



EXPLORING
THE
EMOTIONAL,
SOCIAL

AND

SEEING
LIBRARIES
DIFFERENTLY



IMAGI-
NA-
TIVE
IMPACT
OF

LIBRARIES

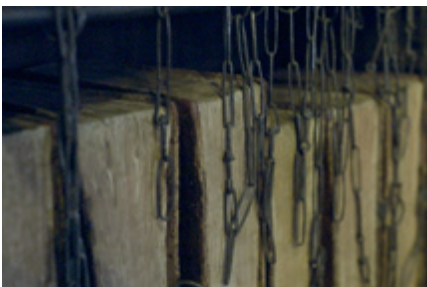
THROUGH



Reading brings worlds
from elsewhere



into collision with the
here and now.





Libraries organise desires
so desires can



hide in plain sight.





We associate collections of knowledge and systems for memory retrieval with silence. silence with permanence because silence is an eternal prospect.



FILMOGRAPHY

Libraries have been a topic, location or cue for an extraordinary range of moving image works by artists, made and screened in various formats and settings. Film curator and producer Will Rose and I compiled the following list of some of the most inventive contemporary examples. We are sharing it here as a public resource to be added to, adapted or simply enjoyed. The list is organised alphabetically by artist surname and colour-coded into three groups according to broad themes that seem common to the works selected and the Seeing Libraries Differently project. The red group all study the history of particular libraries, their collections or users, to somehow reflect on the social and emotional value of libraries and library cultures. The blue group all experiment with the audio-visual representation of reading and readers, creating playful tensions between watching, capturing, speaking and writing for film-makers and audiences alike. The green group all respond imaginatively to a particular experience of a library or a holding, playing on an idea or image seeded by that experience to create something new, treating the library as a starting point rather than an end. Of course, most are a mix of all three.

These Silences Are All the Worlds (2018)

Madiha Aijaz

15.00 min

Casimê Celil (2021)

Celil Badikanlı

55.00 min

From Source to Poem (2016)

Rosa Barba

12.00 min

Mutzenbacher (2022)

Ruth Beckermann

100 min

A Beautiful Living Thing (2015)

Ross Birrell

14.00 min

Alphabetically Sorted (1994)

Rebecca Bollinger

05.30 min

In Real Time (1999)

Janet Cardiff

18.00 min

A Needle in the Binding (2011)

Beatrice Catanzaro

122.20 min (in 3 parts)

The Reading Room (2002)

Stephen Connolly

02.50 min

Tearing (2018)

Neil Cummings & Marysia Lewandowska

06.34 min

Ex Library (2009)

William English

20.52 min

Toute la mémoire du monde (2006)

Nina Fischer & Maroan el Sani

07.00 min

Mum's Cards (2018)

Luke Fowler

09.03 min

Fourdrinier Machine Interlude (2010)

Aurelien Froment

07.36 min

The Joycean Society (2013)

Dora Garcia

53.00 min

La Eterna (2017)

Dora Garcia

49.00 min

Secret History of the Dividing Line, A True Account in Nine Parts (1996–)

David Gatten

Ongoing

Perfect Film (1986)

Ken Jacobs

21.45 min

All the Memory in the World (2016)

Farah Khelil & Antoine Lefebvre Edition

12.12 min

Dirty Bitch (2009)

Sun Koh

13.42 min

Alfalpha (1987)

Richard Kwietniowski

08.49 min

University Library (2004)

Rosalind Nashashibi

08.00 min

Cathay (2010)

Lisa Oppenheim

07.30 min

The Golem - An Inanimate Matter (2018)

People Like Us (aka Vicki Bennett)

02.00 min

Available Light (2016)

William Raban

09.21 min

Pulp: A Short Biography of the Banished Book (2014–)

Shubigi Rao

Ongoing

Anal Masturbation & Object Loss (2002)

Steve Reinke

05.54 min

Lost Libraries (2018)

Abigail Reynolds

19.00 min

Rosebud (2013)

James Richards

12.57 min

What's the Time in Vyborg (2004)

Liisa Roberts

87.38 min

What I Am Looking At (2011)

Marie Shannon

07.11 min

Crushed

Tan Siyou

02.11 min

6 Essential Books (2008)

Stephen Sutcliffe

02.00 min

Heavy Metal Sharks Calming Jaws

Reversal Film (2011)

Jennifer West

06.47 min



The silence of a library is an endless murmur





of caring practices.

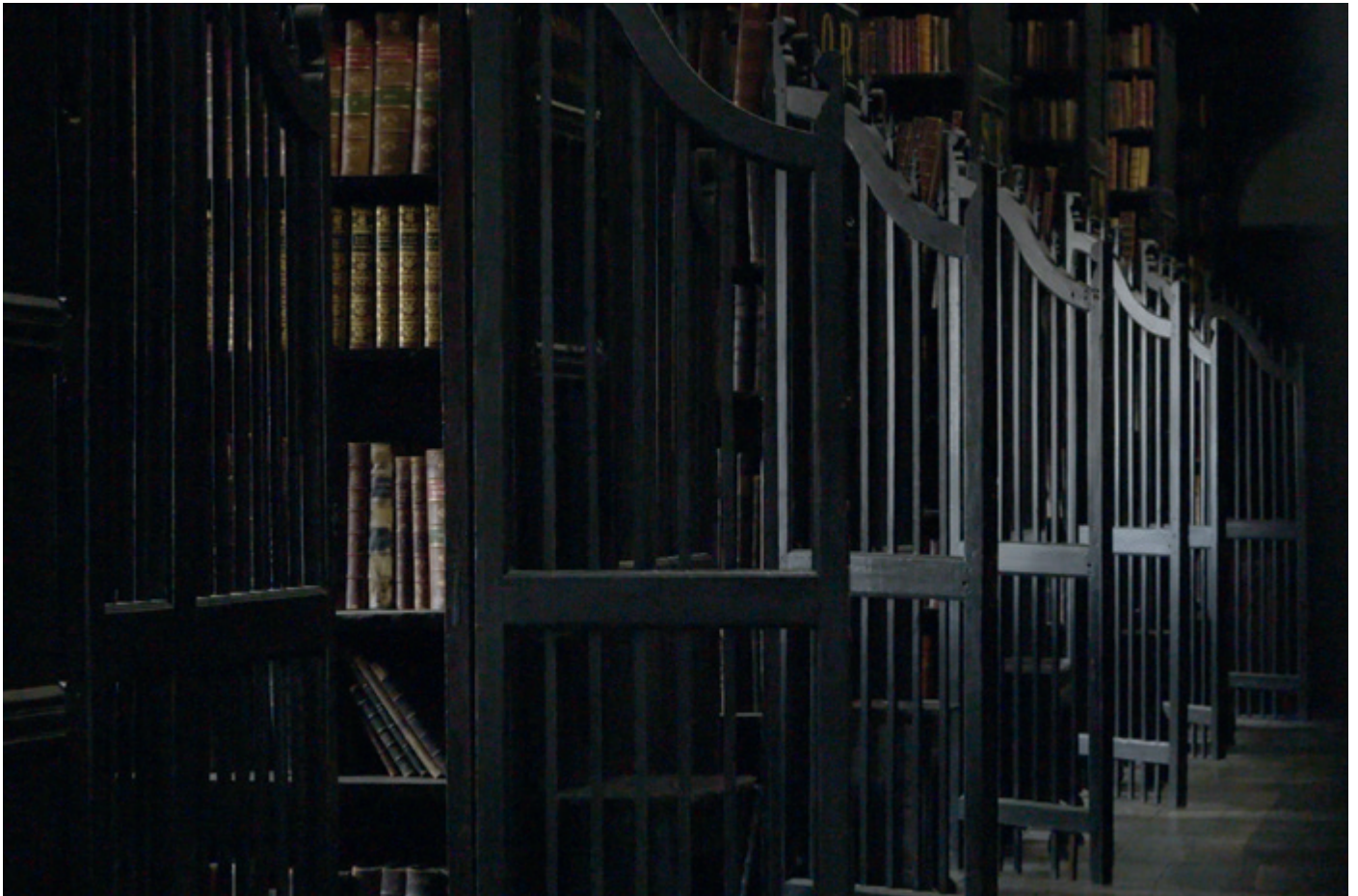


of mute communication.





Librarians
are custodians of

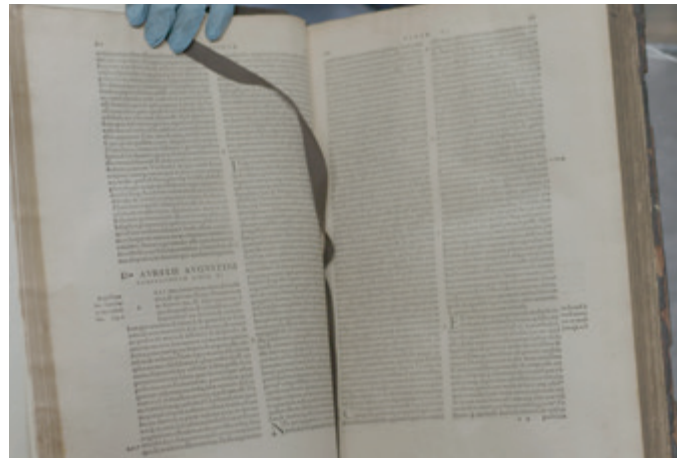




an
infinite



conversation



THE building that houses Chetham's Library was constructed as a college for priests in 1421 and adapted into a library in 1653. It has been free to use as a public reference resource ever since. From its ground-floor cloisters to the digitisation equipment in an upstairs store room, its architecture, furniture and holdings record their own complete story of modern literacy development.

FOR years I have been thinking about the relationship between art and libraries – about how art might help us to see the life of particular libraries in new ways, and how art might help us to imagine different future forms of public library – and often dreamt about Chetham's, the oldest public library in the English-speaking world. One day in April 2021, as the librarians prepared to re-open the place from lockdown, I stopped thinking and just watched with a camera. I was looking for a story about the history of reading, the organisational logic of the library and the layered forms of attention that libraries are designed to enable. Instead, we saw the extraordinary practices of care being exercised by those people who quietly preserve public access to the place, its things, its histories and its opportunities.

THE film we eventually created from all that footage is called Tender Silences. It is short and noiseless and you can stream a version for free. Hidden in the subtitles is a prose-poem written in four pairs of sentences. Together, the film and this newspaper tell the story I think we saw. The filmography in this newspaper points to a history of other artists asking the same questions with the same means but coming to a host of different answers, each of us seeing libraries differently.

Nick Thurston, 2022

Chetham's Library, Manchester

SEEING LIBRARIES DIFFERENTLY

A project by Nick Thurston
Developed with Chetham's Library, Manchester
Presented for the Festival of Libraries, 2022
Dedicated to Simon Morris and Craig Dworkin
In fond memory of Michael Powell
Curated by Fergus Wilde
Special thanks to Claire Batt and Laura Bryer

TENDER SILENCES

Stream at www.bit.ly/seeing-libraries-differently
Director of Photography, Dominic Joyce
Video Editing, Jennifer Handley and Will Rose
Text with Craig Dworkin
Colour Grading, Jason Moffat
Titling, Karanjit Panesar and Anya Stewart Maggs

THIS NEWSPAPER

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Filmography with Will Rose
Text with Craig Dworkin
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