

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **Dovecot Studios, Edinburgh, bring Grayson Perry's first solo exhibition to Scotland**

**25 July – 02 November 2019**

**£9 General Admission | Concessions available**

**Dovecot Studios, 10 Infirmity Street Edinburgh EH1 1LT**

**PRESS PREVIEWS: 22 – 25 July, 10-12pm**

- *Julie Cope's Grand Tour: The Story of a Life by Grayson Perry* will open on 25 July 2019 at Dovecot Studios in Edinburgh
- Expanded Crafts Council exhibition will include two additional large-scale tapestries from the Julie Cope series
- New research explores the process and art of machine-woven tapestry in the context of Dovecot Studios, the UK's oldest hand-woven tapestry studio
- Part of Edinburgh Art Festival and Edinburgh Festival Fringe

The groundbreaking work of popular artist Grayson Perry will be the focus of a solo exhibition at Dovecot Studios this summer. *Julie Cope's Grand Tour: The Story of a Life by Grayson Perry*, which will open on 25 July as part of Edinburgh Art Festival, will mark the first solo exhibition in Scotland of the celebrated Turner Prize winner and self-titled 'unapologetic fetishist'.

*Julie Cope's Grand Tour* comes to Edinburgh, bringing the complete set of tapestries designed by Grayson Perry (b. 1960) for A House for Essex, giving Scottish audiences a chance to discover this extraordinary body of work. The exhibition will explore the creation of the house, which was designed by Perry with FAT Architecture for Living Architecture as a secular chapel dedicated to Julie Cope, a fictional every-woman. An artwork in and of itself, this real-life house and architectural marvel evokes the tradition of wayside pilgrimage chapels, and is located on the Stour Estuary at Wrabness.

The story of Julie Cope is told through four large-scale tapestries and an audio ballad spoken by Perry, which narrate key events in the protagonist's journey from her birth during the Canvey Island floods of 1953, to her sudden death in a tragic accident. The exhibition will juxtapose large-scale tapestry and its associations of status, wealth and heritage with current concerns of class, taste, and social aspiration.

Perry is known for tackling subjects that are universally human, exploring identity, gender, social status, sexuality, and religion. By delving into the narrative of fictional Julie Cope, the artist explores in his own words, 'the trials, tribulations, celebrations and mistakes of an average life'.

Using innovative digital processes of craft making, the imposing Julie Cope tapestries were machine-woven in collaboration with two international production studios. Designed by Perry using an interactive pen display, the compositions were then translated into coded instructions for a digital loom by Factum Arte, Madrid, and threaded and woven by Flanders Tapestries, Belgium.

A keen collaborator and advocate for contemporary craft, Perry has said, 'What I stand up for is the relevance of craft in the information age. Some people think that craft is a nostalgic activity like knitting with grandma or throwing a medieval peasant pottery, I say craft is necessary and thriving more than ever.'

Set in the context of Dovecot Studios, one of the world's leading tapestry studios, *Julie Cope's Grand Tour: The Story of a Life by Grayson Perry* will offer the opportunity to explore both hand-woven and machine-woven tapestries as well as the different crafts, skills, and techniques used to produce these extraordinary works of art.

Kate Grenyer, Dovecot exhibitions curator, said: 'It is indisputable that Grayson Perry's popularity has opened up many museum and gallery visitors to the idea of tapestry; and our exhibition provides a context for this unique and beautiful medium to be examined and better understood.'

Celia Joicey, Director of Dovecot Studios, said: 'Dovecot Studios is delighted to be giving Edinburgh audiences a chance to discover Grayson Perry and his affectionate creation Julie Cope. As the UK's leading tapestry studio, we are privileged to be working with the Crafts Council and with the Art Fund to champion Dovecot and Scotland as the place to make, see, collect and learn about contemporary tapestry.'

*Julie Cope's Grand Tour: The Story of a Life by Grayson Perry* is a Crafts Council touring exhibition. Purchase of the *Essex House Tapestries: the Life of Julie Cope* (2015) was supported by Art Fund (with a contribution from The Wolfson Foundation), Maylis and James Grand, Victoria Miro and other private donors

Visit [www.dovecotstudios.com](http://www.dovecotstudios.com) for tickets and more information.

**ENDS**

Notes to editors:

**For more information contact Susan McAteer, Marketing and Sales Manager, Dovecot Studios [susanmcaateer@dovecotstudios.com](mailto:susanmcaateer@dovecotstudios.com) 0131 550 3660**

### **About Grayson Perry**

Born in Essex, Grayson Perry (1960) is a contemporary artist known for ceramic art, tapestries, and cross-dressing. In his work, Perry tackles subjects that are universally human, exploring identity, gender, social status, sexuality, and religion. A Turner Prize winner (2003), more recently the artist has reached a wider audience through a series of socio-cultural television programmes.

Perry has had solo exhibitions at Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, at the Barbican Centre, the British Museum and Serpentine Gallery in London, the Arnolfini in Bristol, The Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh, and at the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan. His work is held in the permanent collections of the British Council and Arts Council, Crafts Council, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Tate, and Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

### **About Dovecot Studios**

Dovecot is a world-renowned tapestry studio in the heart of Edinburgh and a landmark centre for contemporary art, craft, and design. Established in 1912, Dovecot continues a century-long heritage of collaboration with international artists to make exceptional and engaging works of art.

Dovecot Studios undertakes public and private textile commissions, with major tapestry projects including collaborations with Chris Ofili, Alison Watt, and Gary Fabian Miller. Also specialising in handcrafted rugs, Dovecot have worked with various artists such as Linder, Jim Lambie, and Nicholas Party.

Occupying an extraordinary building, formerly Victorian baths, Dovecot also has an engaging programme of exhibitions and events, which expand the conversation around art, craft, and design.

### **About Crafts Council**

Founded in 1971 and incorporated by Royal Charter, the Crafts Council is the national agency for contemporary craft. Through exhibitions, publications, education programmes, and presenting contemporary craft in new ways, Crafts Council challenges perceptions of what craft is and can be. The Crafts Council is a charity, and its work is made possible by the support of trusts and foundations, individual patrons, and corporate sponsors, and through public funding by Arts Council England.

### **About Art Fund**

Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art. In the past five years alone Art Fund has given £34 million to help museums and galleries acquire works of art for their collections. It also helps museums share their collections with wider audiences by supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, and makes additional grants to support the training and professional development of curators. Art Fund is independently funded, with the core of its income provided by 122,000 members who receive the National Art Pass and enjoy free entry to over 240 museums, galleries and historic places across the UK, as well as 50% off entry to major exhibitions and subscription to Art Quarterly magazine. In addition to grant-giving, Art Fund's support for museums includes Art Fund Museum of the Year (won by the Tate, St Ives in 2018) and a range of digital platforms. Find out more about Art Fund and the National Art Pass at [www.artfund.org](http://www.artfund.org).