

SEARCHLIGHT

DUSK (18.45 -19.15)

9. 10. 2021.



RIVER FOYLE / BANBAS CROWN, MALIN HEAD.



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SEARCHLIGHT was an innovative, immersive project that engaged with refugee and migrant communities to reflect on the concept of borders at a local and international level. It was developed in collaboration with the Donegal Intercultural Platform and Donegal Refugee Resettlement project. **SEARCHLIGHT** developed exchange about surveillance that is visible and invisible. It created dialogue around the local border topology and redefined the notion of cultural practice in a public space with a specific historic and post-conflict fabric, within the tensions of larger global events.

It created a reflective space for dialogue to emerge around the themes of crossing borders and transnational identity. Testimonies were gathered from Syrian, Iraqi, Kurdish, Sudanese, Palestinian, Roma (migrants/refugees) and the Traveller community. *HOME-LAND (Albalad Alam)*, a collaborative soundwork was produced, which echo's the Arabic call to prayer in music performed by the Syrian Ex-Pat Philharmonic Orchestra.

SEARCHLIGHT culminated in a large-scale nocturnal event at Banbas Crown, Malin Head, Irelands most northerly point. It used a specifically commissioned helicopter equipped with a searchlight to fill the skies in a light projection event, which illuminated the aeronautical border line in the River

Foyle, where connotations of their use in surveillance still remain. SEARCHLIGHT also engaged innovative broadcast technology, to develop new language around border demarcation.

As HOME-LAND (*Albalad Alam*) emanated from the Look-Out Posts at Malin Head. Just on dusk at (6.45 pm) the (artist-team) used radio broadcast to communicate with the helicopter pilot. This live event created a form of visual choreography with light. The pilot was instructed to fly in a northerly direction on a route along the now (EU) international border line in the River Foyle. When the helicopter reached Bambas Crown, it dropped to (500 ft) and hovered in designated areas to cast beams of light across the sky. This nocturnal event signaled the end of light on that day. *

Conceptually the beam of light formed a transient and temporary sculptural form. The ephemeral nature of SEARCHLIGHT raises intriguing questions around artistic permanence as it will remain in the imagination long after it was removed from a traditional audience's view.

SEARCHLIGHT facilitated new ways for non-traditional and new audiences to engage with the project. Audiences looked up to the sky to view the work from designated areas, at Malin Head, it was also be visible to cross-border communities along the River Foyle. There was also live streaming of the event on all our social media channels, to attract new audiences nationally and internationally. SEARCHLIGHT has strong metaphorical power in terms of how we engaged with aspects of place, surveillance and contested histories.

**Aviation's' international official night time occurs (35-40) min after sunset, dusk is the time between sunset and dark.*

COLLABORATORS:

Inishowen Development Partnership, Francine Blanche Breen, (Donegal Intercultural Platform/ Donegal Travellers project), Fadl Mustapha, Eyad Meshael, (Resettlement Support Workers), Changemakers, Malin Head Community Association, Glengad Community Association, Culdaff Community Association, Greencastle Community Association, Maritime Museum Greencastle, Binevenagh-Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust, Executive Helicopters, Charter Service, Galway.

