

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Wallpaper
Assemble designs new Wellcome Collection gallery in London
Clare Dowdy
3 September 2019



The Wellcome Collection open new gallery with architecture by Assemble. For the opening exhibition 'Being Human' graphic design has been done by Kellenberger-White with lighting design by DHA Design, and build by Realm Projects. Photography: Thomas Adank

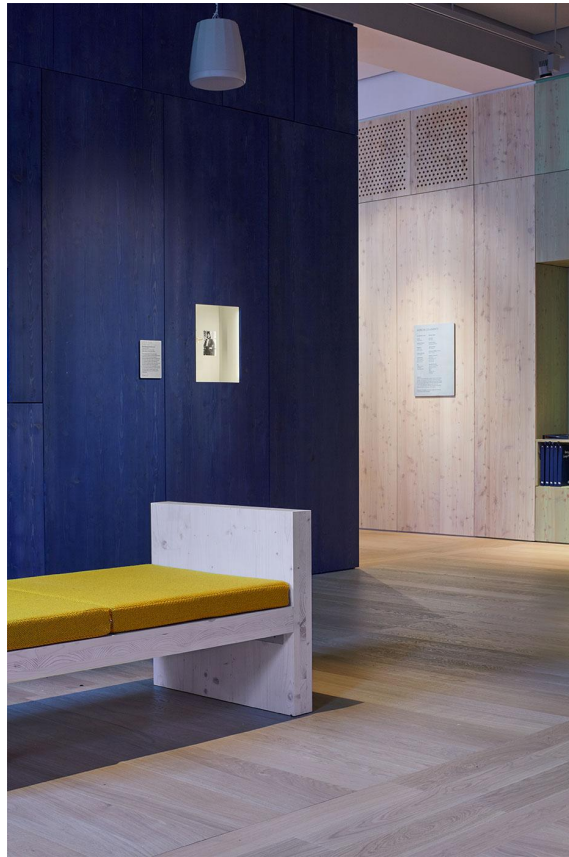
Turner Prize-winner Assemble has designed a new gallery at the Wellcome Collection, introducing natural materials and custom-built plinths. Standing on London's busy Euston Road, the free museum was inspired by the medical objects collected by pharmaceutical entrepreneur Henry Wellcome, and has a mission to challenge how people think about health.

The design, architecture and art collective Assemble has reimagined the first-floor gallery, which until recently was home to the 15-year-old Medicine Now exhibition. Medical science had moved on so much since 2007 that the gallery came to feel more 'Medicine Then', says the Wellcome Collection's head of public programmes, Rosie Stanbury.

'Before, the gallery felt like a laboratory or a hospital, with traditional vitrines and draws in Corian-faced MDF,' says Assemble's Joseph Halligan, 'our design is a response to that.' The collective recently completed a new public art gallery within a Grade II listed former Victorian bathhouse at Goldsmiths, University of London.

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Wallpaper
Assemble designs new Wellcome Collection gallery in London
Clare Dowdy
3 September 2019



Called 'Being Human', this new permanent gallery, which opens in September, will explore what it means to be human in the 21st century. The centrepiece will be a new commission titled Refugee Astronaut, by British-Nigerian artist, Yinka Shonibare. Halligan intends to 'open up the 300 sq m space. We've removed the big red display boxes, so that all the windows are visible and let in tempered natural light.' An oak floor has gone down, and the walls are lined with timber panelling stained by green and blue pigmented oils.

'We're seeing the gallery like a collection of objects, with free standing walls, and everything on a cross-laminated timber plinth,' says Halligan. The surface of the plinths will be white-washed, and the bases will be painted black. 'The room will almost feel ceremonial,' Halligan adds. 'It will feel like quite a bold space.'

Meanwhile glass-maker Jochen Holz is creating the gallery's main piece of signage, in thick, hand-bent glass. And Kellenberger-White is handling the two-dimensional graphics.

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Wallpaper
Assemble designs new Wellcome Collection gallery in London
Clare Dowdy
3 September 2019



The Being Human helium sign, made by Jochen Holz



Being Human painted sign, by Erin Bradley-Scott

25—28 Old Burlington Street London W1S 3AN
T +44 (0)20 7494 1434 stephenfriedman.com

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Wallpaper
Assemble designs new Wellcome Collection gallery in London
Clare Dowdy
3 September 2019



Stephen Friedman Gallery

Wallpaper

Assemble designs new Wellcome Collection gallery in London

Clare Dowdy

3 September 2019

