

From the Culch

A documentary short edited from the bin cuts of a lost BBC documentary that was shot in Cornwall in 1978.

The film has screened alongside Q&As and panel discussions at film festivals, community events and academic conferences in 2023, 2024 and 2025.

Paul Mulraney

Research Theme - Practice: Research and Impact



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Project details

From the Culch (2023)

Dir: Paul Mulraney | 17mins |

Documentary | UK

- Shot in 1975, edited in 2023, premiered at Cornwall Film Festival, November 2023.
- Partners: Seamonster Media, Sound/Image Cinema Lab, The BBC, Alive Studios
- Staff Collaborators: Dr Kingsley Marshall (composer), Andrew Edney (sound)
- R&I Programme Alignment: Practice: Research and Impact, SICL



300-word supporting statement

From the Culch is assembled from the bin cuts of a 1975 BBC documentary about the Fal River oyster fishery. After the documentary was broadcast a can of 16mm film was given to Dennis Laity, crewman on the working boat *George Glasson*, as a memory of his brother who passed away just after shooting wrapped. The can of film lay in Dennis's airing cupboard for nearly 50 years, unseen, before being passed to the director, Paul Mulraney. A 4K digital scan revealed the beauty captured in the celluloid and Dennis, 82, gave voice to his memories of the men and boats that dredged the Carrick Roads.

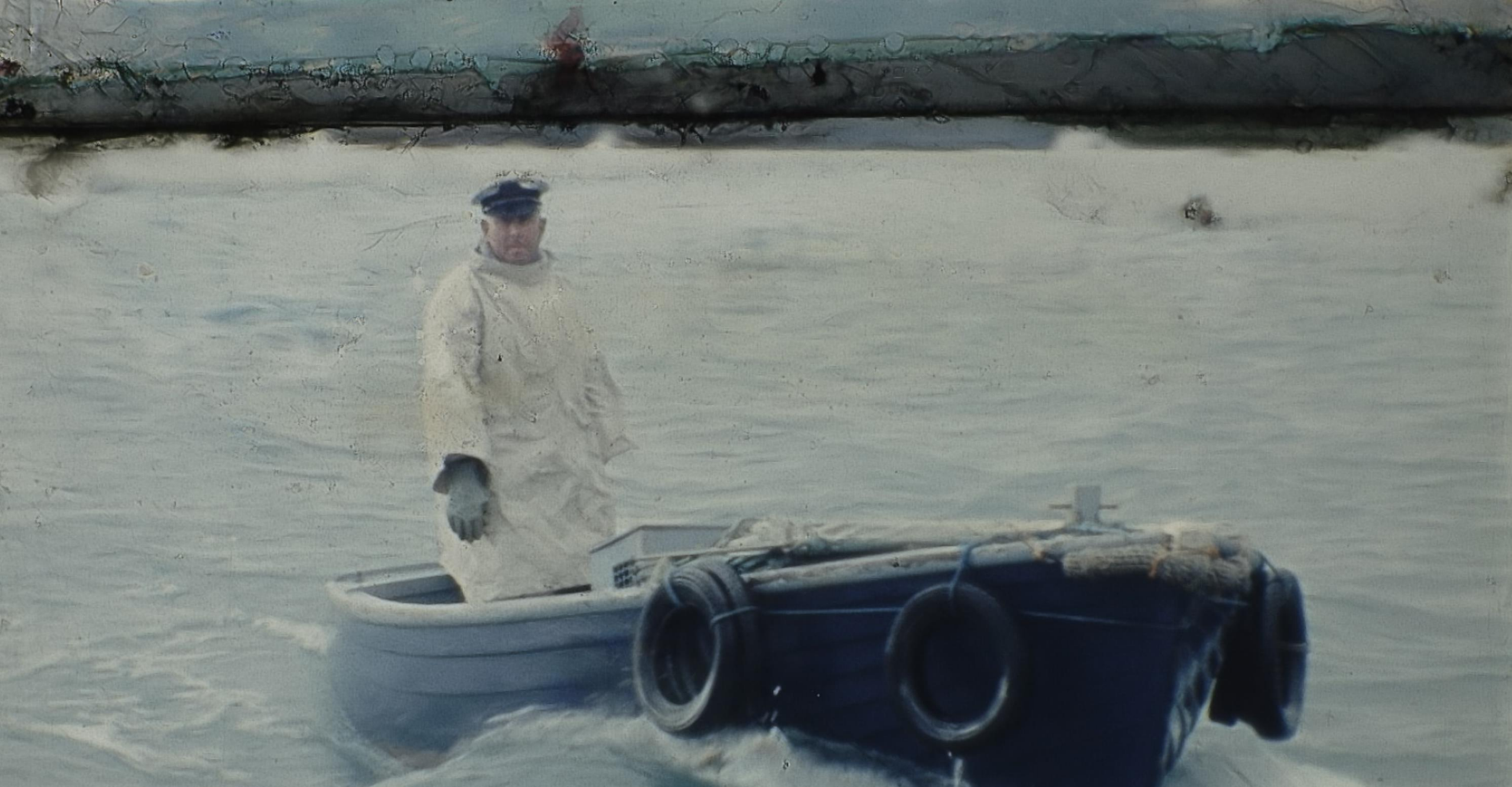
Working with Falmouth University technicians and scholars, Alive Studios in Plymouth for the restoration, and the BBC archive team for licensing and archival research, the film is created as a collaboration with the Laity family in the village of Flushing, as an act of remembering for the community, and as a eulogy for a threatened way of life.

The film sits within the wider context of academic and director Paul Mulraney's *Vernacular Films* project, an area of practice-based research that explores community filmmaking as a means of telling marginal stories.

Academic outputs have included screening and paper *Harvested from Bin Cuts*, delivered at the BFI Southbank FIAT/IFTA *Rethinking Broadcast Archives* symposium. This led to the BBC archive team's interest in the project, and the discovery of the original documentary - long thought lost - in the BBC Fabric archive. This paper was published as an article in [View Journal](#), *Lost in the Archives, Found in the Community*, on 31/12/25.

The paper and workshop *Death in the Celluloid*, delivered to Falmouth University's *DeathxDesignxCulture* conference, explored film's capacity to store and communicate grief, analysing the place that grief has in eco-cinema, and the ethics of using personal grief to evoke environmental grief.

Screenings at environmental festivals, in sailing club events, and curated screening programmes, have brought the film back to diverse audiences, offering a chance for director Q&A, audience discussion on the film's themes, while returning an important piece of history to the community. BBC Upload ran a feature on the film and its creative process that can be found on BBC Sounds at: www.bbc.co.uk/sounds



From the Culch, *The Bailiff* (Paul Mulraney, 2023)

Research Output

From the Culch can be viewed at:

<https://vimeo.com/792259305>

View Magazine, Lost in the Archives, Found in the Community:

<https://viewjournal.eu/articles/10.18146/view.366#abstract>

A recording of the paper *Harvested From Bincuts*, presented at the BFI Southbank's FIAT/IFTA Media Studies Seminar 2023:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCelAiMBas&list=PLDsGt8W90ecDMmyCwsOnuafwigZWLoKYu&index=1&ab_channel=FIATIFTA

The Vernacular Films project page:

<https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/research/projects/vernacular-films>



The original can of 16mm film, From the Culch, courtesy Seamonster Media.



From the Culch, *The George Glas* (Paul Mulraney, 2023)

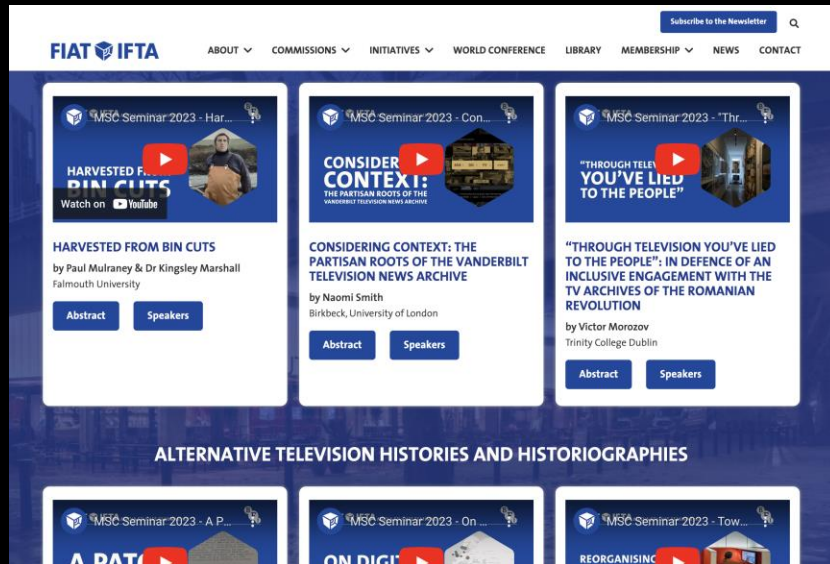
Dissemination

- Test screening and Q&A: *Flushing Sailing Club* (March 2023)
- Screening: *Falmouth Oyster Festival* (October 2023) – Rolling screening throughout the weekend
- Screening: *Cornwall Film Festival: Tides of Connection* (November 2023) – Public premiere in a themed screening
- Screening and Q&A: *Porthtowan Ocean Film Festival*, St. Agnes Marine Conservation Society (November 2023)
- Screening & Academic Paper: *Media Studies Seminar, FIAT/IFTA Rethinking Broadcast Archives: Dig, Deconstruct, Display*, BFI Southbank, London (December 2023) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clCelAiMBas&list=PLDsGt8W90ecDMmyCwsOnuafwjgZWLoKYu&index=1&ab_channel=FIATIFTA
- Screening and Q&A: *99p Films: Seas of Change*, Falmouth Pavilion (April 2024)
- Academic Paper & Workshop: *DeathxDesignxCulture Conference*, Falmouth University (September 2024)
- Screening and Q&A: *DeathxDesignxCulture Screening Programme*, The Poly (September 2024)
- Screening: American Association of Geographers AGM, Honolulu, US (April 2024), <https://www.filmgeographies.com/video/from-the-culch/>
- Screening: *AGM featured screening*, The Poly (November 2024)
- Screening: *Hedges & Oysters: Cornish Shorts*, The Poly (January 2025)
- Interview and Feature: *Paul Mulraney*, BBC Upload/ BBC Sounds (January 2025) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0khw391>
- Article: *From the Culch: Lost in the archives, found in the community*, View Journal (December 2025) <https://viewjournal.eu/articles/10.18146/view.366#abstract>
- Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/792259305>

| General Dissemination | Community Dissemination | International Dissemination |



Contextual Evidence



Promo for the paper *Harvested From Bincuts*, at the BFI Southbank



Director's paper and Q&A at the BFI Southbank:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cICelAiMBas&list=PLDsGt8W90ecDMmyCwsOnuafwjgZWLoKYu&index=1&ab_channel=FIATIFTA

"Very much enjoyed the peacefulness of the imagery and commentary. Started a reflection on the sense of honesty within both, in comparison with the manipulation now inherent in the "documentary" form. Watching, there's no doubt about the truthfulness within, so one relaxes into trusting these fragments."

Kirk Tougas (Cinematographer, *The Corporation*, *Manufacturing Consent* / Dir. *The Politics of Perception*)

Contextual Evidence (cont)



24 CHURCH ST, FALMOUTH : 01326 319461
THE ROYAL CORNWALL POLYTECHNIC SOCIETY

WHAT'S ON? THE GUILD SHOP ARCHIVES GET INVOLVED ABOUT US CONTACT

FILMS // COMING UP // CFF: TIDES OF CONNECTION: A CORNWALL WATERWAYS ODYSSEY

19

NOVEMBER
SUNDAY
7:30PM

CFF: TIDES OF CONNECTION: A CORNWALL WATERWAYS ODYSSEY

Dive into the captivating world of Tides of Connection: A Cornwall Waterways Odyssey, an immersive event that beautifully explores our deep...



Promo for the film's screening in the 'Tides of Connection' event in the 2023 Cornwall Film Festival

Time	Session 2	Duration
3:45pm	Spin Cycles and Life Cycles Director: Monty Halls Microplastics and microfibres, and how your weekly wash introduces the equivalent of a carrier bag worth of microfibres into the marine environment. We take a look at the efforts of a surfer, turned inventor, who may have just solved the problem...	16
	Seaweed Stories Director: Richard Draisey Introducing two members of our St Agnes Marine Conservation Group, the 'Seaweed Sisters' Jo Polack and Angie Gall, this film tells of how the pair got through lockdown and grew a science and art collaboration.	5
	The Wave Project Director: Luke Pilbeam 1 in 6 children in the UK struggles with their social, emotional or mental health. This film shows how the fantastic local charity, The Wave Project, is changing this through combining the therapeutic elements of the ocean with the adventure of surfing and a supportive culture of acceptance to help children do things they never thought possible.	4
	Morvoren Seythen (The Seaton Mermaid-Kernewek) Production company: Bosena Director: Holly Summerson The story of the Seaton Mermaid. One of a series of animations commissioned for the MAZED project that collects culturally distinct stories of place, to see them told again in ways old and new.	2
	A Ruined Past, A Future Rebuilt Director: Lauren Holford A short film about how nature has reclaimed sites formerly degraded by mining along the North Cornish coastline. Filmed around St Agnes, this is a story of recovery, redemption and renewal. In a marginal land that was once gutted and scarred, ecosystems have re-established and previously lost species are thriving, providing hope for the regeneration of wild spaces elsewhere.	6
	From the Culch Production company: Seamonster Media Director: Paul Mulraney Assembled from the offcuts of a lost 1978 BBC documentary about the Truro oyster fishery, this production presents work, love, and loss of time and memory, of dog biscuits and sideburns – and the discarded bin cuts grew into the film you see today.	17

Promo in the Porthtowan Ocean Film Festival programme



Director's Q&A at the Porthtowan Ocean Film Festival

“From the Culch was an important film for the festival as it brought such a different perspective to the audience. It was poignant and moving and, though based on historical footage, it was still so relevant as that fishery, the last of its kind, still operates today. One of the key features of the festival was hearing from the filmmakers themselves and this was highly valued by the audience in the feedback. Having Paul present to meet people in the intervals and take part in the Q&A sessions was integral to the success of a project that one hundred percent of respondents said they would like to see repeated.”

Angela Gall (Festival Organiser, Director St Agnes Marine Conservation Society)

Contextual Evidence (feedback)

Will you make any changes in your life as a result of seeing the films?

- I was pledging to get involved in Seaquest and seagrass surveys
- I thought the seagrass project was super interesting so will research that a bit more.
- Looking for an outflow filter.
- Maybe volunteer in some capacity apart from beach cleans
- Possibly, I have been searching for a new career/ possibly studying again, and find events like these very inspiring and mind opening, and hopefully they will guide me in new direction (purpose)
- Get more involved with the local community
- I hope to join some of the events run by the group.
- Yes
- Yes several things to change
- Yes. We are going to get a filter for our washing machine
- I already do beach and village cleans whenever possible, I recycle as much as possible and try to do things to protect the environment. I will now look at different ways of doing my weekly washing.

Collated audience feedback, Porthtowan Ocean Film Festival



BBC SOUNDS Menu

From: **Upload with Daniel Pascoe**

The 1975 BBC documentary brought back to life

Available for over a year

'From the Culch' is a short film made from the offcuts of a 50 year old BBC documentary.

Interview and feature on BBC Radio/ BBC Sounds