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INNOVATIVE ART SCIENCE INTERVENTION AT SCIENCE GALLERY DUBLIN

Science Gallery Dublin collaborated with the Open Window project, a highly successful art intervention initiative, to bring virtual tours of the 2014 exhibition BLOOD to hospital patients.



The Open Window RemotePresence robot viewing one of the BLOOD artworks.

WHO?

- ▶ Shaun McCann, Professor of Molecular Medicine at Trinity College Dublin, and former Stem Cell Transplant Consultant at St. James's Hospital, Dublin
- ▶ Denis Roche, artist and curator of the Open Window project
- ▶ Vivartes
- ▶ Double Robotics
- ▶ Science Gallery Dublin
- ▶ National Stem Cell Transplant Unit, St. James's Hospital, Dublin

WHAT?

During BLOOD, patients in the National Stem Cell Transplant Unit in St. James's Hospital in Dublin had the chance to virtually tour the exhibition with the help of a 'Double' telepresence robot. Patients used a controller to direct the robot around the Gallery from their hospital bed, while a Science Gallery Dublin Mediator talked them through the exhibition. This was part of the Open Window project, a highly successful art intervention project that aims to improve the wellbeing of hospital patients through giving them access to art.

A large scale clinical trial of the Open Window project showed that anxiety and depression were significantly reduced in patients who took part, combating the isolation and stress of being confined to a hospital bed. Previous incarnations of the project gave patients access to pictures of landscapes and other artworks, but the project as seen in BLOOD had an added telepresence robot, the ability to move the robot around the space, and interaction with Science Gallery Mediators. The benefits of these added interactions are currently being researched.

WHAT THEY SAID?

'The great news is that the Mediators have been fantastic with the patients and it's really good to see a personal connection developing over the course of the tour. The patients are loving the exhibition and find it really relevant given their situation and what they are going through. Patients are reporting that they really feel like they are at the Gallery and expressing a wish to visit in person when they get out.'

-Open Window artist Denis Roche



Open Window contributor Denis Roche demonstrating how to give a virtual tour to a hospital patient.

WHAT WERE THE BENEFITS AND IMPACTS?

- ▶ Social inclusion
- ▶ Reaching new minds
- ▶ Feedback
- ▶ Linking university and city
- ▶ Growth of scientific knowledge
- ▶ Innovation

LINKS

Watch the video about Open Window RemotePresence at BLOOD:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KH8B9XH8cco>

Read more about the project on Science Gallery Dublin's website:
<https://dublin.sciencegallery.com/blood/openwindow>

Find out about previous Open Window initiatives in this article:
<http://www.siliconrepublic.com/startups/item/23263openwindow-projectbeingr>

Sources: Interview with Open Window curator Denis Roche and BLOOD Lead Mediator Miriam Harte

Compiled by: Jessica Stanley, Science Gallery Dublin in 2015

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