

Commissioned by The Fruitmarket Gallery and supported through the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund for Edinburgh Art Festival 2010, *Work No. 1059* involves the resurfacing of Edinburgh's historic Scotsman Steps with different and contrasting marbles from all over the world. It is part of a larger renovation project supported by the City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh World Heritage. Check the website for updates [www.fruitmarket.co.uk](http://www.fruitmarket.co.uk)

#### Open late

To coincide with the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 6–30 August, the Gallery will operate extended opening hours of 10am–7pm.

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With support from  
The Fruitmarket Gallery  
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#### Scotsman Steps project

Supported through the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund for Edinburgh Art Festival 2010



#### Martin Creed at Edinburgh International Book Festival

Monday 16 August, 8.30pm, 8/10 (58)  
This year two new books celebrate Martin Creed's artistic practice over the past twenty years, which he will discuss in an appearance at the Edinburgh International Book Festival.  
For tickets contact [www.edbookfest.co.uk](http://www.edbookfest.co.uk)

#### Work No. 1020: Ballet, 8–15 August 2010 (Previews: 3 and 7 August 2010)

**Traverse Theatre** Cambridge Street, Edinburgh, EH1 2ED  
To coincide with the exhibition, Sadler's Wells and The Fruitmarket Gallery are presenting Martin Creed's *Work No. 1020: Ballet* at the Traverse Theatre as part of the 2010 Edinburgh Festival Fringe. A piece for dancers, live band, art and the artist, this funny and thoughtful work by Creed speaks eloquently to the incremental impulses at play in his work.  
**Book tickets on 0131 228 1404** or online at [www.traverse.co.uk](http://www.traverse.co.uk)



Sadler's Wells



#### This guide is available in large print, on tape and by email.

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**P** 0131 226 8181 **E** [bookshop@fruitmarket.co.uk](mailto:bookshop@fruitmarket.co.uk)

#### Find out more...

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# Martin Creed

## Down Over Up

Sponsored by **Bloomberg**

### Edinburgh Art Festival Exhibition

30 July – 31 October 2010

Mon–Sat 11am–6pm, Sun 12–5pm. Extended opening 6–30 August, 10am–7pm

Always free

The  
Fruitmarket  
**Gallery**

45 Market Street, Edinburgh  
[www.fruitmarket.co.uk](http://www.fruitmarket.co.uk)

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Martin Creed (b. 1968) uses ordinary and extraordinary materials to make deceptively simple, direct and compelling work. His paintings, drawings, sculptures, installations, films and music have been described as minimalist, conceptualist, and by the artist himself as 'decorative'. Germaine Greer praises his work for its resistance to 'being explained', or being confined to particular meanings: 'He strives for utterances that will not yield an ulterior meaning to even the most dogged (mis)interpreter.' When asked to define what he does, Creed simply states 'I make things'. His primary concern is for the work to be interesting to look at, rather than for it to have a predetermined or fixed meaning. Any verbal interpretation of the artist's work, including this Exhibition Guide, risks misinterpreting it.

*Down Over Up* presents recent and newly-commissioned works, many of which focus on the movement of going up and going down – through stacking and progression, ascent and descent – and the differences between them. Pivotal to the exhibition is a new work, *Work No. 1061*, 2010, specially commissioned for the Gallery's central staircase: the tread of each step sounds a single note on the chromatic musical scale, transforming the process of going up or down into a multi-sensory (physical, aural and visual) experience. Likewise, in *Work No. 409*, 2005/2010, the lift becomes a space in which to experience a four-part sung harmony going up and down the chromatic scale. Individually, each of the individual voices – bass, tenor, alto, soprano – join the others when the composition comes within their range, moving up the scale as a group. In both the musical staircase and singing lift, 'down' and 'up' are mutable ideas, places and experiences.

The idea of movement as growth resonates in the broccoli prints and cactus plants and in the form of stacks of incremental steps. Stacks of chairs, lego, tables, planks of wood and cardboard boxes present objects ranging in size and form, each one looking the way it does in relation to its larger family, slightly smaller or slightly larger depending on their positions in their stacks. When groups of stacks are seen in relation to each other, differences between both the size of the objects and the materials draw attention to each thing's formal qualities and essential characteristics, its colour or texture, its perceived weight, its brand, its spikiness or squatness.

Creed's interest in 'making things' draws attention to what the things are made of. Some materials that Creed chooses to work with are conventional art materials, some are easily available objects, and others, such as dogs, marble and dancers, are more unusual. Without placing limits on what he works with, he often devises systems for his working process, using a self-imposed framework or set of instructions within which to make a work. As he suggests, 'if it's a good rule or a good formula, it will work in any given situation. It'll help you see the mess better. And by keeping a strict boundary the differences between things can maybe become more clear.' The works on A4 paper were made with marker pen covering the whole side of the

paper, with no marks entirely overlapping. 'Everything is kind of a little experiment in trying to make enough decisions to be able to come up with something I am happy with.' Whether the works were made with all the marker pens in a purchased set, or, as in the paintings on canvas, with all the brushes in a set, the set defines the limit of what decisions have to be made, and what remains variable.

One thing that can result from these self-imposed frameworks is repetition, which Creed likes. 'It's a scary, crazy, ever-changing, unpredictable world, and you don't know what is going to happen. And so a rhythm, whether musical or visual, is a comfort. It's like putting up a ruler, or a grid, against the world, so that the changing world, as messy as it is, can be made into a pattern – like looking at a garden through a fence.' Products of repetitive handmade actions never look identical, but are equal in terms of the position they hold in a set.

Repetition is also important to Creed's music, as songs like *Work No. 296: What's the point of it?*, 2002–4 suggest, its lyrics repeat the subtitle 34 (or so) times. Creed has spoken about how he came to feel that music captured the excitement of the process of making something, which is why he has since tried to make his sculptures 'more like music'. Creed sees his music and live performances as absolutely part of the work he makes in an art gallery. It is fitting that Sadler's Wells and The Fruitmarket Gallery are presenting Creed's *Work No. 1020: Ballet*, at the Traverse Theatre as part of the 2010 Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Based around the five positions in ballet and the notes of the musical scale, the ballet also addresses notions of increment and scale, order and re-ordering.

The fluidity of Creed's work, its capacity for moving from gallery to performance and back again – while retaining its precision and clarity – is one of the things that makes it so magical. *Work No. 141: From none take one add one make none*, 1996–2004 features the lyrics of one of the songs performed in Creed's ballet, *Work No. 208: Nothing is something/blow and suck*, c. 1997–99. The artwork's words, or the song's lyrics, propose to make something out of what appears to be nothing. The same statement could be applied to all Creed's works. The result of carefully pared-down processes, uncomplicated actions, and unpretentious materials, Martin Creed makes work that sings for all who want to listen.

An extensively illustrated publication with essays by Fiona Bradley, Director of The Fruitmarket Gallery, and the art critic Alex Coles accompanies the exhibition and is available from the Gallery bookshop priced £12.

Martin Creed's film *Work No. 732*, 2007 will be screened daily throughout the exhibition on the BBC Big Screen Edinburgh, in Festival Square, off Lothian Road. Please note times will vary.