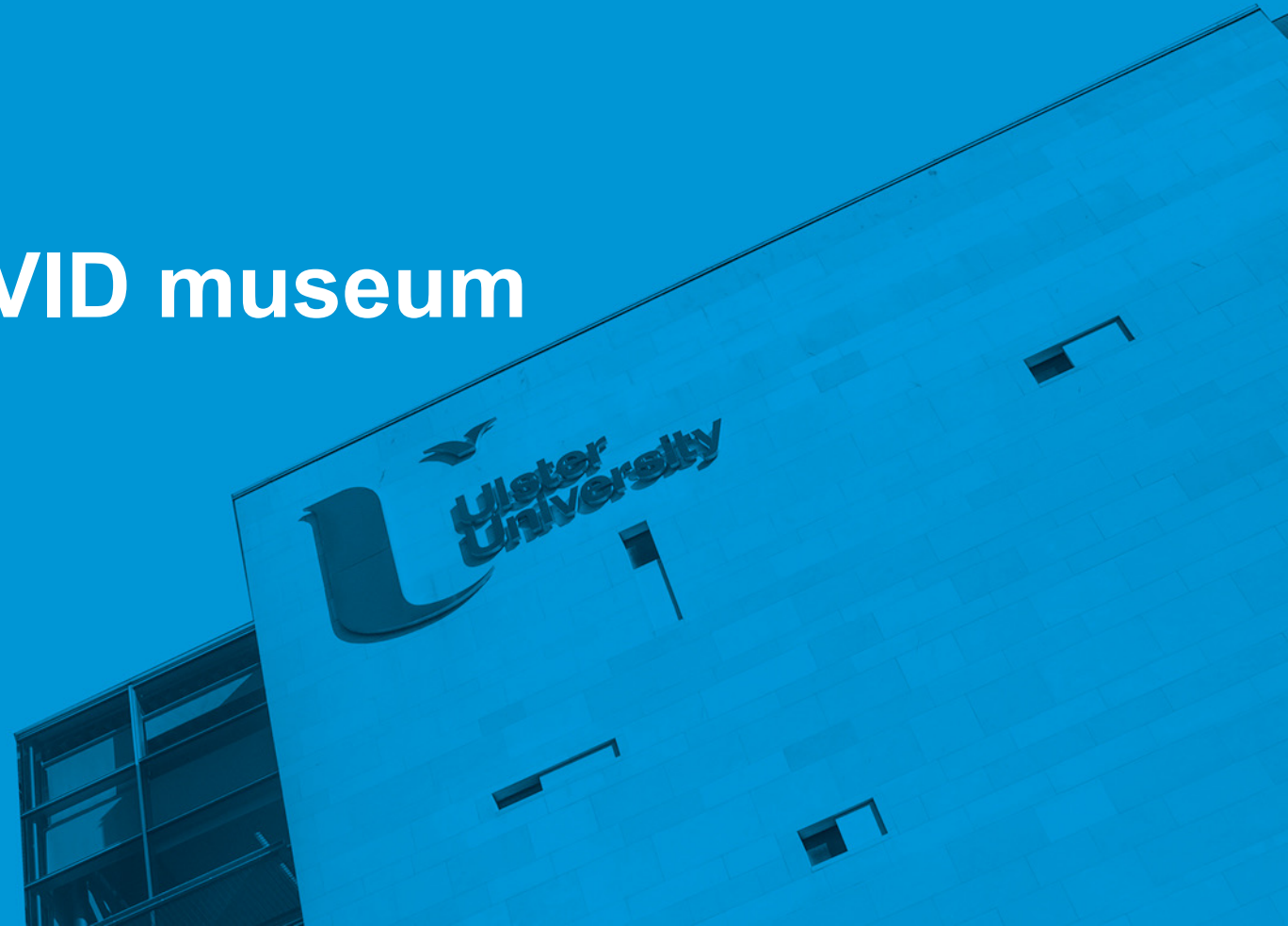




‘Caressez-moi!’ touch in the post-COVID museum

Dr Tom Maguire



Caressez-moi!
Touch me!



The shock of touch

Centre d'histoire de
Montréal



Public object palaces

**Kelvingrove Art Gallery
and Museum, Glasgow**

‘Museums consider real, authentic
objects to be a central distinctive
characteristic of their type of
learning experience’

(Schwan and Dutz 2020)



Don't touch

Gothenburg City Museum

The gradual proscription of multisensory forms of engagement was an artifact ... of new needs for security and the disciplining of the populace that emerged as these private collections were opened up to broad publics in the nineteenth century.

(Edwards et al 2006: 18-19)



**Come closer
but
keep back**

Stirling Castle



Peter and his twin sister Sarah, Cumbria, about 1930



TRANSFORMATION

One Man's Cross-Dressing Wardrobe

Peter Farrer was born in Surrey in 1926 and has lived in Liverpool for many years. His father was a schoolmaster and clergyman, and the family moved around a lot as Peter grew up. After school in Reading and the Isle of Man, Peter served in the Army for three years before going to Oxford University. He then entered the Civil Service and spent his whole working life as a tax inspector. He has been married twice and has a son.

Peter was interested in female clothes from a very early age and has been cross-dressing since he was 14. He has described the first time he put on a girl's full-length party dress, made from taffeta, a crisp rustling silk, and the effect it had upon him.

"The sheen of the fabric, its bright colour, the feel of the cool crisp taffeta... but above all the sound of the taffeta rustling as I moved about, all gave me intense pleasure."



This early experience developed into a life-long passion for taffeta dresses. As a member of an historic dress society, Peter has collected a huge number of garments, especially evening dresses made between the 1930s and the 1980s.

His motivation in collecting vintage garments was twofold. He admired the designs, fabrics and construction of all the dresses he collected. He also enjoyed the



Peter Farrer



Traditional Engagement

Walker Art Gallery,
Liverpool



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EPIC The Irish Em



epicmuseumch
celebrate #Tec

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computing equ
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#TechWeekIrel
#Computers #I
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Digital Engagement

EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum, Dublin

“It is no longer a question of imitation, nor duplication, nor even parody. It is a question of substituting the signs of the real for the real”

(Baudrillard 2009: 2)



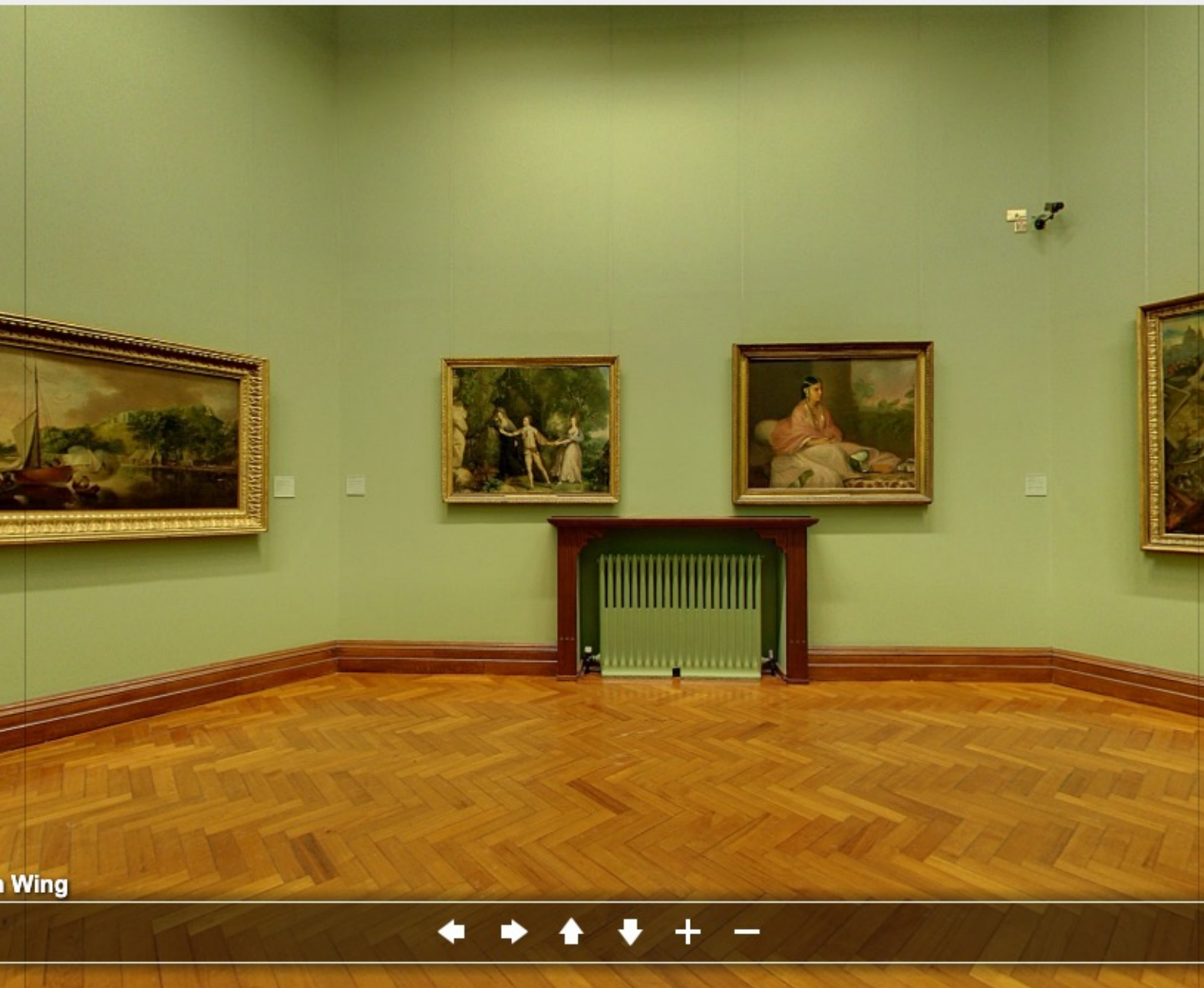
Van
Gogh
Museum
Amsterdam

Museum Temporarily Closed

Due to national policy
relating to the
coronavirus (covid-19)
the Van Gogh Museum
will remain closed to
the public until
and including
31 March 2020.

COVID & Museums

FILE PHOTO: A tourist looks at an announcement that the Van Gogh Museum is closed because of the coronavirus outbreak, in Amsterdam, Netherlands March 13, 2020. REUTERS/Piroschka van de Wouw/File Photo



Online engagement

Virtual Tour,
National Gallery of Ireland,
Milltown Wing, Dublin

A photograph of two young women in a museum. The woman on the left has long brown hair and is wearing a dark patterned shirt. The woman on the right has long red hair and is wearing a blue floral shirt and a black face mask with white polka dots. They are both looking at a bronze statue of a young boy, which is seated and leaning forward. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Build back better (but still no touching)

As part of this AHRC-funded project, Work Strand 1 examines how can we change our existing digital and other pedagogies to encourage the porous, polyvocal and collaborative out-ward facing museum.

Visitors wearing face masks look at “The Boy with Thorn,” a 1st-century B.C. bronze statue, in Rome's Capitoline Museums on Tuesday. Museums in Italy were allowed to open this week for the first time since March. ASSOCIATED PRESS

Losing touch with visitors

Without touch, we lose

- The materiality of things
- Haptic experience
- True Object knowledge

Digital haptic technology might,

- allow rare, fragile or dangerous objects to be handled
- Allow long distance visitors
- Improve access for visually disabled people
- Increase the number of artefacts on display

‘standard museum protocols are increasingly being challenged by members of the communities from which the objects originate. They argue that the Western museum’s ritual practices of **sensory isolation** and **enforced stasis** are **antithetical to indigenous forms** of ritual correctness that may require that objects be fed, held, worn, played, danced, or exposed to air, water, or incense’.

(Edwards *et al* 2006: 20).