



CRAVEN DUNNILL JACKFIELD

NEWS RELEASE

Frances Priest Ceramic Art Engages the Senses at New Hospital

Frances Priest's recently completed ceramic art installation at Edinburgh Hospital is engaging patients, residents, staff and visitors alike with its visual warmth and texture. Completed in December 2018, the work is locally referred to as *The Tiled Corridor*. Fusing studio ceramics with factory tile-making, Priest tapped into local, Victorian architecture for her inspiration and collaborated with specialist ceramic manufacturer Craven Dunnill Jackfield, an experience she refers to as "like gold dust".



At the hospital, the installation adorns both sides of a light-infused corridor, stretching 14m by 2.5m high. The glaze palette mutates from ochre-yellow to teal, providing a sense of movement,

whilst the relief tiles interlock to create vast patterns, but with no pattern repeats and few straight edges.

Whilst the original tender specification from Edinburgh Lothian Health Foundation focussed on signage artwork in vinyl for the new hospital, Priest's previous ceramic work entitled *Patterns of Flora* and her initial pitch featuring ceramic tiles proved convincing. She was ultimately given the go-ahead to work on a large-scale art installation, along one of the corridors. Specialising in mental health, the hospital has both long term residents and day patients and the project was identified by the health authority as a way to soften the clinical environment and provide some interior beauty.

Tim Montgomery, hospital director reports: "The tiles have been so well received by patients and staff alike, they have brought colour and interest to the entrance of the hospital, which is no longer a blank canvass."

And Susan Grant, Arts Manager at Edinburgh & Lothian Health Foundation: "It has been a real delight to engage Frances on this project, from engagement with staff and patients, through research and design, to the detailing of final install. We're delighted to have been able to commission this striking piece, which couples the rich tradition of decorative ceramics in hospital buildings of old with a stunning contemporary craft practice."

Echoes of Victorian architecture

The Tiled Corridor has echoes of local Victorian tenements and the glazed stairwells of Craig House, now privately owned but once part of the old hospital. Frances Priest's research also took her to the Jackfield Tile Museum, Shropshire, where she was given access to a wealth of archives, including relief and embossed tile designs from the 19th century.

A collaboration with artisan tile maker Craven Dunnill Jackfield

On her first visit to the Museum, she was introduced to Adrian Blundell, production director at the adjoining specialist tile-makers, Craven Dunnill Jackfield. The company is acclaimed for its original tile production and ceramic expertise. It proved to be a pivotal moment for Frances Priest, leading to her decision to collaborate with the company on the project. She explains: "To properly collaborate with a manufacturer like this – it's gold dust. Craven Dunnill Jackfield is a rare species and we need to safeguard it – there aren't any others like it!"

Whilst Adrian Blundell comments: "Frances's empathy with ceramics and her creativity meant she was able to push the normal boundaries of design, arriving at something new and contemporary."

A team of around 20 ceramists worked on the project, ensuring its smooth progress. Production started in August 2018 and the tiles were installed at the hospital in December 2018.

The completed piece features more than 2500 tiles, slip cast by hand at CD Jackfield. These are interspersed by some 300 of Frances Priest's studio-made tiles, featuring a flower style reminiscent of her *Pattern and Flora* work. A bespoke palette of coloured crackle glazes was

developed for the project, including ochre-yellows, teals and dramatic accents of deep blue and pink.

A lasting impression on the senses

During the two weeks it took to install her artwork, Frances received comments from those passing along the corridor, including how the tiles sparkle in the sunlight and how the colour-drenched space creates a sense of warmth and of somewhere hot, like Morocco or India. She was also surprised and touched by the members of staff who told her they love the sense of opulence in their working environment, created by the glazes and colours, and that this contributes to making them feel valued in their jobs.

Since completing the installation, Francis Priest has been approached by Design Exhibition Scotland to present a panel of tiles from *The Tiled Corridor* at its forthcoming Edinburgh exhibition, in June. Meanwhile, having now completed her first ceramic collaboration with CD Jackfield, Frances Priest is eager to do more public pieces and to further explore the extensive archives held at the Jackfield Museum.

Frances Priest: www.francespriest.co.uk T: +44(0)787 9636358

Craven Dunnill Jackfield: www.cdjackfield.com T: +44 (0)1952 884124

Peter Navratil at Recraft (installation): www.recrafts.co.uk

Becky Brazil (project manager)

Ref CDJ 164Te(i)



Notes for editors about Craven Dunnill Jackfield

Craven Dunnill & Co Ltd was founded in 1872 and is renowned for the production of wall and floor tiles and specialist ceramics. The company combines modern with traditional production techniques, to enable the manufacture of customised wall, floor, decorative art and faience ceramics in any style, volume or size.

Craven Dunnill Jackfield has been producing handcrafted ceramic wall and floor tiles for more than 145 years. Its factory at the Jackfield site is the oldest surviving purpose-built tile factory in the world. Located in what was once the world centre of tile production, the working factory is now part of the World Heritage Site at the heart of Britain's Industrial Revolution in the Ironbridge Gorge, UK.

Acclaimed projects completed by the company include, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park mural (Clare Wood), The Blues Kitchen (London), Comal Courthouse (Texas), Keble College (Oxford), Leeds Library (UK), London Underground, St. George's Hall (Liverpool), The Palace of Westminster (London), Williamsburg Savings Bank Brooklyn (NYC).

The End

For all press enquiries including requests for *high resolution images*, please contact:

Fay Handley at Dixon Handley Marketing

T: 01295 724177 M: 07790 659983 E: fay@dixonhandleymarketing.co.uk



Frances Priest