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"Saving Faces" exhibit of facial trauma and reconstruction opens at Yale

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New York.— An unusual exhibition of nearly six-foot portraits painted by Glasgow artist Mark Gilbert and showing faces distorted by cancer, congenital deformities, and trauma, opens Oct. 20 at the John Slade Ely House.

The works depict the patients' physical appearance before, after, and, at times, during reconstructive surgery. The portraits also capture the patients' changing emotions, character and confidence.



"The portraits chart the patients' faces as they progress through their surgical and emotional journey," said Thomas Duffy, M.D., professor of hematology and director of the Humanities in Medicine Program, which was instrumental in bringing the exhibit to Yale.

"The result is not simply medical illustration, but a 'feeling into' the life and suffering of the subjects portrayed. Aesthetics, compassion, and the visual depiction of medical treatment are all part of this sometimes disturbing but always moving show."

This is only the second show of the exhibit's North American tour. The 17 portraits were displayed first at the National Portrait Gallery in London and then toured throughout the British Isles and Europe. Because of the paintings massive scale, the exhibit will be in the John Slade Ely House, 51 Trumbull St.

The exhibit is the result of collaboration between Gilbert and British surgeon Ian Hutchinson. Gilbert was the recipient of a year-long fellowship at St. Bartholomew's and the Royal London Hospital, where he worked on the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Units.

Five lectures will accompany the exhibit. The first, at the opening reception October 20, will be held at 5 p.m. at the John Slade Ely House. Mark Depman, M.D., physician and artist, clinical instructor at Yale School of Medicine will speak about "Saving Faces: The Artist in the Hospital."

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