

PRESS INFORMATION
For immediate release

13 January 2012

Exhibition on the Power of Art to Heal and Console Opens on 28 January 2012

The power of art to heal and console is expressed in a new exhibition of work in a range of media including sculpture, paintings, glass and photography at Sarum College beginning 28 January 2012.

The exhibition will be opened by Richard Cork – art critic, historian, broadcaster and exhibition organiser – who will also launch his new book, *The Healing Presence of Art: A History of Art in Western Hospitals*, published by Yale University Press (29 December 2011).

The therapeutic value of art in physical, mental, and spiritual healing has been recognised since the Middle Ages. The earliest hospices, such as that at Isenheim with its famous Grünwald altarpiece, were dominated by large and often exquisitely painted crucifixions, a present reminder of Christ's sufferings.

Art gave comfort and strength to those who were overtaken by disease and cared for by religious foundations with only the most rudimentary medical help at their disposal. These carers followed Christ's instruction to 'heal the sick, feed the hungry, and let the oppressed go free' which was, and remains, a cornerstone of Christian life.

Participating artists include Sally Fawkes & Richard Jackson, Elizabeth Herkströter, Charlotte Mayer FRBS, Ruth Oaks, Keith Rand ARBS, Tracey Sheppard, Will Spankie and Ryan Tabor.

The exhibition also includes paintings by members of Freedom from Torture's art therapy group. Freedom From Torture (formerly The Medical Foundation for Victims of Torture) will also hold a presentation of poetry and prose by members of its Write to Life programme on Wednesday 22 February (6pm arrival for 6.30pm start).

The Art of Healing exhibition is free and open to the public until 8 May 2012. Opening hours are 9am to 5pm, Monday to Saturday (closed Sundays).

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Photographs

Flight (bronze) by Charlotte Mayer FRBS. Photograph by Steve Russell.
One (Portland stone) by Elizabeth Herkströter

Notes for editors

Contact

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Sarum College is an independent ecumenical centre for Christian study and research based at 19 The Close, Salisbury, SP1 2EE. Sarum College receives no regular funding from churches or other public bodies, and is a registered charity (no. 309501). The college website address is: www.sarum.ac.uk

The Garden Gallery exhibits and sells sculpture, ceramics, glass and furniture for gardens by contemporary artists. Located at Rookery Lane, Broughton, Stockbridge, Hampshire SO20 8AZ, the gallery represents about sixty artists, both well-established and those embarking on their careers. The gallery's website address is: www.gardengallery.uk.com

The Sarum College arts programme forms part of the college's academic programme, which offers a range of courses on theological and spiritual aspects of art, aesthetics, imagination and culture. It includes two major exhibitions every year, with opportunities in between for local schools and local artists to show their work.

Richard Cork is an award-winning art critic, author, historian, broadcaster and exhibition organiser. He has written numerous influential books on modernist art and has curated major exhibitions at Tate, the Hayward Gallery, Barbican Art Gallery, the Serpentine Gallery and elsewhere in Europe. Most recently, he curated the exhibition Wild Thing – Jacob Epstein, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska and Eric Gill at the Royal Academy (October 2009-January 2010). His forthcoming book, *The Healing Presence of Art: A History of Western Art in Hospitals* is published by Yale University Press (29 December 2011).