



PRESS RELEASE

Woad, Weld & Madder: from plot to palette

24 February – 18 March 2016

The earliest recorded uses of colour by man were from pigments from plant extracts. In Stone Age times warriors used colour from the Woad plant to paint their skin before going into battle. With the evolution of modern paints artists and textile makers no longer have to manufacture their own pigments and the link between colours and their origin is disappearing. The communal and healing experience of harvesting and producing dyes from plant materials has also largely been lost from western society.

This exhibition will be a culmination of a project, led by Eco Illustrator Deisa Centazzo, in collaboration with the Occupational Therapy department at Bethlem Royal Hospital, which engages patients in the making of dyes and pigments from plants grown in the hospital's Walled Garden. Patients harvest and prepare pigments and then use them in the Occupational Therapy art and textile studios to then experiment with, colouring fabrics, painting with watercolours and mark making. This 'plot to palette' approach enables artists to be involved in the complete process from the nurturing of plants through to experimenting and developing artworks using the natural pigments.

Opening Event: 24 February, 3 - 5pm

Exhibition continues: 25 February - 18 March

Opening times: Wed - Friday, 10am – 5pm

Gallery and museum open the first and last Saturdays of the month 10am - 5pm.

Address: The Bethlem Gallery, Bethlem Royal Hospital
Monks Orchard Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 3BX

Travel: Nearest British Rail: Eden Park / East Croydon



Contact: Beth Elliott, Gallery Director, 020 3228 4101
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Notes to editors:

1. The Bethlem Gallery was established in 1997 to provide a professional platform for artists who are current or former patients of South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. Exhibitions and events are programmed throughout the year presenting a wide range of media and contemporary practice. Our annual programme incorporates collaborations with the Bethlem Museum, artists-in-residence, interdisciplinary research, and partnerships with arts organisations across the UK and beyond. We campaign for access to the arts in healthcare environments, and engage audiences in learning and debate on the subject of mental health. The Bethlem Gallery is funded by the Maudsley Charity. They support mental health and wellbeing by investing in projects that aid innovation in health services; training and education; and research and infrastructure. For more information visit: www.maudsleycharity.co.uk

2. In 2015 the Bethlem Gallery, together with the Bethlem Museum, moved to a new venue situated in the original administration building on the hospital site. The building has been radically redesigned to contain exhibition spaces for the museum's prestigious collection and a contemporary exhibition space for artists practicing today. The space opened to widespread acclaim and aims to be the UK's leading arts and learning space for mental health. In the vastly increased exhibition spaces, you will now be able to view centuries of significant historic artworks and objects together with inspiring contemporary artworks by current artists and service users. The new building is open to the public and free of charge. For more information visit: www.bethlemgallery.com

3. Bethlem Royal Hospital is the oldest psychiatric hospital in the world and is a provider of mental health and substance misuse services for people locally and specialist services for people from across the U.K. For more information on our service please visit: www.slam.nhs.uk

4. Peter O'Hare, Head of Occupational Therapy Bethlem Royal Hospital

"Bethlem Royal Hospital has a long history of providing the highest quality care for people recovering from mental health issues.

The hospital offers the perfect therapeutic environment for promoting recovery, set in 270 acres of green space, with woodland and meadows that are designated as a site of importance for nature conservation.

Facilities include a swimming pool, art gallery, walled garden, nature walks and an extensive occupational therapy programme. Our programme offers a wide choice of creative activities, which gives people the opportunity to rekindle old skills, learn from new experiences and build their confidence on their path to recovery."

5. Magic Dye House: Mission Statement

Following the importance of the reconnection with nature for both human and planet health, Magic Dye House was created to bring ART, NATURE and her COLOURS into hospitals and other places devoted to children, adults and their health. The charitable project, founded by the artist Deisa Centazzo, works in the gardens of hospitals and places devoted to people's health and well-being growing dye plants and flowers to make pigments and natural colours used to paint a more "colourful soul". It's head office is in Devon, in South West England, but works worldwide especially in big cities where Nature and her colours are disappearing to leave an environment of grey.

Further information: www.magicdyehouse.org

6. 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem in any given year. This is the most commonly quoted statistic, and the one which has the most research evidence to support it - www.mind.org.uk Around 300 people out of 1,000 will experience mental health problems every year in Britain 230 of these will visit a GP 102 of these will be diagnosed as having a mental health problem 24 of these will be referred to a specialist psychiatric service, 6 will become inpatients in psychiatric hospitals.

7. Interviews with the artists can be arranged and high resolution jpegs are available

8. A series of workshops will be run as part of the exhibition programme and is free and accessible for all.