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# SCIENCE OF GRIEF:

# A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL EXPLORATION OF GRIEF THROUGH SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, POETRY, ART AND PERFORMANCE

Science of Grief is a durational conversation and performance related to grief, developed by Science Gallery Detroit's Community Engagement Manager, Natasha Miller in 2018. After the resounding success of the event for two years, two additional members from the Network, Atlanta and Dublin, in conjunction with Science Gallery International, decided to collaborate on the event in the wake of the coronavirus crisis.



## WHO?

- ▶ Science Gallery Atlanta
- ▶ Science Gallery Detroit
- ▶ Science Gallery Dublin
- ▶ The Global Science Gallery Network

## WHAT?

Science of Grief, an exploration of multiple forms of grief through scientific research, poetry, art and performance, was born in 2018, when poet and Science Gallery Detroit Community Engagement Manager, Natasha T. Miller, had a powerful idea to open a space overnight where any person could come and speak of their grief onstage to a silent audience. The audience was both present in the room, and via a livestream.

The original live event format (of 14 hours duration) was designed both for those experiencing grief, and for those who wanted to stand witness to those grieving. Participants could choose to speak and share, or remain silent.

In April 2020, Science Gallery Dublin and Science Gallery Atlanta partnered with Science Gallery Detroit to connect these three cities online during a time of change and grief for many. Grief is a part of all our lives – but social distancing and the Covid-19 pandemic made it all the more challenging.

The three-hour virtual program featured a full lineup of academics, artists and scientists, exploring grief from various perspectives. Among the participants are Emory faculty, physician and researcher Aneesh Mehta, who is treating patients with COVID-19, Detroit poet and storyteller Omari Barksdale, who discussed loss associated with the virus and author and Irish Senator Lynn Ruane, who shared a moving excerpt from her book *People Like Me*. The event was streamed on [Science Gallery Dublin's YouTube page](#).

# WHAT THEY SAID?

*“Working together as a Network to produce a program has been one of my dreams since joining the Science Gallery Team. It was inspiring to see the impact we can make globally when we join forces and work towards one singular mission. Working with the broader team gave me ideas on how to better work with my team at home. I hope to see more of that teamwork.”*

- Natasha Miller, Community Engagement Manager (Detroit)

*“While our borders remain locked, we surmounted those barriers by collaborating across state and transatlantic lines for the Science of Grief program. What made this joint initiative particularly memorable was how seamlessly this virtual program came together with everyone doing their part. We each brought distinct dimensions of grief from art to science to inspiration for the future, which enriched the end product and created a truly shared experience for us as well as those watching it.”*

- Jenna Heaton, Senior Project Support Specialist (Atlanta)

*“It was great to gain the opportunity to work with our sister galleries in Atlanta and Detroit to programme an event with such breadth of diversity and variety. Science of Grief brought together a host of researchers, performers and artists all focusing on different areas of grief to highlight the importance of research and creativity during this time”.*

- Jane Gleeson, Events Manager (Dublin)

## LINKS

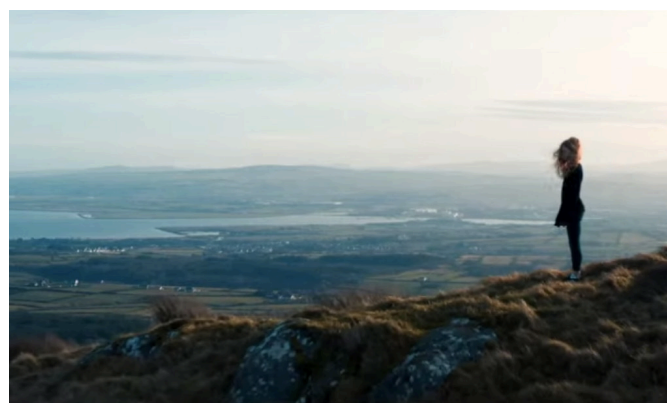
**Direct link to Science of Grief 2020 recording:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22006Huwuaw&feature=youtu.be>

**Science of Grief past events:**

**2018:** <https://detroit.sciencegallery.com/events/the-science-of-grief-1?rq=science%20of%20grief>

**2019:** <https://detroit.sciencegallery.com/events/the-science-of-grief?rq=science%20of%20grief>



*Track LOVE, part of project BORDERS by Ryan Vail and Elma Orkestra - Science of Grief 2020*



*Kevin Karnes interviews physician and researcher Aneesh Mehta - Science of Grief 2020*

## WHAT WERE THE BENEFITS AND IMPACTS?

- ▶ Providing supportive community spaces
- ▶ Social inclusion
- ▶ Cultivating creative outlets
- ▶ Network collaboration

**Sources:** Correspondence with Jenna Heaton, Senior Project Support Specialist (Atlanta), Jane Gleeson, Events Manager (Dublin) and Natasha T. Miller, Community Engagement Manager (Detroit)

**Compiled by:** Jahitza Balaniuk, Science Gallery International in 2020

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