

June 2014



Dovecot Studios

Press Release



Dovecot Studios and Magne Furuholmen collaborate to create *Glass Onion* tapestry

Following an introduction from Paul Stolper, Dovecot Studios are delighted to be working with Norwegian artist Magne Furuholmen on an exciting new collaboration in tapestry.

Dovecot invited Furuholmen to the Studios in early 2013 to consider a tapestry project and following a series of conversations with Dovecot's weaving team, he returned to the studios in late April 2014 with a selection of design ideas derived from a series of ten large format woodcut prints collectively known as *Norwegian Wood*. Furuholmen has created a new print titled *Glass Onion*, specifically as a design for the tapestry, using music as its main reference point. Dovecot are particularly thrilled by this project as Furuholmen's holistic approach to his practice as an artist - continually assessing his modus operandi and experimenting with various media - will ensure that his involvement in the creation of *Glass Onion* will be rewarding for all those who are involved in the process. The *Glass Onion* tapestry will be woven at Dovecot under the supervision of Master Weaver Naomi Robertson. This process will begin in June 2014 and continue throughout the Edinburgh Art Festival to be completed before embarking on a tour in late September. Three of Furuholmen's *Glass Onion* woodblock prints will be displayed as part of Dovecot's summer exhibition *Current Exchanges: Dovecot and the Australian Tapestry Workshop*, and viewers will be able to watch the weavers work on the tapestry from the Balcony. A major exhibition of Magne Furuholmen's work is scheduled at Dovecot for early 2015.

Furuholmen's design for *Glass Onion*, named after the 1968 Beatles song, marks an inspirational return for the artist to his first use of text and reference to musical terms featured in works he created for his first solo exhibition *KUTT* at the Henie Onstad Art Center in Oslo in 1995. The woodcut prints showcased in *KUTT* - Norwegian for 'cut/s' - related both to the motion of 'cutting' the wooden shapes to form the print impressions and the jazz improvisation terminology. Lyrical referencing and musical context underpin Furuholmen's desire to bring together word, image, sound and installation to form his own type of visual language. In his recent exhibition *Norwegian Wood* - after the Beatles song - Furuholmen illustrates the performative nature of printmaking through spontaneous and punctuated mark-making. In the same way Furuholmen juxtaposes his influences in this medium, John Lennon references other Beatles song titles in *Glass Onion* and draws upon the thoughts of the band members. The lyrics 'Fixing a hole in the ocean, Trying to make a dove-tail joint-yeah, Looking through a glass onion' suggests an impossible situation. In contrast a glass onion hand-blown bottle designed to hold liquid aboard a sailing ship in high seas, has increased stability due to its shape.

John Lennon had wanted to name a band signed to their record label Apple Records Glass Onion but instead they were called Badfinger. Glass Onion was also the original name of the Glasgow band, later known as Travis which included in its lineup, musician Andy Dunlop with whom Furuholmen collaborated in 2004 on the project *Past Perfect Future Tense* with appearances from Guy Berryman and Will Chapman from Coldplay. The links with British popular culture are also revealed in Magne's close relationship with

artist Peter Blake, whose portfolio of graphic works *Alpha Beta* was influenced by Peter Blake's own *An Alphabet A-Z* portfolio series.

Furuholmen says of the *Glass Onion* project:

"While working on a soundtrack for a Norwegian feature film titled *Yesterday* (to be released Autumn 2014) I came back to woodcuts as a medium for the first time in 10 years. My initial woodcuts in the 90s constituted a breakthrough of sorts as a visual artist, and they were closely linked to jazz and my father's musical history, whereas this time it was all about the Beatles, and my own musical upbringing.

The link between art and music has always been a natural one to me, but through the medium of woodcuts I found a method (incidentally favoured by Norwegian artist Edvard Munch) which made that point in a very visual way; the separately coloured forms pieced and printed together make up the formal 'composition' - seemed to me much like the way clearly defined musical instruments in jazz and pop/rock make up the structure of a particular sound - whereas the looser lines made through use of various tools can perhaps be seen as improvisational or energetic or rebellious elements.

In visual terms, jazz and pop/rock are more closely related than what perhaps meets the ear; a few clearly defined instruments make up a whole. Returning to music as a source of inspiration and to the music of the Beatles in particular, I was very honoured when Peter Blake offered to lend me his personal wood-carving tools for this series. Rife with historic art and music references it meant that for one, I was producing my visual interpretation of the song *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts' Club Band* with the tools of the artist who had originally created the cover for *Sgt Pepper* in my hands - perhaps one of the most significant pop-cultural images in history.

For the Dovecot project I decided to revisit the images that I had made for the *Norwegian Wood* series to create a unique work (monotype) and to try and imagine how the weavers would interpret my style. Together we chose a version of the work *Glass Onion*, as this one seemed to excite the weavers the most. I really like this kind of collaboration, exposing my work to the craft and perspective of others with a completely different angle of attack to my own."

Norwegian Wood Press Release:

<http://www.paulstolper.com/Exhibitions/PressRelease/54-magne-f>

David Weir Director of Dovecot Studios states:

"It is great to be working with someone of Magne's breadth of interest and creative energy who joins a long and talented list of artists with whom the studios have worked with over ten decades including Cecil Beaton, David Hockney, Alison Watt, Frank Stella and Claire Barclay. Magne has a particular sensibility toward colour and materials and his openness to collaborate makes this project feel full of possibility".

Paul Stolper comments:

"There is an aspect of transformation that occurs when a weaver (re)creates from an original. It requires trust between artist and craftsman, where the artist is able to relinquish a degree of ownership of their work to allow the weaver to respond in confidence. In the case of *Glass Onion*, 2014, a new monotype by Norwegian artist Magne Furuholmen, himself well versed in, and always open to a variety of media, two Dovecot weavers, Freya Sewell and Rudi Richardson, will co-opt and adapt the woodcut, introducing new materials, textures and shape. Dovecot Studios has worked successfully for over a century with artists, and this latest project with Furuholmen, will truly reflect the collaborative nature of weaving and highlight that to some degree all art is collaboration."

For sales enquiries please contact:

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Notes to Editors

1. The tapestry will take approximately 5 months to weave and will be woven by up to three weavers at any one time.
2. The tapestry dimensions are approximately 2 x 1.5 metres.
3. The process of creating the tapestry will be documented in time lapse film format from beginning to end.

Image credits

Press release image:

Magne visits Dovecot, April 2014

Link to Dropbox where you will find further images:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jf2wteytkw31wnt/AADX3Ht6qypqOqpnJ8aj4ypWa>

For images of the tapestry in progress please email:

lizziecowan@dovecotstudios.com

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 Magne Furuholmen

Magne Furuholmen's work has been exhibited both in the UK and abroad. Since 2008 his artistic activities have expanded to include exhibitions and performances with *Apparatjik*, a collective of collaborating artists. Performances include *Thinking Inside the Box* for the opening of the new The Astrup Fearnley Museum in Oslo in 2012, *The Apparatjik Light Space Modulator* at The Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin in 2011, *Globe Art Café*, at Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt 2011 and the *We Are Here* performance at The Serpentine Gallery, London 2010. From 10 November 2010 to 5 August 2011 he participated in *Under Pressure* in Sweden – all 80 print artists involved had collaborated with Atelje Larsen. Other collaborations have included works from Magne's 2004 series *Payne's Grey* featured in the concept store Dover Street

Mark New York (DSMNY) by designer Rei Kawakubo, founder of Comme des Garçons. His exhibition *Norwegian Wood* at the Paul Stolper Gallery ran from 3 May to 1 June 2013. Magne lives and works in Oslo, Norway.

About Paul Stolper Gallery

The Paul Stolper Gallery is situated in Bloomsbury, London and is a leading contemporary dealer of fine art prints by established artists including Damien Hirst, Gavin Turk, Peter Blake and Peter Saville. Paul Stolper works with these important creators to produce unique works including sculpture, photographs, installed art and limited edition prints. In 2012 Dovecot Studios and Paul Stolper collaborated to produce a series of tapestries with Peter Blake and Peter Saville.

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