

## **Bio-Bling: A project to create the world's first jewellery made from human bone tissue launches at the Dana Centre**

A groundbreaking new project - using human bone tissue to create bespoke jewellery - will launch at the Dana Centre, the Science Museum's unique café and bar for adults to discuss contemporary science, on **18 January 2006**.

'*Bio-Bling*' will explore how lab-grown bone tissue cultured from human cells can be engineered as a material for design and future possibilities and uses for human bone tissue produced in a laboratory environment will also be explored before the jewellery is constructed and displayed at Guy's Hospital later in 2006.

At the Dana Centre event the public will have the unique opportunity to probe designers and scientists behind the project.

The event will be a 'melting pot' of ideas. Experts include Ian Thompson from Kings College London who will be quizzed about the clinical opportunities for bioactive materials and Nikki Stott and Tobie Kerridge, researchers from the Royal College of Art, who are investigating the relationship between design and new technologies as well as the social and cultural issues of tissue engineering. The couples who are donating their bone tissue will also be at the event.

In addition, visitors will have the chance to get involved in a hands-on demonstration of the technologies that allow human tissue and precious metals to be combined as biojewellery.

*Biojewellery* is a government-funded project to promote awareness of the issues surrounding tissue engineering.

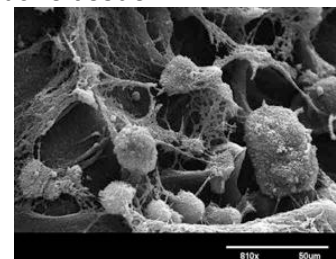
### **Bio Bling – Bone Jewellery**

- **Date:** Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2006
- **Time:** 19.00-20.30
- **Venue:** The Science Museum's Dana Centre, 165 Queens Gate, London, SW7 5HD
- **Tube:** Gloucester Road
- Our events are open to anyone over the age of 18. Tickets are FREE but must be pre-booked on 020 7942 4040 or [tickets@danacentre.org.uk](mailto:tickets@danacentre.org.uk)

The brainchild of Stott and Kerridge, *Biojewellery* aims to share the new advances in biotechnology with the public in an exciting and relevant way.

*Biojewellery* began with two inconspicuous adverts in New Scientist and Bizarre magazine inviting couples to take part in the process and design rings using precious metals and lab-grown bone-tissue cultured from their own cells.

Four couples have been selected and their cells - taken during the removal of wisdom teeth - will be prepared and seeded onto a bioactive scaffold (a structure made from living tissue). This pioneering material encourages the cells to divide and grow rapidly in a laboratory environment, so that the scaffold disappears and is replaced by living bone tissue.



Appearing at the Science Museum's Dana Centre on **Wednesday 18 January** are:

Dr Ian Thompson, Kings College London

- Dr Thompson is a materials engineer and is leading a group of researchers who are exploring clinical opportunities for bioactive materials.

Nikki Stott and Tobie Kerridge, Royal College of Art

- Stott and Kerridge will discuss how the new technology combines with design as well as the social and cultural issues of tissue engineering

Dr Iain Brassington, University of Keele

- Dr Brassington will discuss the ethics of enhancements and body modification in a medical and matrimonial context.

Dr Lucy Di Silvio, Kings College London

- Dr Di Silvio, a cell biologist, will be discussing the principles and procedures for Isolating, preparing and culturing human cells.

Couples involved with the project

- All the couples who have donated cells for tissue culturing will discuss their involvement. The couple's cells will be grown at Guy's Hospital and finished bone tissue will be taken to a studio at the Royal College of Art to be used in the design of a pair of rings.

The bone will be combined with traditional precious metals so that each has a ring made with the tissue of their partner. The rings will be displayed as part of an exhibition later in 2006 at Guy's Hospital.

"Medical research is often estranged from the social and cultural contexts in which it is destined to play a role," said Tobie Kerridge, RCA. "With *Biojewellery* we are keen to engage individuals in the hidden technologies of tissue engineering, and provide a context for the intimate and emotional qualities of peoples desires to influence the value of biomedical processes."

**Further information, interviews and images are available from Lauren Gildersleve:**  
Science Museum Press Office, 020 7942 4328; 07989 979864; [lauren.gildersleve@nmsi.ac.uk](mailto:lauren.gildersleve@nmsi.ac.uk)

#### **Notes to Editors:**

- 1 The Dana Centre is a collaboration between the Science Museum, the BA (British Association for the Advancement of Science) and The European Dana Alliance for the Brain (EDAB) making it unrivalled in its expertise and depth of knowledge of scientific and technological fields. The Centre is housed in the Wellcome Wolfson Building alongside the headquarters of the BA, EDAB and Science Museum offices.
- 2 The £9.8 million building has been provided by four major benefactors – the Wellcome Trust, the Wolfson Foundation, The Dana Foundation and the Garfield Weston Foundation.
- 3 The Science Museum exists to promote the public understanding of the history and contemporary practice of science, medicine, technology and industry. It aims to inspire, educate and involve visitors. It achieves this by building, researching and caring for the national collections; and by interpreting these collections and engaging the public in the contemporary issues they raise.
- 4 The BA is the UK's nationwide, open membership organisation dedicated to connecting science with people, so that science and its applications become accessible to all. The BA aims to promote openness about science in society and to engage and inspire people directly with science and technology and their implications.
- 5 The goal of EDAB is to inform the general public and decision makers about the importance of brain research. EDAB aims to advance knowledge about the personal and public benefits of

neuroscience and to disseminate information on the brain, in health and disease, in an accessible and relevant way.

- 6 Nearest tube: Gloucester Road. There is no parking at the Dana Centre (except for disabled drivers). Residents' parking restrictions apply until 10:00pm.