

Hospital Rooms Charity Partner An Update

Many of you will have heard about our support of Hospital Rooms, the amazing charity set up by long term Colart collaborators Tim A Shaw and Niamh White. We thought it would be great to share some of their latest news, so we asked them to tell us about one of their recent projects involving our artists and materials.

How did Hospital Rooms start?

Tim A Shaw says *"In 2015, a close friend of ours was sectioned under the Mental Health Act after a suicide attempt. On visiting her, we were shocked to find that the environment that she was in was not only cold and clinical, but also dilapidated and run down. We felt that we had the skills and contacts to make a change and we co-founded Hospital Rooms to bring extraordinary art and creative activity to some of the most vulnerable and marginalised members of society. So far, we've undertaken nine projects in a range of mental health settings across the life span, from mother and baby services, to older people's mental health. NHS Trusts are now contacting us on a weekly basis to request projects and transform their spaces."*

Recent Project with Rebecca Byrne

"We recently completed a multi-faceted project at Woodlands, Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust in the UK. One of these, the 136 Suite is one of the most challenging spaces that Hospital Rooms has ever worked in. It's a place of safety for those who have been detained by the police and guests can arrive in a very distressed, agitated or aggressive state. As a result, the rooms are often kept very plain and low stimulus."

Long term Colart collaborator and artist Rebecca Byrne took on the challenge of transforming this space with Liquitex and Dulux paints. Rebecca has worked in the London Head Office in many capacities, most recently as artist engagement consultant for Liquitex and W&N.

For this project, she was inspired by a local story of two friends who had formed a 'recovery trail' of whelk shells on the beach following a diagnosis of cancer, that was later added to by the wider community. With a base of blue and yellow tones, she added a pattern of hundreds of whelk shells that works its way throughout the lounge, bedroom and waiting area, punctuated by the occasional sea cabbage.



Rebecca says *“A young man who was in the 136 Suite while I was working (always with a staff member present btw), asked me if he could speak with me about the painting. Standing in front of one of the sea cabbages, he said that he had been looking at this lettuce for much of the afternoon. He wanted me to know that it was making him feel really good and channelling a lot of positive energy for him - I was really happy to hear that.”*

Staff have also noted that the work provides a calming distraction for people entering Woodlands through this space.



If you want to find out more about the charity, or if you can offer any support, go to hospital-rooms.com or follow them:

- twitter @Hospital_Rooms
- instagram @_hospitalrooms
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