



School: School of Creative Industries

Researcher: Lucy English

Project Title: The Book of Hours

UOA: 27 - English Language and Literature

300-Word Statement

The Book of Hours contains 48 poetry films (short films which contain words, either spoken or text, sound and moving image). I wrote the poetry and directed the films. Each film was made in collaboration with one of 27 international filmmakers who were chosen for their experience of working with this form. The project reimagines a medieval book of hours, such as the *Tres Riche Heures* (1412) which provided readers with religious texts connected to the times of the day and religious festivals.

The films follow the suggestions of Tom Konyves in *Videopoetry: A Manifesto* (2011) by blending text/spoken poetry, images and sound so that the 'poetic experience' is the response to all of these elements. I wanted to explore how online projects can be a space for reflection by developing a project capable of evoking a present-day meditative experience. I used the passage of seasons as the starting point (the location for much of the poetry is the Welsh Marches) and the visuals, chosen in dialogue with the filmmakers, evoke feelings of contemplation or reflection.

I researched the placement of spoken poetry in film in previous collaborations between poets and filmmakers (notably *Flow and Frame* (2013) and *Disappear Here* (2016)). By a process of writing and redrafting I combined their methods with the direct language of spoken word until I had created poetry where the sound enhanced the meaning, such as using pauses to create moments of reflection or emphasizing vowel sounds to mirror emotions.

The poetry was published by Burning Eye Press and the project is available on <https://thebookofhours.org/>. Throughout its development, the project was shared on social media and on Movingpoem.com. It was shortlisted for the New Media Writing Prize in 2018 and is held on the British Library database of digital projects.