



Press Release

Dalziel + Scullion exhibition *Tumadh: Immersion* at Dovecot explores relations between mankind and the natural world

Tumadh: Immersion is an exciting and extraordinary new commission from Dovecot which will transform the North and South Galleries at Infirmary Street into an immersive and experiential space with sound and tactile qualities, created by Dundee based artists Dalziel + Scullion.

The two parts of the exhibition, at Dovecot Studios in Edinburgh and at An Lanntair in Stornoway on Lewis, are a coherent and related whole which also work when viewed as separate exhibitions.

Tumadh: Immersion exhibition is open at Dovecot from 1 August to 13 September 2014 and entry is free. The An Lanntair show runs from 6 July to 31 August.

Dalziel + Scullion's practice explores the complex, and at times strained relationship, between mankind and the natural world. *Tumadh: Immersion* continues to investigate the artists' understanding of different responses and engagements with landscape. This ambitious, multi-part, and dual site work pays particular attention to the geographic locations of both exhibition spaces and their wider locality. The work encourages us to examine ideas of belief, pilgrimage, cleansing and transformation through immersion in the substance of the earth.

The themes and interests that underpin this exhibition stem from our bodily relationship with the natural environment and how the tactile and physical qualities of textile can mimic and enhance the feeling of immersion in the natural world. An on-going theme throughout Dalziel + Scullion's practice relates to our increasing dislocation from the natural world and that real immersion in nature requires active concentration and involvement. This is something that the artists' practice aims to guide us towards, with this show in particular concentrating on how textile and clothing can both reflect natural spaces and dictate our experience of it. They explore the relationship Tweed has to the landscape of Lewis and Harris as part of this overarching study.

To this end a further element of the exhibition is the creation and design of four garments. These garments are made from Harris Tweed and are a gently subversive take on the outdoor clothing normally worn when preparing to go out into wild landscapes - such as weather resistant Gore-Tex, technical hiking gear and similar clothing designs. These garments instead encourage immersive natural experiences, for example a rain jacket that has a rubber collar which is open to the elements and only allows you to look up so that you can focus on the rain falling on your face, and another

with a padded back that allows you to lie down in rocky landscapes. Films of one of the garments, titled *Gatherer* being worn on location outdoors in Scotland are shown in the gallery spaces as well as the garments themselves.

The show also features a large Victorian sculptural 'walking dress', the pockets of which are filled with boulders. Other elements of the show include photographs of the Hebridean skies and sculptural pieces made from rock and hair. Each of these being a manifestation of the artists' reflections on landscapes which have driven the whole *Immersion* project. These elements, and the soundtrack to the films by composer and member of folk trio *Lau* (winner of BBC Radio 2 Folk Award) **Aidan O'Rourke**, will be reflected in the simultaneous second half of the show at An Lanntair in Stornoway.

The exhibitions in both sites share a work in which a steel drawing of a fractal, cliff-like form displays a series of 'adapted' boulders: in Edinburgh, examples of three billion year old 'Lewisian gneiss' are presented, where as in Stornoway, comparatively youthful examples of 345 million years old 'Old Red Sandstone' from the mainland have been relocated to the gallery space.

Dalziel + Scullion have said of the two shows: "These contrasting yet comparative spaces offer a unique opportunity for us to look at differing ideas of an immersive Scottish landscape and its influence and hold on us. In cities our relationship to nature is strained under the dominance of our constant human constructed surroundings - and can be all the poorer for it - seasons slip by unnoticed, rivers and geology are built over, it takes a keen eye and clear mind to keep the other-than-human world we live amongst still on our radar. Our interest in this is routed in the firm belief that we need an awareness and understanding of our place in the wider, non-human world to feed our soul, to keep us sane and to inspire us with new methods and scales of inventive ways of living."

This exhibition forms part of **GENERATION**, a national programme taking place in the summer of 2014 that will celebrate the wealth of contemporary art that has developed in Scotland over the last 25 years. Over 60 venues across the country are participating in this unique programme. The commission was supported by **Creative Scotland**, and the exhibition also forms part of the **Edinburgh Art Festival** programme.

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Notes to editors

1. **GENERATION** is produced through a core partnership between National Galleries of Scotland, Glasgow Life and Creative Scotland, with the assistance and expertise of partners including VisitScotland and EventScotland, British Council Scotland, Museums Galleries Scotland, Education Scotland, Young Scot, Children in Scotland and the BBC. **GENERATION** is part of the Glasgow 2014 Cultural Programme, which is a partnership between the Glasgow 2014 Organising Committee, Glasgow Life and Creative Scotland. Further details at www.generationartscotland.org
2. Founded in 2004, **Edinburgh Art Festival** is the UK's largest annual celebration of visual art. Uniquely, the festival offers the chance to experience the best contemporary Scottish artists in the context of exhibitions of the most important international artists and movements of the 20th Century and historical periods. Attracting over 250,000 visitors each year, Edinburgh Art Festival brings together the capital's leading galleries, museums and artist-run spaces, alongside new public art commissions by established and emerging artists and an innovative

programme of special events. The vast majority of the festival is free to attend. Further details at www.edinburghartfestival.com

Press release image:

Immersion garment, 2014

Photographed on location in Scotland

Image courtesy of Dalziel + Scullion for Dovecot Studios

About Dovecot

Dovecot is a specialist tapestry studios at the heart of a landmark centre for contemporary art, craft and design based in the centre of Edinburgh.

In August 2008 Dovecot moved to new workshops in a renovated Victorian Swimming Baths on Infirmary Street in Edinburgh's Old Town. As well as providing a permanent home for Dovecot's tapestry studio, the building also houses two stunning gallery spaces which deliver an international programme of exhibitions exploring contemporary art, craft and design. Events, gallery and meeting space rental, café and shop all contribute to making Dovecot a dynamic creative centre in the city.

Dovecot Studios was originally established in 1912 by the Marquess of Bute; the two founding weavers from William Morris' renowned tapestry workshops at Merton Abbey passing on their skills to successive generations of weavers through a formal apprenticeship scheme that continues today.

Dovecot's tapestry studios continue to work to commission, producing tapestries and tufted rugs for private and public collectors working in collaboration with leading international artists, designers, curators, architects and specialist interior designers. Recent commissions and projects include work with Peter Blake, Peter Saville, Victoria Crowe, Than Clarke, Nicholas Party and Alison Watt.

Although Dovecot has evolved through the decades, the studios remain true to William Morris' ethos of the artist craftsman and unique in its highly creative collaboration between artist, weaver and commissioner: a potent dialogue that is special to each project, where human interaction and the hand-made combine to create outstanding tapestry. The list of artists with whom and for whom the studios worked and continue to work is extraordinarily rich: the British Library, Scottish Opera, National Museums of Scotland, Kings College Cambridge, PepsiCo's HQ in New York, are amongst some of the many collections in which Dovecot tapestry now hangs. The Dovecot Foundation, a not for profit organisation, has been established to continue to support and develop the skills of the studios through apprenticeship and an evolving programme of collaborations with both established and emerging artists and designers.

About Dalziel + Scullion

Matthew Dalziel and Louise Scullion have collaborated together since 1993. Dalziel (born 1957 in Irvine) studied sculpture at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design, Dundee (1981–5), Documentary Photography at Newport College, Gwent (1985–7) and Sculpture and Fine Art Photography at The Glasgow School of Art (1987–8). Scullion (born 1966 in Helensburgh) studied Environmental Art at The Glasgow School of Art (1984–8). They have exhibited widely in the UK and internationally, including General Release: Young British Artists at the 46th Venice Biennale in 1995. Much of their work involves site-specific commissions. They live and work in Dundee.

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