

Scotland + Venice 2015

**Scotland + Venice 2015 at the 56th International Art Exhibition
of the Venice Biennale, 9 May to 22 November 2015**

Graham Fagen selected to represent Scotland

Presentation commissioned and curated by Hospitalfield Arts, Arbroath

The Scotland + Venice partnership is delighted to announce that **Graham Fagen** has been selected to represent Scotland at the **56th International Art Exhibition, the Venice Biennale**, running from 09 May to 22 November 2015, in a solo presentation commissioned and curated by **Hospitalfield Arts**, Arbroath.

Graham Fagen is one of the UK's foremost contemporary artists. His work mixes media and crosses continents; combining video, performance, photography, and sculpture with text, live music and even, plants. His recurring artistic themes, which include flowers, journeys and popular song, are used as attempts to understand and talk clear-sightedly about the powerful forces that shape our lives.

Hospitalfield Arts is based in the early arts and crafts house and grounds of the 19th century artist and collector, Patrick Allan-Fraser. Located just to the south of Arbroath, the house, collections and estate were left in trust on Allan-Fraser's death and in 1901 Hospitalfield was established as a place of work and learning for artists and students, making a significant contribution to 20th century Scottish art. Today a series of nationally and internationally significant residency programmes for artists, curators and writers, continue to be accommodated within the house and purpose built studios.

The selection Panel included: Amanda Catto, Portfolio Manager for Visual Arts at Creative Scotland and Chair of the Scotland + Venice partnership; Francis McKee, Director of the CCA and co-curator of Zenomap for Scotland + Venice in 2003; Richard Riley, Head of Exhibitions, Visual Arts Department, British Council; Dana MacLeod, Head of Arts, British



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Council Scotland; David Watt, Director of Arts and Business Scotland and Board member of SCAN – the Scottish Contemporary Art Network.

The Venice Biennale is the largest and most prestigious visual arts exhibition in the world. This will be the seventh presentation from Scotland + Venice, a partnership between Creative Scotland, National Galleries of Scotland and British Council Scotland. For the partners, Venice is an important project that helps to build Scotland's profile and reputation as an international centre for the visual arts.

Amanda Catto, Chair of the Scotland + Venice Partnership and Portfolio Manager for Visual Arts at Creative Scotland said:

'We are very excited to be working with the artist Graham Fagen and Hospitalfield Arts to stage a new commission for Scotland and Venice 2015. The project provides Graham with an unprecedented opportunity to develop new work in an exceptional context. We look forward to welcoming people to the exhibition when Biennale opens in May next year.'

Graham Fagen said:

'It is a fantastic honour to have been invited to represent Scotland at the Venice Biennale in 2015. The Biennale is one of the most important events in the international calendar for the visual arts and I hope that I can do justice to its history and Scotland's participation in it.'

Lucy Byatt, Director, Hospitalfield Arts said:

'We could not be more delighted to be offered this opportunity to commission Scotland's contribution to the Venice Biennale in 2015. It is an outstanding opportunity for Hospitalfield Arts to work closely with an artist such as Graham Fagen and to bring to Venice a project that emerges from our work in Arbroath in the



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beautiful region of Angus. We will enjoy too, the chance to work with Robin Klassnik and Matt's Gallery who have supported Graham's work for many years.'

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. **Scotland + Venice** is a partnership between Creative Scotland, British Council Scotland and the National Galleries of Scotland and representatives of these organisations sit on the Steering Group that oversees the successful delivery of the project. For information on past projects please visit www.scotlandandvenice.com

For the artist/s selected Venice provides a significant opportunity for the development and presentation of new work. For the partners Venice is an important project that helps to build Scotland's profile and reputation as an international centre for the visual arts

Previous Scotland + Venice presentations have included Duncan Campbell, Hayley Tompkins and Corin Sworn (curated by The Common Guild in 2013), Karla Black (curated by the Fruitmarket Gallery in 2011), and Martin Boyce (curated by Dundee Contemporary Arts in 2009).

2. **Graham Fagen** is one of the UK's foremost contemporary artists. In video, performance, photography, sculpture or text, he creates works, which explore how identity is both created by, and a response, to its cultural context. Fagen studied at the Glasgow School of Art (1984-1988, BA) and the Kent Institute of Art and Design (1989-1990, MA).

In 1999 Fagen was invited by the Imperial War Museum, London to work as the Official War Artist for Kosovo, and since then has exhibited widely both in the UK and abroad, and exhibitions include Golden Age, Institute of Contemporary Art, London (1999), The British Art Show (2000), part of



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Zenomap, Scotland and Venice at the 50th Venice Biennale (2003), Bloodshed at the Victoria & Albert Museum and Art of the Garden, Tate Britain (2004), Busan Biennale, South Korea, Still Life, Art and Industry Biennial, New Zealand (2004). In 2011 Fagen was the International Artist in Residence at Artpace, San Antonio, concluding with a solo exhibition, Under Heavy Manners, and created a special commission with the playwright Graham Eatough, which toured with the National Theatre of Scotland's production of Andrew O'Hagan's play, The Missing.

Forthcoming solo exhibitions include Cabbages in an Orchard at the Glasgow School of Art and Peek-A-Jobby at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art as part of GENERATION: 25 Years of Contemporary Art from Scotland; In Camera, with Graham Eatough at the Panorama, Le Friche, Marseille from September 2014. He is represented by Matts Gallery, London and Galerie Micky Schubert, Berlin. For further information please visit:

www.grahamfagen.com

3. **Hospitalfield House** first opened to the public in 1892; 2000 visitors came over a single weekend. Today it programmes major public events that take place four times each year. These events provide an opportunity to see the wonderful historic interiors of the house and to platform newly commissioned artist's projects, performances, screenings, summer schools and talks.

Hospitalfield is currently working on an £11.5m fundraising campaign with the aim of restoring the house and rejuvenating the facilities for audiences and for our arts programme. For further information please visit <http://hospitalfield.org.uk>

4. **British Council Scotland's** mission is to build long-term international relationships and trust between the people of Scotland and other countries through the exchange of ideas, knowledge and information in the arts and education. Our involvement in the arts arena stretches back to 1947 when we



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helped to found the Edinburgh International Festival and every year we continue to work on new and exciting cultural projects connecting Scotland and the world. For further information please visit:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/scotland.htm>

5. **Creative Scotland** is the national organisation that funds and supports the development of Scotland's arts, screen and creative industries. Creative Scotland has four objectives: to develop and sustain a thriving environment for the arts, screen and creative industries; to support excellence in artistic and creative practice; to improve access to and participation in, arts and creative activity; and to deliver our services efficiently and effectively. In 2013/14 we will distribute over £100m in funding provided by the Scottish Government and the National Lottery. For further information on Creative Scotland please visit www.creativescotland.com. Follow us @creativescots and www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland
6. **The National Galleries of Scotland** (NGS) looks after one of the world's finest collections of Western art ranging from the Middle Ages to the present day. These holdings include the National Collection of Scottish art which is displayed in an international context. Every year the NGS welcome over 1.5 million visitors from Scotland and the rest of the world to our three Galleries sited in Edinburgh. These include the Scottish National Gallery, the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. For further information please visit: www.nationalgalleries.org

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