

# BRAINSTORM

## INVESTIGATING THE BRAIN THROUGH ART AND SCIENCE

12<sup>th</sup>- 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2011

GV Art Gallery, 49 Chiltern Street, Marylebone, London W1U 6LY

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Artists David Marron and Katharine Dowson observe a 'brain cut up' by Dr Federico Roncaroli at the Joint MS Society and Parkinson's UK Tissue Bank at Imperial College London.

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### BRAINSTORM

Next Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January, a leading neuroscientist will install a human brain as part of an exhibition at GV Art in London, the only private gallery in the UK to hold a Licence for Public Display and Storage from the Human Tissue Authority. This will mark a unique collaboration between fine art and neuroscience.

The arrival of the brain tissue at the gallery completes GV Art's recently opened "Brainstorm" exhibition acting as a central reference point for the selected works by seven London artists with the source of their inspiration and their actual subject, the human brain.

The brain tissue will be personally installed by Dr David Dexter, Reader in Neuropharmacology, Centre for Neuroscience, Imperial College, London, and when the exhibition is over it will be returned to the MS Society Tissue Bank for further research, a facility that allows people with MS and people without the condition to donate their brain and spinal cord after their death for MS research.

The exhibition came about thanks to Dr Dexter who invited Robert Devcic, Director of GV Art and the curator of the exhibition, and two artists, Katharine Dowson and David Marron, to watch a "brain cut up" by a Neuropathologist researching the physical effects on the brain of multiple sclerosis.

The seven London-based artists – Susan Aldworth, Annie Cattrell, Andrew Carnie, Katharine Dowson, Rachel Gadsden, David Marron and Helen Pynor – have diverse practices but each uses science as part of their investigative process. They have responded to the subject of the brain in their combined use of

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sculpture, painting, drawing, etching, photography and scientific materials. Each achieves their own cerebral poetic, shaped by their individual scientific, philosophical and aesthetic concerns.

Also on view at Brainstorm is a film of the original "brain being cut up" at the joint MS Society and Parkinson's UK Tissue Bank at Imperial College, London. It shows Dowson and Marron at work making preliminary sketches and observations for what became works in the exhibition.

Doug Brown, Head of Biomedical Research at the MS Society, welcomes the collaboration and says, "This exhibit brings in to sharp focus the physical affects on the brain of multiple sclerosis (MS) and implications for the person affected, as well as the need for research into MS. The MS Society spends millions of pounds every year on MS research, including support for the MS Society Tissue bank, using valuable donations in the quest to ultimately find a cure."

MS is a potentially devastating neurological condition which affects the brain and spinal cord. It is the result of damage to myelin, a protective sheath surrounding nerve fibres of the central nervous system. When myelin is damaged, this interferes with messages between the brain and other parts of the body. The symptoms vary from person to person and include fatigue, difficulties with balance and mobility and bladder problems.

GV Art and the MS Society would like to thank the families of the donors for allowing them to raise awareness of the condition by displaying the tissue, which shows the impact MS has on the brain. To respect the privacy of the families the samples will remain anonymous. They will be returned to the MS Society Tissue Bank after the exhibition closes to be used for research to help find the causes of MS and ultimately a cure.

Dr David Dexter will be giving a talk at the gallery on 13 January 2011. Places are limited, so RSVP essential.

For press information please contact  
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#### NOTES TO EDITORS:

GV Art is a contemporary art gallery that aims to explore and acknowledge the inter-relationship between art and science, and how the areas cross over and inform one another. The gallery produces exhibitions and events that create a dialogue focused on how modern man interprets and understands the advances in both areas and how an overlap in the technological and the creative, the medical and the historical are paving the way for the development of new aesthetic sensibilities.

- MS is the most common disabling neurological condition affecting young adults. Most typically, people are diagnosed between the ages of 20-40 and around 100,000 people in the UK have MS. [www.mssociety.org.uk](http://www.mssociety.org.uk)
- The Human Tissue Authority (HTA) is a watchdog that supports public confidence by licensing organizations that store and use human tissue for purposes such as research, patient treatment, post-mortem examination, teaching, and public exhibitions. [www.hta.gov.uk/media/resourcesforjournalists.cfm](http://www.hta.gov.uk/media/resourcesforjournalists.cfm)

#### **VISITOR INFORMATION**

GV Art, 49 Chiltern Street  
London W1U 6LY nearest tube Baker Street  
Tel: 020 8408 9800  
Email: [info@gvart.co.uk](mailto:info@gvart.co.uk)  
Web : [www.gvart.co.uk](http://www.gvart.co.uk)

#### **GALLERY OPENING HOURS**

Tuesday to Friday 11am – 6pm,  
Saturdays 11am – 4pm or by appointment.  
Admission Free

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# BRAIN STORM

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### IMAGES

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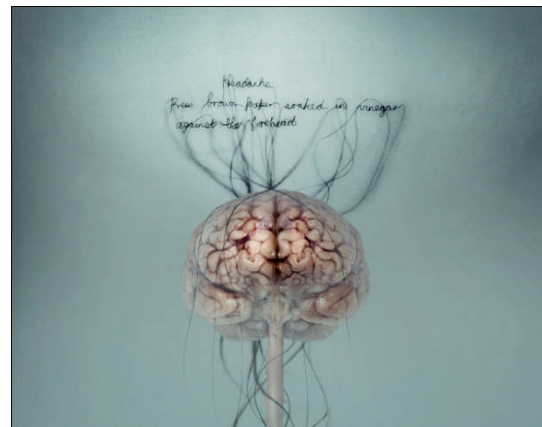
Katharine Dowson, *My Soul*



Annie Cattrell, *Inside*



Annie Cattrell *From Within*



Helen Pynor, *Headache* (detail)