

## Artists in Residence

### Picture Attached



*Three artists in residence in Mackay Country Joanne B Kaar based in Durness, Ruth Macduogall based in Strathnaver, Deirdre Nelson on Handa Island and front Norman Gibson arts coordinator for the project*

Three artists have been appointed to carry out artistic interpretation of heritage sites in Mackay Country each working in different forms and media. All have experience in teaching and community orientated projects, some of which has been overseas.

Joanne B Kaar is based at Dunnet Head, on the north coast of Caithness Joanne will be working from Durness based at the community house with specific interest in Cape Wrath. Joanne is a fibre artist and has particular expertise in paper-making and its associated creative artifacts – including ‘log books’ and their history

Deirdre Nelson, from Ireland but now based in Glasgow will be working on Handa Island based in Eddracilles. Deirdre's textile practice has evolved through experimenting with materials and methods of making in which hand work and craftsmanship provide both direction and context. Hand skills are transposed though the work in a humorous commentary on social and textile history within the contemporary gallery. Her textile work employs a variety of techniques and materials fusing traditional textile skills and contemporary reinterpretation through photography and digital manipulation. Deirdre works in a variety of scales and explores social dimensions through textiles, with sewing and knitting retaining their hand-skilled character while being considerably more than a technical processes.

Ruth Macduogall is from Glasgow and will be working in Strathnaver based in Skerray. Ruth will seek to communicate the socio-political history of the site in a way that would empower the local community, identifying their relationship with the site and offering a site specific happening that would encourage a dialogue between past and present. Since graduating with a first class honours degree from the Glasgow School of Art Ruth has spent much of her time travelling, researching and collaborating on artistic projects, enabled by the British Airways Travel award she was given for her final degree show work. Ruth's site-specific practice is intriguingly wide-ranging, but she has recently returned to photography and performance-to-camera.

To liaise with the Durness Development Group in order to direct the programme of residencies that are site specific and to ensure artistic excellence and exhibition/event presentation with professional assistance to the artists Norman Gibson has been appointed as arts coordinator for the project

Norman is a Sculptor and designer with a thematic focus on landscape, archaeology and visual memory. He has had many exhibitions at solo, regional and national levels alongside an educational career in Scotland and England—including seven years as lecturer and director of studies in art and design education at the University of Warwick and three years as head of the department of Arts, Design and Performance at Manchester Metropolitan University completing his Doctoral research on the interplay of visual and verbal arts, with associated papers delivered at international conferences in Finland, Canada and Portugal. Born in Edinburgh and educated at Ellon Academy, Aberdeenshire, and subsequently at colleges and universities north and south of the border Norman returned to Scotland in 1997. His deep family roots in Sutherland and a converging interest in local history and landscape, extended by

studies of past cultures on Aberdeen University's Certificate Course in Field Archaeology and a Master's Degree in Archaeology and Heritage at the University of Leicester gives Norman the appropriate qualifications to ensure the artists are directed in the appropriate fields.

Commissioning of artists to work with sites of historical and scientific interest and develop work that will be accessible to the local community and beyond is the objective of the scheme. The intention of the residency is for artists to engage with the sites and develop site specific work. The artistic interpretation of the site will develop over the period of each artist's residency and culminate in an exhibition/event. People are invited to meet with the artists and become involved in their work. Local posters and information will be available but any enquires can be directed to Norman [gibsondesign@brora99.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:gibsondesign@brora99.freeserve.co.uk) 01408 621186 or Ronnie Lansley [Ronnie@durness.org](mailto:Ronnie@durness.org) 01971511346

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