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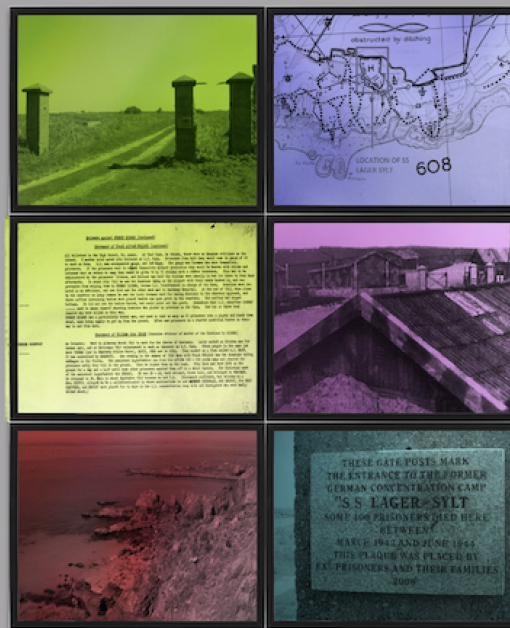
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Piers Secunda is an artist and the latest person to confirm more secrets about the dark history of Alderney during the Second World War.

Alderney was occupied from 1940 to 1945 and was the last place in Western Europe to be liberated, one week after Guernsey. The Nazis established four camps on the island and the extent of the suffering wrought upon prisoners brought to the island has never been fully understood.

Secunda's research for a project based on the occupation of Alderney has brought new facts to light and has inspired an exhibition that he is holding in London. It stems from a passion for art and investigating the destruction of culture.



"I've been making art about the destruction of culture for about fifteen years," he told *Express*, during an interview about his project in Alderney.

"I went to Iraq to see what ISIS had done to some ancient villages. It's not just about destroying iconography, it's about rewriting the local history. Alderney is a very interesting example because the locals were removed by the Navy and the Germans had free run to do whatever they felt they needed to do.

“In doing this they changed the identity of the island in an irretrievable way, and that, in essence, is exactly what I’m interested in with my art.”

Secunda has developed 32 prints and several casts of damage done to physical structures in Alderney. His prints are brightly coloured photographs of plants, wildflowers, and sweeping shots of the sea and the island’s beaches. The images have been blurred and overlayed with silk screen prints utilising ink made from burned cordite, removed from abandoned Nazi ammunition found in Alderney.



They are records of history infused with both the beauty and the horror of what happened, but it’s his work on a four and a half metre long cast of a wall that is truly revelatory and confirms the existence of a firing squad in Alderney.

“Bullet damage inside a wall at Platte Saline was, for me, a very significant indicator of the kind of brutal reality of what was happening on the island,” he said. “In order to make sure of [what I was looking at] some forensic work had to be done.”

Secunda was given a bullet pulled from the wall and took it back to London to be examined. “You do stress and strain testing, a variety of different metal testing and compare it to [German ammunition] from that time... it came back as a match,” he said.



"Once I received those results I decided that it was worth going further and I contacted a couple of forensic scientists in New York. Between them they have given more than 550 expert witness forensic testimonies in legal cases," continued Secunda.

"They came in June last year [to Alderney]... they asked a lot of questions and they did a lot of examination and testing. They took photos and measurements and then they went back to New York. In the last few weeks they presented me with their findings, which are very decisive, and the conclusion is that this was a firing squad execution wall."

It's a powerful revelation, highlighting exactly the kind of horrific acts that were taking place on British soil during the Second World War. Secunda has created a physical cast of the wall at Platte Saline and is exhibiting a small section in London.

"[Alderney] is an island of spectacular beauty; it's a gem sitting off the coast of France, and it really looks like something that should be in the Mediterranean, but it has this dark underlying history. I wanted my work to show both sides of that."

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