

# frieze

WEBSITE SPONSORED BY

Simmons &amp; Simmons

- [Frieze](#)
- [Frieze Magazine](#)
- [Frieze Art Fair](#)
- [Frieze Foundation](#)
- [Why?](#)
- [Register](#)
- [Log In](#)
- [Archive](#)
- [Blog](#)
- [Comment](#)
- [Shows](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [Advertise](#)
- [About](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Vacancies](#)

Search:  

## Current Shows

### War + Medicine

Wellcome Collection, London, UK

David Cotterrell, *Ambulance* (2008)

### About this review

Published on 10/12/08  
by Eliza Williams

- [Print this review](#)
- [Email this review](#)

### Current Shows in this city

- Laurence Kavanagh
- Dayanita Singh
- Phillip Allen
- Smoke
- Claire Hooper
- Charles Atlas
- Richard Aldrich

### Previous Shows in this city

Presented as part of 'War + Medicine' at the Wellcome Collection, David Cotterrell's five-channel video installation, *Theatre* (2008) offers a glimpse into a military world that is usually hidden from view. The film is screened across three walls, in which the viewer is placed, appropriately enough, in the position of fourth wall. *Theatre* appears to document the evacuation of a number of wounded soldiers from a war zone, including one who is seriously injured and lying on a stretcher hidden beneath medical paraphernalia. With the loud engine noise obscuring any speech between the soldiers and medical staff, the journey appears calm and methodical, and is compelling, in spite of its lack of action.

As its title suggests though, the film is in fact a reconstruction of the last day of training for evacuation crews before they are deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq. In a three-channel work by Cotterrell, *9-Liner* (2008), a film of a genuine evacuation is shown. Despite its jerky camera work, the systematic approach displayed by the soldiers in *Theatre* is still evident, enhanced by two additional screens that document the journey from different perspectives: one shows the progress of the patient's flight in scrolling code; the other follows the watchkeeper, a soldier who monitors computer screens from an office. The result is an abstracted vision of an injury, far removed from the circumstances in which it was sustained.



- Hilary Lloyd
- James White
- Roy Voss
- Nought to Sixty
- Elmgreen & Dragset
- Zineb Sedira
- Nicole Wermers
- Royal Art Lodge
- Anya Gallaccio
- Sights from a Steeple

## Other Articles by Eliza Williams

- Jesper Just Issue 117
- Milly Thompson Issue 116
- Royal Art Lodge Shows
- Anya Gallaccio Shows
- Jason Dodge / Tereza Buskova Shows

## RSS Feeds

- Get the Universal feed, or the Current Shows feed to be updated of new reviews in this section.

**HAUSER&WIRTH**

MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY

LISSON GALLERY

GLADSTONE GALLERY

**GAGOSIAN GALLERY**

[WWW.GAGOSIAN.COM](http://WWW.GAGOSIAN.COM)



David Cotterrell, *Red Cross Tent* (2008)

This cool analysis of the horrific consequences of war recurs throughout ‘War + Medicine’, with the exhibition placing an emphasis on the medical discoveries and advances that have come as a result of warfare. Cotterrell’s films, which were commissioned by the Wellcome Trust, are shown amongst a collection of intriguing objects and art works that stretch back to the mid-19th century. The emphasis is largely on the aftermath of conflict, and on the treatment and rehabilitation of those injured, with images of severely scarred soldiers appearing alongside some of the implements that were used to treat them.

A final section of the exhibition concentrates on the effects of war upon the mind, an area that neatly loops back to Cotterrell’s works. In a film on the Wellcome Collection’s website, Cotterrell talks at length about his experiences in Afghanistan. He emphasizes the distances, both physical and mental, between where an injury is sustained and the systems of rehabilitation found in the civilian world, of which the flights recorded in his films (real or simulated) provide a bridge. Cotterrell’s films provide an insight into this military environment, as well as to some of its methods and techniques, but perhaps only as much as the medical artefacts elsewhere in the exhibition give access to historical conflicts. Instead of revealing the harsher realities of warfare, the medical teams give order to the chaos and tragedy of war, keeping any sense of confusion or disarray out of sight, if not out of mind.

**Eliza Williams**

MONIKA SPRÜTH  
PHILOMENE MAGERS

DAVID  
KORDANSKY  
GALLERY

Stephen  
Friedman  
Gallery

Sorcha Dallas

X

MAUREEN PALEY

Frith  
Street  
Gallery

## Responses

There are no responses yet for this article.

## Add a Response

Sorry, only subscribers and registered users may leave responses. Please log in or register.

Please Login

Username

**LOG IN**

- Forgot Password
- Register

## Listings Nov-Dec 2008

Download the Nov-Dec 2008 exhibition listings from the latest issue (PDF)

## Subscribe to *frieze*

Receive *frieze* magazine to your door, from only £29 for 8 issues a year.

**SUBSCRIBE**

## Podcasts

### The Aesthetic Responsibility - Added on 17/10/08

Philosopher Boris Groys on the aesthetic responsibility.

**LISTEN / DOWNLOAD**

## Frieze Mailing List

For news from Frieze join the mailing list

Name:

Email:

**REGISTER**

## Publications

### Frieze Art Fair Yearbook 2008-9

UK £19.95. The latest edition of the Frieze Art Fair Yearbook

**BUY NOW**

## Podcasts

### The China Experience - Added on 17/10/08

Panel discussion on contemporary Chinese art

**LISTEN / DOWNLOAD**

Frieze 81 Rivington Street, London EC2A 3AY, UK, +44 (0) 20 3372 6111 info@frieze.com www.frieze.com

Back to Top ↑

Site by Erskine Design