

Large-print book

Please do not remove from the gallery






Faith, Hope and Fear

Medicine: The Wellcome Galleries

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Faith, Hope and Fear

gallery introduction

Despite the many advances in modern medicine, it does not have an answer for everything. When faced with illness, many of us turn to other means for a solution or comfort, either social, spiritual or emotional.

The Science Museum's medicine collection shows the many ways we have made sense of, treated and coped with illness and injury across different times, places and cultures. The objects displayed here reflect the hopes and fears we have for our health, and the diverse sources we turn to for help when we need it.

Medicine: The Wellcome Galleries consists of five galleries, each looking at a specific area within medicine. There is a large-print book for each of the galleries.

Accessible features

Features for blind and partially sighted visitors

This gallery features six alcoves containing audio from overhead speakers, which are triggered by movement. Other audio in this gallery is delivered through single-ear listening cups which are activated via a touch screen.

An audio description app called Audio Eyes is available on iOS devices for the Medicine and Information Age galleries. The app offers audio-only descriptions for selected exhibits and enables you to roam freely through these galleries. You can either download it from the app store, or borrow a free device from the Information desk located at the Exhibition Road entrance.

Features for Deaf and hard-of-hearing visitors

Induction loops are available for all audio content in the gallery, including audio delivered via the single-ear listening cups. Please look out for the induction loop 'ear' symbol for these exhibits and turn your hearing aid to the T setting. Large-print transcripts and BSL are also available for selected audio where signposted.

Accessible events

A programme of accessible events will be delivered within the gallery, including audio-described tours. Please refer to the Science Museum website for the schedule and additional details, or ask at the museum Information desk. These accessible events are part of a wider Medicine events programme for adults and children.

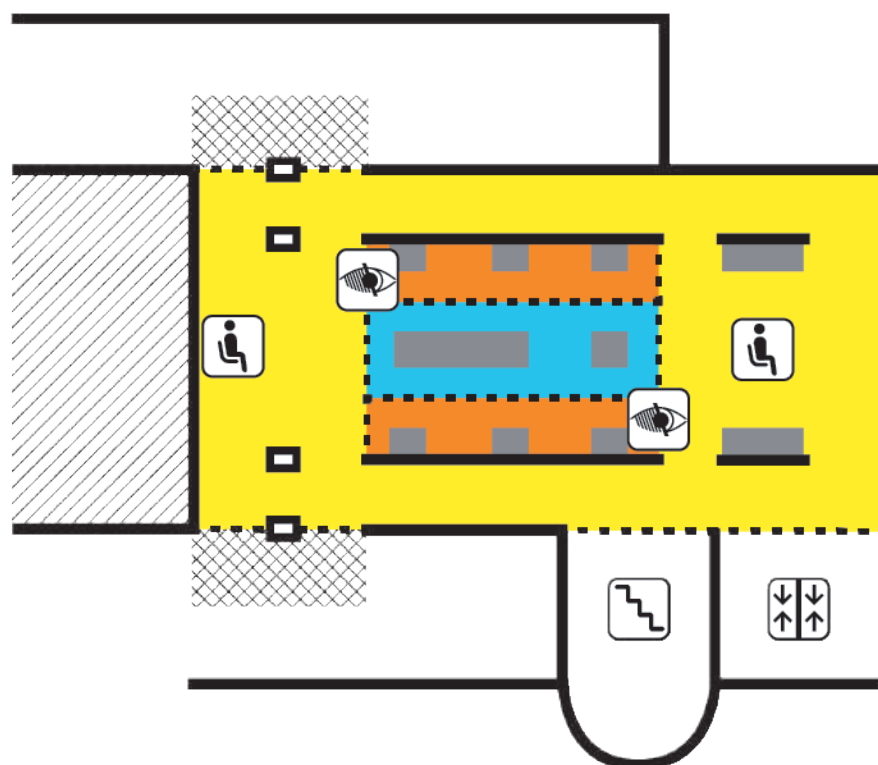
Wi-Fi is available throughout the gallery.












Gallery layout

The gallery is located on one floor. It is a rectangular-shaped space that can be accessed via three entrances. Two entrances lead to other galleries: the Medicine and Communities gallery and the Medicine and Treatments gallery. The gallery is about 7 metres wide and 23 metres long. The third entrance has nearby lifts and stairs that provide access to the rest of the museum.

This gallery features a series of displays that cluster around a large central case. Visitors can browse them as they wish.

Gallery map



- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
|  | Section A: |  | Medicine: The Wellcome Galleries (continued) |
| | Groups of objects | | |
|  | Section B: |  | Seating |
| | Personal stories |  | Stairs |
|  | Section C: Figures, amulets and charms |  | Lift |
|  | Wall |  | Large-print and Braille books |
|  | Show case | | |
|  | Atrium | | |

Section A: Groups of objects

Objects: Healing waters 1800–2018



Water has long been celebrated for its life-giving qualities. We visit hot springs to ease our aches and pains and have built many of our healing shrines near wells or rivers.

Travellers to these sites often collect the water for its perceived medicinal qualities, and as a memento of their journey. In this display you will find pilgrims' flasks and water sourced from sacred places around the world. Mineral water has been bottled and sold as a restorative since the early 1600s. The label on this example from Budapest claims to resolve 'the evil consequences of indiscretion in diet'.



Pilgrim bottle used to carry holy water

1700–1850

North Africa

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A105270

**Flask with embossed illustration of the
baptism of Christ, possibly a pilgrim bottle**

1750–1830

Europe or north Africa

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A52654

Objects: Healing waters

1800–2018



Water has long been celebrated for its life-giving qualities. We visit hot springs to ease our aches and pains and have built many of our healing shrines near wells or rivers.

Travellers to these sites often collect the water for its perceived medicinal qualities, and as a memento of their journey. In this display you will find pilgrims' flasks and water sourced from sacred places around the world. Water has been bottled and sold as a restorative since the early 1600s. Spa water from Braceborough in Lincolnshire, for example, was marketed as a remedy for eczema, gout and sciatica among other ailments.



1. Drinking flask, probably a pilgrim bottle

1800–1900

Possibly Iran

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A102782

2. Bottle of Braceborough Spa water, Lincolnshire

1905–1940

England

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A653981

Objects: Anatomical votives

400 BC – 2017



Votive offerings are those left in sacred places to ask for, or express gratitude for, healing. Some are bespoke pieces, cast in expensive metals such as bronze. Others are mass-produced from cheaper materials such as terracotta and wax. The examples here are shaped like parts of the female body, including organs thought to represent the placenta and uterus.

Although it originated in earlier cultures, the phenomenon thrived in Ancient Roman Italy between 400 and 100 BC. It persists today in many faiths, including Christianity and Hinduism. The contemporary wax versions bear a striking resemblance to their ancient equivalents.



Votive left arm, bronze

200 BC – AD 100

Possibly Italy

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A634944

Votive viscera, terracotta

200 BC – AD 200

Possibly Italy

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A634939

Objects: Anatomical votives

400 BC – 2017



Human societies have been gifting objects, or votives, to their gods for thousands of years. The examples here are shaped like parts of the male body, including a testicle, a torso with internal organs and a healthy head of hair. They are intended to express gratitude for healing, or indicate which area needs help.

Although it originated in earlier cultures, the phenomenon thrived in Ancient Roman Italy between 400 and 100 BC. It persists today in many faiths, including Christianity and Hinduism. Can you find what appear to be a tiny pair of bronze tears?



Votive dissected male torso, terracotta

200 BC – AD 200

Italy

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A634998

Votive tears, bronze

200 BC – AD 400

Unknown location

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A656201

Objects: Paintings of thanksgiving 1700–1900



These paintings are known as 'ex votos', meaning 'from a vow' in Latin. Left in a church in gratitude for answered prayers, each one tells a story of a cure or delivery from disaster through the intervention of the Virgin Mary or another Christian saint.

As well as people on their sickbeds, these examples show a boy run over by an ox cart, a builder falling through a platform and a woman cured from mental illness, attributed to demonic possession.

The tradition, which continues to this day, is developed from Ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman practices of offering gifts to the gods.



Boy falling under the wheel of an ox cart

1800–1900

Italy

Lent by Wellcome Library

Object no. L2019-014

Builder falling from a platform in a church

1700–1900

Italy

Lent by Wellcome Library

Object no. L2019-013

Objects: Paintings of thanksgiving 1700–1900



These painted plaques are known as 'ex votos', meaning 'from a vow' in Latin. Left in a church in gratitude for answered prayers, each one tells a story of a cure or delivery from disaster through the intervention of the Virgin Mary or another Christian saint.

Ex votos can take various forms. These colourful glazed pottery examples, known as majolica, are from Deruta in Italy, a town renowned for its ceramics since the 1400s.

The central plaque was commissioned by a man named Pietro, to express his thanks to the Virgin and Child for saving his daughter, Anna Vittoria, from drowning.



**Lionardo expressing thanks to the Virgin for
saving his daughter, Anna Vittoria, from drowning**

1724

Italy

By Enrico Pignattelli, Deruta

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A85173

A man being thrown from a horse

1680

Italy

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A23169

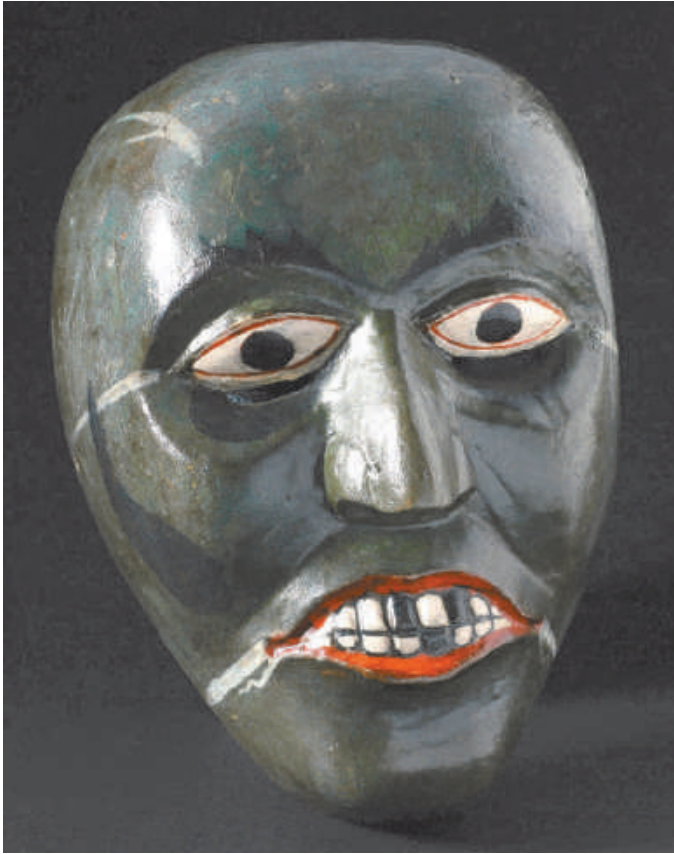
Objects: Sri Lankan masks

1770–1925



Masks have long been used in healing rituals. These ones were made by the Sinhalese people from the island of Sri Lanka. They were used in a traditional dance known as a 'tovil' or a masked play called a 'kolam'.

The ritualistic tovil dances are exorcisms, intended to dispel demons thought to cause specific illnesses. Performed at night, accompanied by beating drums, singing and flaming torches, the ceremonies also aim to bring about good fortune. There are 18 demons in total, each depicted by a different mask portraying the character's associated symptoms. The example on the bottom left possibly represents Amukku Sanniya, the demon linked to vomiting and stomach diseases.



Disease mask

1800–1900

Sri Lanka

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A19437

**Kolam play character called Maru Raksha,
the Demon of Death**

1770–1900

Sri Lanka

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A134254

Objects: Bolivian Diablada masks 2006



Over the centuries, different cultures have devised rituals of varying form to appease the spirits and prevent misfortune.

These papier-mâché masks were used in a carnival dance by the mining community of Oruro in Bolivia, performed annually since the 1790s. Known as 'Diablada', or Dance of the Devils, it originated from earlier ceremonies honouring the Bolivian god Tío, protector of the mine.

Miners face the daily threat of accidents and the long-term risk of diseases such as silicosis, caused by breathing dust. Many continue to make offerings, hoping Tío will keep them safe.



Diablada mask

2006

Bolivia

Made by Rene Flores Ordonez

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. E2017.0230.16

Diablada mask

2006

Bolivia

Made by Rene Flores Ordonez

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. E2017.0230.13

Section B: Personal stories

Longing for a child

Pioneered in the UK in 1978, in-vitro fertilisation or IVF has given hope to millions of people otherwise unable to conceive. Yet decades later, the process remains physically, emotionally and financially demanding, and is more likely to fail than succeed.

The lack of guarantees leads many to put their faith in complementary therapies, ritual and folklore in addition to medical science. This has created a market for unproved approaches, which critics accuse of offering false hope.

This audio is the voice of Tabitha Moses and lasts 3 minutes.

Tabitha Moses

Diagnosed with unexplained infertility, Liverpool-based artist Tabitha Moses and her husband Jim spent three unsuccessful years trying to conceive.

After a miscarriage and two failed cycles of IVF using her own eggs, Tabitha went on to have a daughter using the eggs of an anonymous donor.

Objects: Investment – Tabitha's gown 2014



Tabitha's artwork, a hand-embroidered hospital gown, charts her attempts to assert control over the process of trying for a baby.

An acupuncture body map and fertility figurines sit alongside the medical components of fertility treatment, including a syringe, hormones and a thermometer.

Placing trust

Several medical systems are recognised in India, including modern Western medicine. Bonesetters, who treat minor breaks and soft tissue injuries, often without X-rays, are among the most popular traditional practitioners.

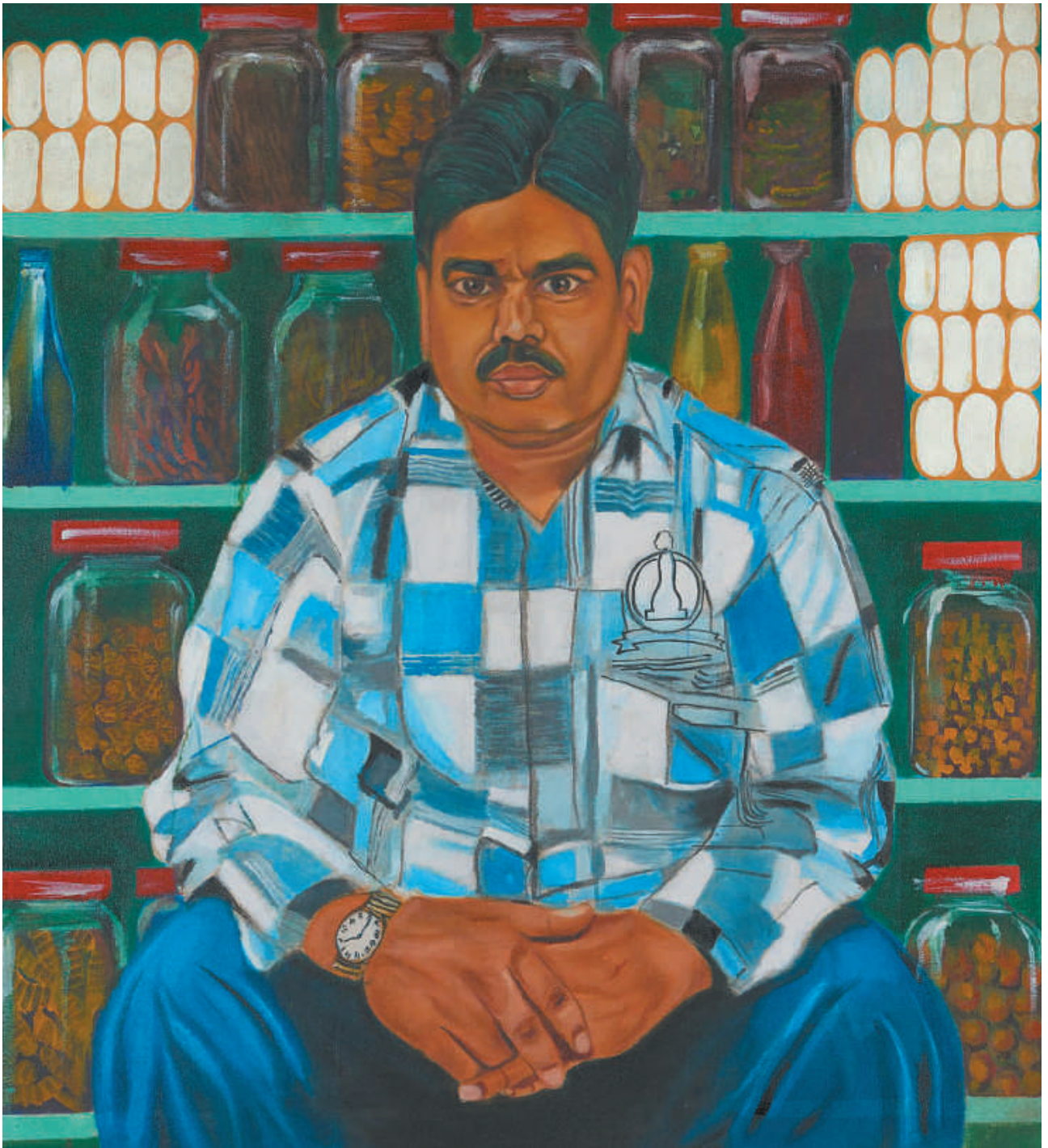
Their services are affordable and readily available, and believed to provide a less invasive alternative to hospital treatment. Lack of regulation, however, leaves the profession vulnerable to fraudsters, so patients rely on reputation and trust. Having confidence in those who care for us has been shown to play a role in making us feel better.

This audio is the voice of an actor reading the words of Mohammed Bashir and lasts 3 minutes.

Mohammed Bashir

Mohammed works in the 'zari' (embroidery) industry and lives in Mumbai's Dharavi area, India's largest slum. After injuring his foot, Mohammed sought relief from local bonesetter Mohammed Salim. Dharavi's main road is home to an array of healers from which residents are free to choose according to reputation, budget, preference and tradition.

**Object: Portrait of Mohammed Salim
by Mahendra Vartak
2014**



Surrounded by bottles of massage oil, jars of Ayurvedic herbs and cotton bandages, Mohammed Salim has been practising bonesetting in Dharavi for over 17 years. He attends to ailments from minor breaks and sprains to muscle spasms and back pain, referring more severe injuries to nearby hospitals.

Donated by the Dharavi Biennale

Confronting fear

Undergoing treatment for a life-threatening condition takes its toll on our minds as well as our bodies.

Medical advances have improved survival rates for diseases such as cancer, but the psychological impact can be felt long after treatment has finished.

Fear of side effects, uncertain outcomes and of the treatment itself are common. With patients now living longer, cancer centres are increasingly providing psychological and emotional support alongside life-extending treatments such as radiotherapy.

Roger Pebody

Shortly after being diagnosed with throat cancer in his forties, Roger began six weeks of intensive treatment, including radiotherapy. For 20 minutes every weekday he was bolted down inside this mask.

Roger drew on the support of his partner, Jean-Michel, and close friends throughout his illness. Playing his own music during radiotherapy sessions, and knowing that treatment for this kind of cancer is often successful, helped him manage the discomfort.

Object: Radiotherapy mask
2017



People who need radiotherapy to the head or neck wear a tailor-made mask to keep them still during treatment. This allows radiation to be targeted at the cancerous cells while minimising damage to the surrounding healthy tissue. Wearing the mask can feel claustrophobic.

Donated by Roger Pebody

Waiting and hoping

Babies born too early face an uncertain future. Medical advances have improved chances of survival in very premature infants, yet longer-term outcomes are almost impossible to predict. Many of these vulnerable young patients will spend weeks or months in intensive care.

Parents can be left feeling helpless, with little they can do but stand aside and hope.

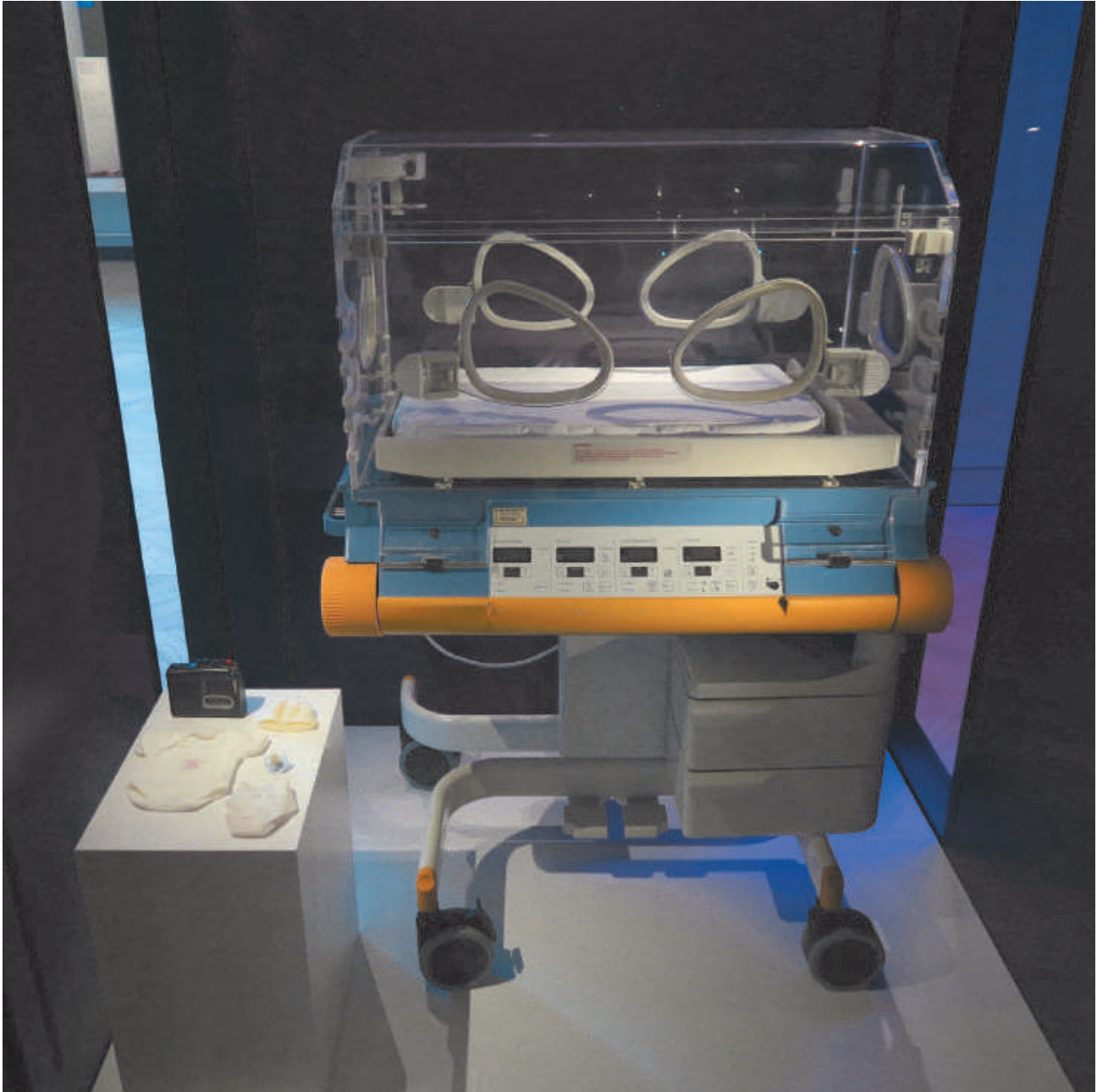
This audio features the voices of Janette and Sophie Proud and lasts 4 minutes.

Janette and Sophie Proud

Janette was astonished to become pregnant unable to conceive.

But at just six months she went into labour. Her daughter Beth died shortly after she was born. Beth's twin Sophie endured multiple surgeries, pneumonia and blood poisoning, yet made a remarkable recovery. Years later, Sophie became a nurse on the unit where she was treated.

Object: Incubator and baby items 1994 and 1996



Incubators provide a controlled environment for premature babies. But controlling your emotions when not able to hold your child is more difficult. Janette drew strength from being involved in Sophie's care, helped by trusting relationships with staff and other families.

Donated by St Helier Hospital in London
and Janette Proud

Performing pilgrimage

Surveys suggest more than half of us pray about our health concerns. For people of religious faith, the act of pilgrimage holds particular significance in this regard.

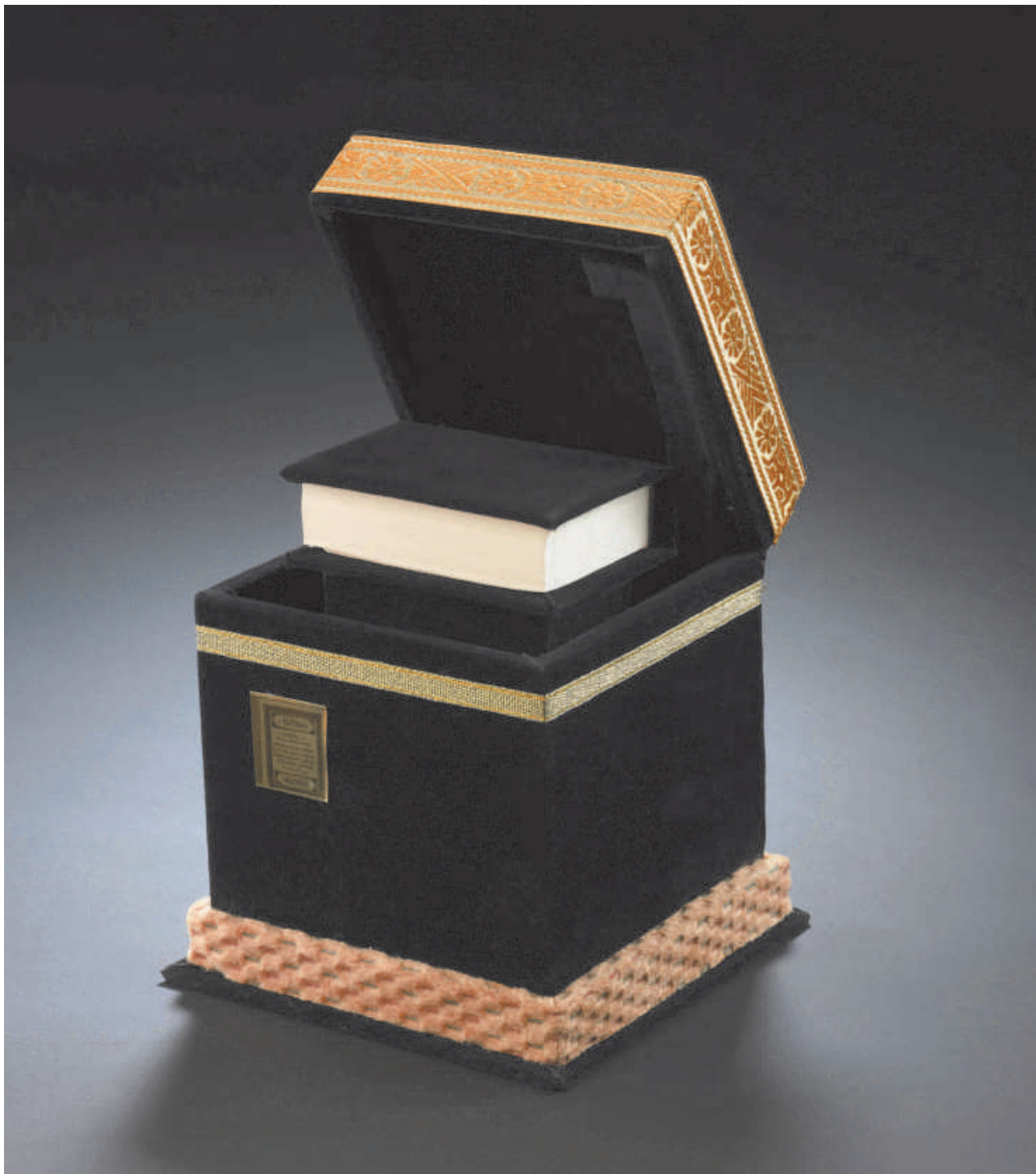
One of the most well-known pilgrimages in the world is to Mecca in Saudi Arabia, a place all Muslims are expected to visit at least once in their lifetime, if they are able. Pilgrims make the physical and spiritual journey – known as the Hajj – for many reasons, including to pray for health.

This audio is the voice of Shayma Zaman and lasts 3 minutes.

Shayma Zaman

Shayma developed difficulties with eating as a teenager. As her illness worsened, her mother secretly entered her into a radio competition to win a trip to Mecca. Shayma won the prize. Performing Hajj at 17 proved to be a transformative experience, and the first step on her road to recovery.

**Object: Replica Ka'ba containing
a miniature Qur'an
2011**



This box is an imitation of the Ka'ba, a cube shaped building located inside the Great Mosque of Mecca, the holiest place in Islam. It contains a full Qur'an and is Shayma's most precious Hajj souvenir.

Wherever they are in the world, Muslims face in the direction of the Ka'ba during daily prayer.

Lent by Shayma Zaman

Taking a leap of faith

Home dialysis was pioneered in the 1960s, offering a lifeline to people with chronic kidney disease.

Allowing patients to manage these complex blood-filtering machines unsupervised was nevertheless a gamble for all concerned.

Almost all medical interventions carry a degree of risk and offer no guarantees. When deciding on a course of treatment, patients and their doctors must trust that the physical, emotional and financial demands are worth it for the possibility of a longer or better quality of life.

This audio is the voice of an actor reading the words of Moreen Lewis from the book 'Plug in for Life' by Keith Bill (1968). It lasts 4 minutes.

Moreen Lewis

In 1966 Moreen became one of the first kidney patients to have a dialysis machine at home.

A single 39-year-old without dependents, she was not considered eligible for National Health Service treatment. Finding £7,000 for her own machine and private care was the first of many challenges she would face.

Object: Milton Roy dialysis machine
About 1966



This machine kept Moreen alive for nine years. She named it 'Dr Who'. Smaller and quieter than hospital models, it was designed to blend into the home environment. Moreen was trained to operate it and performed emergency repairs herself.

Donated by Moreen Lewis

Section C: Figures, amulets and charms



Deities and saints

Throughout history, people of all cultures have appealed to gods, saints or other spiritual forces to protect or deliver them from illness.

This selection of religious figures from the Science Museum's medicine collection is united by shared hopes – for relief, answers, a cure or simply peace of mind.

Some of the figures are called on for help with specific conditions, such as Saint Apollonia for toothache, while others, for example Ganesh, are revered as all-embracing protectors and bringers of good fortune. Religious faith is not only there for the sick. Many of these figures are patrons of healers and medical professionals.

Amulets and charms

100 BC – 1940



Almost every culture in the world has at some point used objects to protect against illness or accident, or to bring good luck. These amulets and charms can take an infinite variety of forms, from familiar four-leaved clovers and horseshoes, to religious symbols, coins and objects shaped like – or made from – animals. Whether held, worn or carried in a pocket, some were intended to be seen, while others were kept hidden.

Often made from ordinary, everyday materials, such items are transformed into the extraordinary by the beliefs and hopes invested in them by their owners and users. Belief in the power of objects to influence the course of our lives continues to this day.

Objects: Amulets – coins and cures



Gold touchpiece, issued by King James II at a ceremony of healing by touch. Worn as a cure for scrofula, a type of tuberculosis known as the king's evil.

1685–1688

England

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A215227

Amuletic skullcap printed with religious images, possibly to cure convulsions when placed on the head of a child.

1860–1920

Austria

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A665699

Objects: Amulets – tooth and claw



**Rabbit's foot, carried by an old man
to protect against rheumatism.**

1860–1905

England

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A176531

**Stuffed princely mastigure lizard, hung
over a door to protect against the 'evil eye'.**

1850–1900

Africa

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A651044

Objects: Amulets – words and symbols



Silver pear-shaped pendant, engraved with writings from the Qur'an, and a square rupee, carried to prevent headaches.

1880–1930

Middle East

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A111473

Stone amulet and leather purse, created by the Na-khi people of southwest China.

Date unknown

China

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A7192

Objects: Amulets – evil eye



Silver charm, shaped like a sprig of rue shrub, worn to avert the 'evil eye'.

1700–1830

Possibly Italy

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A641846

Bone amulet shaped like an arm and hand making the 'mano fico' gesture, carried to protect against the 'evil eye'.

1870–1920

Italy

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A665892

Objects: Amulets – pain relief



**Green stone figure of a man clutching his abdomen,
said to be invoked against stomach pains.**

1700–1910

Middle East

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A156286

**Small muslin bag containing a crust
of bread, used as a cure for toothache.**

1901–1913

England

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A659967

Objects: Amulets – fertility and birth



Stone amulet depicting a man and a woman embracing, to promote domestic happiness.

1800–1900

Bolivia

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A669594

Ivory figure of a kneeling woman with swollen belly, used to aid childbirth.

1890–1930

Democratic Republic of Congo

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A658228

Objects: Amulets – worn in war



Woollen doll, possibly worn by a soldier from the London regiment.

1914–1918

England

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A79996

Holy medallion made of tin, sent by a Roman Catholic nun to one of her brothers in France during the First World War to protect him.

1900–1916

England

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A652171

Objects: Amulets – luck and protection



Xodo iodine locket diffuser, worn under the clothes to boost the wearer's metabolism.

1932–1933

England

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A126964

Amuletic plastic model of a Heinz pickled gherkin.

1885–1895

USA

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A665468

Objects: Amulets – protecting children



Buckskin amulet in the form of a tortoise containing a baby's dried umbilical cord, made by the Sioux people to protect a female child.

Date unknown

USA

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A190725

Cash sword made of coins, hung up to protect a newborn baby from harmful spirits.

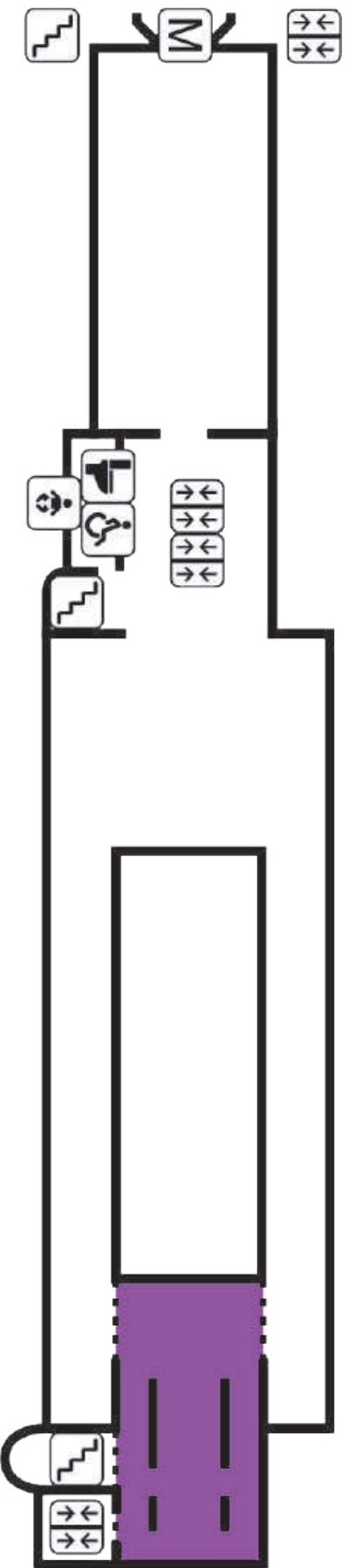
1700–1800

China

Lent by Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group

Object no. A642968

Medicine: The Wellcome Galleries overview map



 Faith, Hope and Fear


 Wall


 Lift

 Atrium

 Toilets

 Main museum

 Accessible toilets

 Stairs

 Baby changing