

Equinox Healing: Pain, Sleep & Memory in Balance

*Renewal, balance, and the changing
seasons in medicine today*

Dilston Physic Garden, Friday 28 March 2025



BRITISH
PHARMACOLOGICAL
SOCIETY



Durham
University



DILSTON
PHYSIC GARDEN

BalbirSingh
dancecompany



Dilston Physic Garden is home to a number of art pieces, including Laura Johnston's Light Installation [Light]



Introduction

Exploring how plant medicine, light therapy and being in nature can complement pharmaceuticals, this tranquil event at Dilston Physic Garden was full to the brim with expert trails, talks, medicinal teas and interactive dance & music.

The day was co-led by Prof. Paul Chazot, Dr Nicolette Perry and Prof. Elaine Perry, with creative performances by Balbir Singh Dance Company (BSDC) that reinforced themes of renewal, rhythm, and equilibrium in both the natural world and human health.

The Team



Prof. Elaine Perry
Emeritus Professor of Neuroscience



Dr. Nicolette Perry
Director of Dilston Physic Garden and Doctor of Pharmacognosy



Prof. Paul Chazot
Dep. Of Pharmacology, Durham University



Balbir Singh
Artistic Director of BSDC



Kali Chandrasegaram
Dancer



Yuvel Soria
Dancer



Fresh perspectives

The day was host to a number of talks from speakers with differing expertise, all exploring various complementary approaches to health and wellbeing.



[Above]

An illustration, from *Köhler's Medizinal-Pflanzen*, depicting *Melissa Officinalis*

Professor Elaine Perry and Dr. Nicolette Perry spoke about the strengths of plant medicine and showcased some of what they grow at Dilston, including *Salvia Officinalis* (Sage) and *Melissa Officinalis* (Lemon Balm).



Professor Paul Chazot spoke about Durham University's research into red light therapy, for use with ageing minds.



Balbir Singh spoke about fresh and creative ways of experiencing the environment around us, finding language in the landscape and prompting participants to *take their finger on a walk*.





Herbs, teas and natural medicines

In an exploration of natural remedies vs synthetic, the group had numerous herbal tea breaks throughout the day; focusing on the use of plants and herbs as a form of medicine.



Conversations

"The Equinox at Dilston Physic Garden was a gentle, grounding day of learning, walking and connecting with the natural world. Surrounded by herbaceous plants and with unexpected art in the garden, we explored the healing wisdom of natural medicine and drank many cups of herbal tea. A powerful reminder of nature's quiet ability to restore and inspire. What a gem! I'm grateful to have experienced this seasonal turning point here."

— Susan Burns, participant



Labyrinth of the mind

In the afternoon, dancers Kali and Yuvel gave a performance in the garden, seamlessly weaving the environment through their art. Kali, who suffers from chronic pain, used the grassy labyrinth as a visual representation of his mind - full of hurdles and objects that he has had to overcome in his health journey.

With cameras brought by Gavin Joynt, the audience were invited to capture the artists amidst the landscape.



Winding down the day



Events of the Day

11.00am Refresh, Calm & Focus the mind with fresh Lemon Balm Tea
Location: *Tea Ceremony Station, Classroom Veranda*

11.10am Balance in Nature & Medicine Opening Talk and Tea (10 mins) with Professor of Pharmacology Paul Chazot
Location: *Light installation, Croquet Lawn*

11.30am Artistic Equinox Wellbeing – Creative pain memory sleep with Balbir Singh Dance Company
Location: *Labyrinth / Sitooterie / Trees / Sky*

11.45am Memory Plants & Awakening Garden Walk and Tea (20 mins) with Doctor of Pharmacognosy Nic Perry. Enhancing clarity as we step into longer daylight hours and life. Time-tested clinically-proven memory retaining and improving plant medicine and disease preventatives for our diet - Sage, Rosemary, Ginkgo, Daffodils, Nigella, Turmeric...
Location: *Memory Collection, far end Bamboo Avenue*

12.00pm Improve memory today with Memory Tea
Location: *Tea Ceremony Station, Classroom Veranda*

12.10pm Artistic Equinox Wellbeing – Creative pain/ memory/ sleep with Balbir Singh Dance Company
Location: *Labyrinth / Sitooterie / Trees / Sky*

12.30pm Pain Plants & Equinox Light Garden Walk and Tea (20 mins) with Prof. Paul Chazot. Symbolising the transition from winter's stiffness to spring's renewal - Infrared Light Therapy, Melissa, Roseroot, Turmeric....
Location: *100 Willow Coppice*

Lower pain and inflammation today with Pain Tea

12.45pm Location: *Tea Ceremony Station, Classroom Veranda*

Lunch Break 1.00pm 1 hour Break for BYO Lunch – Light refreshments available in the shop and Spring fresh disease-preventative herbs available to enhance your food, and your mind!

2.00pm Sunset Walk: Night-Day Balance - Sleep & Dream Plants Garden Walk & Tea (20 mins) with Emeritus Professor of Neuroscience Elaine Perry. Enhance sleep and pleasant dreaming with medicinal plants such as valerian, hops, catnip, vervain, hemp...
Location: *Dream Collection, next to Entrance Noticeboard*

2.20pm Relax and improve sleep onset & sleep quality today with Sleep Tea
Location: *Tea Ceremony Station, classroom veranda*

2.30pm Artistic Equinox Wellbeing – creative pain/ memory/ sleep with Balbir Singh Dance Company
Location: *Labyrinth/ Sitooterie/ Trees / Sky*

3.00pm Enlightening and Awakening to Medicine today (15 min) closing talk on changing seasons of medicine with Dr Nic Perry. Location Classroom Veranda. Comparing plant medicine with pharmaceutical drugs for balanced wellness in sleep, calm, mood, pain, memory

3.30pm Event ends

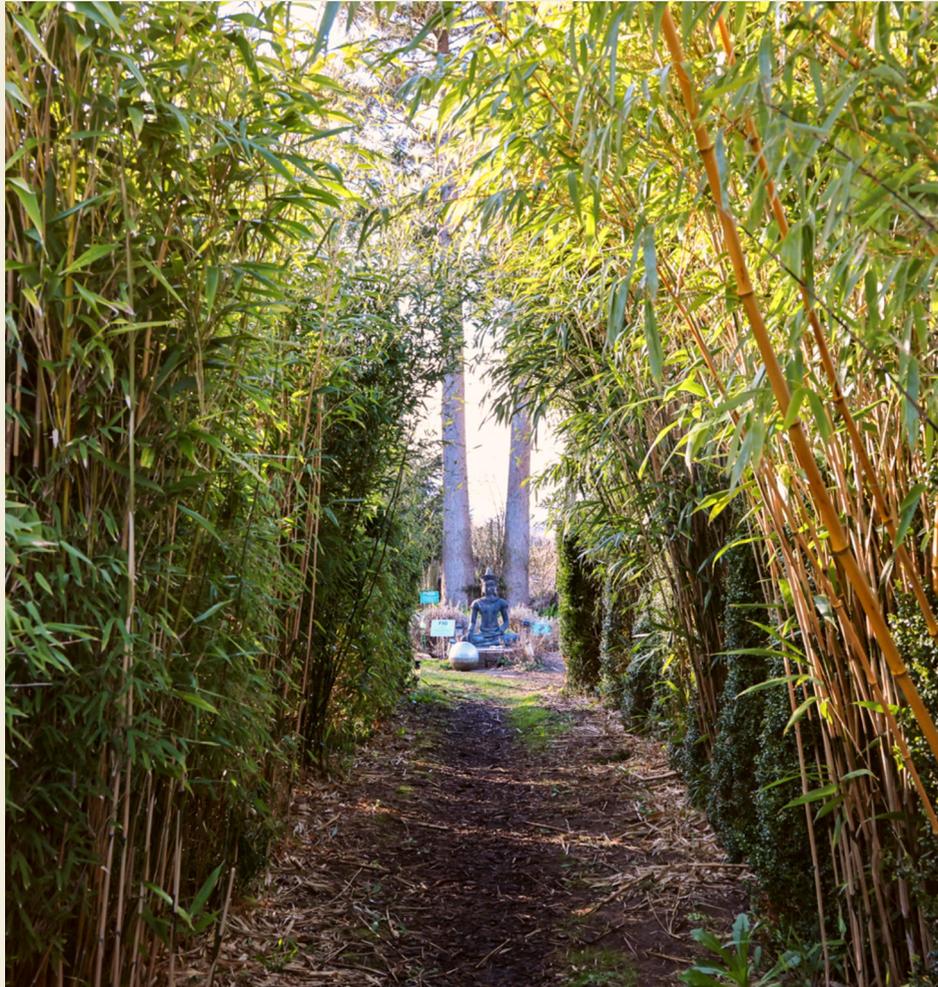
Equinox Healing: Pain, Sleep & Memory in Balance

Funded by:
The British Pharmacological Society

Time:
11.00am to 3.30pm

Date:
Friday 28 March 2025,
around the Spring Equinox!

Location:
Dilston Physic Garden
Corbridge, Northumberland
NE45 5QZ



DILSTON PHYSIC GARDEN CREATIVE TRAILS



*Light Sculpture by Laura Johnston
Photography by Tim Smith*

An immersive journey through nature, movement, and creativity: Experience three guided sensory trails, each designed to explore a unique state of being—Sleep, Memory, and Pain—through dance, music, and interactive elements.

Date: Friday 28 March, 2025

Time: 11:00 am – 3:30 pm / 4:00 pm

Location:
Dilston Physic Garden,
Corbridge Northumberland
NE45 5QZ

A 5 minute walk from our small visitor carpark – please note there's an incline at the end of this path.

A 10 minute flat walk along the lane from our Top-up and Event Carpark.

A 10 minute walk from the bus (Stagecoach 685, Go North East 10)

A 20 minute walk along the road from the train (Corbridge), or enjoy a scenic walk along the Tyne—find us on the Corbridge Heritage Trail.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT US [HERE](#)



The flyer for the event, designed by Balbir Singh Dance Company

Photography by
Balbir Singh Dance Company and Gavin Joynt

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Design by Balbir Singh Dance Company