

Nicholas Hedges/Mine the Mountain
Draft press release

PRESS RELEASE

A Mountainous Journey in Oxford

Nicholas Hedges' Mine The Mountain, Oxford, 1-8 October 2008

New work displayed in these locations in Oxford:

The Town Hall Gallery

Deadman's Walk near Christ Church Meadow

Oxford Botanic Gardens

Ovada

Sponsored by Ancestry.co.uk and supported by Oxford City Council

www.minethemountain.org



August 2008 A fascinating search through family history is the basis for a body of new work by Oxford artist Nicholas Hedges. Mine the Mountain, is to be staged in three parts in different locations in Oxford from 1st to 8th October 2008, including Oxford Town Hall, Deadman's Walk, near Christ Church Meadow and Oxford Botanic Gardens.

The works are part of an ongoing project that Hedges started two years ago, to delve into his past, and that of others, to discover what makes us what we are. In that time his journey has led him from the Welsh mining collieries of his own ancestry to the sites of Nazi occupation in Europe.

"To 'mine' these mountains is to seek the individual among the many millions of victims; to see them as they really were; people who lived as we live now. It's also the anonymous mass of people from whom I am descended, a 'mountain' that is indeed 'mine' and upon the summit of which I am always standing," he explains.

Much of Hedges' desk research was done online through leading social and family history website Ancestry.co.uk, which enabled him to build an intricate family tree and discover details and information on his ancestors.

Ancestry.co.uk Managing Director Simon Harper says: "It is fascinating to see family and social history research presented in this way. Nick's work inspires questions about who we are, where we come from, and the events that shape us and is a great example of how our historical records can be brought to life."

At the Town Hall Gallery, Nicholas will be showing work including paintings, drawings and photography. Deadman's Walk, is one of Oxford's iconic locations, and this is the first time that an art installation has been presented there. Visitors will follow a trail of exhibits that invite them to engage with his ancestors, thereby contemplating their own ancestry and what events made them who they are. At the Botanic Gardens, visitors will see their own vague reflections in an installation of veiled mirrors, whereupon their own ideas about who they are can evolve.

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For more information and images, please contact Karen David, Spriggs David on 01865 512662 or email karen@spriggsdavid.com.

Notes and links

Full information on Mine the Mountain is on www.minethemountain.org

Mine the Mountain is part of M8 - Interdisciplinary Arts Practices Graduate Show 2008 www.m8show.org.

A detailed piece on why Nick Hedges used Ancestry.co.uk and how it influenced his work can be found on www.minethemountain.org/ancestry.htm

Ancestry.co.uk

Ancestry.co.uk was launched in May 2002 and is part of the global network of Ancestry websites (wholly owned by The Generations Network Inc.), which contains seven billion names in its historical record collections. To date more than 6.6 million family trees have been created and 630 million names and 9.8 million photographs uploaded. In 2007, 15 million unique visitors logged on to an Ancestry website.

The Ancestry global network of family history websites: www.ancestry.com in the US, www.ancestry.co.uk in the UK, www.ancestry.ca in Canada, www.ancestry.com.au in Australia, www.ancestry.de in Germany, www.ancestry.it in Italy, www.ancestry.fr in France, www.ancestry.se in Sweden and www.jiapu.cn in China.