

David Cotterrell: Theatre (v)

Date: 21st November 2008

Materials:

60 minute 5-Channel HD Video source. Warp generator, edge-blending and synchronisation hardware.

An immersive projection of an aeromed flight from Camp Bastion to Kandahar

In 2007, Cotterrell was commissioned by the Wellcome Collection to travel to Helmand Province, Afghanistan, with the assistance of the Ministry of Defence, to observe the work of the joint forces medical teams at Camp Bastion.

Theatre is an attempt to put into context the sense of abstraction Cotterrell experienced as a witness to the treatment received by combat trauma victims in the field hospital at Camp Bastion. The film relates to a flight made on the eve of Remembrance Day 2007, in which the artist accompanied a Critical Care Air Support Team during the night-time evacuation of a seriously injured soldier. Such flights are often only vaguely remembered by the sedated patient. Inside the belly of the Hercules transport plane, the juxtaposition of medical care and military hardware creates a strange environment. The flight offers a symbolic bridge between the trauma and confusion of the casualty station and the considered, long-term process of rehabilitation in the civilian healthcare system.

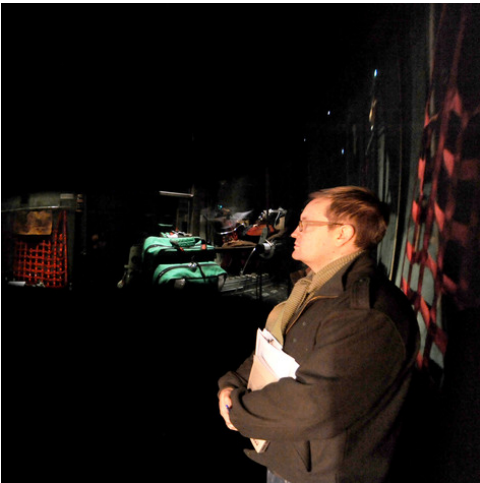
Theatre is a simulation of a simulation: a reconstruction of the last day of training for medical evacuation crews before they are deployed to Afghanistan or Iraq. It offers a rare glimpse of what is hidden from the public eye.



Installation at Wellcome Collection, London Credit: Wellcome Trust (2008)



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