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# **Dimensions of European Wellness: Contemporary Design and the Visions of Life and the Self: ‘The New Apothecary’s Cabinet II’, *Mind-Body-Spirit***

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## **Abstract**

‘The New Apothecary’s Cabinet II’, of *Mind-Body-Spirit* which is a devised, interactive Art Installation, is the second in the series, and investigates what a new apothecary’s cabinet would be as a piece of contemporary furniture, in collaboration with designer Chris White and maker Steve Smith, using machine-made systems, different types of material and wood, reflecting both old and new. Alison Oddey’s research for this creation interrogates how to live well and be happy, and is based on the Foresight Project’s ‘Five Ways to Well-being’, which concluded that five steps incorporated into daily life can fortify mental health and can contribute to a more productive, fulfilling life, as well as a UK survey published by BUPA in 2015 that it is the simple things in life which make us smile. The Cabinet is a provocation to the viewer to interact with the 24 drawers, to connect, be active, be curious, learn and give. There are health gains within the sensory experiences of all drawers to enrich life, bring support, feel good, maintain mobility, appreciate what matters in life, feel satisfied with confidence boosted and rewards of helping others to be happy within the community. The viewer is invited to be creative, to smile and laugh, to experience some feel-good moments in their day, in order to improve and maintain their health, to revive and restore their mind-body-spirit in smells, tastes, listening, touching and new ways of seeing.

This project forms part of a sustained programme of research titled ‘The Cultural Value of the Arts for Health & Well-Being’, which employs methods and processes across Art and Science, designed to test and transform perceptions of what it is to live well and be happy, raising public awareness and engagement, to stimulate sustainable, social and cultural debate and significant public dialogue.

## **Keywords**

Contemporary interactive Art Installation; Cultural Value; Cultural Health Intervention; Self-Care and Self-Help; The New Apothecary’s Cabinet.

## **Draft Paper**

### **In the Beginning**

In this article, we understand *Wellness* in the broadest sense as a holistic concept, which combines physical, mental, spiritual and social well-being and is a positive definition of health. Thus, it embraces *Mind-Body-Spirit*, and we are interrogating the mind-body-spirit of the individual being, the life and the self. How we live, how we might change things, as we already know from The Eppossi Barometer that “Self-care must be part of everyday life and a culture of prevention should be second nature”.<sup>i</sup> In a previous research project, we investigated eudemonic well-being, which means an assessment of the extent to which people think the things they do in their lives are worthwhile and valuable, as part of our interest in the cultural value of the arts for health and well-being. In a time of European economic austerity, and an age of big data, we have been questioning how the Arts can support Wellness when only using small-scale studies, case studies or anecdotal histories.

‘The New Apothecary’s Cabinet I’ was created as an art installation for an exhibition of Nature Connectedness<sup>ii</sup>, a theme that is becoming recognized as part of any health provision. The concern is over the relationship, or lack of it, that our young people across Europe have with regard to nature, what they know of it and how they engage with it, or not. This may, or may not, also be linked to a very high prevalence of depression and mental health problems for young people, who have become disconnected from the natural world. Oddey’s inspiration came from her work as a natural and holistic health practitioner, taking a 1950s ‘Gerrix’ German kitchen cabinet as a new instant space for the apothecary, to investigate the world of herbs, plants and their health giving properties,

with the aim of hopefully enlightening the viewer of a new approach and translation of the kitchen apothecary's cabinet. Oddey investigated how the individual can self-care as a part of their everyday life, embracing nature connections through the natural landscape, plants, flowers and mineral resources. She interrogated how an individual can boost their own immune system in relation to specific respiratory system problems, such as, the common cold, flu, throat infections, sinusitis, bronchitis, asthma, catarrh and chest infections, including how a cultural experience of contemplation affords a positive health experience for the individual in enabling an immune system boost.

The viewer sees a petri dish of sliced Fennel, the essential oil of this plant and a test tube of Fennel seeds (Fennel cleans out the body and is a natural diuretic); then a section of Grapefruit in a specimen jar and the essential oil of the fruit, which can be used to stimulate immunity and helps to prevent colds and flu; a petri dish of fresh Basil leaves and the essential oil of the herb, which is used to clear the mind of worries and used for sinusitis; and then the specimen jar with Orange peel in and sweet orange essential oil is next to a card, telling the viewer that there is 8.2milligrams of immunity-boosting Vitamin C in one teaspoon of orange peel, and that if you add the pith and rind when making a smoothie or juice, that peel is boosting your immunity. There is a petri dish of fresh sliced Ginger, the essential oil of Ginger, and a specimen jar of Ginger jam, and near this are recipes for using fresh Ginger for different health conditions, for example, make a Ginger Tea from the fresh root and water; use Ginger and Honey as a gargle for sore throats; make a Ginger Punch using ginger, water and honey at the first sign of a cold or flu, and a Ginger & Garlic Toddy for blocked sinuses or a stubborn cough.

This devised art installation is a visual index of Nature's medicinal, natural ingredients, where the viewer is invited to explore and engage in the possibilities of self-help and self-care. It serves as Nature's medicine chest and Nature's table; and as a provocation to the individual towards a culture of prevention, so that it becomes 'second nature'. Through nature connections, stress can be relieved and mental health can be supported, particularly in terms of improving focus, concentration, calming the mind and lowering blood pressure. One viewer, Jo Roberts, Chief Executive Officer with Wilderness Foundation UK, who reviewed the work said:

"The New Apothecary touched a visual stimulus and effect that was reassuring in the sense that it reminded us of the history of using nature to heal ailments. The exhibit engaged my spirit with the quotations and written notes, and was beautiful to the eye - bringing me in to explore more of its multitude of messages and dimensions - and left a sense of wonder behind. I think that we need to mix a range of messages and mediums to engage a wider audience to understand the vital human nature connections and the harnessing of natural wealth for our own wellbeing, as well as respecting the intrinsic value of plants and nature for itself. The use of art is physical, mental and touches a range of modalities, therefore, somewhere and somehow wriggling into spaces of human awareness that the other means like talking and lecturing just cannot. I think the exhibition should be lodged in the Natural History Museum and the Chelsea Physic Gardens, or other places where people can peruse at leisure...and be drawn in through a range of pathways taking us back to the source of life."<sup>iii</sup>

Aniol Esteban says that, "The link between nature and wellbeing is multiple. At one level, it provides everything we need to live and so guarantees our survival"<sup>iv</sup>, arguing that the lack of connection with nature appears to be the underlying factor to explain depression or all sorts of mental related health issues. Nature contributes to our well-being aesthetically, recreationally and spiritually, delivering both physical and mental health benefits. There are societal benefits to connecting to nature, and not to have contact with nature, has health costs, both mental and physical. In 2015, a survey commissioned and published by BUPA, revealed that it is the simple things in life which make us smile. Dr Paula Franklin, UK Medical Director at BUPA stated that:

"People seem to find it easy to name the things that make them feel great, but unfortunately people don't report very many feel great moments. Feeling great can really help people improve their health and well-being. As a nation, we could do a lot more for our mind, body and soul."<sup>v</sup>

Oddey took this UK survey, in tandem with the Foresight's Project's "Five Ways to Well-being"<sup>vi</sup>, an analysis by a panel of 400 scientists, which concluded that five steps incorporated into daily life can fortify mental health, contributing to a more productive, fulfilling life, as the basis to investigate how to provoke the viewer, to trigger ways of thinking differently about how to live well and be happy.

The aim was to create a second new apothecary's cabinet, taking this set of evidence-based actions promoting people's wellbeing of simple activities which individuals can do in their daily lives, which would be interactive and where the viewer could connect, be active, be curious, learn and give. It was decided that it would be through a sensorium of experiences, via the restoration and revival of mind-body-spirit in smells, tastes,

listening, touching and new ways of seeing. It was important to build and develop further a “multitude of messages and dimensions” that employed “a range of modalities”, which could wriggle “into spaces of human awareness”, as a beautiful, visual stimulus in the form of a contemporary piece of furniture. In order to improve and maintain the viewer’s health, how could we interrogate, create and test what and which invitations to the viewer would boost confidence, bring support, maintain mobility, enrich life, through feeling good and appreciating what matters in life, bringing satisfaction and the rewards of helping others to be happy within the community?

## Early Research, Design and Methodology

The process of design is riven with twists and turns, with cul-de-sacs and u-turns. It is not a straight line from thought to product, and ‘The New Apothecary’s Cabinet II’ is no exception to this rule. The place that any piece of furniture has in the mind is often predicated on its purpose, use and cost. Determining what an Apothecary would be, or do in the 21<sup>st</sup> century was part of the process, as was understanding what might be an aesthetic appropriate for such a piece, alongside how big it was to be and what activities might take place with it, in it, around it and for it. As this project has developed the inherent ambiguity, early reflections on adaptability and engagement have come to be part of its charm, as has its own aesthetic, being able to hark back to a heritage and look forward to a future.

A vision of life and self for the new apothecary needed to be alert to who the new apothecary was - you and me, as well as what the aesthetics of cabinet-making were useful to refer to, and efficacious to embed within it. A look at what the Aesthetic Movement is generally defined as, revealed a movement in literature, fine art, furniture, metalwork, ceramics, stained glass, textiles, and wallpapers, which is thought to have originated in Britain. In theory this is a Movement, which is a British and American phenomenon of the 1870s and 1880s, however, it was also a cult of beauty which sought to elevate the status of all objects to works of art. Aesthetics became a term denoting a theory of taste in the 18th century. In 1859, in his Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic, the British philosopher, William Hamilton, observed that as he understood it, "aesthetic" stands for "the Philosophy of Taste, the theory of the Fine Arts, the Science of the Beautiful, etc."<sup>vii</sup>

Aesthetics is a pan-European term accepted with this meaning in France, Germany and numerous other European countries. But another term, “Apolaustic”, has a meaning for what aesthetics might imply, for Hamilton this meant devoted to enjoyment. Aesthetic became a common term, even though its users betrayed an uncertainty about whether it referenced "taste" or simply "the beautiful". By 1880, the noun “aesthete” was being widely used, most often, in a derogatory sense. The Aesthetic Movement emerged in Britain out of the design reform movement during the 1860s and 1870s, in which the chief impulse was "Art for Art's Sake", which argues for an autonomous value of art, a definition where preoccupations with morality, utility, realism and didacticism are not relevant to an art's quality or value. Art was not supposed to be utilitarian or useful in any practical sense, rather a fully autonomous and independent aspect of a human life, existing for its own sake.

The cabinet needed to be beautiful to own and claim space and to have merit without having to be or do anything else. Erasmus Darwin’s Apothecary’s Cabinet in his home (now a museum in the cathedral town of Lichfield, UK), was a very utilitarian piece of furniture. It sat in his study on waist high legs, which it could be removed from and carried off, presumably by some sturdy servants, to whatever emergency he was called out to. It has cupboard doors, which locked and concealed the various drawers behind it. In looking at what could be defined as a cabinet, we searched a number of sources and learnt by degrees the vast range of what we may call apothecary’s cabinets, some of which were vast installations at the opposite end in scale from Darwin’s that had been sited in a Pharmacy with all manner of bottles of concoctions and powders.

Even more delicate cabinets revealed the intricate workmanship and craft of making some of these pieces, with spaces for tools, potions, unguents and poultices, a medical and mysterious box of delights, with a heritage tracing the use of natural oils, waters, powders, which relate to plants and minerals of the natural world. The inlaid nature of many of these cabinets and the mix of woods and surface pattern reflected thoughts of aesthetics and the decorative arts, which were thought to be admirably suited to women. This was because the detail of the decorative arts was thought to be associated with the domestic and the adornment of the home. They were also by their very nature painstaking, fragile and refined, which gave them the definition as suitably "feminine". The other most fruitful recognition of the Aesthetic Movement was the manifesto that beautiful surroundings promoted spiritual and mental health.

There was, therefore, an art to woodworking, with the underlying principles emphasized as the "art in the

production of furniture", which was a negative reaction to the highly elaborate products of mainstream Victorian taste. In England, George Hepplewhite was an exponent of this, ironically his much used text on the production of furniture was published by his wife, Alice Hepplewhite, and there is some mystery as to whether he really existed at all, or rather that the celebrated furniture designer is, in fact, Alice. In 1788, she published a book of about 300 designs, *The Cabinet Maker and Upholsters Guide (or repository of designs for every article of household furniture)* with a further two editions in 1789 and 1790. It is not known if the designs in it are his own or copies from others, since (unlike Chippendale) he was not famous during his life and no piece of furniture can be traced with certainty back to his workshop. The neoclassical designs in it usually have tapered legs and a variety of contrasting veneers. On the whole this kind of furniture has a relatively delicate look. The designs cover the usual chairs, tables, desks and cabinets.

In the preface to the book, it says:

"To unite elegance and utility, and blend the useful with the agreeable, has ever been considered a difficult, but honourable task. How far we have succeeded in the following work it becomes not us to say, but rather to leave it, with all due deference, to the determination of the Public at large."<sup>viii</sup>

Most notable are the shield back styles to the chairs and the elegant filigree work in the carving. Of course, *The Guide* was also excellent advertising for the handsome furniture that could be purchased at the Redcross Street shops bearing the name 'Hepplewhite'. Possibly his widow and her associates in the business saw no good purpose served by reference to the fact that George was not around and was no longer actively interested in furniture making. Alternatively, he was just an excellent craftsman and his wife was the creative artist. The signature on the text front plate was A. Hepplewhite and Co., not Alice Hepplewhite, thus subtly disguising her gender, for London of 1788 would have rocked at the temerity of any woman who dared sign her name as author of a book of furniture designs!

Whether the designs were those of George or Alice Hepplewhite is a fine point that must remain unsettled save for the unexpected discovery of contemporary letters or the like. However, the fact remains that with the publication of *The Guide* in 1788; the second edition the next year, the third in 1793; and ten plates signed 'Hepplewhite' that appeared in the Cabinet Maker's London Book of Prices, published in 1788 and again in 1793, meant that cabinet makers in all parts of Great Britain, and in the recently established United States, found a new furniture style depicted for them. Structural straight lines were consistently modified by boldly executed curves. Delicacy of line and proportion was always one of the paramount considerations and contrast and colour could be added to furniture by the skilful use of other woods than mahogany, either as inlay and marquetry or as veneer for entire areas, such as drawer fronts and the like.<sup>ix</sup>

Some 100 years later, aestheticism stressed simple forms and uncluttered surfaces, with the use of materials such as inlay, marquetry and cloisonné – decorative work using enamelling. Patterns and compositions were symmetrical, familiar to Europeans and Americans, and were still wrapped up in the Greek and Gothic revivals of the early 19th century. The artists and writers of the Aesthetic Movement tended to hold that the Arts should provide refined sensuous pleasure, rather than convey moral or sentimental messages. As a consequence, they did not accept John Ruskin and Matthew Arnold's utilitarian conception of art as something moral or useful. Instead, they believed that Art did not have any didactic purpose; it need only be beautiful.

Aesthetic Movement furniture is characterized by several common themes: Ebonized wood with gilt highlights. There are commonalities, especially in the overall rectangular shape with columns, and the intricate woodcarvings. This influence can be seen in a concurrent movement known as the Anglo-Japanese Style, especially in the work of E.W. Godwin and Christopher Dresser. E.W. Godwin, the most innovative designer of the Aesthetic Movement in Britain, (and father of Edward Gordon Craig, the celebrated theatre designer) adapted Japanese decorative and architectural elements into his Anglo-Japanese furniture, which was often ebonized to resemble Oriental Lacquer furniture. As the Aesthetic Movement decor was similar to the writing in that it was about nature and sensuality, nature themes often appear on the furniture. A typical aesthetic feature is the gilded carved flower, or the stylized peacock feather.

Our juxtapositions took the Aesthetic Movement's considerations and explored recycled woods, CNC machining (Computer Numerical Control), carvings into the wood of writing, the furniture itself as a theatrical statement and the use of new materials of Perspex embedded with dovetail joints, whilst using laser cutting to explore and contrast old and new. This created a bold aesthetic to draw in the visitor, who 'uses' the cabinet to explore the self. We imbibed the work of Hepplewhite to investigate the line and shape, as well as the use of lathe turning for the anatomical legs, whilst interrogating classical references to veneers, to add a delicacy – 'a woman's touch'.

This was to be a public apothecary's cabinet, which needed to explore mind, body and spirit within the context of a cabinet. We considered the kitchen cabinet, the bathroom cabinet, the bedroom cabinet – where do we keep our domestic cures and who is the apothecary in your home? Maybe no one – for public health rather than private healthcare is what has replaced the self-care. The apothecary is celebrated in the collections held at the Apothecaries Hall in London, which houses The Society of Apothecaries' archives. They constitute a unique and fascinating record of national significance. They chart the history of its development and its changing roles and activities as: a City Livery Company (incorporated by royal charter in 1617); a major centre for the manufacture and sale of drugs at the Hall (1671-1922); the founder (in 1673) and manager (until 1899) of Chelsea Physic Garden, and medical examining and licensing body (1815 to the present day). The Society also holds an 18<sup>th</sup> century walnut, mahogany, juniper and olivewood specimen cabinet, which was originally part of the Royal Collection and was probably given to Nussey by Queen Victoria. It is on public display in the Court Room at the Hall.

How should we view the cabinet and what should we see in it, resulted in the opening up of the cabinet and its contents, but also making visible the cabinet's own structures through the side Perspex panel with mock 'picture frame', inviting the viewer to peer at the aluminium structure of the rods for the drawers that provide a lattice, where contents are revealed as different drawers are pulled open and half shut. The textures of the cabinet itself became as important as the textures and tactility of the artefacts placed in each of the 24 drawers, what was possible with each drawer and how we could engender thoughtful playfulness and reflections.

The purpose of the cabinet is intimated by the turned legs made of laminated plywoods, new materials but lathe turned and hand-cut as feet and hands of human form, a nod to the body to be cured. The drawer which contains the elixir of life, which can't be opened, the drawer with the coffin in which a ¼ sized finest scotch malt bottle reclines, the drawer which shows a small cuddly bear who lies on a gold cushion, the drawer with sand, pebbles, shells and seaweed sourced from Cornwall in England, the drawer which isn't a drawer but a tiny cupboard which opens with an etched business card of one of the cabinet-makers of Derby, laser cut into the purple Perspex suggestive of his business card.

The woods of the cabinet needed to have a look and feel of furniture, but reminiscent of the woods of the forest. The quality of the making was done by a large team at the Derby Silk Mill, supervised by Master Cabinet Maker, Steve Smith. It was important to use traditional methods of dovetail joints for the drawers, modern CNC machining for the lettering and messages on the back of the cabinet. The components of the drawers for the front were produced in software called VCarve. All of the left sides of the drawers were made from reclaimed and recycled wood and from old off cuts from house clearances. Some pieces were over 100 years old, whilst the right hand side was made of clear Perspex. This enabled the cabinet's drawers to be viewed from the side window.

The principles for the level of complexity for the cabinet were those based on that thought typical of a great work of art, that is, it must be multi-layered with content. This is balanced by first impressions, which should begin with superficial content or decoration immediately appealing to the senses. This was important to draw the public in and spend time with the cabinet. To qualify as competent art, it had to be able to offer a deeper content. Finding this deeper content would produce the pleasant feeling, and offer deeper layers of interpretation, where the aesthetic pleasure came from discovery.

In the findings of quantitative perception psychology, the aesthetic pleasure is greatest when the flow of new information remains long near the maximum of human abilities of perception (roughly 100 bits per second). The most rewarding work of art is one, where the process of discovery can take place several times successively; the trick is to make a multi-faceted work of art that can be looked at over and over again. In each new vista the observer finds something new; each phase of observation leads to more profound comprehension and thoughtfulness, increasing the aesthetic value of the work. When no more discoveries can be made, the spectator loses his or her interest in the work. Trying now to apply the theory of gradual comprehension to the art of the cabinet design, started with what could be those hidden structures or messages that could coax a spectator to meditate and examine this piece of furniture and its contents?

All the drawers were finished with veneers and completed with Danish oil to seal them. This gives the cabinet a tone and colour; the tones of the woods and the variety with imperfections give an antique feel, suggestive of wear and flaws occurring with age. The sense of each drawer or its potential nonsensical nature was completed with a label sitting in a handle pull, evocative of the apothecary's labelling. This has also enabled us to re-name and re-site the contents of the drawers to specific locations. It has so far been located in an exhibition for a

Nature Connections Festival in the University of Derby, been situated in a General Practice (GP) surgery and Wellbeing Centre and is currently in residence at the Royal Derby Hospital.<sup>x</sup>

We wanted to approach the cabinet as providing dramatic focal points of interest with elements that invite a spectator to look closer at them, so we had characteristics of drawers that were unexpected, the round drawer; repeated features in the handles; more than two views of itself and the components; the need to look at the back of the cabinet; features inside the drawers that had associations; the turned legs reminiscent of vernacular styles but pushing the contemporary look of laminated and lathe turned legs, as well as adding humour and lastly, exceptional crafts and arts' skills.

The aesthetics of the cabinet and its provocative nature have been fed back to us via, comments and writings, images of engagements and delight at its presence.<sup>xi</sup> We have elevated a piece of furniture to the status of fun, a sensory experience to make you feel healthy and happy. The cabinet acts as a sensorium, where the viewer notices and experiences the sights, smells, sounds, tastes and touches of materials all around you; aware of thoughts, feelings and images of perception. In a world that is disconnected from Nature, artefacts in the drawers can reach out to people in an act of sharing, triggering thoughts and discussion about climate change and how to grow food in a warming planet, about food production, farming, crop science and technology. What are the questions and observations about self-care, self-help and well-being in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? What are the plants that can contribute to an individual living well, to saving the planet and the environment? How can we enjoy the world more? How can we understand ourselves better? How can we re-connect with the body and the sensations that it experiences; the body sensing of how the body is feeling. How can we see the present moment clearly, live life to the full, helping "I" and "We" to help ourselves?

The report "Looking through the wellbeing kaleidoscope"<sup>xii</sup> explores new ways in which policy can encourage and support high levels of wellbeing and draws on evidence from across Europe, using data from the European Social Survey. Previously, evidence and analysis of wellbeing has been based on the single measure of life satisfaction. This report explores new ways of understanding and measuring wellbeing, considering comprehensive psychological wellbeing (University of Cambridge), where a new single score has been created by measuring ten different aspects of wellbeing, in order to give "a richer and more nuanced picture of people's wellbeing."<sup>xiii</sup> They found that "Examining specific aspects of wellbeing provides insights beyond a single indicator. For example, the UK ranks 8<sup>th</sup> out of 21 countries in terms of optimism, but is 20<sup>th</sup> of 21 in terms of sense of vitality." Another interesting finding is that:

"The greatest opportunity to improve well-being in a country is to begin with those with the lowest wellbeing, particularly unemployed and older individuals, through population-relevant interventions."

Further to this, the report takes inequalities in wellbeing (NEF), which analyses inequalities in life satisfaction across Europe and over time, stating that economic factors drive inequalities in wellbeing, "Most notably, a country's unemployment rate is strongly associated with higher levels of inequality in wellbeing."

For the purpose of this article, and in relation to the research and practice of us creating the second new apothecary's cabinet, New Economics Foundation (NEF) have explored the 'Five Ways to Well-being' in terms of "who is and who isn't participating in the five ways, in order to suggest ways of boosting involvement." They found with the exception of those aged 65 and over, that the UK generally had low levels of participation in the five ways, when compared to such countries as Germany or France. Their two key findings were:

"Young women (15-24), parents, and people doing housework or childcare in the UK reported very low rates on Take Notice (whether people take notice and appreciate their surroundings). This finding was not replicated across Europe, suggesting there may be particular barriers in the UK for these population groups which may be amenable to policy.

People of working age in the UK connected socially less than their European peers. This suggests that this age group may need particular attention, contrasting with existing policy approaches which often focus on the young and the old."<sup>xiv</sup>

It is our intention to take these findings and use them in the collection of our own evidence, interrogating these particular identified groups in the belief that the cultural value of this interactive art installation can have a positive impact on well-being with the potential for an individual to engineer their own experience and influence their own physiology. Jo Marchant believes that "we have the capacity to influence our own health, by

harnessing the power of the (conscious and unconscious) mind”<sup>xv</sup> and we believe that the mind, body and spirit are inextricably linked and entwined. Marchant states that “our thoughts, beliefs, stress levels and world view all influence how ill or well we feel”<sup>xvi</sup>. She argues that the new idea for health is that:

“our minds determine far more than our subjective experience of the physical world around us. . . ., the way in which we see the world helps to shape our bodies too. We play a role, then, in constructing not just our experience but our *physical reality*. And in turn, the health of our physical bodies influences the state of our minds.”<sup>xvii</sup>

Finally, let us transport you to ‘The New Apothecary’s Cabinet IV’, which can be viewed as that interactive art installation, an artwork which is housed in a museum or an art gallery in European cities, created out of and from the local community; a co-designed and co-created curation of health stories – the Visions of the Life and Self, which can be accessed via the sensory experiences of listening, seeing, touching, tasting and smelling. The relationship of the Arts and Health has a heritage in classical practices of Aristotle, Hippocrates, Asclepius, Galen and other early Greek practitioners of health, and it is not surprising that perceptions of health and healthcare have become important to a developing European perspective of the ways in which the populations and citizens of European countries can make positive contributions to their own health and self-care. The economic pressures on Europe have resulted in a need to look at ways of changing behaviours to effect positive change for citizens, which are informative, educational and thought-provoking. This creative and innovative pan-European project will add value to both the debate and the experience of contributing cities.

‘The New Apothecary’s Cabinet IV’ will involve a partnership of European museums, galleries and universities, commissioning a number of artists to work in one of the other partner countries and with citizens and communities to contribute creative and personal reflections on health and well-being across Europe. The results will be gathered into a New Apothecary’s Cabinet that will be both a physical structure that will be displayed at the participating institutions, and an online and interactive platform where citizens from both within and beyond the partner countries can contribute their own stories and creative responses, and from where they can draw knowledge and inspiration on the future health and well-being of themselves and of their fellow citizens. The project will provide shared knowledge and ideas, as well as traditional advice and practices which cross the many cultures of the citizens of Europe – providing an opportunity for all EU citizens to be active apothecaries with the message that we are well, we are the EU. The legacy will be the Digital Apothecary’s European Cabinet of Health and Well-being, a creative platform where European citizens will be actively involved, empowered and responsible for managing their own self-care and lifestyle choices and which will help to generate a culture of health prevention.

5, 907 paper; abstract 298.

## Bio-note

Alison Oddey is Professor of Visual Culture & Contemporary Performance at the University of Derby, UK, Senior Research Fellow & Reader in Arts & Health at Nottingham Trent University, UK and Visiting Professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence, Italy. Her interdisciplinary research crosses over, in and through visual culture, arts, health & well-being, contemporary performance, fashion, renaissance history and nature, and is concerned with cultural health interventions, the cultural value of the arts for health, happiness and wellbeing, and landscape health-care interventions for public engagement, embracing art and science. Her current research and practice includes the performance, ‘A Gift for Eleonora’; the interactive art installation, ‘The New Apothecary’s Cabinet II’, and the exhibition, ‘Celebrate the Feet: Indicators of our Health and Lifestyle’, both at the Royal Derby Hospital, where Alison is Artist-in-Residence for 2016-17. Alison has an established international research record evidenced by seven published books, work in the public domain as a presenter for BBC Radio 4 and Royal National Theatre’s Platform Events: her latest podcast is available at: <https://soundcloud.com/#nationaltheatre>. She is Co-Editor of the international Journal, *Scene*, and Associate Editor of *The International Journal of Health, Wellness and Society*. She is a Holistic Health Practitioner.

Professor Chris White Ph.D. is Professor of Art and Design at the University of Derby, UK. She leads the Digital and Material Arts Research Centre, where investigations range from applied arts practice through to product developments in music technologies, visual and contemporary arts and performance practices. Her books have looked at design in theatre and through computer aided design. She has published investigations of space and spectator perceptions and is the founding and co-editor for the international peer-reviewed Journal, *Scene*. She is a designer and curator for events, museum and gallery projects and is the Director of the Nature

Connections Festival. <http://natureconnections.org.uk/> This research explores creative ecologies in the arts for health and wellbeing, the cultural value of the arts. This has manifested a range of research with film, music, arts and science. She has most recently produced, directed and performed 'A Gift for Eleonora' with Alison Oddey. She is Deputy Dean for the College of Arts and Head of the Department for Media and Performing Arts, University of Derby.

## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> The Epposi Barometer: Consumer Perceptions of Self Care in Europe, Quantitative Study, (2013), 5. accessed May 16 2016, <http://epposi.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/EPPOSI-Self-Care-Barometer-Report-2013-EN.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> 'The New Apothecary's Cabinet I', Art Installation, Enterprise Centre, University of Derby, Nature Connections Conference and Exhibition, 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2015-26<sup>th</sup> April, 2015.

'The New Apothecary's Cabinet I', Art Installation, Nature Connections Festival and Exhibition, Markeaton Gallery, University of Derby, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2015-29<sup>th</sup> January, 2016, accessed May 16, 2016, <http://natureconnections.org.uk/>

<sup>iii</sup> Jo Roberts, Chief Executive Officer with Wilderness Foundation UK, 2015.

<sup>iv</sup> "Aniol Esteban on why economics needs to make space for nature", accessed on May 14, 2016,

<http://www.transitionnetwork.org/blogs/rob-hopkins/2014-09/aniol-esteban>

<sup>v</sup> "The real secret of happiness is..." *Mail Online*, April 15, 2015, accessed on May 14, 2016,

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3039178/The-real-secret-happiness->

<sup>vi</sup> NEF, "Five Ways to Wellbeing", accessed May 14, 2016, <http://www.fivewaystowellbeing.org/>

<sup>vii</sup> Sir William Hamilton 'Lectures on Metaphysics I' 1859, *Works of Sir William Hamilton*, ed. H.L. Mansel and John Veitch, 7 volumes, (London: William Blackwood and Sons 1828-1960), 3: 124.

<sup>viii</sup> A. Hepplewhite & Co., *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholster's Guide* (London: I. & J. Taylor, 1788).

<sup>ix</sup> It originally appeared in the February 1938 issue of *American Collector* magazine, a publication which ran from 1933-1948 and served antiques collectors and dealers.

<sup>x</sup> 'The New Apothecary's Cabinet II', Interactive Art Installation, Nature Connections Festival and Exhibition, Markeaton Gallery, University of Derby, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2015-29<sup>th</sup> January, 2016, accessed May 16, 2016,

<http://natureconnections.org.uk/>

'The New Apothecary's Cabinet II', Interactive Art Installation, The Park Medical Practice, Derby and The Student Well-Being Centre, Kedleston Road Campus, University of Derby, 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2016-27<sup>th</sup> April, 2016.

'The New Apothecary's Cabinet 2', Interactive Art Installation, Royal Derby Hospital, 28<sup>th</sup> April-January, 2017, installed as a 9 months Artist's Residency, working with staff engagement to produce 'The New Apothecary's Cabinet III', public engagement, accessed May 16, 2016, <http://newapothecaryscabinet.myfreesites.net/>

<sup>xi</sup> Some examples of comments from the GP Surgery Practice, 2016:

*'Thank you, for making me stop in my tracks, pause out of a stressful job to enjoy a reminder of happiness, lovely smells and curiosity. All of these I associate with mindfulness. Excellent research. Thank you!'*

*'Really interesting – very visual and looking through the drawers was very effective. It made me think! Love the elixir of life drawer – not opening! Brilliant.'*

*'Loved it. Couldn't get the sounds to work (poss battery flat). Love the complexity of the build but the simple, straight forward categories that seem basic to life but missed, not developed on or/and not cherished. Well done. Thank you.'*

*'I love it! It was a welcome and calming distraction on a really difficult day.'*

*'I like it. Was something to take my mind off waiting. It was fun to explore.'*

*'Fabulous! Beautifully crafted, thoughtful installation. Love it!'*

Some examples of comments from the Royal Derby Hospital, 2016:

*'Brilliant. I love love love it. Thank you. You made me smile!'*

*'This has everything: A multidimensional multisensory experience. Congratulations.'*

*'What a wonderful piece of art that I was able to share with, and talk about, with my daughter. A highlight of our day. She particularly liked opening and finding this: 'BE CURIOUS'. Thank you.'*

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*'Lovely idea. Thank you for making my Day. Could be used widely on the Wards.'*

*'Love it! How unusual. I would like to be able to open 'the elixir of life' though ha ha.'*

*Very interesting & thought provoking. I work with people who have memory problems and mental health challenges and has certainly given food for thought. Very inspirational!'*

*'What a wonderful idea. A joy to be able to explore.'*

<sup>xii</sup> "Looking through the wellbeing kaleidoscope", accessed May 16 2016, <http://www.neweconomics.org/publications/entry/looking-through-the-wellbeing-kaleidoscope>. This was joint research with contributions from City University London, New Economics Foundation (NEF) and the University of Cambridge to explore new ways of measuring understanding and wellbeing.

<sup>xiii</sup> The ten different aspects of wellbeing were competence, emotional stability, engagement, meaning, optimism, positive emotion, positive relationships, resilience, self-esteem, and vitality.

<sup>xiv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xv</sup> Jo Marchant *Cure* (Edinburgh, UK: Canongate Books, 2016), 201.

<sup>xvi</sup> Marchant, *Cure*, 299.

<sup>xvii</sup> Ibid.