

Kate Genever:

Award 2016

Final Report

Watermark

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Overview: What I proposed

Watermark will see me generate a series of 6 large-scale drawn portraits and accompanying sketches that tell of my village Uffington.

The drawings will be inspired by village connections - my families farming heritage; the village photographic archive and a quote by Berger. Featuring hundreds of marks that respond to the land, architecture, time, words, resident's stories and weather they would be built up by layering pencil, watercolour and coloured pencils.

Aims for project:

To deeply explore an area; to document a unique Lincolnshire village; to record a shifting site; offer opportunities for people to become involved; include ideas from others along with imagery sourced from photographs and family records; to develop deeper relationships with specialists from within the region and utilise their experience to inform the work; showcase contemporary landscape artwork to diverse, existing, potentially new non-arts audiences' create a free publication and symposium; utilise Village Halls and other spaces for the display of the work

Intended Outcomes?

The outcomes would be varied these would include:

- A celebration of Lincolnshire landscape, heritage and knowledge coupled with a recognition of landscape being a theme relevant to contemporary arts practices.
- The creation of a new body of 6 large-scale drawings and associated sketchbooks that would be exhibited both across the region and online. Exhibitions will take place at: Bromley House Library Nottingham, Uffington Village Hall, Lincolnshire

County Council Offices. NCCD will host publications. Further exhibitions still unconfirmed will take place at a further 4 Lincolnshire Village Halls. The drawings will become part of the village archive and shown when relevant with other village materials.

- A project blog that would reveal ongoing working processes and a place to share stories, information and images revealed along the way
- A free limited 4000 edition publication in the form of a newspaper that would be feature images of the drawings alongside texts and images written by relevant partners and project supporters. The content would be cross specialist and deal with local, regional and global concerns.
- A symposium hosted at The Collection, Lincoln. The day will feature speakers including myself, County Council and Lincolnshire Heritage representatives and villagers.
- Use of local Village Hall spaces, promoting them as relevant and important in the showcasing of artwork and audience development.
- A series of 4 artists talks linked to the village hall exhibitions. Each Hall could promote and fundraise around this event.
- More people from diverse background connecting with contemporary practice through close at hand making and exhibiting
- To further encourage community spirit and the bringing people together with art.

2. What I did:

Artworks made:

What distinguishes the life of a village is that it is also a living portrait of itself: a communal portrait, in that everybody is portrayed and everybody portrays: and this is only possible if everybody knows everybody. A village's portrait of itself is constructed not out of stone but out of words, spoken and remembered: out of opinions, stories, eyewitness reports, legends, comments and hearsay. And it is a continuous portrait: work on it never stops. J Berger.

To understand this quote I worked hard thinking about landscape representation. I wanted to use the concept of 'portraiture' as a metaphor - taking Berger's idea of a living place into drawing and then through those drawings ask questions such as: How could I record and depict a place so layered and known whilst opening up personal understandings to a wider audience? How could I reveal in a static 2D space the concept of 'place' as continuum? How could I include significant traditional notions of portrait without compromising the desire to record place?

In response, I worked from photographs held in the family and village archive, from direct observation, from memory, texts and stories told, all on single surfaces. Like the landscape itself I layered, rubbed back, collaged, printed, over drew and developed a surface that was complex. Ultimately, I made 3 different series of works

5 large scale charcoal and pastel works called: **Croft Farm**

12 digitally printed works called: ***Its somewhere between where we've come from and where we're going.***

4 paper collages called: ***All we've got is each other***

As stated in the proposal, I worked closely with residents and relations in researching ideas and imagery. I listened to stories and memories and included these in the drawings. For example, in *First Rain 1971* [shown below], I drew from a polaroid, from memory and imagination being influenced by a story told. Taken from the church tower, the photo has on the reverse First Rain 1977. I asked people – did someone after the long hot dry summer run up the tower to capture the rain they saw coming, were they up the tower anyway and by coincidence the rain came? No one knew exactly. The photo shows also the village before more recent housing developments and so presents a time of old. It also shows my uncle's house and the northern extent of our farm – I kept this past view in the work. However, I added the 'now' through the use of the peach colour and white frost - I saw it like this one morning while working on the series. The markings in the sky represent - rain, weather, birds, clouds, all witnessed by me at different times.

A seemingly straight forward landscape to most becomes complicated in the recounting of its making. Like the Berger text we see the space not as static but as living and I realised after offering an interpretation to visitors to my studio – I complete the work, my voice, the stories I tell complete the work – I am part of a larger portrait and complicit. I am not an observer I am the work.



In the series: *Its somewhere between where we've come from and where we're going.* I worked directly onto photographs I took in the village. Places I knew some history of – be

that physical, geological, personal. I used Indian ink and white pastel to draw and over work. I tried to suggest a new view, a place in transition. I thought about the future and the past of a place, how it was once flooded and perhaps will be again soon. I then scanned and digitally printed larger onto watercolour paper these rough drawing works. They took on the sense of a lithograph - a subtle, misty, atmospheric quality. I aimed to produce images that were propositional where the photographic mixed with the drawn and challenged each other. I wanted to ask the viewer to think and look again, to ask: do these places exist; are they imaginings; are they historically correct; could this be the future?



The images above and below are concerned with an area that belongs to the farm where old clay/brick pits were dug. Planted with a wood in 1999 the workings no longer exist but evidence of their presence is there in the water puddles and remnants of old buildings. I want the work to be propositional, more than sketches, but for the idea and process of making to relate to the idea of the temporary. I hope the works asks viewers to consider the landscape as a shifting industrial space, with changing purposes and views.

"These are so sad; the works really talk of life and death and change and time. I am from East Riding and these works remind me of that flat land, of the mystery of place and the strange industrial goings on that happen in fields and woods and change the landscape. It makes me realise that we are all just in flux."

**Visitor to exhibition Bromley House
Library**



As I worked on these landscapes, the people who I was talking to and know in the village became increasingly important. The photos I was looking at feature some of them as young men and women, also their distant relations make appearances. Increasingly I felt a need to represent them and for 'art' to reveal them. Their physical presence within this body of work became important. I am also interested in how different types of works by the same artists shown together can extend meaning whilst also increasing access to the work. I also like making lots of different things in lots of different materials and so this new challenge of people rather than place seemed good. I've never worked with portraiture and spent a long time considering how to undertake them. I knew that a straight drawing wasn't correct, so I experimented with new approaches. Finally, I came to collage - I built the people on the page, like a landscape. I have so far worked with 4 sitters and called the series ***All we've got is each other.***

I am pleased with these drawings/collages. I like that alongside the landscapes we see the makers of this place and we question their place in time. I plan to continue to make these collages and have had volunteers come forward from showing the works.



Exhibitions and Talks:

Shortly after receiving the St Hughs Award I was offered an exhibition at The Collection. Lincoln. This show had not been part of the original application but seemed timely and useful both as a catalyst to make but also as a culmination of the research and development phase for Watermark. I called the show: ***Slowly I found my way in***. I invited artist David Ainley to show with me. His work is of Derbyshire and deals with landscape but perhaps in a more abstract way. It felt generous and strategic to include him. I am interested in how our works compliment and extend each other and the synergies that became apparent worked well. Feedback from this show has led us to look to work together again. As part of this show we delivered a joint artist talk.

Prior to this show I undertook a residency in Venice. I decided that this opportunity was one also relating to Watermark and the St Hughs Award. For the month, I was away I made work relating to a landscape where questions of delicate environmental and social are pertinent. All concerns central to Watermark. The residency therefore became the R&D making period. Venice is not Lincolnshire or the village but it does deal with the same issues – Water levels, history, people, etc. I explored and generated drawings to understand place. I showed the work made in Venice in the Usher show. These drawings are very significant and led directly to the work I made about Uffington. I came to understand truly what I wanted to say and to understand complexities of being both insider and outsider. I worked at speed and with direct observation creating lots of work. This “sketching” enabled me to be more focused and direct upon my return.

Below is the exhibition information from **The Collection Show**.

Slowly I found my way in

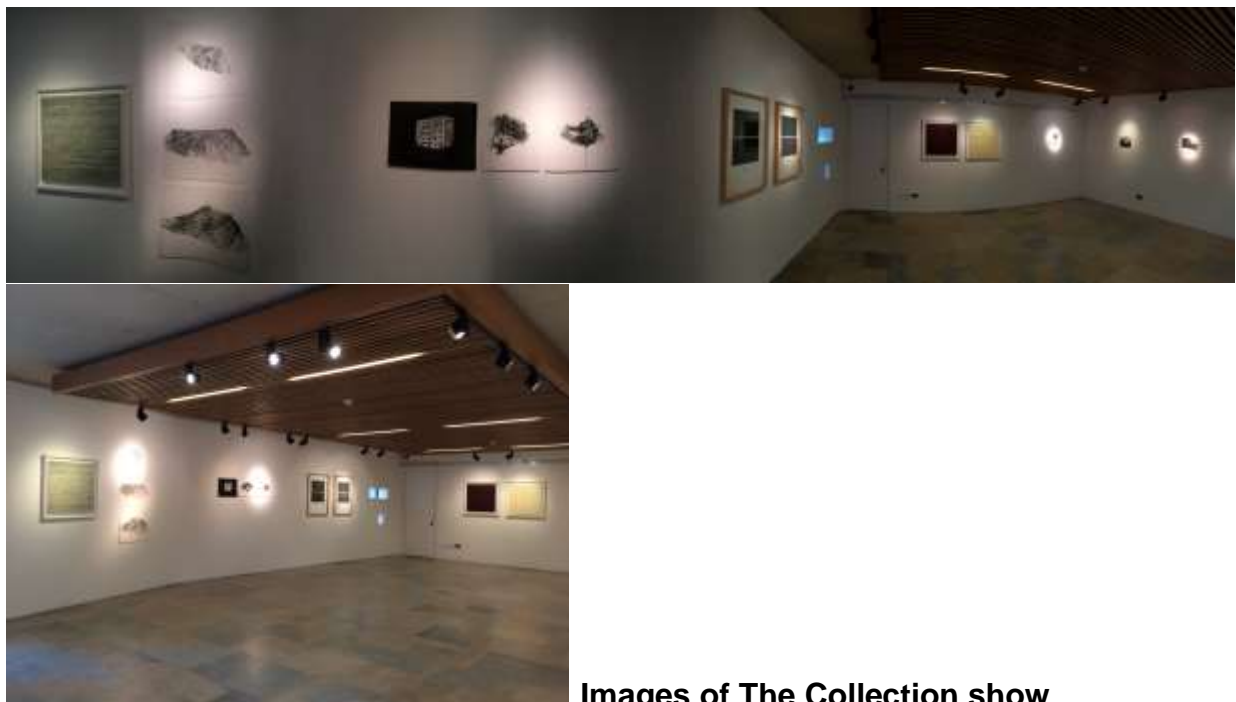
October 29th – November 27th, 2016

This exhibition brings together 2 artists who question traditional notions of landscape representation. Romantic wild ancient spaces are undercut with ideas that speak of industrial pasts, presents and futures.

David Ainley's deceptively simple paintings and drawings are the outcome of lengthy procedural strategies and systems approaches possessing strong metaphorical associations. Conventional perceptions of landscapes and their representation in art are challenged to address the frequently unconsidered human labour and industry that have shaped places through quarrying and mining.

Many solo shows have followed his first at Ikon, Birmingham (1966) and he has participated in numerous selected group exhibitions including the Jerwood Drawing Prize (twice) and *INGDiscerning Eye*. Recent exhibitions have included 'The Priseman Seabrook Collection of 21st Century British Painting' (Huddersfield), 'Contemporary British Abstraction' (London), 'Behind Land: Excavations and Estuaries' (Hull), 'Contemporary British Watercolours' (Maidstone, Antrim & Bideford), 'Contemporary British Painting' (Isle of Wight), the London Art Fair, 'Art-Athina' (Athens).

Kate Genever. *"Ordinary subjects which in their ordinariness are extraordinarily representative"* is a line by John Berger in the book *About Looking*. It refers to the content of some Paul Strand's photographs: people, and the land, their doings. How-they-all-go-on-in-the-world-together-stuff. I think this is what I'm interested in – the interconnections between people and land and their doings. I make drawings and prints in response. Kate has had work in exhibitions ranging from the RA Summer Show, the *INGDiscerning Eye* and British Artshow. She currently has work on show in the Millennium Galleries Sheffield and has recently been awarded a St Hugh's Foundation Bursary to support this exhibition and a touring show of new drawings in Lincolnshire Village Halls.



Images of The Collection show

For **Bromley House Library** show in Nottingham all drawings and prints were shown from and

I undertook an Artist Talk. I was pleased with how the work looked within the building and how audiences new to contemporary practices engaged. I sold 3 pieces from the show. The talk was well attended and I understood how I complete the work through the storytelling I do when presenting the work. Below is the artist info from the show:



What distinguishes the life of a village is that it is also a living portrait of itself: a communal portrait, in that everybody is portrayed and everybody portrays: and this is only possible if everybody knows everybody. A village's portrait of itself is constructed not out of stone but out of words, spoken and remembered: out of opinions, stories, eyewitness reports, legends, comments and hearsay. And it is a continuous portrait: work on it never stops.

I love John Berger and his writings on place, animals, people.....everything, I regularly turn to him to think through stuff. The quote above is his. It's the perfect description of many villages, mine included – Uffington. Like many Lincolnshire villages it's part of an agricultural area that's highly managed and financially valuable, yet it's challenged by environmental, economic and social tensions. Historically and politically relevant Uffington is originally the county seat of both the Kesteven and Lindsey families and sits at the county boundary with Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Rutland.

The drawn, collaged and sewn 'portraits' shown here in Bromley House Library are inspired by this village and its tensions; my embedded farming connection, the village photographic archive, landscape representations and reflections on Berger's quote. Made over recent months, the work ultimately responds to land and water, how we farmers do, lost architectures and workings, weather and geography, time and stories. Importantly the work is my version of a place, it's about my looking and a way of seeing.

This show is dedicated to John Berger [1926 -2017] and is kindly supported by the St Hugh's Foundation. The exhibition continues throughout the library, please see the reverse for titles and works whereabouts. All works are available for sale or on commission - please ask library staff for more information or help.

I love this work, I love how you make the place become more alive through the stories and memories and by the fact it's your home. People who make

landscape work are normally outsiders and never know what you know. .
Visitor to Bromley House Library Exhibition

Images from Bromley House Show:



The **Uffington Village Hall** exhibition and archive opening was very well attended and I was proud to share my work with the people who had help make it, who had told stories and shared their histories and photographs for it. People enjoyed the inclusion of the archive photos alongside the drawings and it felt very positive to share through an informal talk contemporary work about a place they know. It allowed me to complete one of my aims: *For the drawings to act as contemporary records, documenting now for the future and for those drawings to enter the village archive.* Also, importantly, this show and the one at Bromley have been significant in how I now and want to in the future share my work. It reinforced my interest in showing outside of traditional gallery spaces and in places that challenge, compliment and extend the work. I also achieved through these 2 shows further aims:

- *To showcase contemporary landscape artwork to diverse, existing, potentially new non-arts audiences.*
- *To utilise both Village Hall spaces and more formal spaces for the display of the work along with many others are struggling to find relevance in the current age*

This very informal exhibition also raised over £100 in donations for the Hall fund.

This exhibition led onto a new approaching for a residency I undertook in May 2017 in Wakefield. While there I worked in local halls and directly with community support groups and shared the outcomes in spaces never used for art exhibitions.

Images from Uffington Village Hall Exhibition:



Art and Archives at Uffington Village Hall.

Saturday 22 April 2017

Come and enjoy new drawings and prints made by our very own Kate Genever. Featuring Uffington past and present, the work will be shown alongside village archive materials and photographs.

Kate is keen to share and explain the work and will give a brief talk at 4pm - served with tea and cakes.
3pm until 7pm. Admission free.



All works were commissioned by the St Hughs Foundation and have recently come back from exhibition in Nottingham.
Donations towards Village Hall would be welcome.

*Kate we are so pleased to see your work – we go to art class every week and try and try, we now see that you are a proper artist and we love the work you make. It's been a great afternoon looking at your work alongside all the old photos. We love the portraits you've made of some of the residents. All together you have added to our knowledge and understanding of our village.
Thank you*

Village resident

Future Exhibitions

Willoughby Memorial Hall. Corby Glen. Lincolnshire.

I have been invited to show all the St Hughs funded work in Corby Glen 12 June to 10 July 2019. There will be an opening on but as yet it is to be confirmed. As part of this exhibition I will also undertake a drawing workshop for secondary school children from the local Corby Glen School.

Sam Scorer Gallery

Some of the drawings are being included in *Time and Tide Bell Show*: May 2018 in Lincoln. Marcus Vergette's *Time and Tide Bells* project concerns our relationship with the sea, past present and future, and looks particularly at global warming induced sea level change and the migrations that will ensue. This show has the possibility of moving to the new North Sea Observatory at Chapel Point. This is provisional and I await confirmation.

3. Developments and ongoing related activity

The St Hughs award and the work created added support to an Arts Council England - Grants for the Arts Award. The application was successful with me being awarded 12K in funds with further in kind support totalling 10K. The project is called ***Being from Knowing*** and runs until October 2018. The award will allow for further exploration through drawing of my village and 3 other sites in Cambridgeshire, Norfolk & Essex. ***Being from Knowing*** is a period of Research & Development enabling me to explore new ideas, strategies, augment my existing practice and expand on key interests. Working closely & collaboratively with residents, I will seek out DIY technologies & improvisations that respond to local social/political/environmental tensions to celebrate resourcefulness and creativity. Utilising drawing approaches and supported by project partners, who will offer critical reflection and profile raising, I will engage new and existing audiences at diverse showcasing events & through a limited edition co-authored catalogue.

This award is significant and further project partners include Metal Peterborough who also invited me to be artist in residence for the life time of the award. I have recently undertaken a work in progress exhibition entitled ***Everybody knows but their fingers are crossed*** with them and this show also there featured an artist talk and drawing workshop. I also have just confirmed a 2month long exhibition in Jaywick. Essex in July and August 2018.

Importantly for this report I have not yet completed the catalogue I originally proposed. Instead you will see I have included its production into the budget, but it now forms part of the larger Arts Council Award which will enable a more developed publication featuring the work created for St Hughs and *Being from Knowing*. I will credit St Hugh's within that publication and the work created for this award will be part of the publication.

Further to this ACE award I have grown the Bromley House Library relationship from the initial show held there into a year-long residency starting in Feb 2018. I have received funding from CVAN East Midlands to support research and development work with curator David Gilbert and cultural geographer Dr David Matless and events for the public. This initial work will inform a further ACE application to support art making and work with Bromley House Library staff and members.

I did not undertake a symposium at The Collection and instead have approached the speaker contacts made to instead be authors for the final publication. I have notified people involved that I would be interested in their input. They seem willing to be included.

4. Summing Up

By undertaking this project, my work and associated thinking has been challenged and made stronger. I have a new varied body of work which I have shared in and beyond the region at 3 venues with a further 2 in waiting. I have sold work directly from shows and have used this work to make applications for residencies. The work is now part of my practice and I will continue to exhibit it beyond this project supporting my growing reputation. The drawings, prints and collages have contributed to the history and understanding of the region and live in part in the archive of my village, which enables residents to feel valued and proud as their place is celebrated.

Many audiences have seen the work in sites that are not traditionally known for showing contemporary practice and furthermore audiences have been encouraged to engage in cultural experiences that are new to them, supporting my ambition to reach diverse people and for them to see contemporary practice as something that is theirs and not for others. To date I estimate given audience figures collected that over 2000 people have seen the work at exhibitions. 600 have visited my blog. 120 have been part of my artist talks.

New partnerships and relationships will be developed and nurtured with diverse professionals from across the region. I have created a network of people who have the potential to reconnect and make further collaborations happen – or at some knowledge exchange to happen. Landscape is a traditional and unfashionable subject yet I continue to strive to make it and the support of people who work 'out in the field' demonstrates the very real tipping point we live under and how artwork can bring that issue to the fore.

Receiving the St Hughs Award came at an important time and encouraged me to feel confident that my work and efforts are of value and that I can make work that is relevant both county wide but also nationally. I believe my career and development as artist and strategic planner will be given confidence and I will continue to develop and lead on Lincolnshire and national projects.

The validation it offered and the cash award has allowed me to obtain further awards, commissions, residencies and sales. To date I have off the back of this body of work and the award undertaken 4 paid residencies, one international. 1 arts council award for further development of practice in 4 sites, 1 commission from a national museum, 1 CVAN EM award to support work at Bromley House Library, continued sales of work, work accessioned in a national collection and many conversations about further exhibitions and publications.

I am proud that Lincolnshire, its residents and specialists will be celebrated beyond its boundaries and considered anew. Where their ideas, thinking and knowledge will be generated and supported from the development of a substantial large edition publication. But also in which the arts, my art, will be seen both useful and insightful for thinking about heritage, science and policy.

Critical friends and curators I have worked with over the life time of this project have been valuable in the thinking and development of the work. One wrote the following:

Kate Genever's new body of work titled 'Slowly I found my way in', is in a number of parts: drawings, prints and collage. The most striking development for me is in the group of digital prints titled 'ATTEND'. Kate has drawn over archive photographic images of Uffington printed up to a large scale. This technique creates a strange and unnerving experience; where the archive image on its own might have a flat and uninflected documentary feel to it, almost a familiar cosiness, and the drawing a more obviously personal or expressive feel, more readily seen as an aestheticized view of the rural, the combined images – one printed and the other drawn – genuinely seem to embody the tension which Kate feels to exist in this place, between historic and present uses, and conflicting notions of landscape as workplace and as a place of bucolic escapism. In one image the trees and now disappeared buildings fight for space, the drawing seemingly trying to obliterate the photographic image, the present trying to overpower the past, and the distorted perspective magnifies the discomfiting impression of the image further, with the past and present images jarring visually, in a state of interpolation which emphasises the constant flux that the land is constantly in, subject to man-made and natural influence. The drawing is heavy and repetitious, going over and over the photographic image, and this is reflected in the other works as well. In one a series of pits overlay a woodland image, and in another a large circular pond-like structure swirls like an unstable vortex of a whirlpool over a group of delicate, pale silver birch trees, and the level of the land overwriting the photograph is higher, as if the land were rising and falling like a tide in an imperceptibly slow ebb and flow.

The large 'Croft Farm' drawings impressed me too, particularly the repetitive mark-making of one called 'Winter 2017', with the field and track in the foreground of the image entirely rendered in innumerable short charcoal strokes, and two pylons overlooking the scene. 'Floodline' graphically represents the rise and fall of the river level through part time, and like many of the images in this series has the appearance and feel of a photographic negative, which for me connects them semantically with the 'ATTEND' series, though as with that series, here the act of drawing is powerfully present in the marks made. 'Church Paddock – Queenie's Cottage', includes text, too faint to be read and partially obliterated in any case, and this extends the 'language' of the images, encompassing photographic, drawn and now textual elements. The heavy overdrawing of the background both obliterates much of the scene and uncomfortably frames the foreground elements – the heavily drawn trees and sketchy outlines of buildings, dark areas of ground and what might be tracks – which are present in the image but indistinct, once again with a distortion of perspective which unsettles the viewer, as one tries to distinguish the competing images from one other, to see one at a time rather than all of them simultaneously.

The drastic imposition of the drawing onto the photographic image has real power for me, and the monochromatic images more powerfully suggest the archival, the positive and the negative of the black and white photograph. The simultaneity of the views and the tension between them is better represented for me by the overlaying of views in these and the other large drawings than in the collages for me. Perhaps it is the evident mark-making, the visible presence of the artist in the landscape, both as aesthete and worker, that gives these more power for me.

As always with Kate I am hugely impressed by the sheer quantity and the scale of work that she has produced, and there is a tangible sense of experimentation – of trying to find a way in - to the work which I like very much.

David Gilbert. Curator.

5. Budget

Proposed Budget

INCOME		
Earned	Symposium	35 x £10 = 350
Local Authority	/	/
Other public funding	ACE St Hughs	4150 pending 3500 applied
Private funding	Village contribution Personal contribution: studio costs travel	200 100 200
Support in kind	LCC Lincolnshire Heritage Amanda Ravetz Anne Douglas The Collection: room hire contribution Personal Contribution – artistic time Internal Drainage	1000 1000 600 600 100 500 500
Total income		13,050 8500 funded 4400 In kind
EXPENDITURE		
Artistic spending	21 days @200	4200

Spending relating to access		
Marketing and developing audiences	Exhibition promotional material	200
Overheads		
Assets		
Other and contingency	Admin/Blog/Eval Framing Costs. 4 x 5 days Hall Hires. Symposium costs. Publication Contingency Travel	400 500 1200 350 1200 250 200
Total		8500

Actual Budget

INCOME		
Earned	Sale of prints	450
Local Authority	/	/
Other public funding	ACE [as part of larger project] St Hughs	4,500 awarded 3500 received
Private funding	Village contribution Personal contribution: studio costs Travel Willoughby Memorial	100 200 300 200
Support in kind	David Gilbert: critical friend The Collection: exhibition space and marketing Personal Contribution: artistic time Venice accomodation	500 600 500 2000
Total income		14,350 10,750 funded 3600 In kind
EXPENDITURE		
Artistic spending	31 days @ 200	6200

Spending relating to access		
Marketing and developing audiences	Exhibition promotional material	200
Overheads		
Assets		
Other and contingency	Admin/Blog/Eval Framing Costs. Hall Hires. Publication Studio costs Travel Materials	500 800 70 2,130 250 400 200
Total		10,750

6. Short paragraph for Press/ Blog



St Hughs Award for the project **Watermark** has enabled Kate Genever to develop, create and showcase a significant body of drawings, prints and collages. Celebrating her village, its residents and the South Lincolnshire landscape, the works explore memory, myth and landscape construction. Utilising the villages photographic archive as source material alongside interviews with villagers and direct observation, Kate has made works that ask us to consider the layered histories and ongoing change inherent in places we see daily. Shown at a variety of venues ranging from village halls, to Nottingham Bromley House Library and The Collection in Lincoln, Kate was keen to bring diverse audiences to this contemporary work. An Arts Council Award given off the back of this project will see Kate further explore the ideas raised though her St Hughs Award and result in further national exhibitions and an editioned catalogue. Kate said *"The award gave me confidence to make, explore and try new approaches. It also supported my ambition to share work in non-arts spaces and get contemporary practice into diverse communities. I feel proud to have made drawings of the place and people I know and love and for this work to be relevant, critical and poignant, particularly given the nature of the south Lincolnshire landscape and larger issues relating to social environmental and political concerns. Thank you."*

7. Website and further links to images and information

Website: www.kategenever.com

Ongoing Blog: <http://drawnfromthefield.blogspot.co.uk/>

Willoughby Memorial Hall. Corby Glen: <http://www.willoughbygallery.com/>

Bromley House Library. Nottingham: <http://www.bromleyhouse.org/>

Marcus Vergette: <http://www.marcusvergette.co.uk/>

Metal Peterborough: <http://www.metalculture.com/about-us/peterborough/>