

colony in Australia – the aspiration and the awfulness of it. The unintended consequence of probably his only criminal offence, it amounts to a compelling story that should be more widely known.

This exhibition is organised in partnership between Ikon and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

### Find out more

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue, with texts by Gaye Sculthorpe (Curator, The British Museum), Jane Stewart (Principal Curator, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery) and Hamish Maxwell-Stewart (Professor of Social History, University of Tasmania). Available from Ikon Shop and online.

### Edmund Clark In Place of Hate 6 December 2017 – 11 March 2018 Second Floor Galleries

*Visibility is a long standing theme in the history and theory of detention. People effectively disappear when they become prisoners. 'We' on the outside cease to see 'them' on the inside, as if humanity stops at the exterior wall. Or the police mug shot. Except, hopefully, to their family and friends, but that may depend on the crime.*

British artist Edmund Clark is Ikon's artist-in-residence (2014–18) at Europe's only entirely therapeutic prison, HMP Grendon. Established in 1962, Grendon's inmates make a full-time commitment to intensive group therapy and exercise a degree of control over the day-to-day running of their lives through democratic decision-making. Clark – an artist with a longstanding interest in incarceration and its effects – has produced a body of work shaped by the prison environment, community and therapeutic processes. Unable to make work that identifies Grendon's inmates, his exhibition combines photography, video and installation in exploring ideas of visibility, representation, trauma and self-image.

In 1.98m<sup>2</sup>, wild and cultivated plants from the prison grounds are suspended above a lightbox, the inside dimensions of which correspond to the size of a cell at Grendon. Clark picked the flowers and leaves and pressed them between sheets of prison issue paper towels under art books in his Grendon office. With permission from the Head of Security, Clark took camera equipment into the prison for filming *Vanishing Point*, which follows the journeys of prisoners and staff around the gardens, exercise yards and corridors. The videos, including one of the entire interior prison perimeter, the one journey never made by inmates, have been redacted for security purposes.

Psychodrama is one of the main creative therapies in which the prisoners, all men, revisit events from their past under expert supervision, including women staff. The department agreed to collaborate with Clark on a filmed psychodrama response to Aeschylus's *Oresteia*. The characters are performed by the staff, whilst the prisoners identify with the perpetrators, victims or witnesses central to the Greek tragedy. The purpose of the mask is twofold: to ensure the anonymity of the prisoners and in accordance with the customary presentation of ancient drama. The two closer camera angles have been redacted according to Ministry of Justice requirements. The three screen film, fusing accepted representations of high art with narratives of incarceration, is shown as part of an installation comprising prison chairs, arranged in the typical circle of small therapy groups. Diagrams taken from a prison corridor and group therapy room are displayed alongside the film.

The multi-projector installation *My Shadow's Reflection* comprises a triptych of photographs showing prison architecture, the picked and pressed plants and images of members of the community. The latter are made with a pinhole camera, a device that has no lens to shape the image. Created in a group situation each subject, including men and staff, stands before the camera for six minutes, answering questions about their criminal and personal histories. As they talk and move they form a picture of themselves. Here the resulting images are projected

onto the green bed sheets that the prisoners sleep on at night, a time described by them as 'hard lock up', when they reflect on the narratives of violence, abuse and neglect revealed during daily therapy.

The material of the installation forms a stand-alone publication of the same name, given to the prisoners and staff who took part in the project, and sent to key individuals in the policy making and coverage of the criminal justice system.

The men's responses to their pin hole images, through words or by writing, painting or drawing on prints of the photographs, appear in the exhibition and catalogue. Since 2014, Clark has run art groups at HMP Grendon. The work produced by the inmates has been displayed annually in the prison, with specific works entered into the Koestler Awards exhibitions. Through the various exhibitions, publications and symposia, the residency has addressed how prisoners are perceived and discussed by the public, politicians and media in Britain today. As Clark observes,

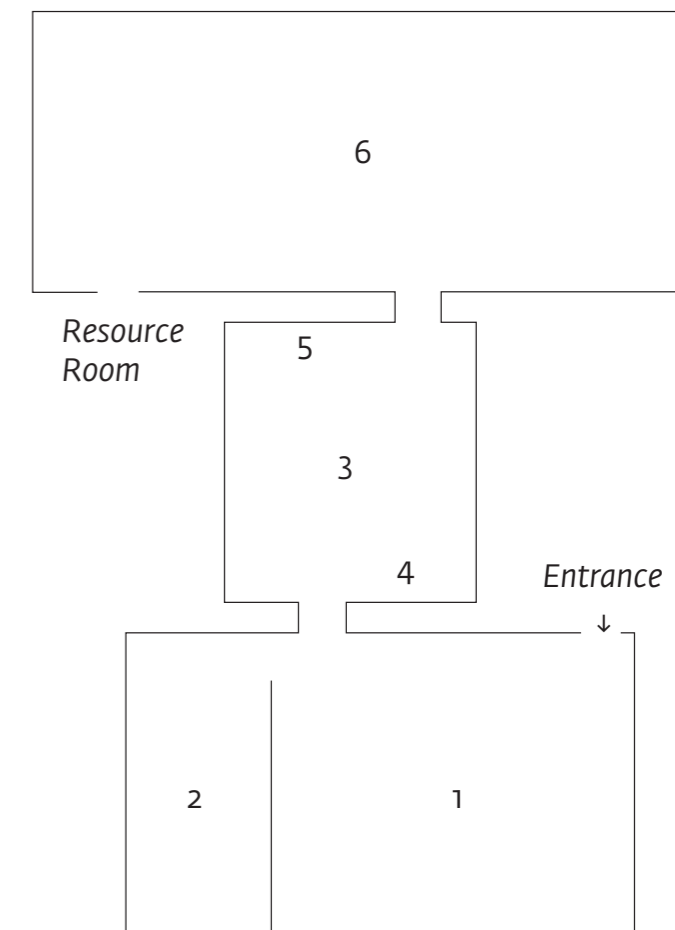
*In the binary of good and evil that afflicts the discussion of criminal justice, human beings are refracted into sharp stereotypes of victim and perpetrator. Once inside they become indefinite presences.*

Presented in partnership with HMP Grendon and the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust.

### Find out more

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue, with texts by Jamie Bennett (Governor of HMP Grendon), Liz McLure and Noel Smith. Available from Ikon Shop and online.

### Second Floor Galleries



1. 1.98m<sup>2</sup>, 2017
2. *Vanishing Point*, 2017  
Longest video, 18 minutes 53 seconds
3. *Oresteia*, 2017  
74 minutes
4. *Untitled Diagram 1*, 2017
5. *Untitled Diagram 2*, 2017
6. *My Shadow's Reflection*, 2017

Resource Room  
*Pinhole Image Interventions*, 2017

Second Floor Landing  
*Fish Tank*, 2017  
Five videos, 1 minute each

Ikon Reception  
*Fish Tank*, 2017  
Five videos, 1 minute each

## Associated Events

### **The Art History of Thomas Bock** **Tuesday 12 December, 6–7pm – £3** **Booking essential**

Join Jane Stewart, Principal Curator at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, and Trawlwoolway artist Julie Gough for papers and discussion on the art history and legacy of Thomas Bock.

### **Van Diemen's Land**

#### **Wednesday 24 January 2018, 6–8pm – FREE** **The Last Confession of Alexander Pearce** **Wednesday 7 February 2018, 6–8pm – FREE** **Booking essential**

Ikon has programmed a series of film nights to coincide with the Thomas Bock and Edmund Clark exhibitions. This starts with a screening of *Van Diemen's Land* (2009), the story of Alexander Pearce, one of Australia's most notorious convicts. Thomas Bock sketched Pearce before and after his execution in 1824 and these portraits feature in Ikon's exhibition. See Ikon's website for further screenings.

### **Pinhole Portraits**

#### **Tuesday 20 February 2018, 1–4pm** **Thursday 22 February 2018, 1–4pm** **£4 per child** **Booking essential**

Join us during half-term holidays for an afternoon with artist Jo Gane as we make pinhole cameras from recycled materials. Inspired by our current exhibitions take and process your own images out and about in the galleries. This workshop is suitable for children over 7 accompanied by an adult. When booking please indicate children's ages.

### **In the Frame**

#### **Wednesday 7 March 2018, 6–8pm – £5** **Steelhouse Lane, Birmingham B4 6NW** **Booking essential**

Photographic historian Pete James discusses the early history of photography in Birmingham, with reference to its use as a means of surveillance by the Birmingham Police Force in the nineteenth century, and in relation to Edmund Clark's exhibition at Ikon.

## Find out more




Visit the Resource Room where you can find a selection of books, audio and film.

If you have any questions about the exhibition please ask the Information Assistants in the gallery.

### **How to book**

Book online at [ikon-gallery.org](http://ikon-gallery.org) or call us on 0121 248 0708. All events take place at Ikon Gallery unless otherwise stated.

### **Stay in touch**

Subscribe to our e-bulletin at [ikon-gallery.org](http://ikon-gallery.org) and find us on    [ikongallery](https://www.instagram.com/ikongallery)

Ikon Gallery  
Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2HS  
0121 248 0708  
[ikon-gallery.org](http://ikon-gallery.org)

Open Tuesday – Sunday  
and Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am–5pm  
Free entry, donations welcome

### **Exhibition supporters**

The Thomas Bock exhibition is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grants Program of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Gordon Darling Foundation, the John Feeney Charitable Trust, the Owen Family Trust, and a Jonathan Ruffer Curatorial Research Grant from Art Fund. Edmund Clark, Artist-in-Residence at HMP Grendon, is supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust.

# I K O N

## Exhibition Guide

### **Thomas Bock** **6 December 2017 – 11 March 2018** **First Floor Galleries**

Ikon presents the first UK exhibition dedicated to the work of convict artist Thomas Bock (c.1793–1855). Comprising a selection of drawings, paintings and photographs, it demonstrates not only Bock's technical skill, but also his sensitivity to a wide range of subject matter.

Bock was one of the most important artists working in Australia during the colonial years. Trained in Birmingham as an engraver and miniature painter, in 1823 he was found guilty of "administering concoctions of certain herbs ... with the intent to cause miscarriage". Sentenced to transportation for fourteen years, he arrived in Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania) where he was quickly pressed into service engraving bank notes. An early commission was a number of portraits of captured bushrangers, before and after execution by hanging, including the notorious cannibal Alexander Pearce.

In a short space of time, Bock's life was turned upside down. Once a respected artisan in his early twenties, with a good address in a booming industrial town (24 Great Charles Street, Birmingham), he now found himself at the edge of the known world in the company of compatriots who were as desperate as they were depraved.

There are no surviving diaries that document his personal journey. However, Bock's artistic output on arrival, through conditional and absolute pardons until his death – marked by an obituary that described him as "an artist of a very high order" – is a rich seam of observation, at once subtle and astonishing. Most significant in this respect is Bock's series of portraits of Tasmanian Indigenous people, commissioned by George Augustus

Robinson (1791–1866), now in The British Museum. His drawing throughout is fine and the likenesses probably very true, and having them at the heart of this exhibition conveys the tragedies suffered by the Indigenous people through the British colonisation of Australia. The sitters – including Trukanini (c.1812–76) and her husband Wurati (c.1784–1842) – have a demeanour that conveys both pride and despair, thus suggesting that Bock, being marginalised himself, closely identified with them.

In the 1830s, Hobart Town flourished as a cultural place, with Bock establishing a living as an artist alongside fellow convicts William Buelow Gould (1801–53) and Thomas Griffiths Wainwright (1794–1847). Bock was commissioned to portray British colonists, usually government officials, wealthy farmers, businessmen and their families. He advertised himself as a "portrait painter", but it is in his drawings (esp. crayon, chalk and/or gouache) that we see an evocative liveliness. The sketches he made in his studio or at home, often of his family, and sometimes outdoors, are like pieces in a jigsaw of social history. Another fascinating side to Bock's artistic practice is revealed in his life drawing, a number of nude studies that are as tender as they are well observed, likely of his second wife Mary Ann (1818–98) with whom he had five children. This was equivalent in size to the family Bock had left behind of which all members had died by 1845 – perhaps as an indirect consequence of his conviction.

This exhibition also includes some daguerreotypes by Bock – tiny mechanical images in silver plate, mounted and glazed in cases – depicting the kinds of people that he would have otherwise drawn or painted. They provide further evidence of his openness to new experience, incorporating it into his existing practice.

It is interesting to speculate on what might have happened to Bock had he remained in Birmingham. Tasmania afforded him recognition within his field, and the body of work by him that survives is remarkable not only for its inherent quality, but also the light it shines on the early years of a penal



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