



EDINBURGH ART FESTIVAL

31 July – 31 August 2014

www.edinburghartfestival.com

Jacqueline Donachie
Mary and Elizabeth

Commissioned by Edinburgh Art Festival

East and West Princes Street Gardens

EH2 2HG

Mon–Sun, 7am–10pm

Biography

Jacqueline Donachie studied Fine Art at The Glasgow School of Art from 1987 to 1991. She was a committee member at Transmission Gallery, Glasgow, from 1993 to 1995, before undertaking an MFA at Hunter College, New York. Donachie has exhibited internationally, including the group show *Here and Now, Scottish Art 1990–2001* at Dundee Contemporary Arts (2001), her solo presentation *Tomorrow Belongs to Me* at The Hunterian, Glasgow (2006) and *Talking Loud and Sayin' Something* at Gothenburg Museum of Art, Gothenburg (2008). Her public, site-specific projects include *Slow Down* (2009–14) and *New Weather Coming* (2014). She lives and works in Glasgow.



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Cover and inside images:
Test for Mary and Elizabeth, 2014
Photographs by Holger Mohaupt
Map design by Stuart Cockburn

Jacqueline Donachie
Mary and Elizabeth



Jacqueline Donachie works largely outside formal gallery contexts, often making work in collaboration with specialist disciplines, or with the direct involvement of the general public. Her sculptures can sometimes incorporate a possibility for performance, or extend a direct invitation to be used. *South* (2000), a perfect sphere of polished concrete, was created following a residency in the cold unheated studios of Spike Island. Heated internally, it provided, quite literally, a warm focal point for gathering.

Fascinated with public space, Donachie has explored how we navigate towns and cities in her recent work. *Slow Down*, originally conceived for the small market town of Huntly in 2009, and subsequently realised in the profoundly different contexts of Melbourne (2013) and Glasgow (2014), invited cyclists to follow a route through a city, making a giant chalk drawing in the process.

Her new work *Mary and Elizabeth* unites and expands these interests. Consisting of two sculptures situated on either side of the railway line which cuts through Princes Street Gardens, it invites us to journey through the sites and their latent histories, in a summer of national debate about democracy, identity and governance.

Mary (West Princes Street Gardens) and *Elizabeth* (East Princes Street Gardens) mark the end points of a line drawn in red which starts at the sea adjacent to the Cockenzie Power Station and travels into the city, skirting the railway line along the way. Ephemeral and transient, the line drawing will be made by a specially adapted bicycle,



Glasgow *Slow Down*, 2014, photograph by Jacqueline Donachie

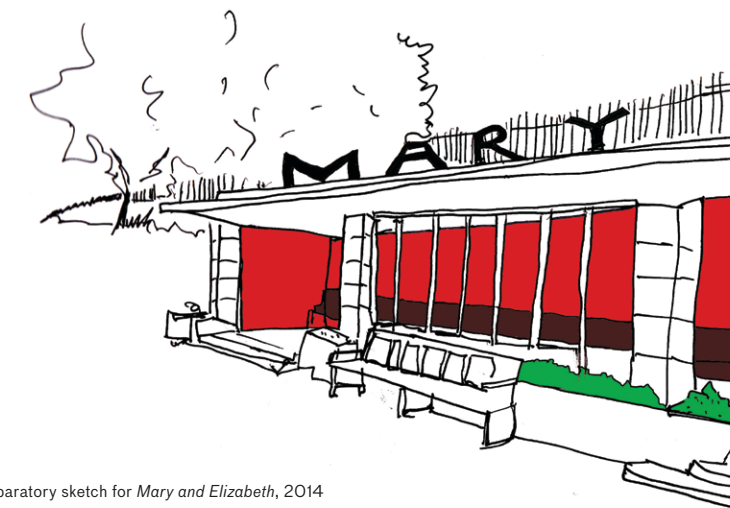


and will change and evolve as the city and the weather wear it away. At certain points the line co-opts architectural features to become a more permanent presence – the railings at the front of the Royal Scottish Academy, for example, will become a vibrant red for the duration of the festival.

The sculptures too annex their surroundings to become elements of the work. The shelters in West Princes Street Gardens have been painted black and red to form a dramatic backdrop to *Mary*. *Elizabeth* in East Princes Street Gardens is draped with handcrafted red silk netting – a visual reference to the web of associations which the work builds through the city.

Donachie is fascinated by the complex co-existence of romantic history and rational present in the fabric of Edinburgh as a city, as well as by Scotland's identity as a nation. At the heart of *Mary and Elizabeth* is the railway line and Waverley Station, named after Walter Scott's fictional Jacobite hero, and the main point of departure to London. Cockenzie, Prestonpans and Port Seton all have important historic associations with Mary Queen of Scots, as well as the later Jacobite rebellions; but they are probably best known for the striking and supremely modernist vision of Cockenzie power station rising out of the flat landscape. As Donachie's line reaches the city centre, it passes another of Edinburgh's rare modernist monuments: the St. James Centre, an important (if divisive) example of brutalist architecture at the heart of the city centre, formerly home to the Scottish Office, and still hosting the 'King James' hotel.

Donachie's red line is at once a physical record of a journey undertaken, and an invitation to the audience to make their own journey through the city and the rich web of associations and reflections which the line evokes.



Preparatory sketch for *Mary and Elizabeth*, 2014