

Edinburgh Printmakers opening this weekend with free tours

It's all happening in Fountainbridge where Theresa May, Donald Trump, Sean Connery and Nigel Farage are all hanging out together in a new artwork created by artist activist, Thomas Kilpper.

This artwork is called *The Politics of Heritage vs The Heritage of Politics* and is the opening exhibition. You can see it both on the floor and a print of it on the ceiling above on a repurposed sail. It is a fascinating piece of art and you will have to linger there a long time to see all the details. Sadly the artist himself could not be here in Scotland this week as he is lecturing in Bergen, his home town.

Rubber makes a return to Castle Mills as Kilpper has carved his new work into the main gallery floor. The series of overlapping prints presents a fictional narration, touching upon the site's heritage and many local stories and records.

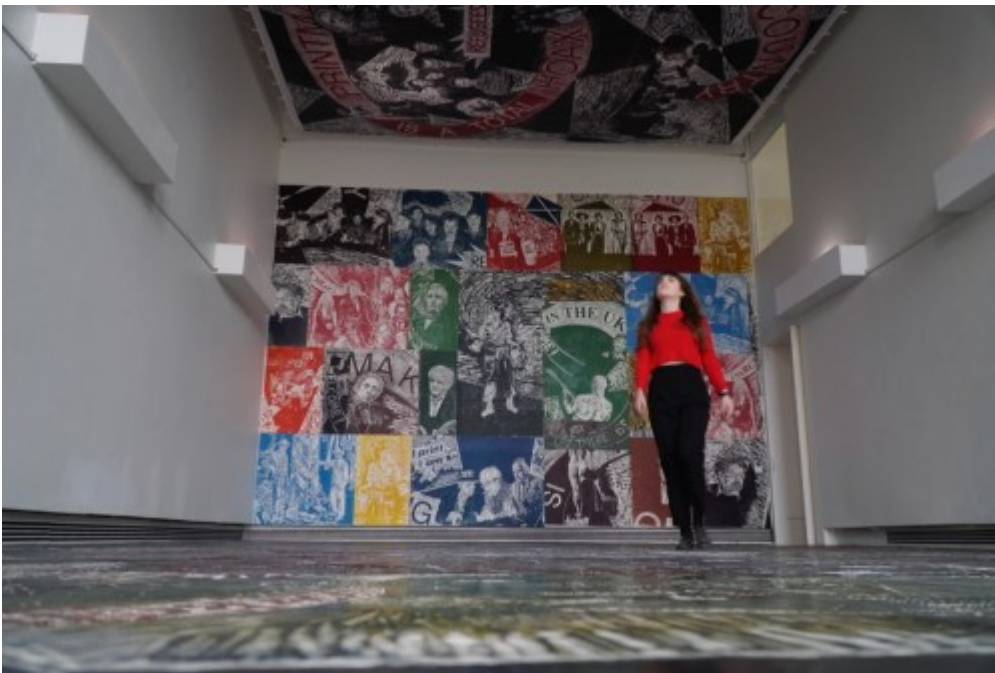
The artist's research interests form the narrative and they use the history and images of the past to spark public dialogue on the questions of significance today and pondering the prospects of tomorrow.

Covering the floor, back wall and ceiling of the gallery images of a dancing Theresa May referred to as LINO (Leader in Name Only) sit alongside images of factory workers, printmakers, Kate Moss in Hunter boots, Donald Trump, Nigel Farage, a group of former German politicians observing Brexit and many more. Kilpper's unique style brings together these

disparate images to create an overwhelming immersive experience.

Commissioned by Edinburgh Printmakers, The Politics of Heritage vs The Heritage of Politics receives support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, The Elephant Trust and Sylvia Waddilove Foundation.

This is the end of a long refurbishment and modernisation programme for Edinburgh Printmakers. It has cost £11 million funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund, The City of Edinburgh Council, Historic Environment Scotland and donations from various trusts.



Judith Liddle of Edinburgh Printmakers in the exhibition The Politics of Heritage vs The Heritage of Politics
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The North British Rubber Factory as it once was is the acknowledged 'home of the wellington boot' and has now been transformed into a creative industries hub, one of the largest printmaking facilities created for artists in Europe

In a major boost for the creative economy Edinburgh Printmakers will open their new £11million home at Castle Mills on Saturday 27th April at 10.00am.

Britain's oldest open access print studio is now double its original size following the rescue and transformation of the former North British Rubber Factory building in Fountainbridge.

To meet the growing demand for printmaking facilities and the growth of Edinburgh's creative industries, the new 2194 square metre space houses an enhanced open access print studio, traditional and digital processes, a dedicated learning space, artist accommodation, art galleries, a shop, café and print archive.

One of the hotspots in Edinburgh's industrial heritage, the North British Rubber Factory employed over 8000 people at its peak producing the first welly boot, tyres, golf balls, hot water bottles and a huge range of products. As an industrial space rubber production ceased in 1969 and following use by Scottish and Newcastle Brewery has lain empty and under threat since 2004. The transformation and restoration of the Grade C listed building by award-winning Scottish architects Page \ Park has been a painstaking, considered process enhancing the space for public use for the first time in its 160 year history while remaining faithful to its unique heritage. The result is a new kind of production hub as the city's arts community is set to benefit from not just from printmaking facilities but a range of other production resources and a concentration of creative talent.



Chief Executive of Edinburgh Printmakers, Shân Edwards

Chief Executive of Edinburgh Printmakers, Shân Edwards said: "We're delighted to welcome visitors to our new home at Castle Mills. As an arts organisation breathing new life into an industrial building and making it accessible and welcoming to the public is part of our vision for the future. This former hub of industry and innovation will maintain those roots now as a creative hotspot in Edinburgh. As one of the largest print studios in Europe, Edinburgh Printmakers will be an

international destination for artists and enthusiasts alike. Working closely with locals in Fountainbridge over the time of the development years has been a privilege and we're proud to be in a position to make Castle Mills a social hub at the heart of community once more.

"A focal point for the local community, the development of Castle Mill Works will allow Edinburgh Printmakers to extend its work as a leading arts charity, bringing together artists and visitors to offer everyone a direct experience of Printmaking. Where once Castle Mills was known for manufacturing innovation we hope our spaces will be creative communities that lead with our knowledge and heritage, innovate through our practice and ambitions and welcome the wider world to art.

"We're thankful for the support of our funders, donors and trusts, the local community and their role in our Heritage Activity programme and of course our members who have shared and supported the ambitious vision that has reinvigorated Castle Mills."

Riona McMorrow, Acting Head of the National Lottery Heritage Fund in Scotland, which invested £4.5million in the project, said : "The people of Fountainbridge are justifiably proud of their industrial heritage and thanks to players of the National Lottery, this important part of it has an exciting future back at the heart of the community. Castle Mills will be a contemporary hub of creative enterprise benefiting people living and working nearby, bringing a sense of pride to the people who call this area home, and offering an exciting addition to Scotland and Edinburgh's cultural scene."



Chief Executive of Edinburgh Printmakers, Shân Edwards
Speaking from his home in Bergen ahead of the opening Thomas said: "It was great working with the team at Edinburgh Printmakers for four weeks on this installation. I knew it would be extremely hard work again and in a relatively short time I would have a lot of decisions to make.

"So I went once more into the lowlands of the floor – on my knees! To depict and reflect from there the situation – not least the Scottish one. A concert, Scottish music with different players and numerous listeners was given, shrill tones, serious tones but above all dissonant, absurd and contradictory tones – as if by a miracle they were all looped into and out of the printing machines and the artistic workshops of Edinburgh Printmakers. The printing presses became a meaningful melting pot that holds everything together and connects it all.

"I hope visitors to the exhibition will have fun and good thoughts, enjoy the contradictions while visiting and contemplating our artwork, which is the result of my

collaboration with four wonderful young people and artists: My sincere thanks go first and foremost to you Caspar Pauli, Keziah Philipps, Yi-Chieh Chiu and Kim Vermeulen – but also to the whole team of Edinburgh Printmakers, James Boyer Smith, Judith Liddle, Hannah Rye, Sarah-Manning Shaw and all the others.

“I would love to spend this week here with you in Edinburgh to celebrate the opening of our exhibition but also the new printing centre Castle Mills as a whole. I very much regret that this is not possible for me due to my teaching activities in Bergen. However, I am with you in mind and wish you all a great opening and a productive artistic future at Fountainbridge.”



Judith Liddle of Edinburgh Printmakers walking across the linoleum floor where the print is shown above. ©2019TheEdinburghReporter

In Gallery 2 renowned artist and Edinburgh Printmakers Artist Patron Callum Innes will present a series of works from Edinburgh Printmakers print collection documenting his journey

in print. Callum's artistic journey through the medium of print and display artworks from Edinburgh Printmakers' print collection and will also present prints made in the studio by the organisations Master printers in collaboration with Callum for other galleries and projects. The interplay between the additive and subtractive process, making and unmaking, presence and absence, constitutes the essence of the oeuvre developed by Callum Innes and is again visible in these works.



To celebrate the opening of Edinburgh Printmakers, once the HQ of the world famous North British Rubber Company (NBRC), artists have used Castle Mills as a matrix for 3 public realm commissions exploring the rich heritage of the building, and the history of the surrounding area. These commissions are integral to the architectural design and redeveloped fabric of the building and include : [Entrance Gates in powder coated galvanised steel by Rachel Duckhouse](#), a kaleidoscopic intervention, the EPscope by Calum Colvin, Suzy O'Leary and Peter Smith and inspired by product catalogues from NBRC, the Catalogue Wall in glass fibre reinforced concrete by Mark

Doyle.

Amanda Catto, Head of Visual Arts, Creative Scotland, said: “We’re very much looking forward to the opening of Edinburgh Printmakers at Castle Mills – a world class centre for printmaking that will extend a warm welcome to all. Supported by the National Lottery through Creative Scotland the new, state of the art facility will deliver programmes, classes and courses to suit people of all experiences – from the absolute beginner through to the established artist / printmaker.

“The completion of the building development is a tremendous achievement and looks set to generate significant, artistic, social and economic benefits for Edinburgh Printmakers, its members and the communities it engages with locally, nationally and internationally. We are excited by the creative vision and ambition of this project and would like to congratulate all those involved. We encourage everybody to visit and explore this great new resource.”



A City of Edinburgh Council building, the conversion of Castle Mills began in 2012, it is part of the Council's redevelopment plans for the area of Fountainbridge and has been supported by the Fountainbridge Canalside Initiative (FCI) as well as the surrounding businesses.

Councillor Donald Wilson, Culture and Communities Convener, said: "An exciting future lies ahead for Edinburgh Printmakers. The new hub is transforming what was a derelict listed building into a brand new arts facility, in keeping with the character of the building and the area. I'm sure it will provide huge social and economic benefits for the local community and greatly enhance Fountainbridge's cultural offering.

"The project has long had great support from the Council, which has worked hard to help Edinburgh Printmakers take this building forward to regenerate the area. This has involved us providing the land and helping Printmakers secure necessary support from the Scottish Government. I'm delighted to see this partnership reach the next stage with news of the very first exhibition."

Thomas Knowles, Head of Grants at Historic Environment Scotland, said: "We are pleased to support Edinburgh Printmakers with the Castle Mills Regeneration Project through our Historic Environment Repair Grant funding programme. This provided £598,000 of investment to support the regeneration of this culturally important Edinburgh building into a multi-use state of the art print facilities and transforming the local area into a creative hub".

Suzy O'Leary from Page \ Park Architects commented: "It is critical we conserve, occupy and reimagine our built heritage to ensure it remains in use for many generations to come. Edinburgh Printmakers ambition for this project has been an inspiration from the start. It has been our privilege to work with them on such a fascinating, unique and important building

which will provide a key cultural anchor for Edinburgh and Scotland.”

The resurrection of Castle Mills was possible with kind thanks to National Lottery Heritage Fund, Creative Scotland, Scottish Government, City of Edinburgh Council, Historic Environment Scotland and all individuals who supported the fundraising campaign along with a significant number of trusts and foundations which are; Garfield Weston Foundation, The Robertson Trust, Dunard Fund, Binks Trust, Turtleton Charitable Trust, The Architectural Heritage Fund, Hope Scott Trust, Barrack Charitable Trust, Gannochy Trust, P F Charitable Trust, Wilmington Trust and The Incorporation of Bonnetmakers and Dyers of Edinburgh.

To mark the opening of Castle Mills a series of free tours will take place on the opening weekend between 10am and 5pm. Printmaking courses and artist residencies will start in April 2019, full details are on the website www.edinburghprintmakers.co.uk.

Castle Mills Launch Weekend

Edinburgh Printmakers

Castle Mills, 1 Dundee St Edinburgh, EH3 9FP

Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th April 10am to 5pm

#CastleMillsLaunch

www.edinburghprintmakers.co.uk

