

## David Cotterrell: War and Medicine

Venue: Wellcome Collection, London

Curators: James Peto, Kate Forde, Lucy Shanahan

Date: 21st November 2008

War and Medicine: 150 Years of Life and Loss

New work by contemporary artist David Cotterrell was unveiled for the first time as part of a major temporary exhibition War and Medicine launching in November 2008 at Wellcome Collection.

Commissioned by the Wellcome Trust and supported by the Ministry of Defence, this work is a response to Cotterrell's experiences travelling to Afghanistan where he spent time with British soldiers observing and documenting their daily life. Through film and photography David Cotterrell captured the drama of being on the front line, in particular the extraordinary efforts of the armed forces' medical staff and the human stories behind them.

War and Medicine considered the continually evolving relationship between warfare and medicine, beginning with the disasters of the Crimean War in the 1850s, and continuing through to today's conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Central to the exhibition was the uncomfortable and sometimes paradoxical relationship between war and medicine and the question of their influence upon each other. War and Medicine showed how humankind's desire to repair and heal is perpetually striving to keep pace with our capacity to maim and kill.

James Peto, Senior Curator, Wellcome Collection commented:

During times of war those who deliver medicine are confronted not only with the worst that human beings can inflict on one another, but also with a whole range of difficult decisions - ethical as well as medical. Concentrating on the modern era, this exhibition looks at some of the extraordinary difficulties faced by doctors, surgeons, administrators, nurses and their patients in war time. It also considers what has been learned from such extreme circumstances and the wider implications for our society and for our health.



We have pleasure in inviting you to a special drinks reception and preview of David Cotterrell's installation, 'Theatre', as part of the *War and Medicine* exhibition.

Friday 21 November, 19.00-21.00

Wellcome Collection  
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Please bring this invitation with you.

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Exhibition Invite Credit: David Cotterrell (2008)