

Lecture series will complement exhibition, 'Saving Faces: Art and Medicine'

*By the Lincoln Journal Star
Tuesday, January 03, 2006*

Omaha will be the third stop for a North American tour of a unique art exhibition, which provides an in-depth look at the physical and emotional aspects of patients who underwent head and neck surgery subsequent to trauma, disfiguring forms of cancer or other problems.

The exhibit will run from Jan. 13 to Feb. 24 at the University of Nebraska at Omaha Art Gallery on the north end of the Weber Fine Arts Building, 60th and Dodge streets.

A five-part lecture series will take place during the exhibition to highlight issues related to healing that are raised by the paintings.

Bringing the art exhibition, "Saving Faces: Art and Medicine," to Omaha has been a cooperative venture between UNO and the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

The exhibition features 42 portraits by Scottish artist Mark Gilbert showing patients at various stages of their treatment. Gilbert's exhibition was spawned by an invitation from Iain Hutchison, a British maxillofacial surgeon, to come to the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Unit of St. Bartholomew's and Royal London Hospital and see for himself what these patients go through. The paintings he created provide a visual narrative of the healing process.

Some of the exhibition portraits are nearly 6-feet tall. They were first displayed at the National Portrait Gallery in London and then toured throughout the British Isles and Europe. The first two stops in the North American Tour have been in Toronto and at Yale University in New Haven, Conn.

The speaker series will take place over a five-week period with each program beginning at 7 p.m. Dates, title of the program, speakers and locations for the series include:

Jan. 13: "Saving Faces: Art and Medicine," Dr. Iain Hutchinson, the British surgeon who launched the exhibition — Weber Fine Arts Theater in the Weber Fine Arts Building at UNO.

Jan. 19: "Healing through the Art and Science of Head and Neck Surgical and Related Interventions," panel discussion headed by William Lydiatt, a UNMC head and neck cancer surgeon with panelists including Dr. Virginia Aita (moderator), Perry Johnson, a UNMC plastic and reconstructive surgeon, and Tom Salinas, a UNMC prosthodontist — Eppley Science Hall Amphitheater at UNMC, 43rd and Dewey Avenue.

Jan. 26: "Healing through Poetry," Ted Kooser, the U.S. poet laureate who is a head and neck cancer survivor — Scott Conference Center, 6450 Pine St. (the UNO south campus).

Feb. 9: "Regarding Transformation: Healing and the Perception of Integrity of Persons," Michael Gillespie, Ph.D., senior lecturer, University of Washington — Bothell and UNO professor emeritus — UNO Art Gallery.

Feb. 16: "Healing and its Relationship to the Depiction of Illness," panel discussion headed by Mark Gilbert, Saving Faces artist, with panelists including Barbara Simcoe, associate professor, UNO Department of Art and Art History (moderator), Al Harris-Fernandez, director of the Sioux City Art Center, and Aaron Holz, assistant professor, College of Fine Arts, University of Nebraska-Lincoln — UNO Art Gallery.

If you go

What: Art exhibition, "Saving Faces: Art and Medicine" There is also an accompanying lecture series.

When: The exhibit will run from Jan. 13 to Feb. 24 at the University of Nebraska at Omaha Art Gallery on the north end of the Weber Fine Arts Building, 60th and Dodge streets. The opening public exhibition and reception will be from 2 to 4 p.m. Jan. 15 at the UNO Art Gallery.

The UNO Art Gallery is closed on Saturdays and Mondays. It is open: noon to 4 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays; noon to 8 p.m. on Thursdays; and 2 to 5 p.m. on Sundays.

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