

Plans for reopening of Fruitmarket Gallery to include major Karla Black exhibition

Edinburgh's Fruitmarket Gallery on Market Street, announced plans for 2021, when the gallery will reopen with its existing galleries refreshed and expanded into a large adjacent warehouse in a £3.75m capital development.

A major exhibition by one of Scotland's most renowned sculptors – Glasgow-based Karla Black – will inaugurate the newly expanded Fruitmarket, which also makes room for a new cross cultural programme.

The development brings the gallery's next door building – also a former fruit and vegetable warehouse – into active cultural use, as an expansive, inspirational space in and for which artists working across art forms can make and show new work. The new space will help the Fruitmarket realise its ambitions to deliver a year-round multi-art form programme.



Karla Black Installation View Palazzo Pisani 2011_Courtesy the artist and Galerie Gisela Capitan Cologne_Photograph Gautier Deblonde

Turner prize nominated artist Karla Black's work will span both the exhibition galleries and the new warehouse space. The Fruitmarket curated Black's solo presentation for Scotland in Venice at the 54th International Biennale in 2011 but has yet to work with her in Scotland. This exhibition is the result of an invitation to Black to play to her strengths and "force a raw creative moment" into the Fruitmarket's pristine new

gallery spaces.

The renovation and expansion offers Karla Black inspirational, materially resonant spaces in which to make and site her work. Inspired by the interplay of the new, double height warehouse with its raw brick and rough wood, and the refurbished conventionality of the exhibition galleries, she is working with the Fruitmarket to reimagine what a retrospective exhibition can be.

A selection of sculpture made since 2000 will fill the ground floor galleries with standing, hanging and low-lying volumes and planes. They are constructed from and worked on with Black's signature materials – cardboard, sugar paper, polystyrene, polythene, cellophane, sellotape, glass, mirror, net, vaseline, plaster powder, powder paint, medicines, cosmetics and thread.

These sculptures articulate and embody the freedom Black demands in and for her art. With their materials kept as near as possible in their raw state (plaster powder and powder paint rather than these same materials mixed, set and dried), even though they were made in some cases quite long ago now, they are not relics of past practice but objects making meaning here and now.



KB Venice 4 Karla Black Installation View Palazzo Pisani 2011
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Gisela Capitain
Cologne_Photograph Gautier Deblonde

These works will set the stage for two major new commissions, made by Karla Black in the upstairs gallery and the new warehouse space in the weeks before the exhibition opens. Creative freedom in action, these new works will embody the trust the Fruitmarket places in the artist and the artist places in her materials and her process.

The Fruitmarket's redevelopment has been designed by Edinburgh-based Reiach and Hall Architects to ensure that the

Fruitmarket can continue to operate at the forefront of contemporary culture for decades to come. Doubled in size, the new Fruitmarket will offer new opportunities for partnership working with other cultural organisations locally, nationally and internationally.

The new warehouse space will lend itself to theatrical and musical performances, spoken word and dance events as much as it will to the presentation of visual art.

Fiona Bradley, Fruitmarket Gallery Director, said, “We are pleased to be able to share our opening dates. It’s been a long year of uncertainty and I would like to thank our team, partners, funders, artists and audiences for their support as we realigned our plans for 2021. In these challenging times we need to continue to give artists opportunities to make and to show their work and audiences the chance to experience it – we look forward to welcoming everyone next year.”



On opening the programme with Karla Black, Fiona added, “There is a defiant force to her work – it is demanding and disruptive as well as beautiful and inspiring. It is because of this that we invited her to be the first artist to work in the newly reopened Fruitmarket: we value artistic experiment and we want her to really challenge the new space. We look forward to sharing her insights with our audience.”

On the new building, Neil Gillespie, Director, Reiach & Hall Architects, commented, “The original galleries are seen as a series of white spaces, abstract and precise. Surfaces are smooth and continuous while detail and material expression are suppressed. The palette in the warehouse, by contrast, is dark and sensual.

“It is a space that relishes the directness and crudeness of the existing steel frame, the strength and texture of the brick walls and the industrial timber floor. The mood is

intense, almost visceral. As an ensemble they offer the artist, curator and their audience remarkable contrasting and complementary spaces for art and performance.”

The Fruitmarket are currently asking the public to help play their part in building their new future, and have just launched a unique [GIFT REGISTRY](#) where anyone who has taken something away from their own experience of the Fruitmarket can select a virtual gift they'd like to give back in return. Visit the Gift Registry here: <https://fruitmarketgallery.myshopify.com>