

Edinburgh Art Festival Commissions Programme 2022
The Wave of Translation

Our 2022 commissions programme invites artists and audiences to explore and respond to sites and situations beyond the city centre, unfolding westward along the Union Canal, which this year celebrates its 200th anniversary.

Originally built to transport coal into the city, the canal today serves as an important 'green lung'. As a focal point for leisure activities and new housing developments, the canal connects communities, and embodies the many transformations and translations that have shaped urban life in Scotland and further afield over the past two centuries.

The participating artists who work across performance, installation, sound, graphic-design, writing, print and choreography question the complexity of our histories and how we live today. Through ways of working which place value on community centred practice, on collaboration and collective learning, this year's programme invites us to think about change across time, technologies, political and social structures, and our desires for the future of our city.

The 2022 Commissions Programme also includes:

Community Wellbeing Collective: *Watch this Space*

30 July to 28 August: Westside Plaza Shopping Centre, Wester Hailes Road, EH14 2SW

Pester and Rossi: *Finding Buoyancy*

28 July to 28 August: Bridge 8 Hub and Paddle Café, Calder Crescent, EH11 4NE

Emmie McLuskey: *Channels*

28 July to 28 August: A series of commissions for public sites and digital spaces produced in partnership with Associate Artist, Emmie McLuskey: with new works by **Hannan Jones, Janice Parker, Maeve Redmond, Amanda Thomson**, and *Background Noise Radio*. Various sites on the Union Canal.

For full details of sites, opening hours and booking information, visit www.edinburghartfestival.com

Edinburgh Art Festival Core Funders

Creative Scotland
The City of Edinburgh Council

Project Funders

Supported by the PLACE Programme,
a partnership between Edinburgh Festivals,
The Scottish Government, the City of Edinburgh
Council and Creative Scotland
Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec
Kinawind Lab at Concordia University, Québec
Canada House
Québec Government Office in London



• EDINBURGH •
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL



Nadia Myre: *Tell Me of Your Boats and Your Waters – Where Do They Come From, Where Do They Go?*
Edinburgh Printmakers, Gallery 2, Castle Mills, 1 Dundee Street,
Edinburgh EH3 9FP; and Union Canal at Fountainbridge
Edinburgh Printmakers open Tuesday–Sunday, 10am–6pm
28 July to 18 September

Front cover: Edinburgh, Union Canal. General view of Hopetoun warehouse,
c.1900 to 1930. Digital image of ED/7623. © Courtesy of HES (Francis M Chrystal Collection).
Back cover: Nadia Myre. Photo by Brian Gardiner.

Design: James Brook, www.jamesbrook.net

EP
Edinburgh
Art
Festival

Nadia Myre:

Tell Me of Your Boats and Your Waters – Where Do They Come From, Where Do They Go?

Edinburgh
Printmakers

EP

**A co-commission with Edinburgh Printmakers as part of
the Edinburgh Art Festival Commissions Programme 2022**



Acknowledgements

The artist would like to thank: Colin Courtney, Dayna Danger, and Mara Eagle for their invaluable enthusiasm; John Griffiths for his openness to an artist's request and generous loan of an original copy of 'The Tales of Nanabozho' LP; Tiffany Boyle and the production team at Edinburgh Printmakers; the kind support of the project funders, and to Brian Gardiner: thank you for being my rock and anchor in this world.

Edinburgh Printmakers would like to thank the artist and her assistants, Edinburgh Art Festival, the PLACE Programme, Scottish Canals and Historic Environment Scotland. This project has been kindly supported by Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, the Québec Government Office London, Canada House London and Kinawind Lab at Concordia University Montréal. Additionally, EP thanks its staff team, McAllister Litho Glasgow Limited and Vastint.

Curator: Tiffany Boyle, Curator & Exhibitions Manager, Edinburgh Printmakers

Artist Assistants: Colin Courtney, Dayna Danger, and Mara Eagle

Print Edition: Alastair Clark, supported by the EP Studio Team

Graphic Design: Sébastien Aubain & Benjamin Fallon / Romulus Studio

EP Gallery Technician: James Boyer Smith

Photographic documentation: Alan Dimmick

Limited Edition Print

In collaboration with Edinburgh Art Festival and Edinburgh Printmakers, artist Nadia Myre has produced a print edition with the EP studio, available in both the EP and Edinburgh Art Festival shops. Purchases made through the EP shop are available via the Own Art scheme with 0% finance.

Nadia Myre in Conversation

Tuesday 2 August, 6.30–7.30pm | FREE

Edinburgh Printmakers, Castle Mills, 1 Dundee Street, Edinburgh EH3 9FP

Montréal-based artist Nadia Myre discusses her commission work created in response to the Union Canal and its migratory connections.

Book online at: www.edinburghartfestival.com/event/nadia-myre-in-conversation

***Tell Me of Your Boats and Your Waters –
Where Do They Come From, Where Do They Go?***

Tell Me of Your Boats and Your Waters – Where Do They Come From, Where Do They Go? is a multi-sited commission from Montréal-based artist Nadia Myre, spanning print, installation, poetry and sound. The artist’s work weaves together reference points spanning Scotland and Canada, migratory routes started on the canal, indigenous storytelling, archival research, pattern, prose and song. Among these reference points is a preoccupation with what is missing from the stories and histories that we have, and the forging of a personal account from the artist in lieu of what is not there. Stargazing and the historic use of celestial navigation by sailors (and tricksters) purposefully merge as a means of orienting oneself.

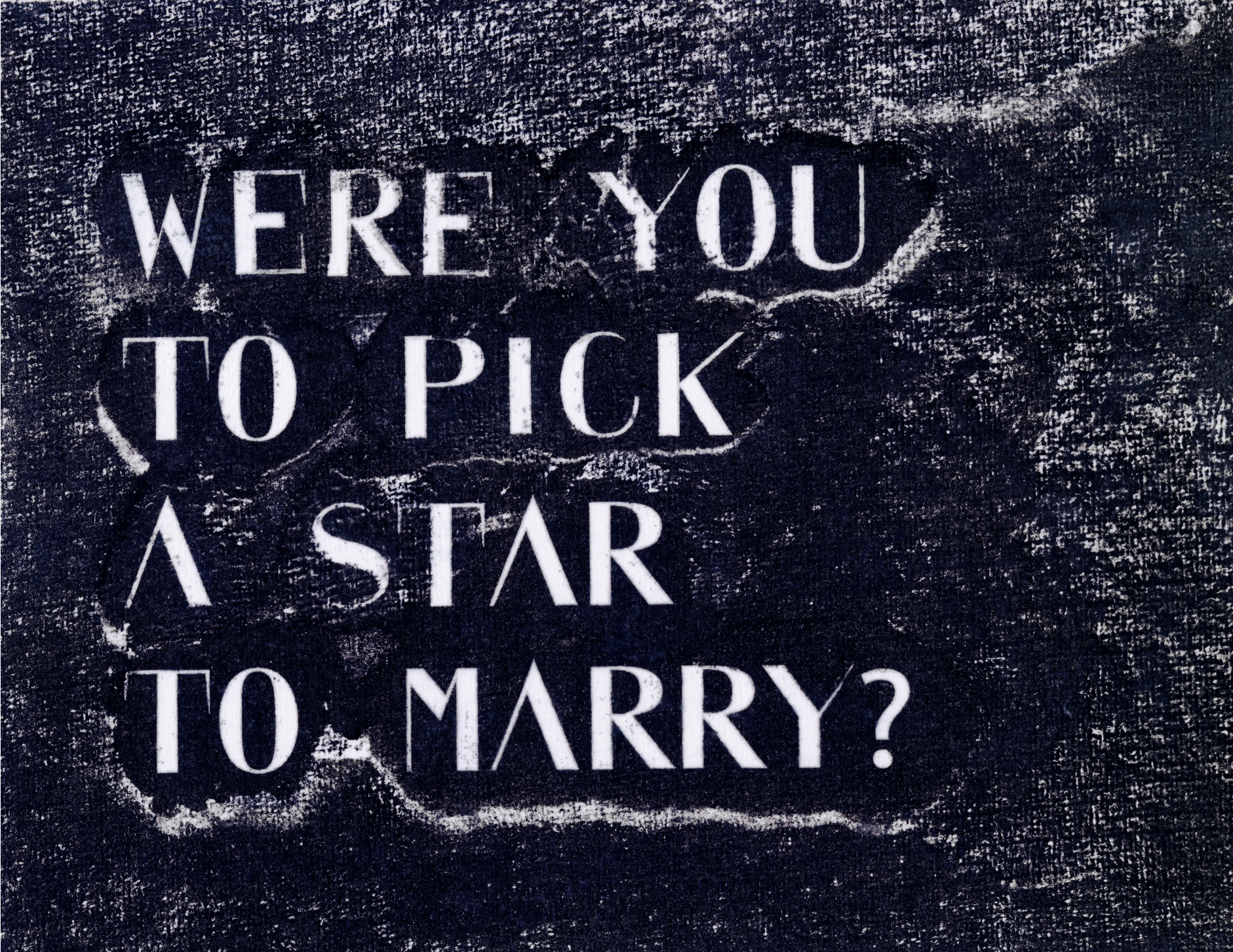
When the Union Canal opened in 1822, its primary purpose was to bring minerals (coal, lime, stone) into Edinburgh city centre. For speedy construction and to reduce the number of locks, the canal’s route followed the contours of the land, exiting the city through three counties. In the canal’s prime, small industries such as tanneries lined the waters’ edge, whilst it was also possible for passengers to begin their migration to the so-called New World on the ‘Swifts’: Glasgow-bound boats that linked up to their trans-Atlantic voyage. A hulking wooden luggage warehouse built in the middle of the canal – used to separate passenger’s personal belongings from the murky industrial materials – becomes a visual point of departure for the artist. In imagining oneself in another’s skin across time and place, Myre has created a series of sack-like bags made from animal hides, alluding to trade, migration and baggage carried from one place to the next.

While perusing a library in Montréal, Myre came across a book published in 1964 titled ‘Tales of Nanabozho.’ Authored by Scottish-born émigré Dorothy Marion Reid after moving to Canada and working as a librarian, it recounts short stories of the Anishinaabe shapeshifting trickster-character

Nanabozho. Following its publication, Reid won a quinquennial award, recorded an LP in which she narrates the stories, and broadcasted a weekly Children’s radio programme for nine years. Tales of Nanabozho came just four years after the Canadian government granted Indigenous people the (unconditional) right to vote. Around the same time, Canada shifted its assimilationist policies from mandatory residential schools to child welfare more broadly; developing a practice that would become known as the Sixties Scoop, where indigenous children and babies were systematically placed into the child welfare system. Myre considers the journey made by Dorothy Reid and the mixed legacy of her book. At once, an academic work of value for ensuring the preservation of indigenous stories, while at the same time, coloured by the worldview of a white woman. Ultimately, what is most important is Nanabozho: a fundamental non-binary character within Anishinaabe stories who often gets into trouble as a means to mirror how humans should be in the world. Bringing to the fore the decolonial impulse inherent in Myre’s practice, the artist – to a degree – assumes the trickster-Nanabozho spirit and explores what may be missing from Dorothy’s tales through poems visible across both exhibition sites.

Often pairing production methods usually understood as “craft” with contemporary art praxis, Myre’s practice incorporates the processes of moulding, imprinting, documenting, and weaving. The print methods underpinning the production of her new works feature substances which react, resist and bind to one another. In testing their material properties, she points to ongoing dialogues around agency, assimilation, and co-existence.

**Tiffany Boyle, Curator & Exhibitions
Manager, and Janet Archer, CEO,
Edinburgh Printmakers**



Nadia Myre

Nadia Myre (b.1974 Montréal) is a visual artist and member of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation. Her interdisciplinary practice takes on conversations about identity, resilience and the politics of belonging as exemplified by seminal works such as *The Indian Act*, (2002) and *The Scar Project* (2005-2013). Her work prioritises collaborative methods, community building, and skill-sharing as strategies for indigenous futurity and cross-cultural understanding. Myre is a recipient of numerous public art commissions and awards, notably the Louis Comtois Prize (2021), the Ordre des arts et des lettres du Québec (2019), the Banff Centre for the Arts Walter Phillips Gallery Indigenous Commission Award (2016), and the Sobey Art Award (2014). Recent solo exhibitions include *Eyes Watching and Other Work* (Art Mûr, Montréal, 2021); *Listen, Speak and Sing* (Prefix ICA, Toronto, 2019); *Balancing Acts* (Textile Museum, Toronto, 2019); and MAC Collection: Nadia Myre (Montréal Museum of Contemporary Art, Montréal, 2019). Myre holds a Canada Research Chair (CRC) in Indigenous Arts Practice Concordia University, where she is the founder and principal of Kinawind Lab, a creation space for Indigenous Arts.

About Edinburgh Printmakers

Edinburgh Printmakers (EP) was established in 1967 as the UK’s first open access printmaking studio, and continues today as a centre for printmaking and the visual arts based in Fountainbridge. Situated at Castle Mills – a former rubber factory and brewery complex – EP has a large light-filled printmaking studio, digital studio, darkroom, classes, two galleries, a shop selling original prints, meeting and event spaces, a café, a courtyard and community garden. EP has played a key role in the careers of some of Scotland’s most acclaimed artists: and provides space, expertise and support for artists to develop their practice, networks and professional experience, at different stages of their careers.

EP has a distinctive offer for printmakers which embraces developmental opportunities for both artists and the creative industries, supporting learning, production, presentation and exchange that will have a significant impact on their practice and profile. The exhibitions programme features collaborations with artist of all career stages, based locally and internationally, working in print within contemporary art praxis. Alongside our co-commission of Nadia Myre with Edinburgh Art Festival marking the 200th anniversary of the Union Canal, EP will present a solo exhibition *Houses Fit for People* from Glasgow-based artist Tessa Lynch developed through the Edinburgh College of Art Florent Stone Partnership.

@EdinburghPrints | #edinburghprintmakers

Image credit: Nadia Myre, *Were You To Pick A Star*, Reverse Transfer Print and Poem, 2022.