She set up the Darklight Film Festival in 1999, which has gone from strength to strength over the past eight years. The Darklight programme is focused on work that challenges; concepts, visual aesthetic, narrative, access, methods of production, distribution and dialogue through contemporary filmmaking techniques. Darklight exhibits work that pushes these boundaries and displays creative excellence. Darklight's mission is to nurture new talent and to create new possibilities for the imagination.

The festival has a broad range of commitments to Irish and international filmmakers and artists working in interesting ways; providing a screening platform for new work, facilitating seminars and workshops, providing networking opportunities for filmmakers and artists and running a national and international touring programme. Darklight have recently initiated an outreach filmmaking programme for teenagers and in 2006 published its first compendium of short films.

Nicky is the chief programmer and director of the Darklight Film Festival, in which capacity she speaks regularly on current developments in film production and media arts, including lecturing at Trinity College Dublin on their Masters in Multimedia programme (MMSA).

As curator in residence at The Digital Hub Nicky produced the Exhibit series of digital art



exhibitions from 2003 to 2005. Acting as moderator and programmer of the Talk Digital seminars that accompany this exhibition series, her programme proved to be hugely popular and has opened up the audience for this emerging genre even further.

Nicky's own creative interests are realised in her capacity as producer and director on short and feature length works with production company Still Films. She produced Paul Rowley's first feature film *As Láthair*. She is currently working with Paul on their first collaborative feature project as co-directors/producers, a feature documentary titled *Mosney* which examines the reality of being an asylum seeker in a rapidly changing Ireland. Still Films is in receipt of Multi Project Development slate funding from the Irish Film Board.

Nicky launched Ireland's first digital film channel for short films, animation and documentary that are particularly suited to small screens, mobile audiences and online services. The Wildlight Channel launched in 2005 and is one of the longest running and largest channels of its type in the world. The service is currently available on cell-phones via Vodafone Ireland and on carriers in Canada, Malaysia and Germany and online channel on Joost (online video platform from Skype).

Nicky is a founding member of DATA, the Dublin Art and Technology Association, a development group to encourage creative dialogue between film, art, and technology. DATA is an exciting informal forum for artists, technologists, musicians, and academia to promote, explore, discuss, and exhibit art and technology in Ireland and the world. DATA holds successful monthly events, with over 100+ attendees each time above the Stags Head Pub in Dublin. It also hosts an expanding emailing-list (about 2000 members) and website, the group has showcased a large body of work including videos and interactive works.

In 2005 Nicky was chosen to represent Ireland as the national expert to select the Irish nominations for the World Summit Awards for eBusiness.

Awards include nomination for 'Multi Media Person of the Year', Digital Media Awards 2003, 2004 and winner of 'Innovation Award' Irish Internet Association Net Visionary Awards 2003. The Wildlight Channel won first prize for mobile content at the 2006 Digital Media Awards and was nominated for Best Made For Mobile TV Channel at the Mipcom audiovisual content market in Cannes.

MAYA DERRINGTON PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

Maya Derrington co-founded Still Films with Nicky Gogan and Paul Rowley on 2006, having worked with them on a range of projects since she moved to Dublin from London in 1996. She is developing a further feature length doc for Still Films, focusing on the lives of teenage girls in a conflict-fraught Dublin flats complex.

Maya has worked in television for seven years, principally with Tyrone Productions. She produced a six part prime time series, *The Master's Apprentice* for RTÉ ONE and a six part music series, *Blastbeat* for RTÉ TWO, both for Tyrone. Other credits include the award winning *Imperfect Day* - an hour long documentary about James Joyce's *Ulysses* with Blueprint Films for RTÉ ONE, the Irish Film and Television Awards, travel series *Wanderlust* and *Charity Queens*, a two part observational documentary for RTÉ ONE 's *True Lives* slot. She has also developed a number of commissioned projects.

In the UK, Maya worked for the BBC and for Bloomsbury Publishing. A graduate of Goldsmiths College, University of London, she is co-founder of *Cow's Lane Fashion* and *Design Market* in Dublin and has written for the *Irish Independent* and the *Radio Times*.