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The Arts in Prison

Edmund Clark's Artistic Residency at HMP Grendon:

Exploring the impact upon residents

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The Residency

The role of the arts in and around criminal justice is an important topic for academics, practitioners and policymakers alike. There are a range of organisations who bring arts into these settings with a variety of aims from enhancing prisoner wellbeing to reducing reoffending. There is a considerable body of research exploring the impact of arts-based interventions which have sought to engage offenders in artistic endeavours. These studies have highlighted psychological changes in participants, for example lower levels of depression, less anger and decreases in self-harming behaviour,¹ increased self-esteem,² sense of achievement,³ feelings of empowerment⁴ and self-efficacy.⁵ In addition, these studies suggest that such programmes can increase participant's receptiveness towards and motivation for wider educational activities, emphasising the value of the arts as a pathway to

engaging in other areas of learning and training.⁶ Furthermore, participation in arts-based programmes may enable offenders to hone their social and communicative skills, developing better capacity for empathy and working with others.⁷

Many of these initiatives have aimed to bring about behaviour change and as such, have been characterised by objectives based upon engaging offenders in artistic endeavours through the delivery of a structured programme of activity. The artistic residency of photographer Edmund Clark at HMP Grendon 2014-2017 was different. Supported by the Marie Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust and coordinated by Ikon Gallery, the aim of the residency was to develop a critical discussion around prison, rehabilitation and criminality. This was to be achieved through Clark creating a body of his own work in response to the prison and helping to facilitate the artwork and creativity of men serving sentences at HMP Grendon.⁸ Clark has considerable experience of working in carceral settings⁹ and his past his work had

1. See for example-Breiner, M., Tuomisto, L., Bouyea, E., Gussak, D. & Aufderheide, D. (2011) 'Creating an Art Therapy Anger Management Protocol for Male Inmates Through a Collaborative Relationship' *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 56(7): 1124-1143. Smeijsters, H. & Cleven, G. (2006) The treatment of aggression using arts therapies in forensic psychiatry: Results of a qualitative inquiry, *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 33: 37-58.
2. See for example Brewster, L. (1983) An Evaluation of the Arts-in-Corrections Program of the California Department of Corrections, William James Association Prison Arts Program. Miles, A. & Clarke, R. (2006) *The Arts in Criminal Justice: a Study of Research Feasibility*. Manchester: Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change, University of Manchester.
3. See for example-Dawes, V. (1999) *Julius Caesar: An evaluation of a full-scale production of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar with original music score at HMP Bullingdon*, London: Irene Taylor Trust. Lazzari, M., Amundson, K. & Jackson, R. (2005) "We Are More Than Jailbirds": An Arts Program for Incarcerated Young Women, *Affilia*, 20(2): 169-185.
4. See for example-De Viggiani, N., Macintosh, S. & Lang, P. (2010) Music in time: An evaluation of a participatory creative music programme for older prisoners, Project Report, Bristol: University of the West of England. Digard, L. & Liebling, A. (2012) Harmony Behind Bars: Evaluating the Therapeutic Potential of a Prison-based Music Programme, in L. K. Cheliotis (Ed.), *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment*, Aldershot: Ashgate.
5. See for example-Cox, A. & Gelsthorpe, L. (2008) *Beats & Bars. Music in Prisons: An evaluation*, London: The Irene Taylor Trust. Harkins, L., Pritchard, C., Haskayne, D., Watson, A. & A. R. Beech (2011) Evaluation of Geese Theatre's Re-Connect Program: Addressing Resettlement Issues in Prison, *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 55(4): 546-566.
6. See for example-Tett, L., Anderson, K., McNeill, F., Overy, K. & Sparks, R. (2012) Learning, rehabilitation and the arts in prisons: a Scottish case study, *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 44(2): 171-185. Williams, R. (2004) Narrative Art and Incarcerated Abused Women, *Art Education*, March: 46-52.
7. See for example-Moller, L. (2004) 'Prison Within A Prison: A Burkean Analysis of The Sing Sing Stage Production Of "Slam"' *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture*, 10: 3:181-198.
8. Hereafter referred to as 'Residents'.
9. For example, Still Life Killing Time, Guantanamo: If the light goes out, Control Order House. Please see <https://www.edmundclark.com/> for more information.

raised many critical questions about the concept of control—particularly representations of control and control over time and space in prisons.

Clark's role at HMP Grendon was not one of art tutor or art therapist. He did not oversee studio activity or participate in the therapeutic programme. He organised discussion groups about the art work that residents made on their own, sharing thoughts while procuring art materials. In November 2016 and November 2017, Clark worked with residents to put on art exhibitions in the prison's conference centre. This provided the opportunity for residents to meet visitors, among them arts professionals, and talk about their work. Clark's residency at HMP Grendon culminated in his own exhibition at Ikon Gallery, which opened in December 2017. The Centre for Applied Criminology at Birmingham City University was commissioned to evaluate Clark's residency. This paper reflects upon one aspect of that evaluation—the impact of the residency upon the men serving sentences at HMP Grendon. Prior to describing this element of the study and our findings, we provide an overview of HMP Grendon—a unique institution in the English and Welsh prison estate.

HMP Grendon

As the only prison in England and Wales to operate wholly as a therapeutic community,¹⁰ HMP Grendon presented an unparalleled carceral space for Clark's residency. The prison is home to up to 235 residents,¹¹ the clear majority of whom are serving life sentences.¹² Grendon residents present complex needs and psychological disturbance, some have engaged in self-harm and suicidal behaviours, and many have a significant history of institutional misconduct in other prisons.¹³ However, Grendon represents, for these men, an opportunity to embark upon a process of change

with the 'supportive and affirmative social climate' of the therapeutic community.¹⁴

Rapoport's four underlying principles of TCs—*democratisation, permissiveness, communalism, and reality confrontation*¹⁵—are operationalised within HMP Grendon through several mechanisms. Every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, residents participate in small therapy groups of up to eight people, where all elements of residents' lives are considered and discussed, including childhood, family life, offences, victims, educational experiences, relationships, working life, and incidents or events that have occurred in the prison.¹⁶ As such, HMP Grendon is a living-learning situation.¹⁷ While *permissiveness* enables residents to behave 'as normal' and tolerate each other's perceived deviancy within the community, *reality confrontation* comes to the fore in the small therapy groups, where all behaviours come under scrutiny. Twice-weekly community meetings are an example of democratization at work in HMP Grendon—meetings are chaired by an elected resident and enable ongoing access to the decision-making process for all residents for example issues affecting community life are discussed and voted upon, e.g., the organisation and allocation of paid work. With regards to communalism, all residents take on responsibilities relating to their physical environment and the events that happen within that environment, for example entertainment coordinator, health and hygiene compliance officer, family day coordinator, or drugs strategy advisor.¹⁸

Narrative is central to HMP Grendon's psychotherapeutic interventions in which life stories are elicited, interrogated, critiqued, and reformed.¹⁹ As Stevens noted following her in-depth study at the prison, 'conventional 'con' self-narratives, those hypermasculine, anti-authoritarian, crime glorifying, risk-taking tales of criminal derring-do, sometimes

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10. For a general introduction to the work of HMP Grendon, see Genders, E., and Player, E. (1995). *Grendon: A study of a therapeutic prison*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.
 11. HM Chief Inspector of Prisons. (2017, May 8 – 18). Report on an unannounced inspection of HMP Grendon.
 12. Brookes, M. (2012). Recovery within a prison therapeutic community: Setting the scene. In D. Alfred and G. Drennan (Eds.), *Secure recovery: Approaches to recovery in forensic mental health settings* (pp. 156-171). London, England: Routledge.
 13. Newberry, M. (2009). The relationship between offence type, psychopathy and blame attribution among prisoners at HMP Grendon. Unpublished Prison Service Report. Newton, M. (2010). Changes in prison offending among residents in a prison-based therapeutic community. In R. Shuker and E. Sullivan (Eds.), *Grendon and the emergence of forensic therapeutic communities: Developments in research and practice* (pp. 281-292). London, England: Wiley-Blackwell. Shine, J., and Newton, M. (2000). Damaged, disturbed, and dangerous: A profile of receptions to Grendon therapeutic prison 1995-2000. In J. Shine (Ed.), *A compilation of Grendon research* (pp. 23-25). Grendon Underwood, UK: HMP Grendon.
 14. Shuker, R. (2010). Forensic therapeutic communities: A critique of the treatment model and evidence base, *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 49: 463.
 15. Rapoport, R. (1960). *Community as doctor: New perspectives on a therapeutic community*. London, England: Tavistock Publications.
 16. Brookes, M. (2010). Putting principles into practice: The therapeutic community regime at HMP Grendon and its relationship with the "Good Lives" model. In R. Shuker and E. Sullivan (Eds.), *Grendon and the emergence of therapeutic communities: Developments in research and practice* (pp. 99-113). Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
 17. Kennard, D. (1998). *An introduction to therapeutic communities*. London, England: Jessica Kingsley.
 18. Stevens, A. (2013). *Offender rehabilitation and therapeutic communities: Enabling change the TC way*. London, England: Routledge.
 19. Adler, J. M., Skalina, L. M., & McAdams, D. P. (2008) The narrative reconstruction of psychotherapy and psychological health, *Psychotherapy Research*, 18: 719-734. Adshead, G. (2011). The life sentence: Using a narrative approach in group psychotherapy with offenders. *Group Analysis*, 44: 175-195. Lieblich, A., McAdams, D. P. & Josselson, R. (Eds.). (2004) . Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

intertwined with self-pitying justifications to the effect that 'life made me do it'.²⁰ In the later stages of therapy, new identities and the narratives through which they are given meaning are tested, reflected upon, and approved by fellow residents.²¹ HMP Grendon residents leave therapy with redemption scripts²² or restoried lives, forming part of a toolkit alongside psychological, physical, and social resources—these components all come together to enable better plans for living a good life.²³ This history, structure and culture of HMP Grendon provided a unique space for the artist in residence. Within the following section, we outline our approach to exploring the impact of Clark's residency upon the men at HMP Grendon.

Approach to the study

Academic literature relating to prison-based artists in residence is very sparse. The largely North-American literature that does exist suggests that prison-based artists can have a positive impact on the offenders who engage with the process and on perceptions of prisons and offenders in the wider community.²⁴ The evaluation of the first artist in residence at HMP Grendon found that residents began to redefine themselves as artists rather than offenders, the prison environment was enhanced by the presence of an artist in residence and receptivity towards the residency among prisoners was enhanced by their faith in the artist as a professional and the acclaim that came with the work being exhibited to external audiences.²⁵ However, Clark's residency at HMP Grendon was marked by change rather than continuity. Its aim was broader than that of the previous residency in establishing impact beyond the gate—developing a public discourse about prison, rehabilitation and criminality. As such, we set out to explore how this unprecedented initiative affected the men who spent time with Clark during his tenure. We were particularly interested in the impact that the residency had upon

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the residents' narratives in terms of the stories they told about their lives and the ways in which their experiences during the residency formed part of their desistance trajectories—in other words, their journeys away from crime.

Six semi-structured interviews were carried out with residents who were at HMP Grendon at the time of the evaluation. These interviews involved exploring their experiences of the residency, images that had been created by Clark during the residency and where applicable, images created by the residents themselves. Where images were used, they inspired dialogue, giving the participants scope and freedom to construct and share their narratives and explore what the images meant to them. The questions posed during the interviews were flexible and responded to the natural flow of conversation around the images being discussed. These interviews could be described as a visual research method²⁶ adopting an image-elicitation approach.²⁷ A research assistant took handwritten notes of the interviews. All participants were allocated non-gender specific pseudonyms. Handwritten notes were typed up after the interviews. We also wrote to and received replies from four residents who were at other

institutions or released from prison at the time of the evaluation but who had previously been involved in the sessions Clark ran at the prison. The data from interviews and letters was analysed via qualitative thematic analysis, assisted by NVivo qualitative analysis software.

Findings

Within this section of the report we outline the key themes that emerged from our analysis of our research encounters with residents. References to notes taken during the interviews and direct quotes from letters are included for illustrative purposes—the nature of the source is noted at the end of each reference and quote.

20. Ibid n.14: 159.

21. Ibid n.10. Stevens, A. (2012). "I am the person now I was always meant to be": Identity reconstruction and narrative reframing in therapeutic community prisons, *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 12: 527-547. Wilson, D. & McCabe, S. (2002) How HMP Grendon "works" in the words of those undergoing therapy, *Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 41; 279-291.

22. Maruna (2001) *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives*, Washington DC: APA Books.

23. For an overview of the Good Lives Model see Ward, T., and Maruna, S. (2007). *Rehabilitation*. Routledge.

24. Caulfield, L.S. (2014). *Final evaluation of the Artist in Residence at HMP Grendon*. Grant report to the Motesiczky Charitable Trust and Grendon Friends Trust.

25. Ibid n.24.

26. Rose, G. (2012). *Visual Methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual materials*. (3rd Edn). London: Sage.

27. Previous research has used the term 'photo-elicitation' – see for example Gariglio, L. (2016). Photo-elicitation in prison ethnography: Breaking the ice in the field and unpacking prison officers' use of force, *Crime, Media, Culture*, 12: 367-379.

Access to arts materials and resources

Clark had ensured access to arts materials that were not previously available—or which would have been difficult to access without this support. However, it was noted that materials were not simply ‘handed over’ unconditionally. There was an expectation that if Clark provided someone with materials, they would make use of them constructively and were responsible and accountable for them. As such, whilst access to materials was beneficial in enabling residents to engage in their artistic practices, the way in which this was operated was very much in the therapeutic community spirit of Grendon. This living learning situation²⁸ in which all elements of prison life, even those which might be considered by people on the outside as minor—like the provision of arts materials—are an integral component of the therapeutic environment,

Paul made the point that without the residency, he would not have been able to fund his art (Interview notes—Paul)

Kevin had observed those involved in the residency getting access to new materials. He said he was pleased to see that there was some accountability around this though—Edmund wanted to see what people had produced with the materials, he didn’t just supply them and move on. Kevin said this encouraged people to make use of the materials they had. (Interview notes—Kevin)

Rediscovery / development / diversification of technical abilities

Residents noted that the presence of an artist in residence had a positive impact not just on their capacity to continue to practice their artwork through the provision of materials but also in terms of how the residency created a space in which to rediscover old artistic endeavours and develop and diversify existing

practices. The confidence, positivity and future-focus evident amongst these residents links clearly to desistance factors around hope and motivation.²⁹ In addition, these activities also embody elements of the strengths-based Good Lives Model (GLM) approach to rehabilitation in providing pro-social pathways to the achievement of goals or ‘key primary goods’ such as knowledge, creativity and excellence.³⁰

For the first time I felt free to paint whatever I wanted and because of that freedom I painted portraits, which remain my best works and I went on to win some awards. (Letter, Danny)

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Richard talked about a sculpture he had created and what various parts of it represented. He explained that Edmund’s advice had encouraged him to think outside of the box and develop his work in new ways through support, challenge and constructive criticism. (Interview notes—Richard)

Expression and reality-confrontation

As noted above, reality confrontation is one of the key principles of the therapeutic community environment where behaviours come under the scrutiny of others and thoughts and feelings are confronted.³¹ The artwork created by residents appeared to complement this element of the therapeutic community. Opportunities to develop artistic practices enhanced the range of methods and means through which residents could express themselves through art. As such, it can be argued that the residency has further facilitated achievement of inner peace and freedom from emotional turmoil and stress—a further ‘primary good’ identified in the GLM approach to rehabilitation.³² However, some emphasised that the artwork they engaged in around the artist in residence was refreshing because it sat outside of the formal psychotherapy and art therapy

28. Ibid n.17.

29. LeBel, T. P., Burnett, R., Maruna, S. & Bushway, S. (2008) The ‘Chicken and Egg’ of Subjective and Social Factors in Desistance from Crime, *European Journal of Criminology*, 5: 131-59.

30. Ibid n.23.

31. Ibid n.15.

32. Ibid n.23.

sessions. As such, these residents considered it not part of the therapeutic process but a relief or a break from it.

I painted a small black/red abstract which I put up in my room. I used this image to explain how I thought I made decisions, that I would have a chaotic lifestyle and make chaotic decisions, the image itself was very chaotic (Letter, Steve)

Richard described the work he has done with Edmund as a 'breath of fresh air'—explaining that it takes him away from the therapeutic elements of Grendon, which can be very demanding and draining. (Interview notes—Richard)

Narrative Identities

The concept of the narrative identity was prominent in resident's accounts. They described themselves as artists, poets—more than just an offender. Getting involved with the artistic residency further reinforced these new identities, created a space in which they could be explored and contributed towards feelings of confidence. There are clear associations between these findings and the importance of not having a criminal identity—a core desistance factor.³³ In addition, this identity reshaping that has occurred during the residency represents a pro-social means of finding meaning or purpose in life and achieving autonomy and self-directedness—core primary goods. There was a critical awareness of the extent to which other people—notably the public—would be able to overcome the persistent myths and stereotypes about prisoners. Residents welcomed the exhibitions at the prison as an opportunity to meet new people and be seen and accepted artists but acknowledged that these events should be open to a broader range of people. For some, art was an interest rather than an identity, but it was nonetheless valuable and contributed to their sense of self outside the offender identity.

Carl explained that most of the time, people beyond the prison walls do not have the opportunity to see the artist behind the work. Carl found it difficult to see how boundaries,

stereotypes and labels could be overcome if the artist is invisible. Carl was very enthusiastic about the exhibition at the prison. On broaching this topic with him, his demeanour shifted, he began to smile and was visibly proud of his work and his role in organising it, 'It was brilliant. The people were seeing me as an artist not a killer'. (Interview notes—Carl)

Whilst Kevin had not been directly involved in creating artwork around the residency, people on his wing had been. He said identity was important, explaining that being known as a poet or an artist instead of his offence had boosted his fellow residents' confidence. Those who were involved identified with something new and Kevin saw the positive effects of this—people with a sense of who they were, and a purpose in life (Interview notes—Kevin)

Sharing artistic work with others, building relationships

Some residents spoke of how their art was both a bridge for building relationships with loved ones and a way of leaving a positive legacy for them, creating new and positive memories and experiences. As such, for these residents, it can be argued that the residency strengthened their capacities with regards to building stronger relationships with friends and families—a recognised factor in helping individuals desist from crime³⁴ and a core primary good within the GLM.³⁵

I get a lot of pleasure out of sharing the things I make with others (Letter—Jim).

I started to spend time in the evenings making cards, for family, for friends, even for staff at times (Letter—Steve)

Communalism

Opportunities to take on responsibilities relating to the therapeutic environment and the events that happen within it were evident within the activities around the artist in residence. The residents expressed their pride and

33. Ibid n.22. Chiricos, Barrick & Bales (2007) 'The labelling of convicted felons and its consequences for recidivism', *Criminology*, 45: 547-81.

34. Maruna, LeBel & Lanier (2003) 'Generativity behind bars: Some "redemptive truth" about prison society', in de St. Aubin, McAdams & Kim (Eds.) *The generative society: Caring for future generations*, Pp. 131-151, Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

35. Ibid n. 23.

sense of achievement in assisting with these events and having contributed to the appearance of the environment through having their artwork put on display within the prison. This enhanced the sense in which they felt they had a stake in HMP Grendon as their home. This provides evidence of the residency facilitating the achievement of a further core primary good—community.³⁶ Furthermore, the artwork they created added to the uniqueness of HMP Grendon—they expressed that Grendon does not feel like any other prison but with the artwork, it looked less like other prisons too.

I have toured all the communities and seen the art, pictures, sculptures that are there is in big part due to Ed and the Trust supplying the much-needed financial support. Without them the place would be just magnolia/grey and not personalised at all. (Letter, Steve)

Daniel's artwork was in the community room where the interview was held. He was very confident in pointing it out and appeared very proud of it (Interview notes—Daniel)

Exposure to new perspectives and views

Some residents felt that being able to discuss their work with Clark had created an awareness of different views and perspectives. They were able to see why someone else would take a different position from them on a topic or a piece of artwork and as such, the discussion groups enabled constructive conversations over opposing and conflicting views.

...the discussion groups I found fascinating, in some way Edmund was able to give me an empathic understanding of other people's feelings on the subjects we discussed and the material he was able to show us, from photos to short clips of films on his laptop...The only thing I can say about the class itself, I wish they could have been longer but all in all it

was a brilliant experience and long may it continue (Letter, Jim)

Ed discussed this image (that Steve had created) with me and explained that everyone does this in some way or form, that decision making as an idea is difficult for all of us and that everyone makes the wrong decision at some point in their life (Letter, Steve)

Engagement in an artistic community

Residents explained that the presence of an artist in residence had brought a group of them together in a new way and created a sense of community—a key primary good³⁷—amongst those who were interested in the arts. They worked with each other and with Clark on pieces of artwork and on organising the events around the residency—for example the exhibitions at the prison. They reported a sense of belonging and stated that they had enjoyed helping others to develop their artwork. In this sense, the residency further facilitated desistance through having something to give to others and having a place within a social group—recognised as important contributing factors in desisting from crime.³⁸

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Daniel placed a lot of emphasis on the importance and impact of the discussion group with Edmund. He explained that this was beneficial to the development of his artwork and building a sense of community among the artists on the wing (Interview notes—Daniel)

Carl explained his involvement in the creation of the artwork in the community room and how he had enjoyed working with others to create it, sharing his knowledge and skills with them in an informal mentoring capacity. Carl acknowledged that many of his fellow residents had benefitted from Edmund's

36. Ibid n. 23.

37. Ibid n. 23.

38. Bottoms, A. & Shapland, J. (2010) Steps toward desistance among male young adult recidivists, in S. Farrall, R. Sparks, S. Maruna & M. Hough (Eds) *Escape Routes: Contemporary perspectives on life after punishment* (pp 43-80). London: Routledge. Burnett, R. & Maruna, S. (2004) So 'Prison Works', Does It? The Criminal Careers of 130 Men Released from Prison under Home Secretary Michael Howard, *Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 43: 390-404.

residency and stated that he would like to see the establishment of a prison-wide arts group (Interview Notes—Carl).

Inspiration, accessibility and support without pressure

The way in which Clark had managed his artistic residency drew much praise from the residents. They observed that there wasn't any pressure to get involved, that was a decision that was down to individual residents. Clark put on regular sessions and if people wanted to come, they came. If they didn't want to, there was no judgement or criticism. He was described as someone who opened doors to opportunities without creating dependency. He was considered approachable, creating his own work whilst responding the residents' strengths and needs but without an agenda. Clark's belief in the residents was highlighted throughout our research encounters with them—they valued his opinions and appreciated the time that he devoted to enabling and facilitating their work. Some residents had been wary of him at first because of their fear that as an 'artsy' person he would be pretentious and would misunderstand them, but it was clear that these boundaries were soon broken. In this way, the residency contributed towards desistance because being believed in and communicating the belief that people can change and have something to offer to society and others is a key factor in desistance from crime.³⁹

He'd always be about his office in education you could go to whenever he was in and he'd always make you feel welcome and be really encouraging...When I arrived at Grendon there was an artist in residence, but we only saw her once every two weeks and it was quite disjointed in the way it ran. When Edmund took over, everything changed. He was working in the prison once or twice a week. (Letter, Danny)

Richard explained that he initially had some scepticism about Edmund in relation to his

motives and what he was doing at Grendon. However, he explained that this view quickly changed, and Edmund was now a much respected and well-regarded member of the Grendon community. (Interview notes—Richard)

Prison and the arts — general observations and thoughts

All residents expressed their frustrations about the lack of resources and support for arts in prisons. There was a recognition that at HMP Grendon, they had benefited from the artistic residency but that people in other institutions were not so fortunate. Residents also noted that key to enhancing awareness of the power of art was opening prison art up to a wider audience of people.

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Carl was very passionate about the value of arts in prisons. He referred to prisoners at other establishments and made the point that Grendon was the exception, other prisoners did not have the same arts resources or opportunities as men at Grendon. He summed this up by saying, 'The whole prison system is missing the point as to how powerful art can be' (Interview notes—Carl)

Paul stated that the wider public—not just people from the 'arts bubble' needed to be able to see prison art and speak to prison artists if arts in prison were to receive more funding and support (Interview notes—Paul)

Final Thoughts—Making the case for artists in residence

As described in this paper, Clark's residency at HMP Grendon has brought a range of benefits and impacts for the residents involved. This encompasses established desistance factors including hope and motivation, having something to give to others, having a place within a social group, not having a criminal identity, being believed in and building relationships. The residency has also opened pathways for the pro-

39. Rex, S. (1999). Desistance from Offending: Experiences of Probation, *Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 36: 366–83. McNeill, Batchelor, Burnett & Knox (2005) *21st Century Social Work. Reducing Reoffending: Key Practice Skills*, Edinburgh, The Scottish Executive.

social achievement of a range of goals or primary goods identified within the GLM—notably knowledge, excellence, agency, inner peace, friendship, community, finding meaning and purpose in life and creativity.⁴⁰ This residency—occupied by a high calibre artist with a reputation for asking challenging questions about incarceration and an aim to develop critical discussion around prison, rehabilitation and criminality—has complemented the therapeutic regime at the prison and facilitated the process of identity reconstruction for the artists he worked alongside. Clarks' residency has built upon and surpassed the outcomes of the previous residency.⁴¹ As such, these benefits demonstrate that there is a case to be made for supporting artistic residencies in carceral settings. There are of course significant challenges to such proposals given the constrained funding environment and the difficulty in gaining public support for initiatives that enhance the wellbeing of prisoners. However, the key to tackling such challenges may lie within the arts.

The public rely heavily upon media representations of prison and 'official' images created

by the Ministry of Justice, HM Prison and Probation Service and their providers. Prisoners are an invisible population. They mostly go unseen—and with the exception of events like the Koestler Trust's annual awards and exhibitions⁴²—so does their art. It is easy to demonise and exclude those who are invisible⁴³ and deny support for initiatives that will enhance their lives. However, some images have the potential to challenge official discourses. The images created by Clark and the residents during the residency are examples of such counter image, and in turn counter narratives—alternative ways of looking at prison and prisoners⁴⁴ (Brown, 2014; Schept, 2014). Through prompting reflection upon lives lived out behind prison walls, these images have the potential to facilitate a re-humanising of the residents at HMP Grendon and prisoners more generally. As such, perhaps it is time to begin incorporating images into our evidence base in calling for support for artistic residencies in carceral settings. They may speak louder than words or numbers.



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40. Ibid n. 23.

41. Ibid n. 24

42. Please see <https://www.koestlertrust.org.uk/> for more information about The Koestler Trust Awards and exhibitions.

43. Cheliotis, L. K. (2010) The ambivalent consequences of visibility: Crime and prisons in the mass media' *Crime Media Culture*, 6: 169-184.

44. Brown, M. (2014) 'Visual Criminology and Carceral Studies: Counter-images in the carceral age' *Theoretical Criminology*, 18: 176-197.

Schept, J. (2014) '(Un)seeing Like a Prison: Counter-visual ethnography of the carceral state' *Theoretical Criminology*, 18: 198-223.