

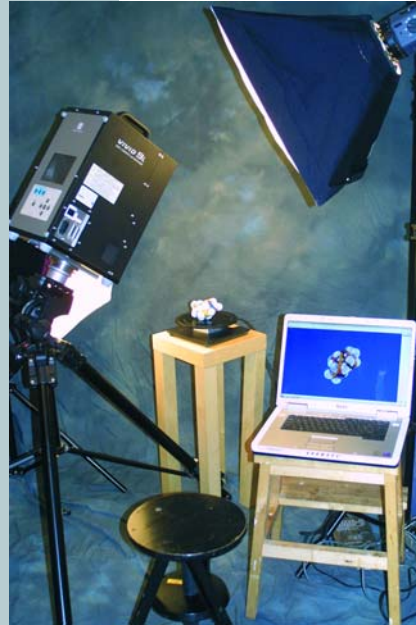
Social Impact of Artist Exhibitions: Two Case Studies

In recent years there has been mounting concern to understand the distribution, utility and influence of research findings in non-academic contexts. This concern originates in part from political imperatives to demonstrate public value, for research to move towards pragmatic considerations in wider public discourse, in cultural, industry and policy environments.

All UK Research Councils are expected to be able to demonstrate the wider impact and value of academic research. The important question that we must seek to address is: what is the contribution of arts and humanities research to society? Or, what is the impact or influence of arts and humanities research outside the academy?

The Arts and Humanities Research Council has commissioned a series of case studies to investigate the impact of arts and humanities research. Across the series as a whole, impact has been defined in its broadest sense to include economic, social and cultural elements. The case studies included in this publication focus on the social impact of two artist exhibitions, specifically concentrating on visitor responses and reactions.

Established in April 2005, the Arts and Humanities Research Council provides funding for a range of UK-wide programmes, supporting the highest quality research and postgraduate training in the arts and humanities.



Jim Pattison's scanning process



David Walker Barker in his studio

Translations

by Jim Pattison

A series of digital artworks interpreting the experiences and language of dialysis and kidney transplantation.

Translations shows how art can be an important medium in the communication of medical terminology between practitioners and patients, and how it can help scientists to innovate by looking beyond the aesthetic constructs that are taken for granted in images. It also gives insights into medical conditions.

The research for this exhibition was supported by a Small Grant in the Creative and Performing Arts from the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

In Search of a Hidden Landscape

by David Walker Barker.

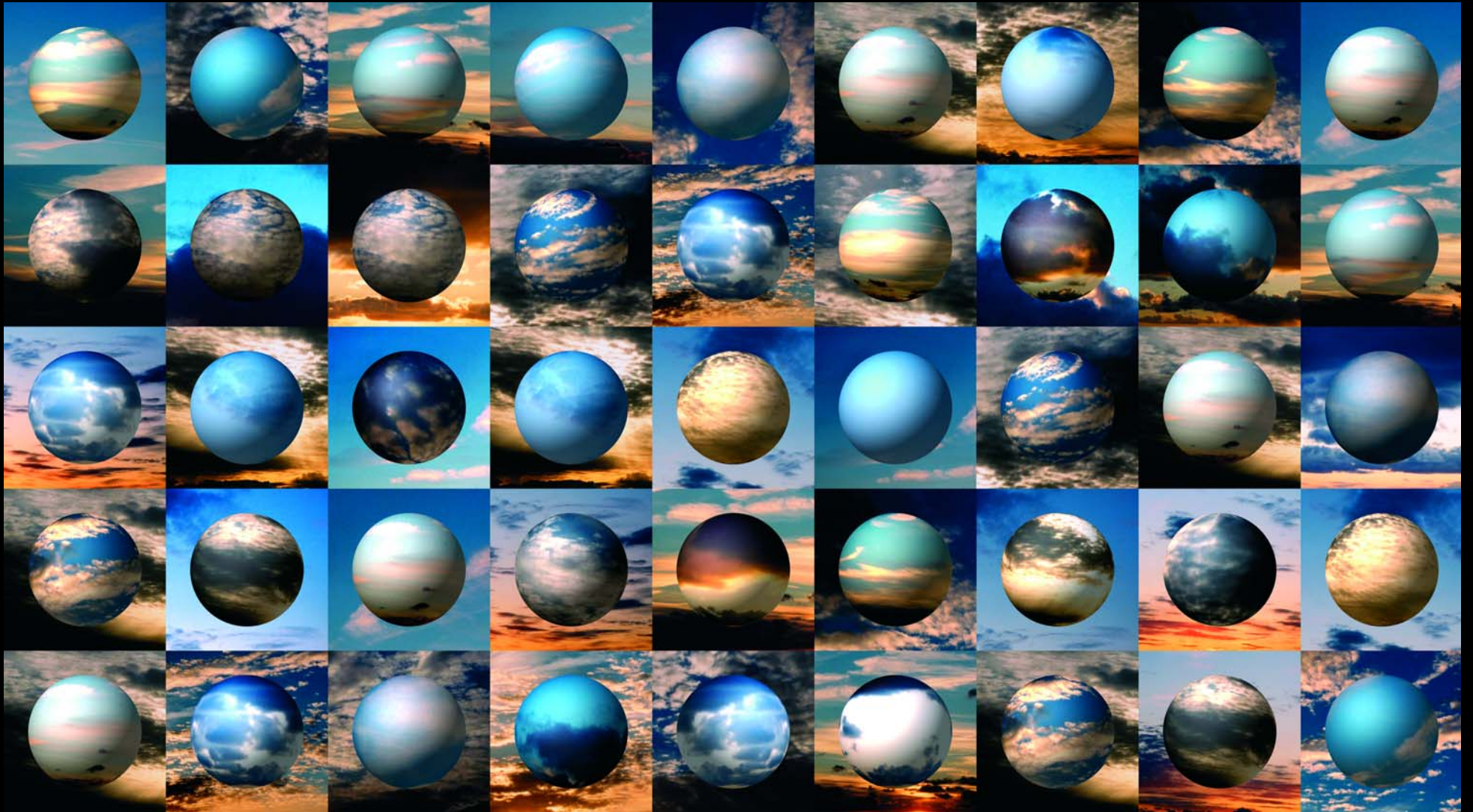
Artworks about the end of lead and fluorspar mining in the Northern Pennines and the interconnections between the human and physical features of the landscape.

In Search of a Hidden Landscape is concerned with how landscapes are formed out of human necessity and how this gives an insight into the complexities of geological and human roots. It also encourages visitors to value the local links and connections that create and reinforce social capital.

The research for this exhibition was supported by a Research Leave Award from the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

The AHRC commissioned an independent consultant to assess the social impact of these exhibitions: Annabel Jackson Associates

Translations by Jim Pattison



Portpatrick Sunsets, Digital Print, 91 x 51 cm

Translations by Jim Pattison

Introduction

Jim Pattison is a lecturer at the School of Fine Art, University of Dundee. Over a period of ten years his research has concentrated on the translation and manipulation of images and information using digital technology, and the transformation and re-modelling of virtual digital images into paintings, prints and sculpture.

In June 1999 he was diagnosed as having renal failure. He underwent CAPD (Continual Ambulatory Peritoneal Dialysis) until July 2002, when he received a kidney transplant. Throughout the processes of diagnosis, dialysis and transplantation he felt a need to make a visual sense of these new experiences and their associated language in order to form and structure this new information. The *Translations* exhibition was a visual response to these experiences and a way to translate language and data into alternative visual forms.

Research for *Translations* was supported by an AHRC Small Grant in the Creative and Performing Arts.

Outcomes

Insight into the experience of being a kidney patient

The exhibition communicated the process of kidney dialysis in particular and illness in general. The specific contribution of the artistic media was to communicate the mix of emotions – relief, fear and confusion – all within a vivid and ultimately enjoyable experience.

Insight into the communication processes involved in medicine

The exhibition reminded medical staff about the responsibility they have in communicating to patients, about the information overload patients experience, and about the deeply personal nature of this information. There were indications that communication between medical practitioners and patients might be enhanced by attending the exhibition.

Insight into the effect of technique on image making

The exhibition reminded visitors about the way messages are channelled by the medium. In addition, a number of the visitors gained insight into printmaking techniques.

Translations also has a wider potential social impact in helping scientists to see how the tools that they use (such as scans) are affected by the aesthetic medium employed and its visual qualities. It has led to a possible collaboration between the artist and a neuroscientist to explore the hidden assumptions behind media, especially digital media. This opening out of perspectives has potentially large gains in helping scientists to use images critically, which can be expected to lead to scientific discoveries beyond the current visual paradigm.

Logic model for *Translations*

A logic model is a visual depiction of a project which shows the hidden or explicit assumptions, and therefore makes a link between means and ends. Logic models provide a clear and succinct image of the work of exhibitions, and draw attention to the artistic process as well as the product.



East Campbell Street Studio

Logic model for Translations

ASSUMPTIONS	RESOURCES*	PROCESSES/ ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
<p>That images are affected by the image maker: person and method</p> <p>That multiple interpretations help to reveal the filters used by different image makers and methods</p> <p>That patients are active seekers after meaning and diagnosis, rather than passive</p> <p>That information is power.</p> <p>Those pictured have rights over their information including a right to personal interpretation</p> <p>That visual images can provide insights into information additional to those provided by words and text e.g. conceptualisation, linkages, context and emotional meaning</p>	<p>AHRC grant</p> <p>Carnegie grant</p> <p>College grant and help in kind</p> <p>Help in kind from galleries</p>	<p>Image making</p> <p>Contact with hospitals and other organisations</p> <p>Exhibitions</p>	<p>Images</p> <p>Visitors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renal patients • Staff in renal units • The general public <p>Catalogue</p>	<p>Feelings of comfort for renal patients from seeing shared experiences</p> <p>Possible clarification of thoughts and feelings around dialysis and transplants</p> <p>Appreciation that people see things differently and different interpretations are valid</p> <p>Understanding of the subjectivity of images, including medical images, and the way the method affects the image</p> <p>Understanding of the information overload of medical experiences and, for staff, a direction of attention towards the responsibility in giving that information</p> <p>Conceptual understanding of the experience of dialysis and kidney transplant e.g. in terms of filtering and displacement</p> <p>Link to other experiences of filtering and displacement</p>	<p>Scope to encourage scientists to look beyond the current aesthetic of digital images</p> <p>Scope to help patients to communicate and interpret their experiences individually and collectively</p>

* See Annex for details on resources.

The Exhibition

There were two venues for the exhibition:

Edinburgh Printmakers Workshop and Gallery,
8 April – 27 May, 2006.

**Centrespace,
Visual Research Centre,
Dundee Contemporary Arts,
Dundee,**
7 – 28 June, 2006.

This case study focuses on visitors to Centrespace.



Creatinine (6), Acrylic on Canvas, 45 x 45 cm

Outputs

The Artworks

A series of digitally designed artworks that make a visual sense of some of the experiences and language of dialysis and kidney transplantation.

The Catalogue

The catalogue served to make a recording of the exhibition, to provide external validation, and to help market the artist to future funders and partners. There were 500 copies produced. Some of these catalogues were sold (£4-5), while others were given away to, for example, hospitals.

Number of Visitors

Jim Pattison had three target audiences: renal patients, staff in renal units and the general public. Hospital renal units in Edinburgh and Dundee were contacted to tell staff and patients about the exhibition. The Exhibition received 624 visitors in Edinburgh and between 300 and 400 in Dundee.

Outcomes

Personal and Artistic outcomes

Jim Pattison used his artwork to reclaim the medical language as his own. He found interest in the three words used to monitor his kidney function – urea, haemoglobin and creatinine, and these are used to structure part of his exhibition. He experienced these terms aesthetically, noticing, for example, the similarity between creativity and creatinine, and appreciating the feel of the word haemoglobin. He used his artwork to define the terms visually.

Jim Pattison believes that this exhibition ‘totally extended my visual range’, and that he achieved a breakthrough with his art. Those visitors familiar with his work noticed this progression. One interviewee, for example, said that ‘I enjoyed comparison to his previous exhibition – this work was more direct.’ Jim Pattison also emphasised the value of exhibitions: ‘Exhibitions are punctuation. They force you to stop and look.’

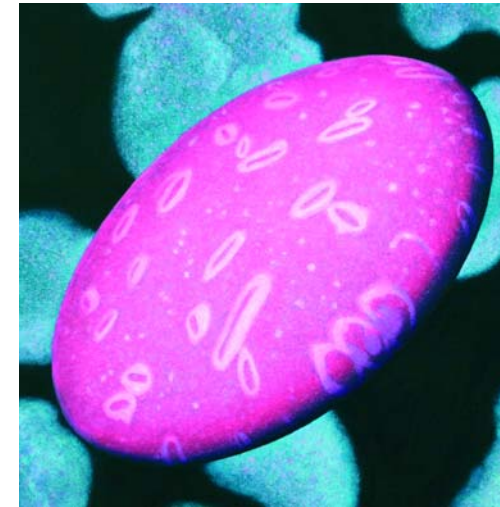
The themes at the heart of Jim Pattison’s work are:

Subjectivity

Images are affected by the medium and the process: by the way images are combined or sequenced, as well as the history, context, emotion and ownership of that being depicted. Images are ways of seeing, but also blinkers or filters.

Information

The medical environment is confusing because of information overload and the way images are presented, especially when abstracted from their personal and emotional meaning. The patient needs to take some control over the medical situation – the language and the experience – rather than being passive.



Urea (6), Acrylic on Canvas, 45 x 45 cm

Identity

Euan McArthur, in the Catalogue, writes ‘that the artist has been impelled to assimilate his experience into his work implies that his art is nothing less than his identity’. There are also questions around the nature of identity in relation to procedures such as transplants.

Visitor outcomes

Visitor data was collected from:

- Two face-to-face interviews at the exhibition using Repertory Grid¹.
- Thirty telephone interviews.
- Comments in the exhibition visitor's book.
- Interviews with staff and management at Dundee Contemporary Arts.

Telephone interviews revealed that 50% of the sample had travelled more than 40 miles to see the exhibition. Furthermore, 24 of the interviewees visit exhibitions three or more times a year, and four of the sample were doctors or nurses. Most of the interviewees (26) were aware of the exhibition before their visit to the gallery, and 23 of them had seen the artist's work before.

Interviewees' views of the exhibition were highly positive. For example, they described it as: 'excellent', 'very impressive', 'visually exciting', 'complex and striking', 'dazzling', 'thought provoking', 'fantastic', 'incredibly well crafted' and 'innovative'. One member of the public said that 'the depth was amazing. It really moved me a lot. It was the best, most moving exhibition I have been to. Keep it up - ordinary people like me love it!' One of the comments in the visitor book stated that this was 'one of the best shows they've had here. Fascinating and engaging.'

¹ Repertory Grid is an open and accessible interviewing technique that uses personalised cards to identify the discriminations that people make, the way they construct opposites, and the correlation between constructs.

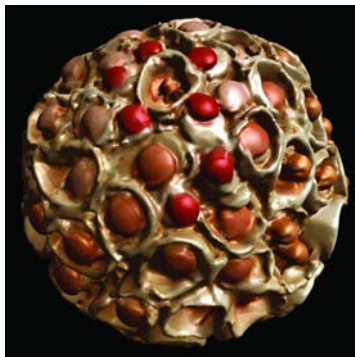


Haemoglobin (10), Digital Print, 91 x 91 cm

Insight into the communication processes involved in medicine

Medical practitioners who attended the exhibition obtained insight into the experience of being a patient. A nurse who was interviewed during her visit clearly felt that the exhibition directly related to her emotional experiences of supporting renal patients:

- 'The exhibition is fantastic. It captures different aspects of the experiences. It makes haemoglobin friendly. So many different representations of what happens. Creatinine looks sharp and menacing, which is exactly right. You don't want it to be too high. I don't know what a Creatinine molecule looks like, but it makes you unwell. You wouldn't want to



Pills (3), Digital Print, 91 x 91 cm

pick it up. He has thought about all these things.'

- 'The dialysis picture is wonderful. The shape looks like a coffee filter. The filter doesn't actually look anything like that. But the picture also looks like an egg timer, it shows the time spent. How much of your life have you spent on dialysis? So many different layers of meaning. I am impressed.'
- 'The nurses observe the patient's reaction, but we can't feel it. I have no idea what they are actually feeling. *Translations* tells me some of that.'
- 'There is fluffy bag tied with shoe laces. This is exactly how I think of it. If the cells have a fluffy coat, a fur coat, then there is more chance of antibodies building up against the transplant.'
- 'I give a lecture about thinking about the patient. I say "nurse your patient, not your chart". This is what *Translations* is about.'

The exhibition also raised some issues around medical processes with other interviewees:

The coping mechanism

One doctor said that the prints made her think about the impact of illness on people's lives and appreciate why some don't cope as well as Jim Pattison.

The personal meaning of a medical procedure

Comments² from doctors included:

- 'It was fascinating to see the way Jim visualised medical things. Colours were the same as real medical things.'
- 'I have never seen anything like this before. It gave me interesting insights into a patient's perspective. Jim's viewpoint is fascinating.'
- 'I realised that the ideas behind the patterns were medical processes.'

In addition, a member of staff at Dundee Contemporary Arts commented that:

- 'Medical subjects can be cold and impersonal. Jim has made them beautiful and familiar.'

Other comments included:

- 'It certainly enlightens people about the problems and processes.'
- 'It encourages people to see things another way.'
- 'It gave a different way of looking at illness.'
- 'Multi-layered value. The visualness hits you and then meaning becomes deeper.'

Art as a medium for public communication

A student interviewee said that the exhibition made her think about the way that artworks can translate bio-medical research into a more readily digestible form. While another interviewee thought about how art can bring understanding to an aspect of life. Further comments included:

- 'Gives you empathy. A more subtle way of getting the message across about chronic illness.'
- 'Raises awareness of the circumstances of the condition.'
- 'Good expression of the subject and of significant interest to other professionals.'
- 'It's extremely important that

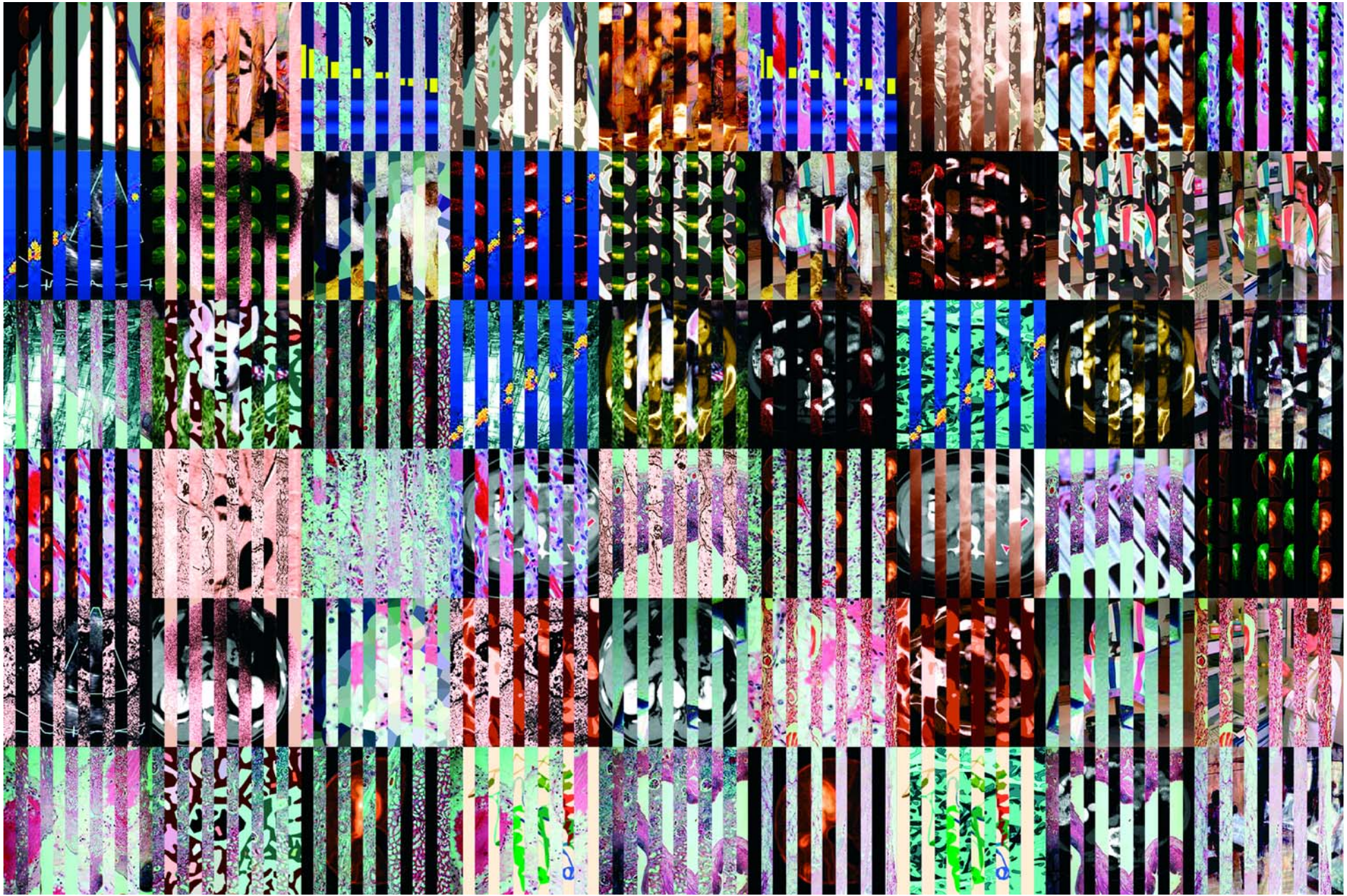
scientists get their message across and artists can be the perfect mediators in this process, without the biased view scientists tend to have.'

- 'Entertaining, and a way of communicating with the public about these issues.'
- 'It is an awareness campaign for the subject matter and a very powerful marketing tool.'

The therapeutic role of art

- 'Art and science have always had strong links. The exhibition could help other patients - make the experience seem less strange.'
- 'Fantastic for those having a similar disease as artist.'

² Comments in the visitor outcome section are taken from the telephone interviews unless otherwise stated.



Creatinine (4), Digital Print on Canvas, 30 x 45 cm

Insight into the experience of being a kidney patient

Most (26) of the telephone interviewees said that the exhibition gave them insight into the experience of being a kidney patient. For example, the exhibition told them 'about the trauma of repeated treatment for this condition'. Interviewees described the ways in which the exhibition stimulated feelings:

Empathy

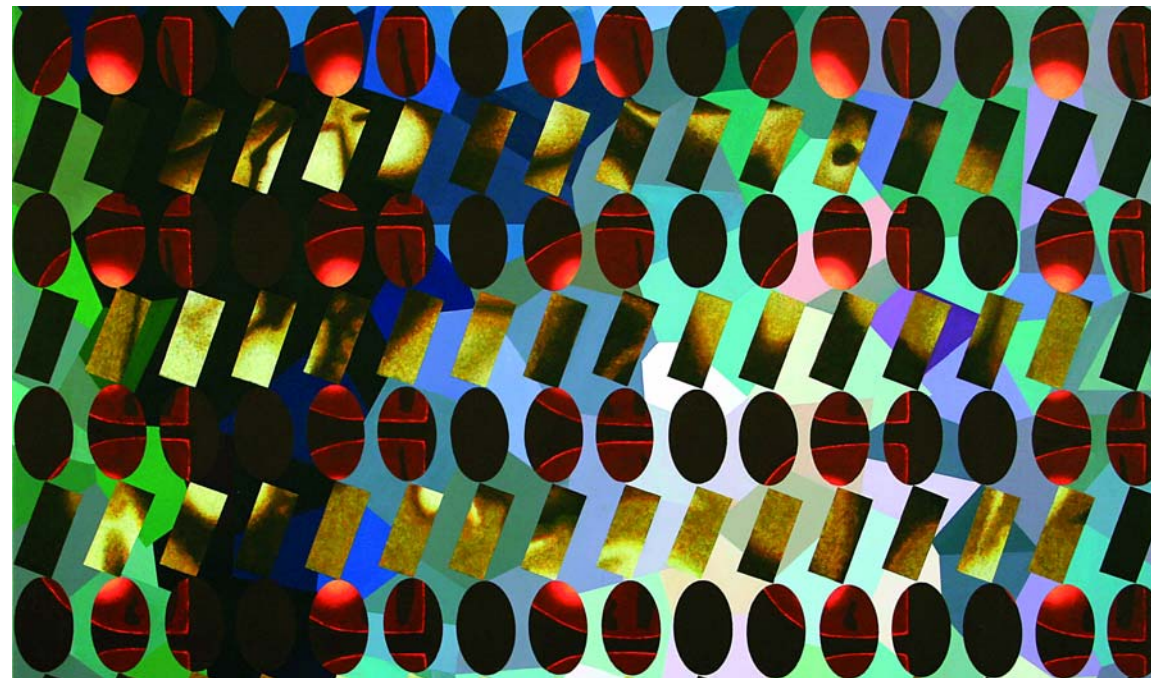
- Several interviewees said that the exhibition made them think about their own health or that of a relative who was ill. An arts development officer from a local authority said that she 'felt privileged to have been given an insight into this personal subject'.

Fear

- 'Work that deals with chronic illness is a bit scary.'
- 'It was a little bit scary - could happen to any of us.'

Hope

- 'Jim's experience is put in a positive way.'
- 'It gave the idea of hope - when things are bad it's not always the end.'



Urea (5), Acrylic on Canvas, 122 x 91 cm (detail)

- 'It showed how you can represent something horrible as something beautiful. I am very interested in the thinking behind the art works.'
- 'I liked that Jim used personal health and turned it into something positive.'
- 'Exhibitions should do what this one did: it can be about pain and difficulty and yet create something optimistic.'
- 'I particularly liked the way in which you have developed the material from a "negative" medical condition and its treatment into a "positive" aesthetic, life enhancing art work. I think it is a model of its type, to embrace the "self" in a wider, inclusive context which draws us towards the Self which we all share³'.

Ambiguity

- 'He manages very fleshy, human, repulsive and attractive at the same time.'
- 'The visceral pieces made me feel nauseous, yet were at the same time beautiful.'
- 'Tablets make a difference but these are also a lot of baggage.'

- 'The exhibition gave awareness of the extent of the issues within the field. It is not straightforward.'

Reflection

- 'It makes you aware of your own mortality.'
- 'Thought provoking, humbling, we take so much for granted''.

Interest

- 'It stimulated curiosity about the artist and the illness.'
- 'It was nothing like I had expected: bigger, more vibrant and lively.'
- 'The latest pieces are very striking and strange, bizarre and unreal.'
- 'The more you look at the work, the more you see. Jim eloquently works through a complex process and presents it so that you can see it as a whole rather than a set of elements.'

³ Comment taken from the visitor book.

⁴ Comment taken from the visitor book.

Insight into the effect of technique on image making

Learning about technique

Several artists who were interviewed as part of the visitor sample said that they learnt about printmaking technique and got new ideas. Interviewees generally understood and valued the research behind the exhibition. Comments included:

- 'Jim's viewpoint was stimulating and refreshing. You really had to think about some things.'
- 'Jim's work is the transition between traditional printmaking and computer technologies.'
- 'The crossover to rapid prototyping is very interesting. I have previously only seen it used as a manufacturing technique.'

Showing how the medium affects the message

Many interviewees commented on the translation between 2D and 3D objects and the relationships between the two. A student interviewee said that she 'had no idea you could produce an image from a 3D object fed into a computer.' In addition, several other

interviewees commented on the use of different media in different ways to communicate messages.

Setting a high standard

- 'The work inspires wonder technically. Use of computer data is brilliant.'
- 'There was a high level of craftsmanship as always.'
- 'I have admiration for the work and the creativity that went into it.'

Making the case for art

- 'It opens people's eyes to the value of non-representational art.'
- 'It broadens peoples' perceptions of what art and artists are.'
- 'It is good for creativity - you don't see much work like this, based on personal experience.'
- 'It re-asserts the artefact in an age where academia is moving away from this and towards theory.'



Haemoglobin (10), Acrylic on Canvas, 45 x 45 cm

Further work

Jim Pattison observed that the descriptions of organic matter and forms have historically been influenced by the technology and aesthetics of time. This simple observation is potentially transformative because it emphasises the way visualisations, including medical visualisations, are conjecture, constructions rather than facts.

An artist such as Jim Pattison can have a pivotal role in helping scientists to see beyond their visual assumptions and therefore, by implication, to have a more complete understanding of the phenomena which they are studying.

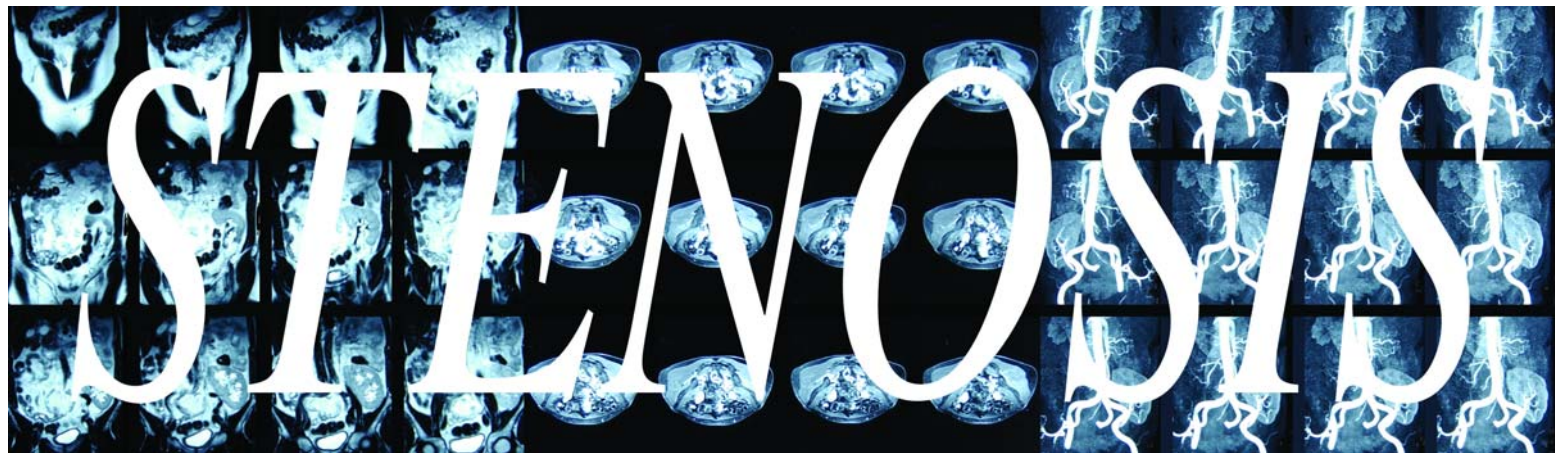


Exchanges, Digital Print + Acrylic on Canvas, 183 x 92 cm (detail)

AHRC's role

Jim Pattison felt that the AHRC funding brought added value to his project. It did this through emphasising the research element. This open ended approach gave flexibility, depth, integrity, and a personal attachment that he described as being different from his previous work.

Jim Pattison also thought that participating in this case study was a valuable experience: 'It has firmed up my approach to the intention and dissemination of my work.' The case study preparation was also 'very useful from the point of view of being clear about addressing aspects of the project.' Overall, the completed case study is 'useful in assessing the effectiveness of the project in reaching its target audience, and the success of the works in conveying some of the experiences of dialysis and transplantation.'



Stenosis, Digital Print, 58 x17 cm

In Search of a Hidden Landscape by David Walker Barker



Groverake Mine, Weardale, County Durham, March 2006

In Search of a Hidden Landscape by David Walker Barker

Introduction

David Walker Barker is a lecturer at the School of Design, University of Leeds. This project was his first sabbatical and his first major exhibition outside of a commercial gallery for several years. *In Search of a Hidden Landscape* is an interpretation of the history of the North Pennines and its (hard rock) lead and fluorspar mining communities. When the mines closed social and economic depression affected the area. Miners were unwilling to talk about what had happened. More recently, as the ex-miners are ageing, there has been a desire to remember and record the stories of the area before they are forgotten. The artist lives in Elsecar, South Yorkshire and his father was a coal miner until badly injured, and so he also has a personal connection with the subject matter.

The exhibition was a collaboration with Killhope Museum, the North of England Lead Mining Museum in Upper Weardale, County Durham. Part of the aim of the exhibition was to find new ways to display and interpret artefacts so as to engage visitors and local people in a vivid and personally meaningful exploration. The region is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, yet there is a strong history of mining and quarrying in the area. It is arguable that the lines of the quarries and old mine workings help to define the landscape, giving it a sculptural quality and in part defining its identity.

Research for *In Search of a Hidden Landscape* was supported by an AHRC Research Leave award.

Outcomes

The exhibition celebrated local history and experiences

The publication produced by the artist contains interviews with two local fluorspar miners, who are retired and whose stories might otherwise have been lost. The artist painstakingly collected artefacts from the area that might otherwise have been dispersed or destroyed. The work of the artist in itself encouraged local pride and identity. The project led to

possible collaborations between the artist and a local authority which might help to involve local people in future development of their area.

The exhibition gave a sense of the local area

Visitors gained a deep feeling for the place that was emotional as well as factual. This feeling was complex, encompassing images of sadness and regret, nostalgia and relief. There is some evidence that local people liked the exhibition because it

provided insights into their lives and histories, without, as one interviewee said 'just whingeing on about what a hard life it was being a miner'.

The exhibition encouraged thought about wider issues

Visitors often made the connection between the local culture of the North Pennines and their own local culture, between local culture and personal identity. The exhibition reminded visitors about the value of community and about some of the risks of a more shallow or rootless modern existence.

The exhibition enhanced the museum experience

The exhibition added feelings, sometimes complex feelings about identity and hardship, to the simpler observations about artefacts and how they work. The presence of the artwork encouraged visitors to spend more time in each space and therefore to take more time for reflection. Visitors commented on the way the artwork made the museum more visually interesting, more human, and



At Killhope Lead Mining Museum, Weardale, County Durham

more relevant to modern life. A minority of visitors did not relate to the artwork in the museum, but it is arguable that the artwork still added to their interest in the museum, albeit in a less comfortable way.

In Search of a Hidden Landscape also has a wider potential social impact in encouraging visitors to value the local links and connections that create and reinforce social capital. The exhibition can be taken to illustrate the nature and

value of social capital as it touches on the ways in which social capital:

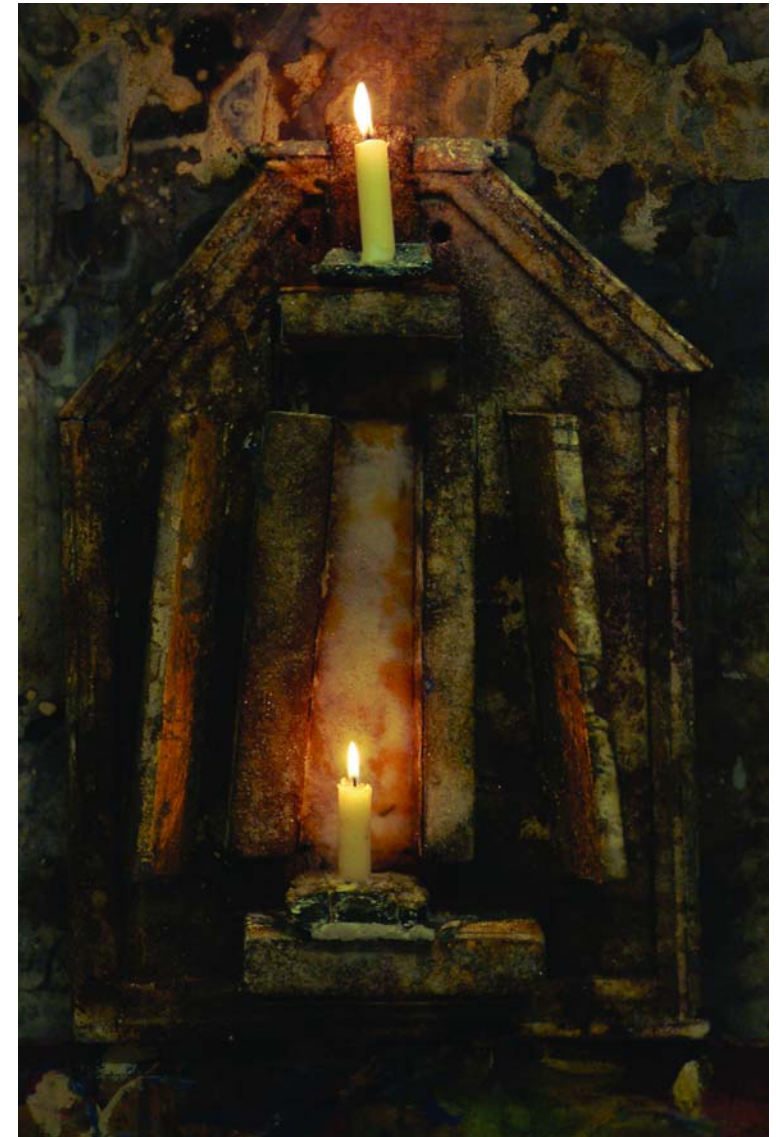
- is built up through a shared history;
- binds people together through sharing experiences that are negative as well as positive;
- is simultaneously an individual and a communal experience;
- and is composed of inter-linkages and connections.

Logic model for *In Search of Hidden Landscapes*

A logic model is a visual depiction of a project which shows the hidden or explicit assumptions, and therefore makes a link between means and ends. Logic models provide a clear and succinct image of the work of exhibitions, and draws attention to the artistic process as well as the product.



Part of the Killhope Site



Where the Candle Always Burns, 38.1 x 54 cm

Logic model for In Search of Hidden Landscapes

ASSUMPTIONS	RESOURCES*	PROCESSES/ ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
<p>That the landscape is a historical resource</p> <p>That working class people should tell their own stories about their history and their lives</p> <p>That communities are partly defined by their histories and shared experiences</p> <p>That art provides a conceptual insight into history e.g. ambivalence, the unknown</p> <p>That the artwork is not the full story, or even the most important piece. It is an exploration</p> <p>Art provides a symbolic rather than a literal narration, which provides a multilayered interpretation emphasising connections and ambivalence.</p> <p>That aesthetics reflect natural ordering principles that apply to mineralization as well as art works</p> <p>That the boundary between fine art and folk art is subjective</p>	<p>AHRC grant</p> <p>University of Leeds co-funded the project, and contributed to expenses and publication</p> <p>Help in kind from Killhope Museum</p> <p>Help in kind from the artist and a friend</p>	<p>Field work</p> <p>Conceptualisation</p> <p>Fabrication</p> <p>Installation</p> <p>Tour</p>	<p>Artefacts</p> <p>Visitors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local people • Tourists • Educational parties <p>Publication</p>	<p>Enhancing the environment of the museum through adding context, emotion and depth.</p> <p>Helping visitors to understand the history of the North Pennines as a working landscape inextricably linked to the people who live and lived there</p> <p>Recording and celebrating local histories before they are lost</p> <p>Communicating some of the experiences of being a miner e.g. the high points, risks, choices and skills</p> <p>Encouraging visitors to look at things differently – to make connections between the personal, local and global scale; the past, present and future; to understand the interdependency between the human and physical landscape</p> <p>Encouraging visitors to think about their own identity and sense of place</p> <p>Encouraging planners and decision makers to understand the importance of mining to the identity and history of the area rather than seeing it as a conflict with the AONB designation.</p>	<p>Scope to increase local identity and confidence</p> <p>Scope to encourage visitors to think about the value of their community and the links that define it (social capital)</p>

* See Annex for details on resources.

The Exhibition

The exhibition was held at **Killhope Museum, County Durham** from 27th May until 31st October, 2006. The paintings and constructions were exhibited in buildings across the museum site, with some artworks specially constructed for display underground in the restored mine workings.

From October 2005 until February 2006, David Walker Barker made 16 visits to the area. This included talking to the staff at Killhope Museum, gaining knowledge of the museum site and space, interviewing miners, looking at the archives with the assistance of the Friends of Killhope⁵, taking photos, collecting objects and extensive fieldwork on location. A diary of this process was kept, and extracts were included in the publication.

⁵ Friends of Killhope is a voluntary organisation and registered charity set up to support the development of Killhope Lead Mining Museum and to foster an interest in the lead mining heritage of the North Pennines.



Beyond the Doors are Other Worlds in the Blacksmiths Shop at Killhope Museum

Outputs

The Artworks

Twenty-three artworks that relate to the Killhope site, the North Pennine landscape and its extensive mining history.

Publication

The publication *In Search of a Hidden Landscape* contains essays by David Walker Barker, Dr Christopher Rawson-Tetley, a practising artist, writer and photographer, and Peter Davidson, Professor of Renaissance Studies at the University of Aberdeen. It also includes excerpts from Walker Barker's fieldwork diary and transcripts from interviews with two fluorspar miners. 1,000 copies were produced and circulated through the museum and other means. The publication was designed to cater for a wide readership, rather than just academics or visual artists.



Beyond the Doors are Other Worlds,
71.2 x 106.8 cm

Number of Visitors

The artist and the museum had four target audiences: local people, tourists, educational parties, and researchers, such as historians, geologists, environmental scientists and industrial archaeologists. Killhope Museum had 16,870 visitors during the period of the exhibition.

Outcomes

Personal and Artistic Outcomes

In Search of a Hidden Landscape is David Walker Barker's first body of work in several years that was not produced for a commercial gallery. This project gave him a chance to explore more openly the subject matter that drives the practice, and was a new opportunity to work in the place that has inspired him – a freedom he has never experienced before. He thinks that his work has progressed as a result: it is 'richer, more self

assured, more conceptually focused'⁶. The images are a part of the landscape which they seek to narrate: 'it is almost as if they have been there forever'.

During this project Walker Barker was not just working as an artist. He also interviewed miners and encouraged them to consider a film or publication of their experiences. The purpose has been different from his earlier work, 'about giving something back'.

The themes that run through David Walker Barker's work are:

History as a collaboration between people and place

The North Pennines is designated as An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, yet it is undeniably made by people: 'If you could map all the shafts (vertical entrances) and levels (horizontal entrances) used for mining there would be thousands of miles of passages under the Pennines, a hidden landscape made by people.'

Ownership

Artistic interpretation can add to more traditional social history through its representation of symbolism and ambivalence. 'In this rush to make this area a rural idyll there is a danger that we will forget where it came from, its origins and the people who made it... When an industry fails everything fails with it and the lives of everyday people are forgotten.'

Making connections

'The essence of the exhibition is looking below the surface of things, histories and our own lives. Crystals take you into other dimensions. They are a portal into an infinite series of relationships, into geological time. When you touch crystallised minerals you enter the microcosmic universe. It is all about how you look at things, transformations through time and scale.'

Looking below the surface

Dr Christopher Rawson-Tetley, in the publication, writes 'the modern world is one that is very concerned with the surface of things, the knowable. How things appear; how we appear to

others; how others appear to us. Concern for surface appearances can run counter to the reality of a world experienced in four-dimensions.'

Engagement

The exhibition provides a different way of engaging the public. Expanding the work of the Killhope Museum to engage the public visually as well as making a connection with the landscape. In the publication, Ian Forbes, the Museum Manager, comments that 'our mission is not about looking after objects and collections for the future, but interpreting the past for the present'.

Ambivalence

The exhibition celebrates the work and achievements of the mining communities as well as depicting the harsh lives many lived. A miner interviewed for this project commented that 'it was a bloody miserable job at times, but it got to you, it was in your blood'.

⁶ Quotes in the Personal and Artistic Outcomes section are from David Walker Barker unless otherwise stated.



David Walker Barker in his South Yorkshire studio

Visitor outcomes

Visitor data was collected from:

- Three visitors and one part-time guide were interviewed face-to-face using Repertory Grid⁷, plus three school parties.
- Twenty-nine telephone interviews.
- Comments in the visitor's feedback forms.
- An interview with the manager of Killhope Museum.

Eighteen telephone interviewees had travelled more than 40 miles to get to the exhibition. Furthermore, 22 interviewees



Flasks, Jars and Vials in the South Yorkshire studio

said that they visited three or more times a year. Eleven had been aware of the artwork before their visit, and seven of them had seen the artist's work before.

Overall, comments on the exhibition were very positive. Visitors valued the effort in the works, their beauty, originality and complexity. Comments⁸ included:

- 'I have never seen anything quite like it.'
- 'It depends on the viewer – you get out what you look into it.'
- 'The works have lives of their own.'
- 'To embed the art in the site and location that inspired it is quite unique.'
- 'It brought a lot of enjoyment.'
- 'My soul was deeply moved.'

⁷ Repertory Grid is an open and accessible interviewing technique that uses personalised cards to identify the discriminations that people make, the way they construct opposites, and the correlation between constructs.

⁸ Comments in the visitor outcome section are taken from the telephone interviews unless otherwise stated.



A Doorway into Unknown Levels, 103.5 x 155.5 cm

Changing the experience of the museum

Ian Forbes, the Manager at Killhope Museum, saw the exhibition as setting a new direction for the museum, helping to renew and refresh its work. His original objective for the exhibition was to help visitors to think differently about heritage sites: 'Twenty years ago heritage museums gave a new way of looking at the past. They were open air, beyond the traditional showcase approach. Heritage museums are not fresh any more. They are a uniform product which is safe and unchallenging. I wanted to give people things

they were not expecting, to challenge them, to encourage them to think actively about the past, present and the future. The past has become divorced from the present and the future. If you package up the past, and park it somewhere you can visit and leave behind, you are not doing it any service. It should inform the present and future. David's work was about interpretation in the broadest sense.' In Ian's view, the exhibition fully achieved these objectives. David Walker Barker's work exceeded his expectations: 'It was instantly appealing. It had

a richness, a texture, that people responded to very readily. It wasn't difficult stuff. It had an incredible power. Each piece fitted in extremely well with its location.'

Taking time

Several interviewees commented on the way the art work forced visitors to spend more time in each space.

Comments included:

- 'Standing with the art work makes you linger in that spot rather than dashing through.'
- 'The art is contemplative. It makes you think and take in the atmosphere.'
- 'If I missed a picture, I went back to look for it. Some blended in so well. The art made me look at the museum differently. I realised that there were things that I had missed.'
- 'The danger of historical tourism is that you buy into the spectacle. The art made you stop and think about the history. How did the miners live? How were they creative? The art makes the museum a much richer and more difficult experience.'

- 'The work is very intense, almost baroque. It acts as an exemplar to visitors of how deeply they might engage with the history of the place. There is a sense of deep engagement rather than being there as a spectator.'

Another dimension

The exhibition added visual appeal, warmth, colour and interest. Three school parties were also interviewed on the site. The response was extremely positive. In particular, it was noticeable that the children, who had fewer expectations about what should be in a museum, felt the art made the visit richer and more interesting. The phrase 'another dimension' recurred during the telephone survey. Other comments included:

- 'It opened up the subject in an imaginative way.'
- 'It put a sparkle in. The art work and the artefacts played off each other.'
- 'Having the works underground was a startling thing. It is such a different environment. Our conceptions of art and mining are so different.'

- 'It made me wonder what was in the artist's mind.'
- 'It was a little bit extra for everybody to see.'
- 'It much improved the environment and experience.'
- 'It brought everything alive without drawing attention to itself.'
- 'It broadened your outlook.'
- 'It warms the place up. It laced the whole place through with colour, brought it back to life.'
- 'It takes an imaginative museum to a different level, giving a lot more than just artefacts. All were transformed by the artist's concept and visual imagination.'
- 'It is important for museums to have exhibitions like this as adds to whole experience.'
- 'It added variety to the experience.'



Compendium of the Under-neath in the Spar Box Room at Killhope Museum

Adding people

The art work made visitors think about the people as well as the artefacts.

- 'It brought people into the exhibition.'
- 'It gave an extra dimension - not just a load of old artefacts.'
- 'It made me think about the museum and people's links with the mines.'
- 'It set the museum in context.'
- 'The art works are like little museums, but have a dynamic quality that museums lack.'
- 'Heritage can be extraordinarily dead. It takes more than people dressing up to bring it alive.'



Old Boots in the South Yorkshire studio

- 'The art added an additional commentary. It brought home that this wasn't just an empty building. There were people working here with their own histories and views of the place.'
- 'It gave a sense of humanity. The miners were not just automatons who had a hard life.'
- 'The work highlighted the miners' creativity. It made you ask what they would have done if they had had the chances people have today.'
- 'The art makes you think. Not just about the artefacts but about the people.'
- 'It made me want to look more into the lives of the people who lived there. To stop and think about what it felt like to work in the mine.'
- 'I was worried about the art work down the mine - that it was going to get wet. Then I thought, but the miners would be getting wet.'
- 'You thought about the work of the artist. Getting the pieces into the spaces, with the inhospitable weather. This made you think about the miners working in these circumstances.'

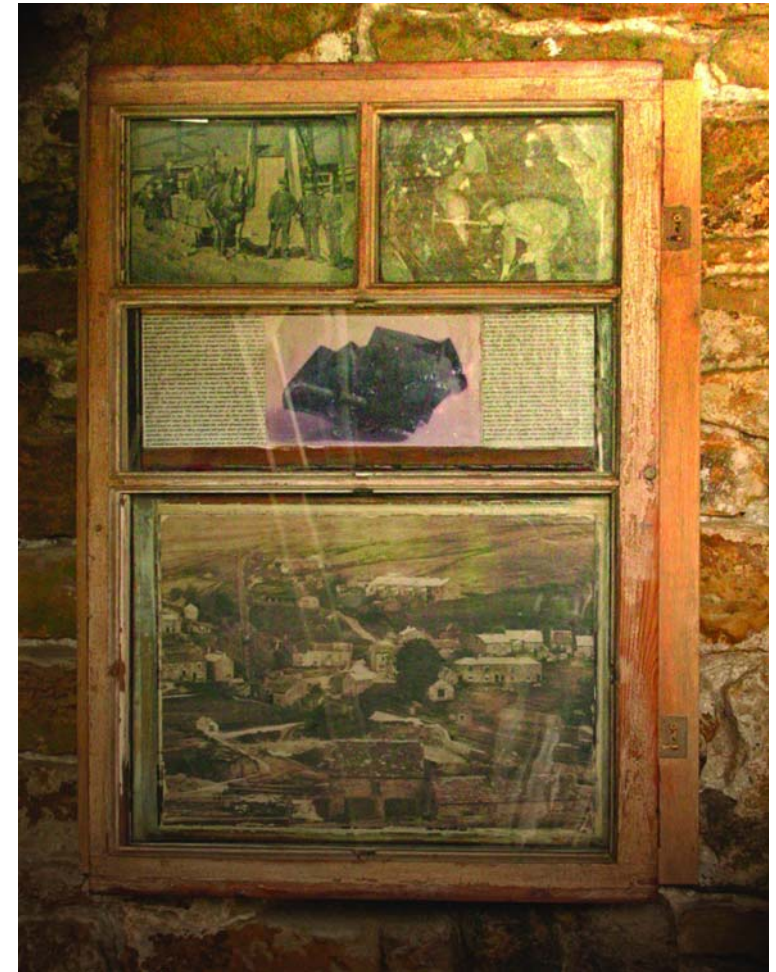
Making the link to the present

The emotions and thoughts stimulated by the art work brought relevance to the present.

- 'The art brings the museum up to date.'
- 'It reinterprets objects in a modern context.'
- 'It gives a different starting point for thinking about things in the museum.'
- 'A lot of people are very concerned about how superficial modern society is. We are sold packaged bites of thinking. This is not good for humanity. But people want to be given tougher stuff. They welcome a chance to think for themselves.'
- 'We have a clichéd view of the past and we lose culturally, historically, emotionally and politically as a result.'

Discomfort

The exhibition was not what some visitors or staff expected in the museum. A minority queried the relevance of art in a museum: one interviewee commented that 'the museum is for mining and minerals, not art'.



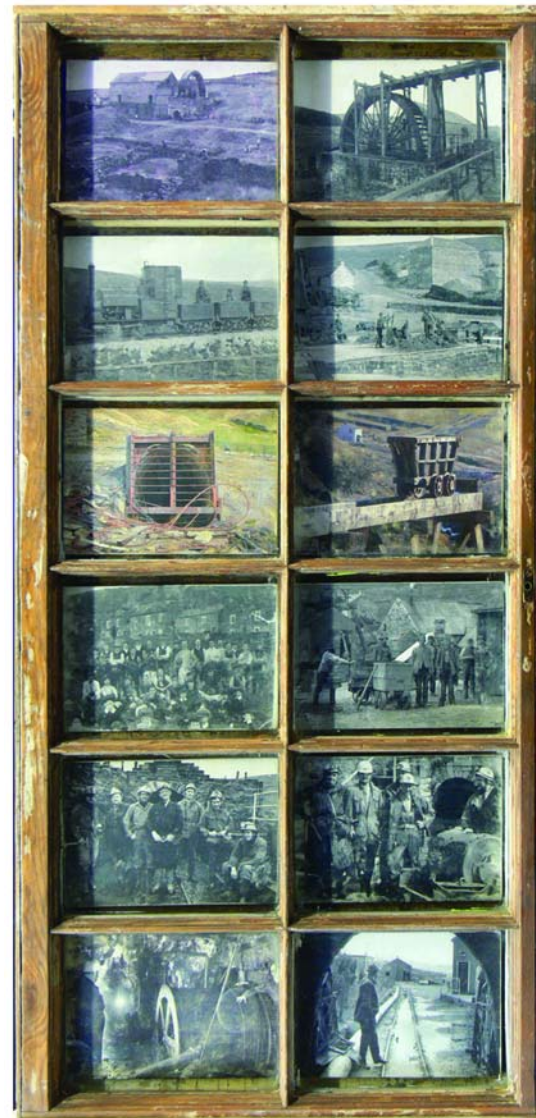
Rookhope for Boltsburn Mine in the Jigger House at Killhope Museum

Giving a sense of the local area

The feeling of the place

Interviewees felt that the art work helped them to understand or appreciate the local area.

- 'It gives a bit more background/knowledge to your visit.'
- 'It gave a sense of time, place and space in an unobvious, sophisticated way so you have to think about it.'
- 'The works are the place.'
- 'The art gave a wonderful sense of the place. Using materials from the area, natural pigments, the organic quality to it, the worked in feeling.'
- 'The works are wonderful evocations of the place.'
- 'The pieces are quite magical, alchemical. They take things from the area and give them a different sense.'
- 'If you don't know the area the art tells you about it. It makes the area real. It gives a real sense of what it would be like to live there.'
- 'It gave a strong sense of communities living bleak and harsh lives.'



Old Mines and the Rookhope Football Team, 66 x 142.5 cm

- 'I liked David's work because it actually means something. You can see the thought and effort that has gone into it. It has a resonance with the whole culture and history of the area. The North Pennines is different to other parts of the north because of the geology. Lead and fluorspar miners worked in different conditions compared to coal mining: in small groups rather than large, and they often moved around and had their own work. They were independent and self reliant.'
 - 'The colour, intensity and beauty of the art works is different from its subject matter. The artist is transforming the landscape into something richer.'
 - 'The art demands a different type of engagement to photos and postcodes. You just accept these. The art encourages thought.'
 - 'The art made me see the local culture as rich and gave an element of sadness because it has gone.'
 - 'The exhibition was a celebration tinged with sadness and regret.'
 - 'There is a paradox in the area. As you drive through there are notices proclaiming an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. But it is actually the result of human activity. The tourism is one dimensional. It takes about the wildness of the area, like the Lake District, when they are actually quite different places.'
 - 'This is a natural looking landscape that is shaped by mining.'
 - 'It is another way of passing on the feeling of being a miner without just whingeing on about what a hard life it was.'
- Encapsulating paradox**
- The artwork encouraged a complex understanding of the area, good and bad, difficult and proud.
- 'It encompassed ideas of darkness and light - central to mining communities - and using materials from the mine.'



Distillations and Concentrates, 142.2 x 107 cm

Wider reflections

The importance of local culture

The artwork encouraged visitors to reflect upon the personal meaning of place.

- 'The pieces themselves are a visual expression of what it means to be connected to a place.'
- 'The exhibition was rooted in the local area, but it also raised other issues. Other possibilities. It opened people's minds to things they might not have thought about otherwise.'



Flasks, Jars and Vials in the South Yorkshire studio

- 'The art gives a sense of a history lost. Of the mystery of the landscape and things hidden within it.'
- 'The exhibition reminds us how impoverished we are by the destruction of local cultures.'
- 'The works use art as a way of promoting engagement with the past, place and the process of change in an accessible and thought provoking way.'

Local culture as part of personal identity

- 'It got you to think about who you are and what you owe to the past. This gives a sense of trying to know yourself better.'
- 'The art makes a greater universal statement. Distilling the lived history. It adds to how you think about yourself.'
- 'Anything that puts us back in touch with who we are and where we come from is excellent. We are losing what we had taken for granted, our local identity, and we are getting poorer for it.'



Distillations and Concentrates in the Mineral Room at Killhope Museum

Artist as servant rather than master

The exhibition was valued as a tool to represent the views of local communities.

- 'I like its sincerity and honesty... David doesn't have any airs or graces. He doesn't impose himself on the audience.'

- 'These days the artist is the product. This exhibition was the subordination of the art to a wider agenda.'
- 'Art has such an important part in raising the big issues. It has a real living voice.'
- 'It is a fantastic achievement. Showing how art can come out of artists'

- relationships with people who are not artists.'
- 'Art is a quiet subversion.'

Further work

David Walker Barker has an increased interest in and opportunity for collaboration as a result of *In Search of a Hidden Landscape*. He is, for example, in discussion with a local council officer about a possible project talking to local people about the mining in their area. Walker Barker could act with others as a facilitator or interpreter in these projects. His work is also used as a model of good practice for academics and graduates working with landscape (www.land3.uwe.ac.uk). In addition, the television company IWC Media, which is making the programme *Mountain* with Griff Rhys Jones, interviewed Walker Barker as a route into understanding the history and identity of the North Pennines. The project, he feels, has also enriched his teaching work.

AHRC's role

David Walker Barker felt that he had achieved an important breakthrough with this project. The AHRC Research Leave allowed him to think about the artistic process differently, and how the whole process of the research involved is the totality of the work. An exhibition could include his sketches, studies made on location and incomplete works in progress, together with his archive of objects and specimens. This would be as equally relevant as finished artworks and provide a deeper insight into both the process of thinking and the process of making. In the publication, he talks about 'studio as landscape' and 'landscape as studio', the two being interchangeable.

David Walker Barker felt that participating in this case study was valuable in gaining other wider perspectives on his work: 'Having spent the nine months working in a very focused manner on the project, it was useful to have feedback from a source initially distanced from the project, the artwork and its context.' Overall, the case study 'will be an important summation for me providing another view of the project... It also covers the complicated area of how an exhibition is received especially in a context where artworks are not expected to be seen. This is particularly relevant in regard to this project both from a personal point of view and from the perspective of the museum itself. It broadens the potential arena in which one might work and the strategies that one might employ, both in interpreting and contextualising.'

A Note on Methodology

Annabel Jackson Associates undertook this case study work with a mixed method using telephone and face-to-face interviews. Logic models, constructed during interviews with the artists, were used to consider the causal links in the exhibitions.

The questions used to derive these logic models came from Personal Construct Theory, Appreciative Enquiry and Neuro-Linguistic Programming. A linear relationship between processes and outputs, or between outputs and outcomes, is not implied, but rather that these are possible interpretations of the different facets of the exhibitions.

Repertory Grid, a tool devised for Personal Construct Theory, was used for the face-to-face interviews. It is an accessible method using personalised cards which is suitable for adults and children of reading age, and which identifies the discriminations that people make, the way they construct opposites, and the correlation between constructs.

The Repertory Grid allowed for the production of a structured questionnaire for the telephone interviews that combined the constructs on exhibition consumption with some personal constructs from visitors. The telephone survey interviewed people a month or more after their attendance and therefore analysed lagged or sustained impact.

Annex: Exhibition Resources

Translations:		
AHRC	Money: £4,990	3D scans Prototype models Digital printing Catalogue
Carnegie Trust	Money: £1,220	Colour illustrations in the catalogue
School of Fine Art, University of Dundee	Money: £300	Printing costs
School of Fine Art, University of Dundee	Help in kind	His salary during the half year sabbatical
Edinburgh Printmakers	Help in kind	Transportation, opening, launch, invites, posters, press
Dundee Visual Research Centre	Help in kind	Administrative support, installation

In Search of a Hidden Landscape:		
AHRC	Money: £14,013	Cover for teaching work Travelling costs
School of Design, University of Leeds	Money: £420 Co-funding research leave	Transportation and accommodation costs, as well as the research leave.
Killhope Museum	Help in kind	Private view; fabrication of stud walls for the exhibition; printing of invites, posters and publicity; access to Killhope Archives; and the AA road signs publicising the exhibition.
Artist himself	Money and help in kind Costs in excess of £4,200	The artist covered the costs of making the large cabinet and other contributions, as well as using materials that he already had in stock and purchasing new ones.
A friend	Help in kind	A friend collaborated in the design of the publication accompanying the exhibition, providing expertise in the layout and formatting the publication ready for printing without being paid.



On a Route Uncharted in the Mine Shop at Killhope Museum



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