

The Edinburgh Sketcher



Exhibition dates 16 Aug-3 Jan2014

The Pelican Gallery, off the main mall
next to OPD4, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh,
51 Little France Crescent, Edinburgh
EH16 4SA (Open 24hrs – hospital)

Local arts and disability organisation Artlink is pleased to present an exhibition of drawings by Mark Kirkham – [‘The Edinburgh Sketcher’](#) – documenting a parent’s perspective of time spent in Edinburgh’s Royal Hospital for Sick Children.

Mark is an illustrator based in Edinburgh who produces an almost daily sketch blog of life in and around Scotland’s beautiful capital; an online sketchbook of scribbles and observations of daily life. In 2011, Mark’s wife gave birth to twins, James and Zoe. James has Haemophilia A and consequently the family have had several visits to Edinburgh’s Sick Children’s Hospital. Whilst there, Mark continued to draw and most of the sketches shown here were made during the time James was in hospital. For Mark, drawing was a welcome distraction from all the things he was powerless to help with, and they have become a visual diary of a most terrifying, depressing and uplifting and amazing time in their lives, something that is being replayed many times over in a hospital ward right now. ‘We discovered James had Haemophilia A thankfully early when on the maternity ward a routine heel prick failed to stop bleeding. A genetic disorder which impairs the body’s ability to control blood clotting, Haemophilia A can cause even minor injuries to result in a severe bleed, either externally or internally. Such a bleed can last much longer and frequently require medication to stop.’

'Since discovering James condition we have tried to protect him without stopping him exploring and enjoying his freedom. A hard balance and one we are constantly trying to achieve.

In August 2011 James had an accident and a bump to the head resulting in a severe bleed on the brain. He required surgery due to hydrocephalus (fluid on the brain) and a long stay in Edinburgh's Hospital for Sick Children.'

Mark Kirkham said:- 'James and Zoe are now two years old and both meeting their milestones equally and competitively! And we are still trying to protect them both constantly, as all parents do.'

Over the next year [Artlink's](#) aim is to build on exhibitions such as this one by creating a longer term programme of talks by artists, academics and medical staff; events in collaboration with arts providers in the city; artist placements with specific departments and commissions supporting longer term involvement with particular patient groups. These partnerships will contribute to add to a growing body of work which explores the positive relationship between the arts and healthcare in supporting recovery.

If you would like to share your own stories and experiences within a healthcare context Artlink would love to hear from you. Do you have your own sketches, diary extracts, poetry or photography that articulate your experiences, or maybe you are a healthcare worker with a story to tell?

You may contact Artlink on 0131 229 3555 / info@artlinkedinburgh.co.uk

If you are interested in purchasing copies of any of the prints from the exhibition (from £18), or in commissioning a sketch of your own (prices start from £48) please get in touch.

Submitted by [Vanessa Cameron](#)

