

album artwork was designed by artist Enrico David. **NOVA POPULARNA** is a compilation of bands who contributed to the bar McKenzie ran in 2003 in Poland with artist Paulina Olowska. The gatefold format of the album reveals a pop up version of the bar. Like the walk-in room in Gallery 2, this also plays with ideas of scale - in this case, reducing the size of a real space. There is artwork for this album on the wall, together with a collage of visual ideas and themes made by the pair as part of the planning and designing of the bar.

**SOME GRAY STUFF** presents spoken word poems, stories and one song by Alasdair Gray, a Scottish writer and artist. Gray's own illustrations make up the artwork for this album.

In this space there are also McKenzie's handprinted posters, produced in small quantities to promote each album.

With her selections of artists to release on Decemberism, McKenzie continues her exploration of production on the edge of mainstream culture. Within much of her work there is a use of and fascination with the personal networks, conversations and recommendations that lead to a discovery of the obscure.

*Please ask Stewards for further information. There is also more information in the Reading Room on the second floor. Open every day 12-6pm.*

*Free tours of the exhibitions are at 2pm every Saturday.*

*A limited edition calendar by Lucy McKenzie and Beca Lipscombe is available in Arnolfini bookshop.*

*For more information on Beca Lipscombe see [www.becalipscombe.com](http://www.becalipscombe.com)*

## Introduction to the exhibition

**Lucy McKenzie**  
**10 Years of Robotic Mayhem (including sublet)**

**Galleries 2,3,4,5**

**7 July - 2 September 2007**

Lucy McKenzie's paintings, drawings, prints, installations and other projects sample a wide range of styles. In this exhibition, there are visual references to Art Nouveau designs, drawings by teenagers, comics and other forms of illustration. In each case McKenzie has chosen a style in which to work, one which is often associated with a specific place, time, set of ideas or feelings. In choosing each style, McKenzie explores its associations and viewers' responses to them.

The paintings inside the large room-like **INSTALLATION** in **GALLERY 3** are based on original drawings for interiors by four Art Nouveau designers working around 1900 (from right, anti-clockwise, George Hobe, Paul Hankar, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Victor Horta). McKenzie's

versions are hand-drawn and their loose, fluid style of painting resembles illustrations, perhaps those from a children's book. The plans have been blown up by McKenzie to explore what happens when a small, paper-based drawing becomes a life size, walk-in experience.

Each side of this 'room' mimics a wall, and the paintings on them can be thought of as murals. Lucy McKenzie has used murals and their associations previously in her work. This form of public art is currently unfashionable but McKenzie holds an affection for it and its associations of regeneration and community involvement. Murals inside buildings, which these works more closely resemble, also have associations with the painted walls and ceilings of

churches and other public buildings.

Two series of drawings in this gallery highlight Lucy McKenzie's appropriation of other styles of working. **ILLUSTRATIONS FOR 032C** is a project McKenzie was asked to make for a Berlin-based cultural journal. The particular issue focussed on *Europe Endless, the Utopian Possibilities of a New Europe* and McKenzie chose to draw attention to some of the contradictions and difficulties in thinking of Europe in a utopian way.

Each of the four pictures includes a portrait of a member of Laibach, a Slovenian band who explore the politics and ideas of Europe in their work (their name comes from the German name for the Slovenian capital Ljubljana). Each member of the band is drawn in a slightly different style, perhaps copied from a range of sources. The resulting drawing style in this work resembles that of teenage music fans – personal tributes intended for bedroom walls or Myspace.

Surrounding each portrait are other things associated with the European Union such as European Commissioner, Peter Mandelson, EU administrators and Euro banknotes. As her text in the magazine makes clear, for Lucy McKenzie these images present an idealised, stylised version of European harmony. In contrast, the music and stage performances of Laibach question these values and the expansion of the EU.

The series of drawings on the other

walls in this gallery were made for Edinburgh-based free newspaper **THE ONE O'CLOCK GUN**. Like the work for 032c, these original drawings are presented alongside the mass-produced, printed versions. In these works, McKenzie has been influenced by European comic illustration such as *The Adventures of Tin Tin* by Hergé, as well as satirical and political cartoons in *The New Yorker*. This style of drawing uses clear lines, often with cartoonish characters on a more realistic looking background. It is different to the loose sketchy styles used for the portraits in 032c and the large paintings.

As with other styles sampled by McKenzie, she has not copied any particular works by these comic artists, but her interests in their work and her study of it has led to her appropriation of their style.

In **GALLERY 2**, McKenzie has sublet part of the space to fashion designer Beca Lipscombe who shows clothes from her latest collection in **SHOWROOM**. The two have worked together in the past, McKenzie having modelled some of her friend's previous collections and they have recently begun an interior design business together. The shop unit resembles a concession inside a large store or shopping centre: self-contained and perhaps slightly out of place. The clothes can be browsed, items tried on and bought. (Please ask a Steward if you wish to purchase any of the clothes.)

McKenzie's 'sublet' of gallery space in her exhibition can also be seen

as a type of appropriation: in this case mimickery of a style of shop and its financial systems. By inviting Lipscombe to exhibit alongside her, McKenzie is also giving space to the economic systems represented. This sublet is referenced in the title of the exhibition, the main part of which is borrowed from the title of a DVD survey of robot wars-style events by artists Survival Research Laboratories in the US. In appropriating this title, McKenzie wanted to reference the idea of a retrospective, but not of her own work.

Like many of the alternative systems used by McKenzie such as free newspapers, fanzines and her independent music label, Lipscombe is not part of the high street or couture fashion industry. She uses only Scottish suppliers and distributes her clothes through a limited number of alternative outlets. The **PORTRAITS** of collaborators, including Beca, for *Contemporary* magazine further emphasise the importance of other people to McKenzie's practice.

In this gallery there is also artwork made by McKenzie for Erasure's album **UNION STREET**. Like other works in this exhibition, this was a commercial commission and shows studies and sketches as well as final artwork and the resulting poster, cover, mug and key ring.

The **CHAIRS** (one for use by Stewards, one placed in the Showroom for a friend or husband to sit on while others try on clothes) are reproductions

based on a design by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, also referenced in the Art Nouveau 'room'. Like the sublet clothes shop, McKenzie has not appropriated this work as her own, but for its associations. Rennie Mackintosh is closely associated with Glasgow and much of the re-branding of this city as a cultural centre has included imagery and references to his designs and buildings.

The series of **DRAWINGS ON DISPLAY BOARDS** in **GALLERY 4** further explores McKenzie's interests in the changing image and life of Glasgow. Each of these drawings, produced in a range of styles, show a place well known to the artist. They are all social spaces, although shown unpeopled: cafés, bars, a swimming pool, independent shops, a mural on a factory wall. For McKenzie, who made this series just before she left Glasgow to live in Brussels, these are places for which she has feelings of nostalgia and places which she expects have already changed and disappeared or will soon, as the city is regenerated and gentrified.

A different, rural, experience of Scotland's identity is illustrated in McKenzie's **GUIDE TO OUTDOOR SCULPTURE**, produced for a symposium event.

In **GALLERY 5** on the second floor are records, posters and artwork made for Decemberism. This is a small scale, independent vinyl-only music label run by Lucy McKenzie. The three records may be played and listened to. **BONNIE CAMPLIN's**