

LondonTown.com: New London museum located in notorious hospital



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Bethlam Royal Hospital hosts new permanent Museum Of The Mind.

LONDON, March 23, 2015 -- /[EPR NETWORK](#)/ -- One of the most notorious psychiatric hospitals in history – Bethlam Royal Hospital, which gave its name to the word 'bedlam' – will be opening a pioneering gallery and museum on its premises this month. The new displays will be filled with the personal stories – both historic and contemporary - of those who have experienced mental health difficulties and will explore the long, controversial and often misunderstood history of Bethlem, founded 1247 in central London. Bethlem Gallery and Museum of the Mind opens on 19 February 2015. The Bethlam Royal Hospital has occupied various sites, including the building now used by the Imperial War Museum in Waterloo, and is now located in Beckenham, a short journey by train from the centre of London. To see other attractions in the area and learn how to get to Beckenham, as well as finding up-to-date information on [hotels in London](#), see LondonTown.com.

The Bethlem Gallery and Museum of the Mind will occupy the hospital's original 1930s administration building and celebrate the lives and achievements of those living with mental ill-health. Themed gallery spaces will explore the reasons why people arrive at Bethlem, aiming to inspire discussion, debate and reflection on mental health issues which are as relevant today as they were in the past. The museum will house significant art and historical artefacts, almost all of which will be

on display for the first time, as well as works by current artists and hospital service users.

Among the highlights are paintings and drawings by Richard Dadd, Louis Wain and Jonathan Martin, each of whom was a former Bethlem or Maudsley Hospital patient; and the oldest objects in the collection, the imposing statues, 'Raving and Melancholy Madness' by Caius Gabriel Cibber (c1676) which originally stood above the gates of the 17th century 'Bedlam' at Moorfields. They will now take their place either side of the art deco staircase directly ahead of visitors entering the new museum. Notable paintings from the internationally renowned art collection include 'The Maze' by William Kurelek (1953), 'Sketch of an idea for Crazy Jane' by Richard Dadd (1855), 'Numb' by Lisa Biles (2009) and 'Phrenology' by Louis Wain (1911). Each of these will be on permanent display.

The exhibition will include striking images by Victorian photographer Henry Hering of Bethlem patients taken before and after treatment in order to detect their mental health conditions through facial expressions and features. The collection will also feature a key to the gates of the 18th century hospital, 19th century manacles, chains, straitjackets and other physical restraint devices, comments and letters from visitors from the 18th century up until today and 19th century admission and discharge registers.

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