



[The Film & Video Institute](#)

# THE IAC BRITISH INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR FILM COMPETITION 2018

## Judges' Comments

Title: The War to end all Wars  
Number: 12148  
Award: 3 Stars

This was described as a documentary, so when the panel started to view it we were confused. What we saw was a soliloquy– images set against sombre music and the words of a First World War poem. It did not 'document' anything as such, nor did it educate or inform. A documentary is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as;

using picture and interviews with people involved with real events to provide a factual report on a particular subject.

So, to pick up on this definition, you might have made a documentary on the origins of the expression 'The War to end all Wars' with quotes and interviews to back up your arguments. What you have given us is far from this.

It was a simple montage of archive stills, mostly black and white, and full colour movie clips of soldiers, poppies etc. The music was very slow and sombre, and it was this sound track that really made the piece. The poem, speaking of Flanders Fields where no poppies grow, was very well read. Having said that there is very little else on which to comment. The film told us nothing new.

The opening shots of autumn leaves after the dramatic text on a black screen seemed to be leading us to reflect on the dying year, but then this was shattered by the archive stills reminding us of the awful conditions on the Western Front, followed by a montage of poppies etc. It was all quite well put together, but straight cuts could have been used instead of dissolves giving the film a dramatic pace rather than the slightly soporific feel of the movie. It did tug at the heart strings a bit, but more could have been made of the idea.

Film Club archives are full of this type of film and it is important that we make them, because it an easy way of learning the art of editing. Whether they are competition films is another debate altogether.

John Howden on behalf of:

Judging Panel: Howard-Smith AACI, Neil Shaw and John Howden LACI