



WildWorks 100



A site-specific, outdoor, 2-part project in partnership with The Lost Gardens of Heligan and part of the 14-18Now programme of Arts events commemorating the Centenary of WW1

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Research Programme: Inequality and Storytelling

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Project Details

- *100* was commissioned by 14-18Now as part of the UK's arts programme for the First World War centenary. 14-18Now commissioned new artworks from 420 contemporary artists, musicians, film makers, designers and performers, inspired by the period 1914-18.
- *100: The Day Our World Changed*, the first part of the project, was performed 3rd August 2014. The project ended in July 2018 with 18 performances of *100:UnEarth*
- Researcher's role:
100: The Day Our World Changed - Writer and Director of Research and Community
100: UnEarth - Lead Artist, Writer and Director of Research and Development
- The Project was funded by 14-18Now, The National Lottery, ACE, FEAST and Cornwall County Council
- Partners: The Lost Gardens of Heligan
- Collaborators/ key people: 500 local volunteers.

300-Word Supporting Statement

The output for *100* consisted of two companion performance pieces that commemorated the centenary of the beginning and end of WW1 created by WildWorks Theatre Company and performed at The Lost Gardens of Heligan.

The Lost Gardens of Heligan have a strong link to WW1 as when they were re-discovered in the 1990s it was found that the gardeners' outdoor toilet contained the scribbled signatures of the Estate gardeners who went to war in 1914. As part of the research for the performance we wanted to recover their stories and those of the men who went to war from the three tiny parishes surrounding the Heligan Estate and the families they left behind. The aim was to find as much human detail as possible.

In addition to the historical research we wanted to explore the cinematic possibilities of working in a large-scale landscape with a moving audience. We used the entirety of the 200-acre Heligan estate for both performances, with two audiences on a 2.5 mile promenade that meandered through secluded spaces, enclosed gardens and huge open vistas. This allowed us to explore how the audience could take the place of the camera, presenting them with both intimate close-ups and huge panning shots, become immersed in the action and experience

epic moments. Musical underscoring throughout added to the cinematic experience.

Research involved:

Archival research into war records, the Imperial War Museum records and the work books from the Lost Gardens of Heligan

Research into personal archives belonging to families in the locality.

Extensive interviews with the descendants of the men lost at war from the parishes of Goran, Mevagissey and St Ewe.

Extensive interviews with veterans from contemporary conflict.

We found many similarities between the stories of those who experienced WW1 and contemporary conflict. The affective impact on both combatants and their families showed many commonalities. This allowed us to create events that drew a direct link to the past and had a considerable impact on both participants and audiences, establishing an emotional connection with those lost 100 years ago.

Research Output

Two part research output

Part 1: 2014

100: The Day Our World Changed was a one day dawn till dusk event starting in the harbour at Mevagissey and ending in The Lost Gardens of Heligan.

It involved a company of over 70 professionals, 500 volunteers and an audience of 8,000.

- [100: The Day Our World Changed](#): WildWorks Theatre's documentation of the performance (YouTube 15:14)

Research Output

Part 2: 2018

100: UnEarth was a series of 18 performances in The Lost Gardens of Heligan involving a company of over 80 professionals, 250 volunteers and an audience of 5,000.

- [WildWorks 100: UnEarth trailer](#): WildWorks Theatre (YouTube 0:44)
- <https://cornwall365.org.uk/blog/wildworks-100unearth-heligan/> - blogpost preview of production

The following videos show clips from the performance:

- [100 Unearth: The Experience](#) : WildWorks Theatre video documenting the experience of the people who came to see and be part of 100: UnEarth (YouTube 5:36)
- [100 Unearth: The Tribe](#): WildWorks Theatre video documenting the involvement of participants in the performance (YouTube 5:53)
- [100: UnEarth – Designing the Underworld](#) : WildWorks Theatre video discussing the design of the performance (YouTube 7:29)

Dissemination

[100: The Day Our World Changed](#) (3rd August 2014) - one day event at Mevagissey Harbour and The Lost Gardens of Heligan

[100: UnEarth](#) (3rd-22nd July 2018) - a series of 18 performances involving a company of over 80 professionals. 250 volunteers and an audience of 5,000.

There was also extensive press coverage and an academic journal article by a scholar from Royal Holloway (See contextual evidence)

Also publicised through [14-18Now](#) (including a [book](#) about their remembrance projects) and [The Lost Gardens of Heligan](#)

Contextual Evidence

100: The Day Our World Changed

Programme:

[100: The Day Our World Changed](#)

Journal article about the performance:

[Bennett, Elizabeth \(2015\) Trace: 100: The Day our World Changed](#) in *Platform*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Performance, Place and Geography, Autumn 2015

Newspaper article publicising information gathering:

[Heligan to pay tribute to gardeners who served in the First World War](#)- Western Morning News, Oct. 5th 2013

Contextual Evidence

100:UnEarth

Programme:

[100:UnEarth](#)

Mercedes Kemp talking and writing about 100:UnEarth:

[100: UnEarth – The Heligan Connection](#) - Mercedes Kemp and Candy Smit talk about the connection between Heligan and the First World War

[100: UnEarth - Turning Research into Story](#) – The performers and Mercedes Kemp talk about how the stories inspired their work

[Fine Art Senior Lecturer Mercedes Kemp on 100:UnEarth by WildWorks](#) – blog post by Mercedes Kemp about the production

Contextual Evidence

100: UnEarth

Reviews

[100 UnEarth](#): *The Stage*, July 16th 2018

[100: UnEarth review – love and war in the Lost Gardens of Heligan](#) – *The Guardian*, 16 July 2018

[Cornwall you only have a few days left to experience WildWorks' wonderful 100: UnEarth at Heligan](#) – *Cornwall Live*, 18 July 2018

Blog post

[100:UNEARTH – Wildwork's ambitious new show at Heligan](#) – The Cornish Bird (a blog about Cornwall's hidden places and untold stories)

Acknowledgements

[WildWorks Theatre Company](#) is an internationally renowned theatre company, pushing boundaries of participative and professional practice with a reputation for working on large-scale public projects. WildWorks' shows happen in found landscapes and sites rather than formal theatre spaces; they reflect and embrace the host communities from which they draw their meaning. Everyone's invited and everyone's welcome.

Mercedes Kemp is a WildWorks founding artist. Her main role is Director of Research and Community and Writer. She has been Lead Artist in a number of Projects including WildWorks *Travelling Agencies*, *Cinema of Dreams* (The Tunis Biennale for Art in Public Spaces), *Nablus*, *City of Stories* (The Occupied Territories of Palestine) and 100: UnEarth.

