

Andrew Brooks' 'FND Stories' exhibition at Inspace Gallery this June

East Lothian based artist, Andrew Brooks will be exhibiting art focussing on telling the stories of those diagnosed with neurological condition Functional Neurological Disorder, FND, often referred to as the most common condition you've never heard of.

Brooks makes art that concentrates on small details of information to tell stories, using the particular to find the universal. The multidisciplinary exhibition, FND Stories is based on in-person interviews with 6 people from around the UK who live with FND along with contributions from over 90 of those diagnosed from around the world.

The interviews gave first-hand accounts of living with FND and include a beauty queen finalist from Croydon who only began competing since her diagnosis in July 2020. The artwork was created using techniques of data analysis from the interviews and contributions in a range of media including silent video, text-based art, and large-scale ink and gold leaf pieces.





The exhibition seeks to raise awareness of the condition and highlights the lived experiences of those diagnosed. It will be on show through the 20m long windows of InSpace Gallery for

the full period to engage as many people as possible, as well as a shorter internal show with an opening event.

Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) is a common and disabling cause of neurological symptoms. The symptoms are not caused by a structural disease of the nervous system but it is a problem with the “functioning” of the nervous system. It is a problem with how the brain and body send and receive signals. The symptoms can cause impairment in quality of life that is similar to and in some aspects worse than other neurological conditions. Symptoms are highly varied and can include weakness and abnormal patterns of movement, attacks of abnormal movement / change in awareness that resemble epileptic seizures, sensory problems, cognitive problems, and visual and speech problems.

Brooks began making work involving the condition while studying a Fine Art MA in Bristol: “FND is a constant part of my life as my wife was diagnosed with it in 2015 following a bicycle crash involving a car. I began to make and exhibit work about our experiences living with FND reflecting on our married life, subsequently broadening the project making further work with members of Southwest England based charity ‘FND Friends’.



Andrew Brooks 'FND Stories', Inspace Gallery, Edinburgh, 7th June 2022

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"Having moved to Scotland I secured funding from Creative Informatics. The 'Connected Innovators' funding stream has given me the time and resources to continue making work with those diagnosed with FND developing new skills to represent people's stories and raise awareness about the condition".

With support from FND Hope UK (whom he is independent from) Brooks has been able to broaden the project and had responses from around the globe, including America, Canada and Gibraltar, with over 90 participants answering the question what three words would you use to describe your FND – the top three responses being frustrating, debilitating and misunderstood.

Six in-person interviews with participants from around the UK were filmed and transcribed, these stories are the basis for much of the artwork. Those interviewed are from a range of ages, backgrounds, types and severity of condition and were asked the same set of questions about life with FND. In

response to “what is a good day with FND?” one interviewee answered, “a good day is having a shower and not having to sleep after it (laughing)...good days are when I can do the things I used to take for granted”.

Inspace Gallery, 1 Crichton Street, Edinburgh, EH8 9AB

Inspace City Screen, window display on Potterrow – Tuesday 7th – Sunday 26th June;

Opening Event Wednesday 22nd June, 5-7pm;

Internal Exhibition Thursday 23rd – Sunday 26th June.