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Coast Garde

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The seaside town of Margate, England, a thriving summer playground until its decline in the 1970s, is counting on the Turner Contemporary to revive its fortunes. Opening April 16, this striking museum - designed by David Chipperfield and named for the painter J. M. W. Turner, one of Margate's famous visitors – has already spurred new galleries, pubs and cafes, as well as the restoration of Dreamland, a 1920s amusement park down the road. And it has inspired a lyrical new work by Tracey Emin, who grew up in Margate. Her pink neon sculpture "I Never Stopped Loving You" hangs adjacent to the museum. (Hundreds of people showed up to cheer its installation last year.) "There is more of an appetite for contemporary art here than you might imagine," says Victoria Pomery, the Turner's founding director. The inaugural show presents six artists whose works relate to a little-known Turner canvas depicting the Soufrière volcano on St. Vincent. "We want to help audiences get a better sense of the contemporary through the historical," Pomery says. "And we will always have a Turner presence." Adds Emin, "The other nice thing about the Turner is that it will have a really beautiful cafe, so people like my 82-year-old mum can go and look out at the sea and have a nice cup of tea."