

# Fierce Light

## A Somme Commemoration

'Hide in this battered crumbling line  
Hide in these rude promiscuous graves,  
Till one shall make our story shine  
In the fierce light it craves.'

'The Fierce Light'

Major John Ebenezer Stewart, M.C.



### The Context

The changes wreaked on our world by World War One reached beyond politics, economics and technology into the very fabric of our daily lives, our communities and relationships. It was the artists of that war – perhaps the poets above all – who took on the challenge to make sense of a world transformed almost beyond recognition. As we approach one hundred years since the Battle of the Somme, **Fierce Light** brings together outstanding poets from the UK and around the world to look once more at the forces changing our world and the struggles we face to make sense of them. Newly commissioned work by six prominent poets from a range of those countries engaged at the Somme, will be adapted by exciting filmmakers to create short visual responses.

### Film Commissions

We will commission up to 6 film-makers to respond to and feature these poems in a film or films of 2-5 minutes each. The total budget is £2500 per film, plus expenses. The film-maker will have access to the Imperial War Museum film, photographic and sound archives and may use some of these materials for the films where appropriate (subject to clearance by IWM).

### Poetry Commissions

We have commissioned 6 new works of poetry from high profile UK and international writers, to commemorate the Somme, reflect on Modernism as a literary form, and explore each of their legacies in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Did efforts to respond to and memorialise the incomprehensible Somme demonstrate the impossibility of realism or the absurdness of idealism?

The poets commissioned are Yrsa Daley-Ward, Jackie Kay, Bill Manhire, Paul Muldoon, Daljit Nagra, and Jo Shapcott.

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We're keen for Fierce Light to reach the widest possible audience, and to explore how the poetry can live and speak to people in a range of contexts, from the exhibition hall and cinema to the morning commute to work.

Fierce Light will premiere at the Norfolk & Norwich Festival in May 2016, featuring an event with poets and filmmakers, and an exhibition of the poetry and films. We will then be exploring the legacy of Fierce Light, with BBC Radio, Channel 4, as well as literature festivals and digital exhibitions.

For more information and to discuss the commission and project, please contact: Sam Ruddock on (+44) 01603 877177 or [sam.ruddock@writerscentrenorwich.org.uk](mailto:sam.ruddock@writerscentrenorwich.org.uk)

### Timeline

by Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> February	Filmmakers and poets paired.
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> February	Deadline for delivery of commissioned poems
w/c 29 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Poets recording readings of commission. Passed to filmmakers immediately
Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> April	Deadline for delivery of films
w/c 18 <sup>th</sup> April	Post production of films
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> May	Fierce Light exhibition opens at East Gallery, Norwich
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> May	Fierce Light event at Norwich Playhouse

### Basic spec

Length of film	2-5 minutes each
Resolution	4K widescreen for potential use in cinemas and a variety of projectors
Audio	High quality. A suitable recording of the poet reading their poem will be supplied. Whether this is used or not in the film is up to you.