This is a research-based short documentary film about Amateur Radio and its role in contributing to the wellbeing and resilience of an elderly man in India. Amateur Radio (more commonly referred to as Ham Radio) is the use of designated radio frequency spectra for purposes of non-commercial, recreational communication. There is an extensive international network of Ham Radio enthusiasts, supported by publication of specialist magazines, websites, and the staging of regular conventions.

OLD MAN is an intimate documentary film which explores the enclosed world of an elderly Amateur Radio operator from South India, set against the sights and sounds of the general election campaign. OLD MAN is a poignant and life-affirming account of how one elderly man’s passion for this old form of communication technology has enabled him to connect to a global social network, keeping him both included and alert in a fast changing society that sees disappearing families and an indifferent state. The film was shot in April 2014, coinciding with the General Election campaign in India. It gives the film a very distinctive soundscape in which interior and exterior sounds intertwine to suggest the interconnectedness of the public and the private space in this corner of India. The film is immersive, expressive and suggestive, rather than informational, direct and didactic. OLD MAN prompts us to reflect on the Heideggerian notion of Being and Time, on the problematic of 'being-in-the-world' in the later stages of life.

The film will be circulated to various film festivals over the next 12 months, (2016) before making it available to targeted groups (in particular the elderly) via Newcastle Institute for Social Renewal and then finally making it available on general release in 2017. OLD MAN is a distinctive form of practice-based Arts and Humanities research. In exploring the relationship between technology, ageing and well-being in India, the film addresses some of the key questions raised about wellbeing and resilience, central to the research themes of the Institute for Social Renewal.

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