

Transported Haulage Commission By Alisha Miller

My Work

TRANSPORTED HAULAGE CARRIER COMMISSION PROPOSAL By Alisha Miller

Alisha Miller
Visual Art - Public Art - Transport

The public artwork is inspired by the people, the landscape and the feelings of those who work in the haulage industry. The artwork will be a series of images that tell the story of the haulage industry and the people who work in it. It will be a series of images that tell the story of the haulage industry and the people who work in it.

My Approach
The artwork will be a series of images that tell the story of the haulage industry and the people who work in it. It will be a series of images that tell the story of the haulage industry and the people who work in it.

When will I engage with?
The artwork will be a series of images that tell the story of the haulage industry and the people who work in it. It will be a series of images that tell the story of the haulage industry and the people who work in it.

Research
The artwork will be a series of images that tell the story of the haulage industry and the people who work in it. It will be a series of images that tell the story of the haulage industry and the people who work in it.

WE ARE ALL CONNECTED BY FOOD.

TRANSPORTED

www.transportart.com
@transportart
transportart

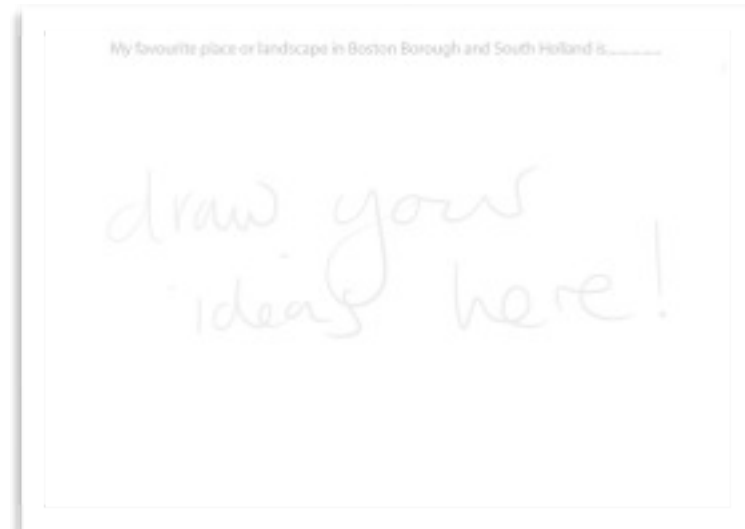
This is my Mind Map. I created it for my interview to present my haulage project proposal to Transported and FreshLinc. It supported the first design I had created and later it would be used as a social engagement tool. It features Transit Art, the previous artwork I have created for the sides of lorries and my artwork for public spaces along with my research for the commission and places I would visit.

Transported is about connecting people and places through art, just as roads connect villages and towns, a map seemed the perfect tool.

With map in hand I could trudge into the fields, meet the picking gangs and visually show them my work as an artist and use the map to describe the research I had discovered. The map helped create discussions and because I was aware that I would be meeting people who may not speak English, the imagery became a really important form of communication. Also the size of the map (A1) and the fact it was a bit of paper you could hold onto, meant that everyone could see it easily and the sun did not cause any reflection problems, as an iPad or lap top may. I had eight of these maps printed, so that they could be left in offices and work places, while I was on location.

The map is of South Holland and Boston Borough in Lincolnshire and features all the towns and villages I could potentially explore along with images of the research I had discovered about those places and initial design ideas for the lorry trailers. It was the first time I had created an engagement tool of this nature, its familiarity immediately connected with people.

Engagement postcard



I gave this postcard to everyone I met during the research phase of the project in order to record their ideas, so I could visit places that had been suggested to me. I would also fill them in as I spoke to individuals on my visits to the fields, in the packing factory, taxi journeys etc.. I used the postcard comments to help inspire the final ten designs.

Descriptions of artworks for Lincolnshire Loveliness,
a series of ten artworks designed for the sides of ten FreshLinc lorries.

1 - Splendid Spalding



This is the first artwork I designed for the Transported commission. As part of the interview process I had to produce a finished design.

I totally immersed myself into researching the history and landscape of South Holland and the Borough of Boston. I wanted to make the first artwork vivid with a bold, colourful, eye catching design which was immediately recognisable.

As I began to search for images and information I soon discovered the World Famous Spalding Flower Parade. A fantastically colourful procession of tulip and flowered covered themed floats. Immediately I was attracted by the brightness of the flowers and the magnificence of the event itself which has now sadly ended, the last parade took place on May 4th 2013. The Parade began in 1935 with the Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary which coincided with the time the tulips were in flower. This led to Tulip Week in 1948, a 25 mile tour through villages and country lanes to show off the best fields. In 1950 came Tulip Time, to ensure there would always be tulips on display, even if they might not be in fields. From the millions of tulip heads removed, some were kept for decorative purposes. 1959 saw the first Spalding Tulip Parade, within a few years this was as world famous as The Spalding Flower

Parade, and even more so than the tulip fields themselves. I imagined myself visiting Spalding back in the 1940s, I would have loved to have experienced those fabulous fields full of colour. I found a series of old photographs of tulip fields in Spalding which became a starting point for Splendid Spalding, the artwork which won me this fabulous commission.

People often ask me why there are the odd red tulips growing in the yellow stripes on the design. Initially I wanted to break up the mass of yellow on the design, and I had found an image on a Spalding website which had the odd red tulip mixed in with the yellow. Also the eye is naturally attracted to the colour red. Artists often use red to take the viewers eye across a painting, so it seemed a perfect solution to do this. I was telling this story to one of the farmers I worked with. I mentioned that the artist Constable famously used this technique in The Hay Wain. His reply to this was, "You might talk to a lot of people, especially farmers around here who may not know a lot about art, but I can guarantee that a good majority of those people will have a copy of the The Hay Wain hung on their walls, or will certainly know of the painting".

Since making this artwork, I have visited the Bulb Museum in Pinchbeck, a wonderful little place. I was fortunate to be given a personal guided tour around the fascinating museum where I learned all about the process of tulip picking. During my visit to the Bulb Museum I learned that these red tulips are "rogues" and there is an actual implement called a 'roguing tool' to pull out the offending odd coloured flowers in the strips. I quite like the idea of my red tulips being rogues! The rest of the design is made up of various images and colours I found from old photos of Spalding tulip fields and compiled them together. I wanted the strips of colour to dominate the whole design leaving only just a little bit sky. This was the first design to be wrapped around a FreshLinc articulated lorry. Transported launched the project from Parliament in July 2014, its was also filmed for BBC Look North. During the filming at Springfield Shopping Centre near Spalding the BBC interviewed some members of the public about art work. One lady said "I got it straight away, those tulip fields just say 'Spalding' to me, and I really like the way you have brought in the waterways - the dykes and drains". I really love this interpretation, and I can see why she thought that the white strips were water. At this early stage in the project point I was still getting to know this area of the Country and I don't think I had fully grasped the vast amount of dykes and drains in the area and the importance of them.

2 - Pumpkin Place



Its not often (unless you are a pumpkin farmer or a picker or happen to live near a pumpkin field) that you get to see these massive orange fruits in all their glory as they grow from small dark green buds and leaves into giant fields of orange. I had found an image on the internet of a Lincolnshire pumpkin field and discovered that Lincolnshire pretty much grows most of the pumpkins we see in our supermarkets. Spalding also now hosts an annual Pumpkin Festival following the demise of the famous flower festival, so I was thrilled to discover that one of the products the farmers I had planned to work with were pumpkins. I visited the fields a couple of months before harvest, when the pumpkins were small and green. Slowly the field transforms from green to orange as the leaves die back and the pumpkins emerge. I next visited during the second day of harvest, and this is what I saw - miles and miles of orange. I went to meet the gangs of pickers in the fields; many were foreign agency workers recruited especially to harvest these large heavy fruits which are hand lifted and carefully placed into crates. Thousands and thousands of these fruit are picked and distributed throughout the country in a very short time frame in readiness for Halloween. This artwork took me the longest to create, I wanted to show the process of picking, by featuring some of the workers in the fields as well as the magnificence of the colour. This artwork also features the perspective of the pylons in the distance; there were always pylons in the distance. This design was transferred onto a model of a lorry which I took along with me to the annual Spalding Pumpkin Festival. It received a really positive response. One lady said to me, "You never forget the

first time you see a pumpkin field". I recorded this quote onto a postcard, and it is now featured on the backdoor design of Pumpkin Place.

3 - RAF Holbeach



This landscape is the bombing range at RAF Holbeach. It features the flight tower and a strange looking island locally referred to as 'the doughnut' due to its circular shape with a dimple in the middle. I had discovered this island during my research for the commission. There are actually two of these curious structures but why were they built? The answer seems to lie in a scientific experiment - they were both built in the 1970s as a feasibility study into water storage. Looking out to the island, the plan was to see whether large parts of The Wash could be converted into a freshwater reservoir, but building these test lakes on a tidal estuary soon meant their fresh water was becoming salty. It also cost a large amount of money - three million pounds for the trial alone. The plans were soon shelved, and the trial banks were abandoned. But they've now gained a new importance as a breeding bird colony, around three thousand pairs of sea birds now nest on the outer bank. These are two unique islands left behind by science - which have now been taken over by nature. The 'island' features on the Mind Map, so I asked everyone who I came into contact with during the research if they were aware of it and surprisingly no one really knew of it. It was good to share the information I had discovered but deep down I wanted to go and see it for myself. During one of my research days I was taken to the RAF Holbeach flight tower, I climbed up the steep grassy bank and there in the distance I could see one of the islands.

I had also created a preliminary design for the Mind Map which featured the RAF Holbeach flight tower and a Lancaster Bomber; again these images were discovered during my research. I initially chose to include the Lancaster Bomber purely because of its fantastic shape and visual image. It's a magnificent feat of engineering, a giant bird in the sky. However, I wasn't prepared for its popularity with absolutely everyone I met. People in this area have a real love for this aeroplane and most people talked of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. Just north of Boston is the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre at East Kirkby, its the only place in the country to see a Lancaster Bomber on an original wartime airfield, and ride in it! It was suggested by many if I were to feature the Lancaster Bomber then I should show it during the triple flight with a Spitfire and a Hurricane. One of the postcards returned to me stated, "My mother's cousin was rear bomber for a Lancaster Bomber from Kirton", I was also encouraged to visit the Facebook site 'The most beautiful plane in the world', by a potato farmer.

4 - Sugar beet Sunset



I love to see a spectacular piece of industrial architecture dominating the skyline, especially in the middle of the countryside. The first time I came to Spalding was for my interview with Transported and FreshLinc at FreshLinc's depot, north of Spalding. As I approached the industrial estate I was presented with one of the most prominent landmark features in the area which I would use as a guidepost in the beginning stages of the project. It was the power station known as the Spalding Energy Facility and it is sited on a former sugar beet site of British Sugar. I had been told of the old sugar beet factory; I had even watched a video on Youtube of its demolition. I knew immediately

that this magnificent and highly efficient power station which stood in its place had to feature in one of the artworks. I had also received a postcard which mentioned the ROPA Beet Harvester with the sun going down in the background. I had no idea that sugar beet was grown in this country to make sugar! It sounds silly now, but all the sugar beet I had seen was usually grown as a food for grazing animals and that sugar came from sugar cane. How wrong I was. I wanted to see the sugar beet fields for myself and I was taken to meet Nat, the driver of the ROPA to see how sugar beet was harvested. I was really fortunate to have a ride in this giant yellow beast. It slowly drove up and down the field collecting the beet. I discovered it was Nat who had filled in a postcard and had beautifully described the sun going down and the snow and frost on top of the piles of sugar beet. So this image is a combination of all of that. The darker building is the current power station and the light blue building is the old sugar beet factory, both sited in their exact locations. In the foreground are the sugar beet fields, with layers of vivid green leaves, rich earthy soil and the giant yellow beast. The quote on the back doors came from a conversation I had with a gentleman at the Spalding Pumpkin Festival he said "You could see the Sugar beet factory in the distance and you knew you were coming home." I really liked the connection I felt with this, my two and a half hour car journey home would begin when I saw the power station and would take me through the country roads to Bourne and back down to the Midlands. I also had a chat with a lady who also remembered the sugar beet factory, she said, "The smell the lovely smell - you knew you were coming home". I love the idea of sweetness filling the air.

5 - Large Skies



Lincolnshire is very flat, so the skies are enormous. I was told by a stall holder and pumpkin carver that Lincolnshire landscapes follow the one eighth rule - 7/8 sky and 1/8 land. So I decided to take this comment literally and I carefully measured the design to fit. It was during the summer that I conducted my research in South Holland and Boston Borough and the sky was glorious almost everyday I was there.

To complement this wonderful purple/blue sky, I wanted to contrast it with a golden yellow landscape. On my first visit to the fields I met up with some old friends of my uncle, John and Marion Christian who were ex farmers. They had arranged for me to meet a combine driver to experience corn harvesting myself. The dusty, yellow corn fields were having the short stalks left in the ground from harvest chopped and spread over the land. Driver Richard Dobbs kindly allowed me to be a passenger for a while in his combine harvester; what a fantastic first hand experience, driving up and down the vast fields trimming the remains of the corn harvest in preparation for planting. Richard wrote on his postcard 'The Corn Harvest. From 2 horse power to 300 horsepower. The progression from the binder to the combine has taken just one lifetime'. John and Marion's postcard read 'The golden fields having just been harvested with tall straw bales and the beautiful sunset going down over the Fens. Shire horses to horse power'.

6 - Sutton Bridge



During my visit to the pumpkin fields I met tractor driver, Ferret, who together with my driver for the day, Mark Gott, from Lincolnshire Field Products discussed my mind map. Ferret suggested I should go and see the two white light houses at Sutton Bridge and later that day I visited them for myself. Since that visit I have discovered some great facts. The East Lighthouse on the left hand side of the image above was once owned by the famous naturalist, Sir Peter Scott, son of Scott of the Antarctic. He was inspired by the words written a hundred years earlier by his father, Captain Robert Falcon Scott, as he lay dying on the Great Ice Barrier in March 1912: 'Make the boy interested in Natural History if you can, it is better than games, they encourage it at some schools'. During his time at the lighthouse, Sir Peter Scott, founder of numerous wildlife conservation societies, painted dramatic oil paintings of the wildfowl, which flocked to the remote Lincolnshire outpost. It was built along with its twin on the west bank of the River Nene in 1831 to commemorate the opening of the Nene outfall cut. These were never functioning lighthouses and were merely markers to guide ships into the cut. Not only were the lighthouses great examples of interesting architecture, Sutton Bridge itself is a beautiful example of steel work engineering; a very pretty and decorative bridge, even on a grey cloudy day. From the bridge you can just about see a series of wind turbines in the distance. I have made them much larger in this image as they are evident all around Boston Borough and South Holland and many people have mentioned them as landscape features which are either loved or loathed. There are also many water towers around this area, all of which are like enormous contemporary sculptures. The one featured is one of my personal favourites.

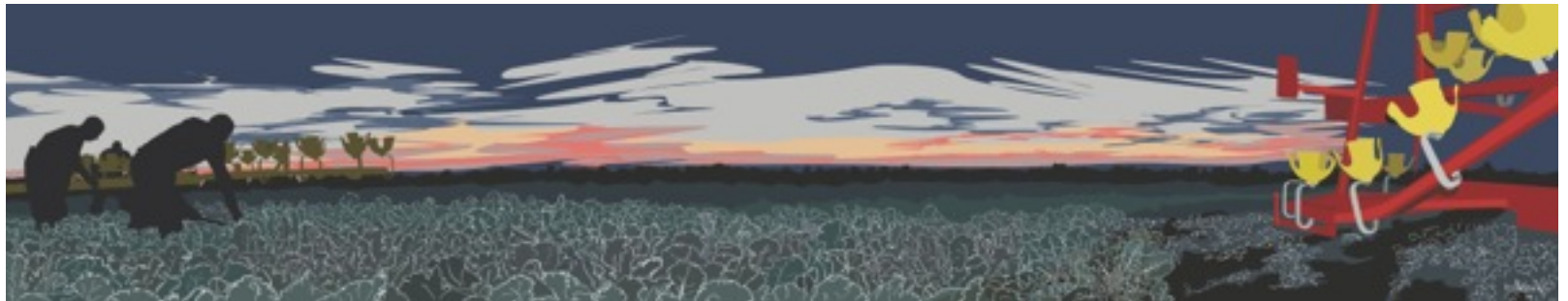
7 - Surfleet Sluice



When I first discovered I had been accepted to undertake this commission it was suggested by an old family friend, who has spent much of his life visiting family in Spalding, that I should visit Surfleet, Seas End. He said, "It's quite like no other place you may have ever been".

Surfleet Sluice - a definite gem this one. What a magical place, three totally different environments sitting beautifully adjacent to one another. This little village is joined together by a magnificent steel bridge/sluice. It's where the fresh water river meets the salt water at Seas End. The Sluice bridge opens from the river side to allow the fresh water to flow into the sea. The gates move aside and the water level drops to allow the boats to squeeze under the bridge. As you look out towards the drain (sea) sailing boats are moored along the steep banks, resting in the shallow brown water. In stark contrast, turn around on the bridge to look across the beautiful wide river and here along the right hand bank, a contemporary collection of residential dwellings stand like a series of luxury holiday homes along the Broads on a super sunny summer day. This modern vista is contrasted by it's opposing view. Here on the left hand bank is a collection of what looks like abandoned wooden huts. It's difficult to tell if these small shabby buildings are occupied. I get the impression that Surfleet isn't quite finished and that half of the village has been left as a heritage site, whereas the opposite bank has been re-modernised. Standing on the bridge which divides this little bit of magic hidden in South Holland was a very surreal moment. A very quiet little place, I was there around lunchtime and only noticed a couple of dog walkers as I was leaving. I'm hoping to go back and speak to some residents. I wonder if *they* feel like they are on holiday?

8 - Broccoli Sunrise



I met this picking gang early one afternoon just as they were finishing a long shift, bending, twisting, cutting and placing cauliflower. Cauliflower, spring greens and broccoli florets are cut by hand using a long sharp blade, they are placed individually into the constantly rotating yellow and red flower shaped plastic holders on the tractor's conveyer belt. It's reminiscent of a carefully choreographed rhythmical dance, watching the tattooed men moving carefully and gracefully, slicing only a tiny percentage of the large battleship grey leaved plants, leaving the hefty stumps of the trunk of the plants in the ground. I was having to concentrate really hard on not tripping over them. All the men were in good spirits and were keen to look at the mind map and know more about the project. It's not often they have visitors to the fields. We chatted about the landscape, something they all admitted to taking for granted, but having thought about it, they all agreed they would prefer to be outside in any weather than stuck inside a factory, warehouse or office. Some of the men suggested I should go and visit Frampton Marsh - coincidentally that was on the agenda for the afternoon. As they were just about to finish, I asked if I could come back at the start of tomorrow's shift. As I waved goodbye, someone shouted see you at 4.30am!!!!!! Aaaghhhh! I set my alarm for 4am. The next day they were due to pick broccoli. I was welcomed by the gang in the dark and as they began their shift I waited in anticipation for a glorious sunrise. I wasn't disappointed. As the sun rose, the sky filled with orange, pink and yellow as it broke throughout the deep indigo clouds. Gorgeous. It was important for me to capture this time of day. Farmers, farm workers and lorry drivers begin their days early enough to witness this beautiful visual moment when most of us are still tucked up in bed and I personally wanted to experience starting my day at this time too. As I took

some photos I experimented with the flash. Turning the flash on I shot the leaves of the plant quite close up; the resulting image looked as if the plants were frosty. A few people had suggested frosty weather and fields on their postcards, so this colour mood became the inspiration for the final image.

9 - Sprouts out



I never realised Brussels sprouts were so beautiful! I was very surprised when I visited the Brussels sprout fields; I was surprised to discover that the large leaves were edged with a delicate tinge of lilac. Colour is a very important element in my work, and I had taken images of potato fields with their purple-lilac plants in flower from the taxi window on the day I was going to see the first truck being wrapped, and of purple-lilac wild flowers I found growing around the car parks of Springfields shopping centre during the filming of the truck with the BBC. Brussels sprouts are fascinating looking plants; they stand about a meter high and are cut at ground level by a series of blades attached to the base of the cutting vehicle. These snip the stalks so that the guys in the machine can easily pull them up and feed them into the machine which then separates the sprouts from the stalk and leaves. The sprouts are collected in an enormous tank at the top of the machine and the remains are scattered back into the fields. Sheep are often let into the fields to feed on the the leaves and stalks. Brussels sprouts are such an under rated vegetable (they have even

been voted the most hated veg in Britain!). I really wanted to capture the beauty of the plants structure and the layers of green you can see stretching across the field out onto the horizon. I love the contrast of the lilac against the dark green and the bright yellow dying leaves revealed as the machine clears the field. Sprout picking is intense and hot work. The four pickers wear full length, black rubber, waterproof gowns and trousers and it was the middle of summer so temperatures inside the picking area would get high. The machine drives slowly up and down the field and in the distance silhouettes of the village, hedges and trees are softened by the hazy morning sun.

“The spire of the village church points skyward like an earthly finger”, postcard quote by Mr P A Cocks

10 - Boston Beauty



Here we have the Port of Boston, again a real fascination for me with the cranes, the warehouses, the machinery, the smells, the industry all beautifully reflected in the dark water. The contemporary, white, St Botolphs bridge, built in 2013, arches over the River Witham. In the distance is the town centre with its eclectic mix of Tudor, Georgian and 1930's buildings. There's a market place, high street shops, a modern shopping centre and small independent stores. Heading out of town, framed between traffic lights and road signs, is Maud Foster Mill, the tallest working windmill in the country, its sails slowly rotating in the distance. There are many windmills around this area and they have been mentioned often on the returned postcards. I love the juxtaposition of this fantastic heritage feature sitting smack bang in the centre of traffic jams, exhaust fumes and houses. There are so many interesting landscape

features in Boston and most famously of all, and recommended by lots of people I met, is St Botolphs Church, 'The Stump'. This enormous church towers majestically over the town. Amongst pylons, it is visible as far away as Frampton Marsh and has the highest parish church tower (as opposed to spire) in England at 272 feet.

When I first began researching Boston, I found a lovely old photograph of the river, with 'The Stump' in the background and a beautiful old boat with its sails and rigging featured in the foreground. I somehow wanted to recreate this image. Moored alongside the banks of the docks are many beautiful fishing boats, but I wanted to find a boat of special significance and a visual spectacle to complete this composition. After a bit more fishing around on the internet and many conversations with members of the public I discovered HMS Endeavour. The image I have made is of a replica of HMS Endeavour which sailed into the Port of Boston on May 1st 2002. HMS Endeavour, also known as HM Bark Endeavour, was a British Royal Navy research vessel that Lieutenant James Cook commanded on his first voyage of discovery to Australia and New Zealand from 1769 to 1771.

Links with Botany Bay come from Sir Joseph Banks, former Recorder of Boston, who took part in this famous voyage of discovery on HMS Endeavour with Cook. This expedition was commissioned for two purposes; firstly, to establish an observatory on Tahiti and observe the transit of Venus across the sun, with the intention of improving astronomy and navigation and, secondly, to discover whether "Terra Australis", the great Southern Continent, actually existed. There was a third aim of the voyage: the investigation, observation and discovery of natural history. This was a privately sponsored project, financed by 25 year old Joseph Banks, and as well as the navy crew, Endeavour carried a scientific party of seven men and their four servants. The voyage was a triumph both in terms of discovery and science, with the identification of more than 1400 species of plant and 1000 animals previously unknown in Europe, and the charting of New Zealand and the Australian East coast.

In the Mediaeval period, Boston was one of the foremost ports in England with a wealthy hinterland. Trade and agriculture brought the wealth that built the church. The town had a charter from King John in 1204. For a short period in the late 13th century the taxes collected at Boston exceeded those of the port of London and by 1300 it was the principal port of the realm.

