

***Feature Documentary to Premier in Aberyswyth
8th and 9th December at 11 am, Aberyswyth Arts Centre***

The local community of Trefeurig near Aberyswyth will have the opportunity to attend the Welsh premier of award winning film maker Gideon Koppel's latest feature documentary, 'Sleep Furiously'.

Shot over 7 months, in and around the community of Trefeurig, the film has a distinctive lyrical and personal style and features music by Aphex Twin. It is funded by the Film Agency for Wales .

Koppel, who is an former pupil of Penglais Comprehensive School in Aberystwyth, has also collaborated on this film with veteran Producer Margaret Matheson and Executive Producer Mike Figgis .

"I had wanted to make a film set in the community of Trefeurig for almost twenty years. It is a landscape and population that is changing rapidly as small-scale agriculture is disappearing and the generation who inhabited a pre-mechanised world is dying out. It is also a world that I have a particular relationship with – not least because my parents, both artists and refugees from Nazi Germany, found a home and a belonging in this beautiful but sometimes harsh environment," explains Koppel.

"One day in summer 2003, I was working in the garden of my mother's house and saw the bright yellow library van driving through the village. It dawned on me at that moment that here was a possible way to create a link between all disparate farms and characters of the community as librarian John Jones visits every month, stopping at each farm and each small cluster of cottages. Everyone waits for the yellow van - it is a vehicle for stories - not only books, but for the stories and news of each other and the community."

"I felt very strongly that to be able to create images which can be evocative in that way, I needed to shoot on film. As the gap between film and high definition video formats closes - at least in terms of specification - it is becoming increasingly difficult to articulate and justify film over video, particularly for a low budget project which was branded 'documentary'."

"If you imagine a video image of a magnificent landscape projected onto a big screen, it works as a signifier - it says "great landscape" loud and clear... but not a lot else. But the same landscape shot on film has the possibility of allowing the audience to 'fall into' the image, to engage with the image with and through their imagination, not simply their powers of recognition."

" This more poetic and painterly approach to film making is becoming increasingly difficult to finance. It is a real tribute to both the courage of the Film Agency for Wales and the unwavering support of Producer Margaret Matheson that this project was made," finishes Koppel.

Koppel's prolific work as a filmmaker is exhibited in a wide variety of formats: from the film installation for fashion label Comme des Garçons seen at the Florence Biennale to the acclaimed documentary series 'Undressed: a history of 20th Century Fashion' for Channel 4. More recently he made the controversial and never broadcast 'Ooh la la and

the art of dressing up' for BBC Wales which explores the psychopathology of celebrity. He is also an award winning director of film commercials; a faculty member at the University of London and a visiting Professor with Theodore Zeldin at HEC, Paris.

“The Film Agency is delighted to be able to support Gideon’s film, both in terms of backing a film-maker with a distinctive voice, and also most importantly in reflecting upon and representing often under-represented communities in Wales. We are additionally committed to ensuring that we facilitate the access that audiences across Wales have to this film and in that respect are working closely with the film-maker and his producer to maximise the opportunities for the film to be shown across the specialist film exhibition network,” finished Pauline Burt, Chief Executive of the Film Agency for Wales.

The Film Agency for Wales is funded by the Arts Council of Wales, the UK Film Council and the Welsh Assembly Government, via Creative Business Wales, the latter of which was set up to support, encourage and increase the range and number of films being produced in Wales and to foster the abundance of creative talent in Wales.

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For further information please contact Lisa Jenkins on 0790 873 8763 or email lisa@filmagencywales.com

Notes to Editors:

About the Film Agency for Wales

1. Established in July 2006, the Film Agency for Wales is the sole Agency for film in Wales, with a remit to ensure that the economic, cultural and educational aspects of film are effectively represented in Wales, the UK and the world. As a strategic agency, the Film Agency aims to facilitate the emergence of a viable and sustainable Welsh film industry and to promote a vibrant and dynamic film culture.
2. The Agency's priority is to identify and nurture Welsh filmmaking talent – particularly writers, directors, writer-directors and producers – by supporting and encouraging the development of their work, accomplishments and ambitions.
3. We support a broad policy on film education to complement our central priority of creating and maintaining a dynamic film culture across Wales. We aim to enhance film literacy for all and stimulate an appetite for specialised, cultural and non-mainstream films.

4. The Board of Directors is chaired by Peter Edwards and includes Sybil Crouch (Vice Chairman), Elan Closs Stephens, Angharad Evans, Stephen Cleary, Nerys Lloyd and Ynyr Williams. Pauline Burt is Chief Executive.

Further information is available at www.filmagencywales.com