

OF WALKING ON THIN ICE: Camino to COP

How to Organise and Execute a Screening Event

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Background

This brief document seeks to set out how you might go about organising and executing a screening event for OF WALKING ON THIN ICE.

OF WALKING ON THIN ICE is a film made by Benjamin Wigley, following the 500-mile journey (Camino to COP26) made on foot by hundreds of climate activists from Bristol and London to Glasgow for the COP26 Climate Conference in November 2021.

In September 2022, OF WALKING ON THIN ICE was walked 135 miles from London to Bristol for its premiere at the Encounters Film Festival on 27th of that month.

[Press Release](#)

[Guardian Article](#)

OF WALKING ON THIN ICE is a beautiful film which captures the spirit of hope in action embodied by the Camino, and the community of care and connection that was formed on this journey. The film shows us not only how we can advocate and influence but also BE the change that we want for our world.

We believe that the important message of the film makes it a valuable vehicle with which to continue our conversations about the climate crisis and what we can do about it. We think this is in line with XR's Project 3.5 efforts and can be a useful engagement and mobilisation tool in the run up to April 2023.

There will be a number of screening events held to coincide with COP27 (6th - 18th November 2022) which we hope will allow many of our Camino community and supporters to see the film. The short film version will also show in Egypt as part of the Culture COP27's Art Hub. After that we hope to distribute the film as widely as possible, all over the country, on foot where possible, via community screenings, gallery / cinema screenings, and arts / film / environment festivals.

Guiding Principle of a Screening Event: The Power of the Moment

We are committed to maximising the potential of each screening event, to encourage people to be champions for the project and the cause, to empower them to collaborate and act. We refer to this as The Power of the Moment.

When we all walked to Glasgow together, a beautiful community was formed. We walked and talked, shared our stories and our thoughts, making deep connections and bonds... but we also helped each other physically, tended to injuries, cooked and cleaned for each other, we recycled and composted, we washed and mended. Importantly, no one was unheard - we debriefed

regularly and tackled numerous tricky situations through active listening and discussion. In short, we tended to the collective and no participant stood outside of that. In this way, the elements of a screening event may include: walking, conversation, shared food, activities such as drumming or flag-making, post-film Q&A and discussion and being together, in person, to watch the film.

This is our guiding principle and indeed it is our only one. There is no proforma for how to build and stage an event. You know your communities best and we seek to meet your community wherever they are.

As such, the following is not a checklist but a collection of ideas that you might want to consider. This process is evolving and we are learning all the time... which means this document will be changing as more things come up, as we make mistakes and learn, and as new situations arise.

Things to Think About

1. Screening Venue:

The inspiration for the entire 'walked' film experience as a distribution method for the film project OF WALKING ON THIN ICE was born from the 'rough cut' screenings held within the community centres (Carlisle and Blantyre) at the end of the Camino to COP. The physical experience of the walk, the weather worn skin, sodden clothing hung to dry, the hot food, the community pulling the chairs around and watching the film all together... A film that talks of community as the place where the answer lies to build a better future, that is presented in a community setting, allowing opportunity for conversation, support and love to grow.

So the film being walked, and then presented in a grassroots community space is really a very specific intention inherent within the idea.

The World Premiere was a dramatic extension of this idea by projecting on the side of the old Lloyds building in the amphitheatre in Bristol for the Encounters Film Festival. This is also true for the Brunel Museum (projected in the engineered tunnel with headphones on). So, idiosyncratic film screening venues/presentations will really suit this film.

Alongside this grassroots/artistic method of presentation, it is also important for the film to be considered in cinema and festival spaces. The film is finished well, beautifully produced, and the full sound and picture experience with a high quality presentation changes the film experience. So we are also looking for gallery space cinemas, arthouse cinemas, film festivals, and also other multidisciplinary art festivals (music / literature / climate).

- a. What is your venue's capacity? Is this seated or standing?
- b. How will people get there and back?
- c. Is there space for discussion / activities / sharing food?

2. Screening Date and Time:

Some screening events may take place as part of an existing festival or series of climate-related or arts-related events. If this is the case, please let us know your dates as soon as you can. We think that in an ideal world each screening event would have a lead time of around two months or more so that it can be publicised adequately.

In terms of the time that you would like to screen the film, this can happen to suit the walk that you may 'build in' as part of the entire 'walked film' experience. We mostly watched the film in the evening after a full day's walking. Usually we slept in the same room that we screened the film, and that was also the space where we ate together. But it may suit your audience to walk in the morning, eat lunch together and watch the film together afterwards. There is no specific template. It needs to work for the community, which is also the point of the film. There is no one right answer to solve the climate crisis universally; we each need to look at our own individual communities and see what response is possible. Similarly, each film screening is likely to be unique.

- a. Is there a particular month / week / day that would suit your community for a screening?
- b. What timings would suit your venue / community?

3. Walking the Film:

The physical activity of the walk is an important aspect to the experience. When a participant undergoes the outside experience of the walk an entire bodily journey is experienced. The outside world, the weather, temperature, energy, the air that is breathed and the conversation with fellow travellers is an important aspect in the sharing of the film.

Filmmaker Ben Wigley conceived and created the 'Film Staff' which literally carries the film (neatly and securely stashed on a USB memory device inside the staff). No single individual will be able to walk this film on foot as a distribution method and reach all of the communities who are asking to host the film. The Film Staff is a symbol of the journey made. There may be a case that multiple Staffs, or something else that is in keeping with the project, may be created in order to share more widely. It's important that this symbolism doesn't become a rod for our backs, as we need this message and this film to be disseminated as widely as possible. However we learned during the Camino to COP that we don't just want to ride the crest of a wave, but we want to grow deep roots and go at a sustainable pace so that we have longevity. This is a big problem of modern life, which this film attempts to pull into focus.

We hope to use the original route to Glasgow from Bristol / London as a river that runs through our distribution plan, and from which tributaries of screening and walking opportunities flow. We hope to be in Scotland in the Summer of 2023.

Time spent walking is always time well spent. We are able to help put together a walk with you, but you know your community and your landscape best.

- a. Where might a film walk take your community before a screening of this film?
- b. What sort of distance / pace might be suitable?

4. Activities / Workshops

During our walk to Glasgow, we hosted almost as many outreach events as there were nights slept on the floors of the community spaces in which we stayed. The formula was simple and participative: we shared our stories, talked about what has led us to walk 500 miles to Glasgow and we invited our guests to think about their own journeys and what had brought them to that conversation in that space.

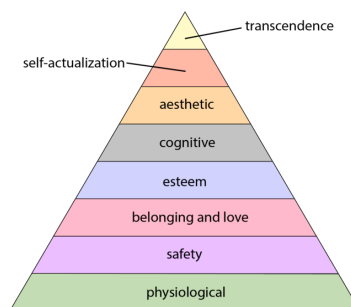
We love to share activities that everyone can take part in. This could be (and has been) as simple as writing our hopes for our planet on a ribbon, block-printing a flag or an item of clothing or making music with samba drumming and singing.

Within our toolkit, we can facilitate workshops based on climate FRESK-work and / or active hope and we have experience delivering sessions with primary schools, secondary schools, church groups and social groups. We can help you to tailor an event to suit your community.

- a. Who will your audience be?
- b. What space will you have for activities?

5. Sharing Food / Hospitality

The whole 'walked' experience is an important aspect of our expanded cinema film project. Eating, cooking, clearing up the dishes... are all parts of the community project that will contribute to a fuller experience. It's always good to eat something after walking and no one wants our audience to sit watching the film hungry! We'd like to refer to Abraham Maslow's Pyramid of needs (written in his paper 'A Theory of Human Motivation', something that is sometimes used in progressive pedagogy/child development). We are looking to achieve a status of self-actualisation and perhaps even transcendence (within a film/art experience). Therefore, all of our 'basic needs' need to be met. We want to create a 'homeostasis' in our audience to be able to immerse ourselves in the best / fullest way possible which, we hope, in turn will motivate the audience.



- a. What catering / food sharing ideas do you have? Or have capacity for?
- b. What facilities does your venue have?

6. Q&A / Discussion

It's impossible to imagine the huge variety of questions that may arise from watching OF WALKING ON THIN ICE. But giving people an opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions after watching the film is an essential part of the experience. Our experience of watching the film with people who haven't seen it before or were not a part of the Camino is that they are often moved to tears.

Consider:

It may be helpful for someone other than the organiser to be in charge of the Q and A session. It can be challenging to deal with the practicalities of screening the film and then to be present to the needs of the audience. It could be another member of your team or even a sympathetic person who understands the issues.

- A short period of reflection; invite people to reflect, in silence, for a few seconds, on their emotional response to what they have seen. Remind them of the (short?) walk they have shared in arriving at the venue
- Alternatively, split the audience into small groups and invite them to share their responses. It may be easier for people to share in pairs or small groups as it can be daunting to speak in front of a large group especially if they are experiencing strong feelings after the film. Some people may be more open to share in the large group having spoken in a smaller group.
- Invite questions from the floor. These may be about technical aspects of the film production, about climate change generally, about COP26 and what has been achieved since (if anything).
- Conclude with a discussion on "action". This may vary depending on the timing of the event but may focus on a specific upcoming event e.g. XR's call to action in April 2023, or encouraging individuals to step up their climate action, or to become a 'Film Bearer' and organise a screening in another community.
- 15 minutes may be the limit of how long people wish to sit having seen the film.

Technical aspects of producing the film

There are likely to be technical questions about how the film was made. You can reference the press release [here](#), but essentially:

- The film was made on hand-crank 16mm celluloid film camera (BOLEX)
- The black and white images were processed in chemistry in a lab at Ben Wigley's home
- The colour images were processed with Kodak at their lab
- All the images were scanned digitally and edited on the computer
- The sound was recorded while we walked, a combination of binaural sound recording (by placing microphones in his ears, Ben made sound recordings that have a true 3D spatial quality to the soundscape when listened back by the audience on headphones, for example, if the sound of the coin rolling is around the feet of the filmmaker is recorded, the sound of the coin - in the film - will be heard around the feet of the audience listening) and single mono recording with a shotgun microphone.

- Tom Hill did the original music that features toward the end. And much of the other songs are recorded live along the walk. Barbara's 'Coat of Hopes' song was recorded in the hall in Blantyre on the last day surrounded by the XR Walkers. Hear the full Caministas choir sing after being trained throughout the walk... they sound so wonderful!
- Ben Wigley arranged a guitar part for the 'Coat of Hopes' song that was recorded separately and used in the edit around the halfway point.
- Because the sound and the picture are completely separate, they are never in sync which creates a poetic film work, and also means one works as a visual artist and a soundscape artist in a very separate way.
- The camera layering of imagery and special effects are done in the camera itself (not in post production) inspired by 'Man with a Camera' the 1929 film by Vertov.
- The film title 'Of Walking On Thin Ice' is inspired by the book called 'Of Walking In Ice' by Werner Herzog, who's short-sharp-jagged and direct prose inspired the way the images were captured on film.

The original journey, Camino to COP (www.caminotocop.com).

- This was a 56-day, 500 mile walk from London and Bristol to Glasgow in which over a thousand people participated. We stayed in community venues all the way and held conversations with our hosts and their communities about climate justice.

Questions about the crisis of climate and nature

- Be aware of the latest science and environmental reports
- Have sign-up details for local XR groups and XR Walkers

How individuals can respond

- We hope that by immersing themselves in the Camino experience people realise that "doing nothing" is not an option. Inaction by the majority permits the powers-that-be to renege on their promises to act. Happily, there are many options to "do something".
- Encourage people to step up their action beyond revising their personal activities and behaviour, through a range of safe activities e.g. writing to MPs, becoming active in environmental groups and helping to make their local communities more resilient.
- Encourage them to consider non-violent direct action and to challenge climate complacency.
- Invite suitable people to become volunteer film-bearers.

- a. What format would you suggest for the post-film Q&A/discussion?
- b. Would you use a facilitator? Who?
- c. Would you use a panel? Who?

7. Technical Requirements:

Every screening event will be different. When organising the screening you will need to consider:

- a. Is your venue equipped to screen a film?
- b. Are both the projection and speaker systems adequate?
- c. Do you need to hire additional equipment? And how will you cover the cost of that?

Venues with cinematic equipment may have projecting equipment and speaker systems set up already. Speak to the venue to find out if you will have someone helping set up or if you will have to learn how to use the system yourself.

In **community based venues** you may need to create your own set up. This may include a projector, laptop, amp and speakers. Please always check with your venue what screening equipment is available when you are deciding on your booking.

a. Downloading the film

In both cases, you will need to make sure you download a copy of the film to play yourself or to send to the venue in advance to play on their system. There are two file format versions available: Quicktime PRORES MOV and H.264.

Quicktime PRORES MOV

The film's highest quality file format is a Quicktime PRORES MOV that is 2K (around 80GB in size). If you plan to screen in a cinema venue, this would be the best format. The venue will need to directly download the file or a copy will need to be sent to you on harddrive or USB from Ben W or Helen L. Please let Helen know in advance if you may need to get a PRORES copy.

H.264

The most common viewed file will probably be the H.264 version (built in Quicktime) at 2K. To get a copy, you will need to request a vimeo download link from Helen L or Ben W to download the 18GB file. If this file is too large you can get a smaller compressed version that is not as good quality that Vimeo produces and plays through its webplayer.

b. Before the screening

Please allow at least 2 days to download or copy from a USB / external drive to your laptop. Make sure that you have enough space (GBs free in your memory) to store the film file.

Make sure to test the film plays on your laptop before the screening. If your computer can't play the film or recognise the file format, you may want to download free software: VLC - <https://www.videolan.org/vlc/> This is easy to use and can play almost all known file formats.

To reduce any jittering or lagging when playing:

- Make sure the film file is saved to and is played from your personal or the venue's laptop or computer.
- Check the harddrive of the computer you are playing the file from has about 20% free. *If using an Apple Mac this is in the "About" section, if on a Windows PC this is the "Local disk" space in your file explorer.*
- Don't stream in the screening off the internet unless all else fails.

- Please don't screen wirelessly (even if it is a remote network) as the image quality will drop out.

c. Venues with cinematic equipment

Please check in advance:

- What visual projection and audio equipment they provide? Will you need to provide anything extra and is it all needed / compatible with the film?
- Do they may also have facilities to directly download the Quicktime PRORES MOV file? If so you may need to send them a download link.
- Can you or someone at the venue test the film beforehand to get the sound levels correct? If so let them know the film is mixed to -6dB and the picture and sound will start 5 seconds into the film.

d. Community based venues

A laptop (Apple Mac or Windows PC), projector and and amp with speakers (or other audio system) will be needed to screen the film. Please make sure in advance:

- Do you have the correct cables, adapters and power supplies to connect the projector to the laptop and any audio device?
 - You may need to buy / borrow and set up in advance to check.
- Is there a screen to project the film onto? If not a light coloured plain wall may also work.
 - Ideally the projected image would be around 2M squared, depending on your projector.
 - Please check the distance between projector and screen beforehand, as this will affect the size of your projected film which may impact your audience size and layout.
- Do you need extra speakers to amplify the sound? (If so a power output of 50 watt is suggested)
 - If you are playing the audio through a separate device, do you need to change the sound output on the laptop in the settings?

Please do test and organise the physical set up of the room in advance in case you need any extra equipment and to make sure it works on the day. Finally, if you are in doubt about your screening set up, always have a plan B (and C)!

8. Publicising the Event:

Ideally you will have at least 6-weeks to publicise your screening event. Here are some materials that you might find useful:

- [Press Release](#)
- Short film (this is password protected and may not be shown publicly - but can be used to show those who are involved in screening the full 55-minute film)
- [Film Trailer](#)
- A3 Poster

- Flyer for Premiere at Encounters
- XR Walkers Vision Statement / joining card
- XR Materials

9. Outreach:

Outreach on the Camino to COP took the form of us sharing our stories and inviting others to consider how they might take action. Everyone who participated in that journey will be able to tell anecdotes about significant conversations with people who had not perhaps thought of themselves as activists.

On our first Camino Encounters journey from London to Bristol, we similarly shared our stories and invited others to share theirs before showing the short film and discussing it afterwards.

We also held a very successful session at a primary school, which included a whole school assembly and a Year 5 workshop.

- Are there local schools, church or other groups that would enjoy a separate outreach session before or around the time of the screening?
- How can we help to put a programme together for that?

10. Signposting:

We would love people who watch the film to want to become a film-bearer and bring the film to their own community.

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/benjaminwigley/>

Artdocs Website: <http://artdocs.co.uk/work/xr-camino-to-cop26-of-walking-on-thin-ice>

Our experience with XR Walkers is that many people are touched by our efforts and activity, and that some people feel inclined to join a walk, who would not be otherwise drawn to join Extinction Rebellion or another activist group.

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/xrwalkers/>

 To receive details about future XR Walks sign up here:

<https://mailchi.mp/82eb3183021c/xr-walkers-landing-page>

Ultimately we are trying to grow a movement that is raising awareness about the climate crisis and presenting many options about how we might act.

If we upgrade politics, we can turn things around. Extinction Rebellion has a plan to make that happen: bring 100K people onto the streets of London on 21 April 2023 to secure a citizen-led programme to get off fossil fuels, and decide together how to build an alternative that's safer, fairer and better for everyone.

<https://extinctionrebellion.uk/>

- a. Where would you like to direct people after they have seen the film?

11. License:

Questions about the film license often come up. Image release forms have been signed by all those in the film, the original music was written for the film, so Artdocs owns the film in its entirety.

Artdocs is allowing XR Walkers to distribute the film with them and agree that hosts may screen it by agreement with XR Walkers and Artdocs. Therefore, hosts do not need to pay a license fee. However, there is a 'quid-pro-quo' for us all whereby we hope hosts will agree to screening the film in a certain way (participatory cinema experience / publicising etc.)

Therefore, we do not intend to charge for people to see the film because we want everybody to be able to watch the film whether they can afford a ticket or not, but we do ask for donations. We can discuss the level of donation that you feel appropriate in your community. This will cover the costs incurred for the screening event. It will also go towards the film distribution project as a whole.

Profit from individual screening events will be invested back into the film project, as the film was entirely funded by the filmmaker and made from artists donating their work for the cause. It may be that the donation is ticketed through something like Eventbrite. Using Eventbrite allows people to use card payments to make donations. Another option would be to collect donations at the start and the end of the event.

The screening venue or organisation may contribute if they want / feel especially that they want to bring the film to the venue, or we come to some arrangement whereby we split ticket sales.