

## The Beauty of Chemistry

A CHEMISTRY exhibition with a difference opens today at the Science Gallery at Trinity College.

Not only can you get the “ingredient list” of what constitutes your body, you can admire a beautiful diamond made entirely from the post-cremation ashes of a man from Florida.



These and 30 other exhibits have been assembled for the gallery’s summer exhibition, Elements: The Beauty of Chemistry. Some are beautiful, including a shimmering pool of mercury and a striking woven work of art made from copper wire. Others are just plain dangerous – including wallpaper laced with arsenic, and a glowing model of a nuclear power station cast in uranium glass.

This is a show designed for those of us who hated chemistry as a subject. The exhibition arose during conversations between Prof David Grayson, head of the school of chemistry at Trinity, and the director of the gallery, Michael John Gorman. “The purpose of an exhibition like this is to get young people engaged in the subject,” Prof Grayson said.

The challenge was to transform the dreaded chemistry into something vibrant and interesting. “We thought it would be wonderful to bring the periodic table to life,” said Dr Gorman.

The reality of our chemical lives is brought home when you stand on a display which delivers your personal ingredient list. The one for an adult male demonstrator included 53.6kg of oxygen, 14.8kg of carbon, 8.2kg of hydrogen and about 2.5kg of nitrogen. Then add trace amounts of dozens of other elements, details of which are also provided.

Marie Curie’s granddaughter, H el ene Langevin-Joliot, a French nuclear physicist, takes part today. More details on the exhibition, which runs from today until September 23rd, are available on the gallery’s website, [www.sciencegallery.ie](http://www.sciencegallery.ie)