



The University of Edinburgh

News Release

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Art exhibition puts ageing in a positive light

The process of successful ageing is being highlighted in an art exhibition which opens at the University of Edinburgh tomorrow.

A series of images of some of the people who are taking part in a major scientific study into the mental and physical aspects of ageing will be held at the University's InSpace Gallery in Crichton Street.

Transformations – Life Portraits by artist Linda Kosciwicz-Fleming is based on the Lothian Birth Cohort 1936, a group of individuals who were born in 1936 and took part in the Scottish Mental Survey of 1947.

Psychologists at the University have spent 6 years studying the ageing of the 1091 people in the Lothian Birth Cohort 1936 – now in their early 70s. The researchers have looked at a number of physical and mental functions of the group as they grow older, including memory, speed of thinking, many aspects of fitness and health, eyesight and blood composition.

As the study progresses the researchers hope to form a clearer picture of why some people age better than others.

Professor Ian Deary, Director of the Centre for Cognitive Ageing and Cognitive Epidemiology, who leads the study said: "There is a lot of common wisdom but it's important to find scientifically validated factors that contribute to successful ageing. In our ageing society more people are living longer and more people want to live longer well – this exhibition reflects that."

The exhibition uses video and photography to demonstrate how movement and facial expressions reveal the process of ageing.

Artist Linda Kosciwicz-Fleming said: "*Transformations – Life Portraits* reflects the purpose of the scientific research by demonstrating that the pathway to old age is actually throughout a person's life, and that ageing can be seen as positive and beautiful."

The Centre for Cognitive Ageing and Cognitive Epidemiology's research into ageing is supported by funding from Age UK (the new force combining Age Concern and Help the Aged).

The exhibition is taking place on Thursday, 22 April only.

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