

Rebels of Today, Classics of Tomorrow

Posted At : July 22, 2008 8:44 PM | Posted By : Helen Vincent

Related Categories: exhibition items

One aspect of the printed word showcased in the exhibition is how it can be part of the underground, used to express the subversive, the radical and the shocking. Sometimes the people involved, and the publications themselves, can shift to new ways of sharing their ideas; sometimes they become fully integrated into the mainstream.

Scottish literary culture offers plenty of examples of this, with small presses and literary magazines offering many people their first chance of getting into print. We chose one of the most striking to display.

Rebel Inc. was founded by self-proclaimed 'media terrorist' Kevin Williamson in 1992 as a magazine that brought the style and attitude of punk fanzines to Scottish literature. Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting* began life as a series of short stories in the pages of this and other local literary magazines. In true punk style, Williamson folded the magazine once *Trainspotting* became a mainstream success, turning Rebel Inc. into a shortlived but successful publishing imprint in association with **Canongate**.

You can find out more about *Rebel Inc.* on this BBC **webpage**. Readers remember it in this **Guardian article** and **this blog**. Irvine Welsh's **website** tells the story of how *Trainspotting* got into print. And last but not least, *Rebel Inc.* took off just before the rise of the internet, but today Kevin Williamson is **blogging**.