

PILLS – WHICH ONES HAVE YOU TAKEN?

Press Release
March 6th 2008

PILLS **Which ones have you taken?**

A collection of works by Pharmacopoeia probing our uneasy relationship with pharmaceuticals

How many painkillers does an average person take in a lifetime? What does it feel like to live with HIV? What is your own relationship with prescribed medication?

Following the phenomenal success of its opening festival LIGHTWAVE, Science Gallery launches PILLS, a timely exhibition exploring our relationship with pills, from the placebo effect to prescription addiction which will run in Science Gallery, Trinity College Dublin on Pearse Street from March 15th to April 12th.

Throughout PILLS, textile artist Susie Freeman and family GP Liz Lee, will exhibit their body of work 'Pharmacopoeia', providing new insights into the world of prescribed medicine. Featuring eye-opening first hand accounts, discussions with divisive speakers and a unique form of medico-political art, PILLS will spark debate and controversy for anyone who has ever taken over the counter drugs.

Prof Irving Kirsch from University of Hull and author of the recent controversial study on efficacy of anti depressants will be at the Science Gallery for a panel discussion, '**Do anti-depressants work?**', on Thursday 3rd April.

There will be 16 works on exhibit in the Science Gallery. The first, 'A Cautionary Tale', is based on the actual medical records of two middle-aged men – Mr D the Driver and Mr C the Cyclist. The piece explores the health and economic burden brought about by obesity.

Also included in the month-long exhibition is 'Table Talk', which illustrates the personal stories of ordinary people affected by HIV. Another must-see is the fascinating 'Miss Essex' - a giant handbag made from one woman's hoarded medicines.

A video installation created by David Critchley, "The Pits", shows a discussion between a patient, Steve, and his GP Liz around his experience of depression and taking anti-depressants.

The topical exhibition will encourage people to think about their own medical and pharmacological history, and to reflect on their relationship with commonly prescribed drugs. It will also reveal how dependent our society is on pharmaceuticals, how ambivalent we feel about them and yet how casually we use them.

PILLS: Which Ones Have You Taken? is open - free of charge - to the public from 15th March to 12th April 2008. For further information and to participate in online discussions see www.sciencegallery.com.

ENDS

Artist Susie Freeman will be available in the Science Gallery for a media preview of the show on Friday 14th March. Booking essential.

For further information, please contact:

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LISTINGS INFORMATION

Exhibition: PILLS – Which ones have you taken?
Gallery: Science Gallery, Trinity College, Dublin
Dates: Saturday 15th March – Saturday 12th April, 2008
Times: Opening Hours: Tue – Fri 12:00 – 20:00
Sat – Sun 12:00 – 18:00
Website: www.sciencegallery.com

Editors Notes:

Science Gallery

www.sciencegallery.com

Located in the grounds of Trinity College Dublin at the new gateway to the college, opposite Pearse Street station, and housed in the new Naughton Institute alongside CRANN, the Science Gallery is right at the epicentre of Dublin's cultural, business and scientific communities.

The Science Gallery launched to a phenomenal response in February 2008 with LIGHTWAVE, a nine-day festival exploring the art and science of controlling light. With landmarks including the IFSC, the gallery district and Temple Bar within walking distance, and the country's most active creative thinkers on its doorstep, the Science Gallery is uniquely positioned at the heart of the city.

But the Science Gallery will not just be at the centre of the city; it will be at the heart of the debate about how we want science to be.

It will bring together people with diverse interests and backgrounds including creative thinkers and young innovators, to connect, explore, create, debate and share ideas on science, technology and the arts, opening up these fields to new audiences.

The Science Gallery 'space' consists of a 144-seater multimedia theatre, studios, café and stunning open gallery space, providing an ideal location for exhibitions, festivals, events and workshops.

The Science Circle is an initiative inviting leading science, engineering and technology companies to support the Science Gallery over a five-year period, with leading computer manufacturer Dell already on board.

The Science Gallery is being funded through government, Trinity College and private sources, including members of the Science Circle.

Pharmacopoeia

www.pharmacopoeia-art.net/

Textile artist, Susie Freeman and family doctor Liz Lee, began working together in 1998. A Wellcome Trust Sciart Award granted that year allowed for the further development of their initial collaborations. From 2000, working with video artist David Critchley, the project became a touring exhibition comprising 21 pieces ranging from ball gowns and framed works to photographs and installations.

In 2003, many of the themes, which emerge in Pharmacopoeia were drawn together in a single major commission for the British Museum entitled 'Cradle to Grave'. On permanent display since November 2003, this large installation includes a lifetime supply of prescribed drugs for a man and a woman in Britain, along with the history of their health and wellbeing in photographs, documents and objects.

Pharmacopoeia are the recipients of a number of awards, An Arts Council award in 2004 lead to the development of 'Table Talk'. First shown at ARTAID 2005, the work considers the UK experience of HIV/AIDS. An expanded version recently exhibited in Norway as part of 'Medical Mesh'.

In June 2007, the Wellcome Trust commissioned work 'Veil of Tears' exploring the devastating effects of malaria in a small African village, Maseno, featured in the first exhibition of the new Wellcome Collection.