



Low graphics | Help

Search

Explore the BBC

NEWS

LIVE BBC NEWS CHANNEL



News Front Page

- World**
- UK**
- England**
- Northern Ireland**
- Scotland**
- Wales**
- Business**
- Politics**
- Health**
- Medical notes
- Education**
- Science & Environment**
- Technology**
- Entertainment**
- Also in the news**
- Video and Audio
- Have Your Say
- Magazine
- In Pictures
- Country Profiles
- Special Reports

Page last updated at 08:59 GMT, Friday, 21 November 2008

[E-mail this to a friend](#) [Printable version](#)

The uneasy link between war and medicine

By Helen Briggs
BBC News

Curator Kate Forde

Two works of art, two stories. Each portray the stark realities of war in their time, and show how medicine has struggled over the years to heal the injured.

In one corner of the Wellcome Collection, a huge canvas depicts a World War I soldier "being heaved out of the mud" on a stretcher, as curator Kate Forde puts it.

In another, a 360 degree video installation shows medical staff caring for wounded soldiers in Afghanistan with all that modern medicine has to offer.

Kate Forde says the oil painting, by Gilbert Rogers, is "quite horrifically realistic".

"It was painted after the war, but no doubt he was making preparatory sketches while at the front," she explains.

The canvas remained rolled up in the Wellcome Collection's vast stores for half a century, and was flaking and cracked when it was unpacked, she says.

It required several weeks of restoration before going on display to the public.

In contrast, the high-tech video installation, by David Cotterrell, was commissioned for the exhibition to show the modern face of war medicine.

The artist spent several weeks in Afghanistan in 2007, witnessing operations in field tents in the desert, and soldiers being flown home for emergency surgery.

Other displays include the plastic surgery techniques first developed during World War I to treat disfiguring facial wounds, through to video stories of the mental scars left by war.

Kate Forde says she hopes visitors will think about "the contradiction between the destruction of war and the humanity of healing".

RELATED INTERNET LINKS

[Wellcome Collection](#)

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external internet sites

TOP HEALTH STORIES

- [MRSA targets may boost other bugs](#)
- [Child food adverts 'misleading'](#)
- [Preterm baby 'lung growth hope'](#)

[News feeds](#)

MOST POPULAR STORIES NOW

[E-MAILED](#) [READ](#) [WATCHED/LISTENED](#)

- 1 [Shoes thrown at Bush on Iraq trip](#)
- 2 [Two banks exposed to '\\$50bn con'](#)
- 3 [Virgin Media broadband speeds up](#)
- 4 [A curiously French complaint](#)
- 5 [Teenager completes UK coast walk](#)

[Most popular now, in detail](#)



David Cotterrell captured the lives of modern military medics in Afghanistan (Wellcome Trust)


It's a subject "not taboo but slightly concealed", she says. "People will think about the human cost of war, not just the physical impact."


The exhibition 'War and Medicine' runs from 22 November 2008 to 15 February 2009. It has been organised in partnership with The Museum of Man, Dresden.

Bookmark with:

[What are these?](#)

-  [Delicious](#)
-  [Digg](#)
-  [reddit](#)
-  [Facebook](#)
-  [StumbleUpon](#)

 [E-mail this to a friend](#)

 [Printable version](#)

FEATURES, VIEWS, ANALYSIS



Mobile ambitions
Can Microsoft survive the mobile onslaught of rivals?



FROM BBC SPORT >>
In pictures
Sports Personality Of The Year 2008



Heavy legs
The illness you can only get in health-conscious France

[SKIP TO TOP](#)

PRODUCTS & SERVICES



[E-mail news](#)



[Mobiles](#)



[Alerts](#)



[News feeds](#)



[Interactive TV](#)



[Podcasts](#)

BBC © MMVIII

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external internet sites.

[News Sources](#)
[About BBC News](#)

[BBC Help](#)
[Help](#)
[Jobs](#)

[About the BBC](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[Terms of Use](#)
[Privacy & Cookies](#)