

Art installation at Uni highlights UK Disability History Month



University of Bedfordshire, SeedBeds Chaplaincy and Students' Union kicked off its support of UK Disability History Month with an unveiling of a dual-screen installation called '*Resistance: which way the future?*'

The installation, by artist Liz Crow, explores a neglected period of history and raises critical questions about disability by immersing the viewer in a landscape of drama and documentary film. It will be available to view at the University's Bedford campus until 15 December.

Richard Rieser, Co-ordinator for UK Disability History Month (UKDHM) attended and gave a short presentation about the various events taking place in the UK. Charles Royden, Deputy Mayor of Bedford, was also in attendance and wrote after viewing the installation: "A thought provoking, disturbing evening which I would never have wanted to miss. A few minutes of viewing has left me with many hours of thought."

UKDHM runs from 22 November to 22 December and the theme for the year is *Celebrating Our Struggle for Equality*.

The University runs a Disability Studies single honours degree and, Senior Lecturer Navin Kikabhai and students from across the University will be viewing the installation as part of their studies.

Navin said: "We're really excited about having this installation at the University to raise awareness of UK Disability History Month and Liz has produced a fantastic, thought-provoking piece of work.

"The *Resistance* installation is an uncomfortable and chilling reminder of the way the state, its institutions, churches, doctors, nurses and universities were actively involved in bringing about disabled people's isolation from mainstream society.

"I hope the installation can prompt us to think differently, to ask questions about our past, present and future, and to ask how this could change us for the better."

Rev Cass Howes, Co-ordinating Chaplain at Bedford campus said "It is important that little known historical events are flagged up, but more importantly that viewers of the installation are encouraged to ask questions about how disability is viewed in today's society and what they as individuals and in organisations can do about changing things for the better."

The installation will be available to the public for booked viewings. Local Bedfordshire MP Alistair Burt, the Fire Service and a number of voluntary and community organisations have already signed up to visit.

Image shows, left to right: Rev Cass Howes, Chaplain, Navin Kikabhai, Senior Lecturer in Educational Studies, Liz Crow, Creator of the installation, Charles Royden, Deputy Mayor of Bedford, Richard Rieser, Co-ordinator, UK Disability History Month, Shaun Scott-Johnson, Vice President, Diversity & Democracy at the Students' Union

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