

The Fruitmarket Gallery
Media Release

Martin Creed

Work No. 1059, 2011

Commissioned by **The Fruitmarket Gallery**

Supported by **Edinburgh Art Festival through the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund, Bloomberg, The Hope Scott Trust** and the following generous individuals, **Elizabeth Cowling, Sophie Crichton Stuart, Alistair and Susan Duff, Werner Keschner and Catherine Muirden, Jaap van Liere, George and Jacqui Morris, Barry Rosen in memory of Bruce Lentini and Dorothy Rosen, Robert and Nicky Wilson, Iwan and Manuela Wirth, The Zachs-Adam Family** and **The Fruitmarket Gallery Board of Directors**

The Fruitmarket Gallery is proud to have commissioned a new work of public sculpture by Turner-Prize winning Scottish artist Martin Creed for Edinburgh's historic Scotsman Steps. Work 1059 is a feast for the eyes – 104 steps leading from the Scotsman Hotel on North Bridge to Waverley Station and The Fruitmarket Gallery on Market Street, each step clad in a different colour of marble. The work has been supported through the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund for Edinburgh Art Festival, as well as several generous individual and corporate donations.

Martin Creed is an artist of international reputation, who makes work of the highest quality. His work is generous, direct and convincing, with an economy of means that belies the complexity of its affect. In 2001, he won the Turner Prize with *Work No. 227: The lights going on and off*. His recent exhibition *Down Over Up* at The Fruitmarket Gallery was one of the highlights of the 2010 Edinburgh Art Festival, with over 60,000 visitors and an extremely positive press and popular reaction.

The Scotsman Steps were built in 1899 as part of the 'Scotsman Building' for the Scotsman newspaper. The Steps are contained in an octagonal stone tower and form a pedestrian link between Edinburgh's old and new towns. The Steps were somewhat dilapidated, and have been refurbished by Edinburgh City Council and Edinburgh World Heritage. Creed's sculpture is a key addition to the refurbishment.

Martin Creed Work No. 1059, 2011, The Scotsman Steps, Market Street, Edinburgh. Courtesy the artist. Photography: Gautier Deblonde

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Work No. 1059 sees Creed re-surfacing the Scotsman Steps with different and contrasting types of marble from all over the world, creating a visually spectacular, beautiful and thoughtful response to this historic artery. Creed describes the project as a microcosm of the whole world – stepping on the different marble steps is like walking through the world, the new staircase dramatising Edinburgh’s internationalism and contemporary significance while recognising and respecting its historical importance. This is both a typical Creed idea, involving as it does the direct engagement of the public in a work whose simplicity belies its conceptual and architectural complexity, and an appropriate response to the particular situation of the Steps. Built into the fabric of Edinburgh, this new work will become a new and joyful part of the experience of the city for both inhabitants and visitors alike.

Quotes

Fiona Bradley, Director of The Fruitmarket Gallery said: *The Fruitmarket Gallery is proud to have commissioned this beautiful and thoughtful sculpture, making art of internationally-recognised quality part of the everyday lives of residents of and visitors to Edinburgh.*

Sorcha Carey, Director, Edinburgh Art Festival said: *Edinburgh Art Festival is delighted to have supported this permanent addition to the capital’s cultural landscape. Martin Creed is one of the world’s most respected artists and we are thrilled that Festival audiences will have the opportunity to view this stunning installation.*

Councillor Jenny Dawe, Leader of Edinburgh City Council said: *The Scotsman Steps are an important part of Edinburgh’s culture and heritage, linking the historic old and new towns. They can once again fulfil that role in magnificent style with the original structures restored and the added artwork. This has been an excellent partnership project with heritage, arts and government bodies working to make a special contribution to the city.*

Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs said: *The Scotsman Steps are simply stunning. This historic landmark has been transformed by one of our leading contemporary artists, showcasing Scotland’s culture at home and internationally and creating an exquisite lasting legacy for the city and country as a whole. Scotland is a creative nation with a rich heritage and this project reflects our significant cultural contributions to the world.*

Adam Wilkinson, Director of Edinburgh World Heritage said: *The City can now be truly proud of the Scotsman Steps, which are now worth seeing in their own right, as well as being a handy short-cut through the city. The project has brought together the flair of artist Martin Creed and the traditional skills of stonemasons, in the process transforming the steps and adding a bit of good old-fashioned delight and discovery. Steps such as these, and the narrow closes of the Old Town, need careful treatment to make them safe and attractive for residents and visitors.*

Andrew Dixon, Chief Executive, Creative Scotland: *Edinburgh Art Festival, with investment from Creative Scotland, continues to attract artists of the highest calibre, strengthening Scotland’s reputation as a centre of excellence for the visual arts and, with the support of Expo funds, is an ideal opportunity to showcase Scottish talent within the August festivals. This commission by the Fruitmarket Gallery, ensures Martin’s work will be a lasting legacy for the city.*



Notes to Editors:

Martin Creed was born in Wakefield and brought up in Glasgow. He studied art at the Slade School of Art at University College London (1986–1990).

Open daily from 6am–10pm.

Martin Creed’s *Work No 1059*, 2011 is supported through the Edinburgh Art Festival through the Scottish Government’s Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund with a grant of £85,000. Additional support for the project has come from Bloomberg, The Hope Scott Trust and a number of generous individuals, Elizabeth Cowling, Sophie Crichton Stuart, Alistair and Susan Duff, Werner Keschner and Catherine Muirden, Jaap van Liere, George and Jacqui Morris, Barry Rosen in memory of Bruce Lentini and Dorothy Rosen, Robert and Nicky Wilson, Iwan and Manuela Wirth, The Zachs-Adam Family and The Fruitmarket Gallery Board of Directors

This project is part of a wider renovation of the

steps which has been undertaken by the City of Edinburgh Council with funding from the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust. Since 2009, repairs have been carried out, retaining much of the original architecture. The work was carried out with around £250,000 funding from the Council and Edinburgh World Heritage.

The Fruitmarket Gallery presents world-class, thought-provoking and challenging art made by both Scottish and international artists in an environment that is welcoming, engaging, informative and always free. The Gallery aims to give audiences the confidence to enjoy contemporary art and to understand the importance of art, artists, culture and creativity and their impact on individual and collective lives.

Edinburgh World Heritage (EWH) is a charity funded by the City of Edinburgh Council and Historic Scotland, with the role of conserving, promoting and enhancing the city’s World Heritage Site.

The Scottish Government Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund recognises the exceptional creative talent that exists in Scotland and gives it an international platform on which to excel. It is available to all 12 festivals to support the development of Scottish-based work. The Scottish Government has awarded £2 million to the Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund in 2011/12. The fund started in 2008-09 (£6 million over 3 years) offering support to the 12 Edinburgh festivals under the umbrella of Festivals Edinburgh.

Founded in 2004, Edinburgh Art Festival is Scotland’s largest annual festival of visual art. An international showcase of visual art, the Festival takes over the city each August with a four-week programme of exhibitions, special events and tours, featuring internationally renowned artists alongside emerging talent and a special programme of new commissions. EAF sees national institutions join with artist studios and pop-up venues to share the best visual art has to offer.