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**Hamish Henderson, '*An Artist's Inspiration*'**

**Who is the film made by?**

It is produced by *flytingfilms*, which takes its name from the Scottish tradition of fierce but rigorous argument between poets, artists and academics, usually conducted in public. 'Flyting' was a regular feature of discourse between the poets Hugh MacDiarmid and Ian Hamilton Finlay, for instance. They had different poetic ideals and engaged in intellectual combat. *flytingfilms* uses this name because its films often explore contentious subjects, where there are widely differing views. *flytingfilms* focusses on topics drawn from Scottish cultural history and current events.

**What other films has *flytingfilms* made?**

Presently in production, are films about the exponential growth of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and the spread of the idea of 'fringe' worldwide, and about the little known early life of Scottish poet and sculptor, Ian Hamilton Finlay. *flytingfilms* also works with Edinburgh cultural guru, Richard Demarco. A recent film called 'Art or Artifice,' asks whether the integrity of the Arts, worldwide, is being undermined by commerce. These films and many others are available to watch on the *flytingfilms* website: [*www.flytingfilms.com*](http://www.flytingfilms.com/)

**Who runs *flytingfilms*?**

*Flytingfilms* has been founded by Michael Lloyd, a former BBC Producer, to make films that take an engaging but considered view of cultural topics, in Scotland. As well as new insights, they offer a resource, which will keep alive the memory of key figures and movements in Scottish culture. Funds from ticket sales are reinvested into future productions. *Flytingfilms* aims to be self-sustaining, although it may seek grants for specific projects.

**What is the film, 'An Artists Inspiration,' about?**

Artist Charles Nasmyth takes a fresh look at one of Scotland's literary and musical giants, Hamish Henderson. He explores his inspiration to paint a portrait of Hamish and asks what motivated this complex and sometimes underappreciated character.

Henderson was driven by his experiences in WW2, in which he fought in the desert campaign and later with the Italian partisans. He was respected by officers and troops alike. He was the only British solder fluent enough in Italian to take Italy's surrender from the head of the Fascist army, General Rodolfo Graziani.

He absorbed the work of socialist intellectuals, such as Antonio Gramsci, whose prison letters he translated. From this he learned to value the culture of ordinary people. Not only the 'travellers' of Scotland, as is well known, but also the squaddies he served with, who inspired many of his songs. He was a freedom-fighting internationalist, penning the song, *Rivonia,* an anthem of the anti-apartheid movement.

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He also wrote the 'Freedom Come a'Ye,' which has been proposed as a new national anthem for Scotland.

Often celebrated for recording and archiving Scotland's traditional culture in song, poetry and stories, Hamish was also a poet in his own right. His wartime experiences provided the basis for his Somerset Maugham prize-winning collection, *Elegies for the dead in Cyrenaica*.

Charles was inspired to paint a portrait of Hamish after meeting his widow, Katzel, and former friends and colleagues.

Later he was connected to film-maker Michael Lloyd, by Edinburgh Arts guru, Richard Demarco. The resulting film includes unique footage of the Libyan battlefields and interviews with key figures in Hamish's life.

Charles's interest in Hamish is shared with Perthshire poet, Jim Mackintosh, traditional music professor at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Fred Freeman, the editor of Lallans magazine, Willie Hershaw, and Hamish's former colleague and folklore expert Margaret Bennett.

There is music from John Morran and Marc Duff, along with Alison McMorland and Geordie McIntyre. Hamish himself contributes historic recordings of his songs.

The film ranges widely from Hamish's Perthshire birthplace and Spital o'Glenshee home to his Edinburgh haunts, including the iconic Sandy Bell's bar.

You can preview the film here: <https://www.flytingfilms.com/general-clean>

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