

# IKON

Ikon Gallery  
1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2HS  
0121 248 0708 / [www.ikon-gallery.org](http://www.ikon-gallery.org)  
Open Tuesday-Sunday & Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am-5pm / free entry  
Registered charity no. 528892

## Edmund Clark *In Place of Hate*

6 December 2017 - 11 March 2018



Left to right: *In Place of Hate* (2017), images courtesy of Edmund Clark, Ikon and Flowers Gallery

As the pressures on Britain's prisons appear ever more regularly in the national news, Ikon presents an exhibition of work by British artist Edmund Clark, the culmination of a residency in Europe's only wholly therapeutic prison environment, HMP Grendon.

Established in 1962, Grendon's inmates must accept responsibility for their offence. They then exercise a degree of control over the day-to-day running of their lives, making a commitment to intensive group therapy and democratic decision-making, whilst holding each other to account. Through research and evaluation, evidence has demonstrated that Grendon has delivered lower levels of violence and disruption in prison, whilst reducing levels of reoffending after release.

Clark, an award winning artist with a longstanding interest in incarceration and its effects, has spent three years at Grendon. He has worked with prisoners, prison officers and therapeutic staff, immersed himself in the routines of the communities and taken part in the therapy meetings that are a key element of life on each wing of the prison.

The nature of Clark's subject matter (previous subjects include Guantanamo Bay, the CIA secret prison program and the detention of terrorism suspects in England on control orders) means his work is shaped by his engagement with issues of censorship, security and control. At Grendon, as in other

British prisons, he cannot make images that reveal the identity of the prisoners or details of the security infrastructure.

His response has been to create work that explores ideas of visibility, representation, trauma and self-image. These themes influence how prisoners and the criminal justice system are perceived and discussed by the public, politicians and the media in Britain today. Above all they are central to the experience of the men and staff engaged in the therapeutic process at Grendon.

The artist explains:

*"Why we lock people up, how we do it and where we do it offer a profound insight into our society. I have tried to reflect on how criminality and prisons are seen, or not seen, in contemporary Britain while evoking the experience of individuals engaged in the intense psychological panopticon of therapy at Grendon. Through collaboration with the men and staff the work has been shaped or created by these processes and experiences, and by the environment of the prison itself."*

Ikon director, Jonathan Watkins, comments:

*"Our residency programme with HMP Grendon was informed by a belief that the arts can be an especially effective way of engaging with offenders who feel alienated from mainstream education and employment, in order to break the vicious circle of offending. The current high level of criminal re-offending signifies that our penal system as a whole is not working. Clark's longstanding interest in incarceration and its effects means he is exceptionally well placed to understand the complexities of Grendon, the men and the staff who inhabit it – this is reflected in the power and poignancy of the works on display."*

The immersive exhibition at Ikon will combine photography, video and installation and will be accompanied by two publications, an exhibition catalogue and an artist's book. The exhibition is presented in partnership with HM Prison Grendon and the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust.



Edmund Clark, *In Place of Hate* (2017), image courtesy of Edmund Clark, Ikon and Flowers Gallery

## Biographical note:

**Edmund Clark** is an award-winning artist whose work links history, politics and representation, through a combination of photography, film, found material and installation. It has been acquired for national and international collections including the National Portrait Gallery, the Imperial War Museum and the National Media Museum in Britain, the George Eastman House Museum in America, and the Fotomuseum, Winterthur in Switzerland. Awards include an International Center of Photography Infinity Award, the Royal Photographic Society Hood Medal for outstanding photography for public service and the British Journal of Photography International Photography Award. His work has very recently been the subject of a major solo exhibition, *Edmund Clark: War of Terror*, at the Imperial War Museum, London, from 28 July 2016 to 28 August 2017. Clark is represented by Flowers Gallery.

For more information, high-res images and to request interviews please contact Milly Carter Hepplewhite or Lisa Hopf at Pelham Communications on 020 8969 3959 or email [milly@pelhamcommunications.com](mailto:milly@pelhamcommunications.com) or [lisa@pelhamcommunications.com](mailto:lisa@pelhamcommunications.com)

## Social Media Handles:

Instagram, Twitter and Facebook: @ikongallery #ikonGallery #EdmundClark #InPlaceofHate

## Note to Editors:

1. Ikon exhibition opening: 6 December 2017
2. Ikon is an internationally acclaimed contemporary art venue situated in central Birmingham. Established in 1964 by a group of artists, Ikon is an educational charity and works to encourage public engagement with contemporary art through exhibiting new work in a context of debate and participation. The gallery programme features artists from around the world and a variety of media is represented, including sound, film, mixed media, photography, painting, sculpture and installation. Ikon's off-site programme develops dynamic relationships between art, artists and audiences outside the gallery. Projects vary enormously in scale, duration and location, challenging expectations of where art can be seen and by whom. Education is at the heart of Ikon's activities, stimulating public interest in and understanding of contemporary visual art. Through a variety of talks, tours, workshops and seminars, Ikon's Learning Team aims to build dynamic relationships with audiences, enabling visitors to engage with, discuss and reflect on contemporary art. [www.ikon-gallery.org](http://www.ikon-gallery.org)
3. Edmund Clark is an award-winning artist whose work links history, politics and representation. His work has dealt with issues of detention and imprisonment in a variety of contexts. Clark has exhibited widely, including major solo museum exhibitions at the Imperial War Museum (London and Zephyr), Reiss-Engelhorn-Museen (Mannheim), and his work has been acquired for national and international collections including the National Portrait Gallery, the Imperial War Museum and the National Media Museum (London). Awards include the Royal Photographic Society Hood Medal for outstanding photography for public service.

4. Ikon is open Tuesday – Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am - 5pm. Admission is free. Ikon Gallery is supported using public funding from Arts Council England and Birmingham City Council. For the latest news and events follow @ikongallery on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).
5. Located in Buckinghamshire, UK, and established in 1962, HMP Grendon is the only prison in Europe to operate wholly as a therapeutic community. Inmates voluntarily apply and exercise a degree of control over the day-to-day running of their lives, making a commitment to intensive group therapy and accountability to each other.
6. Ikon's Artist in Residence programme runs in partnership with HMP Grendon, the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust and Edmund Clark. Established in 2015, and culminating in the exhibition at Ikon, the three-year programme develops public discourse about prisons, rehabilitation and criminality. Integral to the artist's research and art work, undertaken during the residency, will be practical opportunities for offenders to work alongside a professional artist assisting them in their own creative endeavours. The arts are seen as an especially effective way of engaging with offenders who feel alienated from mainstream education and employment.

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