

A fresh new Fruitmarket is ready to open its doors in July

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While everywhere has been closed, the Fruitmarket had planned a closure from September 2019 to allow for a complete £4.3 million renovation and extension project.

The gallery on Market Street has expanded into the building next door which was once home to Buster Brown's nightclub.

The transformed building will reopen on 7 July 2021 to the public with an exhibition by Scottish artist, Karla Black who was given free rein in the pristine new space.

Black's work will span all the galleries in an exhibition which combines a selection of work made over the last two decades with new large scale site-specific work made especially for Fruitmarket.



Karla Black Looking Glass number 7 (detail), 2021, mirror, glass paint Courtesy the artist and Galerie Capitain, Cologne Photo: Karla Black

Audiences will have the chance to enjoy the colours, forms and materials of Black's art. There are sculptures made from plaster powder, power paint, glass, cellophane, gold leaf and metallic thread with others made from earth, Vaseline, cosmetics, over the counter medicines and pastes and gels. Black was last involved with the gallery in 2011 for the Scotland+Venice when the artist was nominated for the Turner Prize.

Reiach and Hall Architects, based in Edinburgh, designed the new space prioritising reuse of the commercial space and sustainability. On the upper floor the natural light flooding the space has been retained, but Exhibition Galleries have been simplified and material finishes and facilities upgraded. With a new Learning Studio, a bigger Information Room, Café and Bookshop this is going to be a space for everyone. The new main staircase will offer one access with other means of accessibility built in.

The new space is a steel-framed and brick lined former fruit warehouse, retained as original as possible while opening it out by removing an upper floor and reusing joists and floorboards. The new Warehouse retains its historic link to the Fruitmarket and will be a juxtaposition to the revamped space next door.

Cllr Donald Wilson, Culture and Communities Convener, City of Edinburgh Council said: "It's fantastic news that the Fruitmarket will soon be reopening its doors and unveiling its expansion. It shows the ambition of our cultural institutions is undimmed by the last 18 months, and keeps Edinburgh at the forefront of the contemporary visual arts.

"Culture is at the heart of Edinburgh's ongoing success and I believe that investment in culture is investment in the future health and well-being of our citizens. We are very much looking forward to the opening next month."



Installation view: Karla Black: Sculptures (2001–2021) details for a retrospective (from left to right): Looking Glass number 7, 2021, Courtesy the artist and Galerie Capitain, Cologne. Photo: Tom Nolan

Fiona Bradley, Director of the Fruitmarket, said: “We’re proud to have turned the Fruitmarket’s well-loved but well-worn building into a bold, collaborative cultural space. Karla Black’s work looks incredible, and proves the building’s potential to inspire artists now and into the future. All that’s missing is the audience that will bring the building back to life. We can’t wait to welcome people back.”

Neil Gillespie, Director, Reiach & Hall Architects, said: “We were aware of the formidable cultural significance of the Fruitmarket both as an agency for excellence and as a piece of architecture. The organisation’s two contrasting but complementary ambitions – renovation and extension – are literally contained within their two contrasting and complementary archetypal spaces. We sought to combine the two very different worlds of the existing Fruitmarket building and the newly excavated warehouse next door to create an ensemble of spaces that is innovative and courageous, offering incredible opportunities for interpretation and use.”



Karla BlackLooking Glass number 7, 2021. Mirror, glass paint Courtesy the artist and Galerie Capitain, Cologne Photo: Tom Nolan

Karla Black

Sculptures (2001–2021)
details for a retrospective
7 July – 24 October 2021
Open 7 Days

Gallery spaces

11am–6pm

Bookshop and Café

10am–6pm

www.fruitmarket.co.uk