



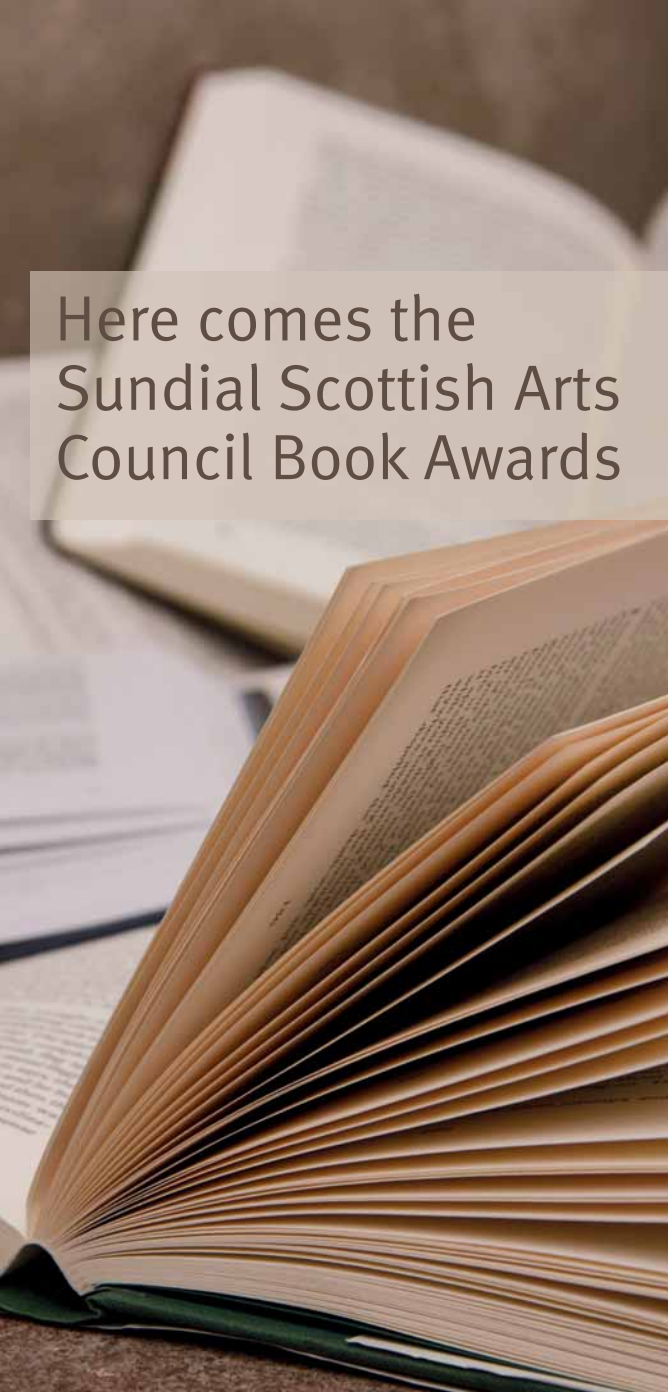
Scottish **Arts** Council

June/July 2007

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Information Bulletin of the Scottish Arts Council





Here comes the Sundial Scottish Arts Council Book Awards

The Scottish Arts Council has announced major changes to this year's Scottish Arts Council Book Awards, including a new major sponsor, new judging process and an increase in the number and size of the awards, to ensure that more books and their writers are recognised.

A sponsorship deal has been secured for the next five years with Sundial Properties Ltd, a family-run property restoration business based in Edinburgh. To reflect this, the awards will now be known as the Sundial Scottish Arts Council Book of the Year Awards.

Judging for the awards will move to categorisation, a move suggested by judges and welcomed by writers. As such books will now be judged like-for-like in each category – fiction, poetry, first book and non-fiction. The award recipients in each of these categories will then go forward to be considered for the overall Book of the Year award.

This year's panel of judges are: Dr Gavin Wallace, Head of Literature at the Scottish Arts Council; author and former prizewinner Elizabeth Laird; and Dr Robyn Marsack, Director of the Scottish Poetry Library. The panel will be in place for a period of three years with a rolling programme of change.

The award amount has also increased. Each of the category award winners will receive £5,000, with the overall winner of the Book of the Year award receiving a further £20,000, bringing their total award to £25,000.

The four category awards will be announced in mid-June, with the overall Book of the Year award announced at a ceremony at the Edinburgh International Book Festival in mid-August.

New appointments at the Scottish Arts Council



A new joint board has been appointed to oversee the work of both Scottish Screen and the Scottish Arts Council. Chaired by Richard Holloway, the joint board members include:

Charles Lovatt, Ray Macfarlane, John Mulgrew, Steve Grimmond, Dinah Caine, Jim McSharry, Barbara McKissack, Donald Emslie, Ben Twist, Rab Noakes and Iain Smith.

Following Graham Berry's retirement, his former deputy

Jim Tough (pictured) has been appointed Acting Chief Executive. Jim will be supported by Morag Arnot, as Deputy Chief Executive. Morag was previously Director of Planning and Communications. David Taylor, has been appointed Co-Director Arts and Head of Drama, as has Iain Munro, now Co-Director of Arts and Head of Lottery. Both join the Directors' group at the Scottish Arts Council. Carol Warner has been appointed Executive Manager.



Artists' residency project in Sri Lanka hailed a success

Five Scotland-based artists visited Sri Lanka recently to take part in a series of pilot artists' residencies, supported by the Scottish Arts Council.

The Hikkaduwa Area Relief Fund (HARF), a Scottish based charity has been working with people in the Dodanduwa area, one of the areas hit by the tsunami in 2004, to help rebuild the community. One of the focuses of the project has been the development of the Chandrasevana Creation Centre, a hub for arts and education projects for local communities, run by Development Manager Barbara Gillespie.

Mixed media artist Guyan Porter; maker, sculptor and puppeteer Ewan Hunter; dance artist Angie Dight; performance artist Ian Smith; and video artist Hugh Watt recently travelled to the centre to develop cultural projects with the local community.

The projects, which took place between December 2006 and April 2007 include: a photography-based project featuring pictures of local people with recorded interviews;

the development of new styles of making animated puppets with a local artist; the development of new flamenco steps and rhythms with a Sri Lankan drumming band; a live art performance which called for audience members to contribute their own reactions and observations; and an exhibition of three films examining the relationship between Buddhism and village life in Sri Lanka.

Commenting on his time in Sri Lanka, Ian Smith, whose project *Feeling Blue*, a live art performance piece investigating and challenging the nature of international aid said: 'Having plunged in feet first with a piece of durational (but accessible) performance art, followed by a fairly spontaneous creation of a large community parade event, I can happily report that I felt a real connection with the local villagers, the wider art community, and the culture itself. Learning every day through conversations with tuk tuk drivers, monks, shopkeepers, cooks, carvers and tailors, I felt part of a wonderfully strange experiment that has had a

profound effect on my personal thinking.'

Guyan Porter plans to develop his photography project and is currently looking at the possibility of developing his interview material into a book: 'Being one of the first artists to do a residency at the Chandrasevana Creation Centre was a great experience. It was a fantastic opportunity to develop new work in Sri Lanka, in what proved to be a moving, uplifting and challenging environment.'

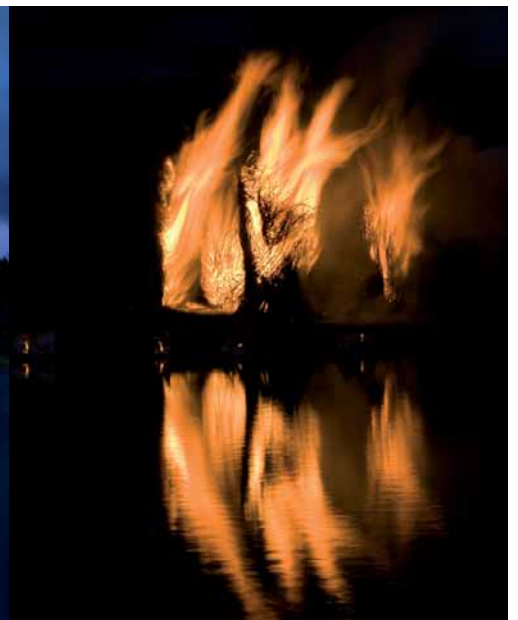
The centre is currently looking at the possibility of hosting a new programme of residencies in the near future.

There are plans for a showcase of the work developed during the residencies in Glasgow in September. For further information contact: neil@uzevents.com

Above clockwise from left: Chandrasevana Creation Centre; local boy taking part in one of the projects; video artist Hugh Watt. Photos: Barbara Gillespie



Big Willow



Visitors flocked to the Brahan Estate in Ross-shire last month to witness the spectacular finale of the Big Willow project which saw the giant willow sculpture set alight to a soundtrack by Blazin Fiddles, and fire and dance performances by te POOKa.

The burning of the sculpture marked the end of a year of Big Willow events, part of the Highland 2007 programme, which drew

thousands of visitors to the area.

With the help of volunteers from the Scottish Basketmakers Circle and using willow grown on the estate, international artist Patrick Dougherty created the Big Willow sculpture, influenced by the landscape and standing stones in the area.

Speaking about Big Willow, artist Patrick Dougherty said: 'The beauty of the Scottish Highlands

are forever in my mind and I am totally indebted to the hearty band of basketmakers who came from everywhere in Scotland to work on the sculpture.'

For more information on the Big Willow project visit:

 www.scottishbasketmakerscircle.org/bigwillow.html

Above: the Big Willow finale.
Photo: Fin Macrae

Major dance bursaries announced

The Scottish Arts Council has announced two major new bursaries for Scotland's dance artists. Anna Krzystek has been awarded the Choreographic Fellowship while Ross Cooper will take part in the first New York Residency.

The Choreographic Fellowship which provides a mid-career choreographer with the opportunity to explore and experiment will provide Anna with the springboard she needs to launch herself in the European dance world and to spend more time creating new work.

Glasgow-based dancer/choreographer Anna trained at Merce Cunningham Dance Studios and extensively in Klein/Mahler technique under the guidance of Barbara Mahler in New York. In 2000 Anna joined as core member of Helsinki based OBLIVIA Performance Company. She has worked independently with numerous choreographers and has been pursuing her own choreographic process since 1997.

Anna will spend 12 months researching the poetics and politics of performance for a new piece entitled 'Figure This'. Her research will be studio based, will

involve working with other artists with similar aims including: Jurgen Fritz (Germany), Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci (France) and Protage – Enrico Gaido and Alessandra Lappano (Italy), and through mentoring with partners: New Moves, Tramway, Artsadmin and ProduForum.

Ross Cooper, Artistic Director of the Curve Foundation, a repertory modern dance company based at the Brunton Theatre in Musselburgh, has been awarded the inaugural New York Residency which provides a dance artist with the opportunity to live and work for up to 10 weeks in New York.

The main focus of the residency will be working with Merce Cunningham, Robert Swinston and Daniel Squire of Merce Cunningham Dance Company. Ross will attend company classes, observe rehearsals and the role of the rehearsal directors as well as spending dedicated time with Merce Cunningham, one of the world's most renowned choreographers.



A visit to the virtuosi of Venezuela

The Venezuelan El Sistema project has won plaudits throughout the world for its unique approach to nurturing young people through the medium of orchestral tuition

In its 30 year history, El Sistema has produced scores of world-class players, not least the recently-appointed Music Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Gustavo Dudamel who at 26 is one of the youngest conductors of a major symphony orchestra.

El Sistema operates 125 youth orchestras across Venezuela and a recent Scottish fact-finding trip to the country's capital, Caracas, set out to learn how the principles and achievements of El Sistema could be used to inspire young people in Scotland.

Nicola Killean, Project Director of the Venezuela in Scotland initiative, led the trip, alongside representatives from Stirling Council, where the first pilot will be developed, and Jennifer Martin, Education Manager of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra who was interested in observing El Sistema's tutoring methods and repertoire.

The week-long visit began at the Simon Bolivar Conservatoire where talented El Sistema students from across Venezuela come to refine and improve their playing skills through individual and group tuition. The young students attend

the conservatoire each afternoon and several are now members of the national symphony orchestras.

Later, the group visited Los Chorros, a residential facility located in the suburban foothills of the Avila mountain that surround Caracas. Los Chorros houses boys aged 8-16 who are under the care of the state and here the children are offered orchestral tuition alongside young people from the surrounding neighbourhood. Playing with the orchestra is not compulsory but most of the boys choose to take part and tutors notice an almost immediate improvement in their behaviour and social skills.

During the week the group also visited the Centro Academico de Lutheria, an instrument-making and repair workshop which, as well as providing a service to the El Sistema centres, also provides skilled craft training for young men and women. As well as producing exquisite violins, guitars and quatros (a Latin American four-string guitar) the centre also repairs and refurbishes the instruments used by the orchestras. It is currently the only instrument-making workshop within El Sistema, but the organisation

plans to develop more centres throughout Venezuela.

El Sistema centres, or nucleos, operate from a variety of centres, including schools, but also in borrowed or donated premises. One of the most startling places the group visited was the abandoned VIP area of Rinconada racecourse. There, often in windowless, airless rooms, scores of young people determinedly rehearse and practice. A lasting image for every member of the group will be the sight of 100 young people laughing and joking while playing almost faultless Tchaikovsky in the racecourse's former bar.

The final stop on the tour was the Montalban centre, at the side of a four-lane highway and surrounded by barbed wire. Here the group watched three outstanding orchestras of different ages perform Bach, Rossini and a beautiful Venezuelan piece by Marques called 'Danson Dos', each one successively more skilled than the last. By the final orchestra, it was apparent to all why international conductors are beating a path to Caracas.

Music for everyone's ears across Scotland this summer

If you are looking for musical entertainment this summer why not go along to one of the many music festivals taking place around Scotland, supported by the Scottish Arts Council?

The West End Festival is currently taking place in Glasgow featuring live music on four stages as well as street parades, comedy and much more to keep you entertained until 24 June.

East Neuk Festival which recently won the Audience Development Award at the prestigious Royal Philharmonic Society Music Awards, runs from 27 June-1 July featuring performances from the Alban Berg Quartet, one of the world's legendary ensembles rarely heard in the UK outside of London. It will be joined by, among others,

Scottish-based Mr McFall's Chamber, which will be performing a brand new piece by Gavin Bryars, co-commissioned by East Neuk and Aldeburgh festivals, and Scots cellist Alasdair Tait who has curated concerts with his regular partners, Isabelle van Keulen and Aleksandar Madzar.

If you fancy trying your hand at music, dance or Gaelic then Ceòlas from 1-6 July is the event for you – a week-long celebration of music, song and dance in South Uist featuring expert tuition in piping, fiddling, singing, Scotch reels and quadrilles, step dancing and the Gaelic language.

The award winning international four day music festival Hebcelt returns to Stornoway from the 11-14 July with a fantastic line-up which

includes the Proclaimers, Peatbog Faeries and Seth Lakeman among others. While later in the month, Paxton House in Berwick upon Tweed will be hosting a summer festival of chamber music from 20-29 July.


For more information on these festivals visit:

West End Festival:
 www.westendfestival.co.uk

East Neuk:
 www.eastneukfestival.com

Ceolas:
 www.ceolas.co.uk

Hebcelt:
 www.hebceltfest.com/past/04

Music at Paxton House:
 www.paxtonhouse.co.uk

A million discover craft in Scotland


craftscotland, the national and international showcase of contemporary Scottish craft hit the million mark in April when their website – www.craftscotland.org – received its millionth visitor.

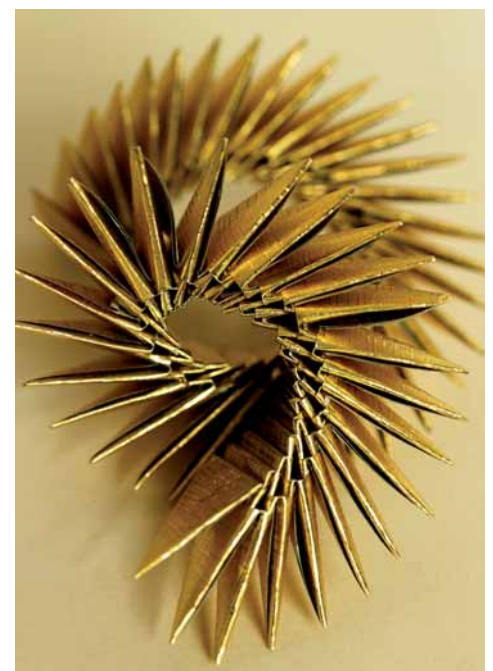
The website, supported by the Scottish Arts Council, was launched in 2004 and creates a vital link between individual makers and potential buyers through a searchable online directory of Scottish makers and craft outlets. Each month the site attracts over 50,000 visitors and an average 16,000 searches in the maker directory.

It has become an extensive resource through its constantly changing selection of news

stories, features and business advice, with around 3,000 visitors each month checking out the events listings and 4,000 visiting opportunities.

One of the most popular stories on the site has been Drawing in Fibre, a virtual curated exhibition exploring the influences and inspirations of Scottish artist Anna King which includes two films where she demonstrates the technique of making string from plant fibre and discusses how she is experimenting with it to develop new work.

For more information on Anna's project visit:
 www.craftscotland.org/craftfocus_annaking.html



Above: Origami from mint cream papers by Anna King.
Photo: Shannon Tofts/craftscotland



Scottish Arts Council announces plans for National Collecting Scheme Scotland

The Scottish Arts Council has announced plans for the next phase of the National Collecting Scheme Scotland (NCSS) which include a new research post working with the member museums to promote the scheme

The scheme which was launched in 2002 provides funding for museums to increase the number of contemporary works of visual art acquired for the permanent collections of Scotland's museums and galleries.

To date 122 works by internationally recognised artists, including artists living in Scotland have been purchased by member galleries, providing audiences across Scotland with access to some of the highest quality art and boosting the nation's profile as a destination for international art audiences.

Current members of the scheme are; Hunterian Art Gallery, Glasgow; City Art Centre, Edinburgh; Pier Arts Centre, Orkney; Aberdeen Art Gallery; McManus Gallery, Dundee; and Paisley Museum & Art Gallery. Recent acquisitions include a painting by Sean Scully

purchased by Pier Arts Centre and work by Chicho Aoshima at Aberdeen Art Gallery.

As part of the second phase of the scheme, a new research post has been established in partnership with Glasgow University History of Art Department. The Research Assistant will work with museums to co-ordinate activity and raise the profile of the scheme through research, debate and events.

The NCSS website will also be relaunched featuring details of new acquisitions, images of work acquired by the museums and interviews with curators.


Meanwhile the Scottish Arts Council has also announced a new Curatorial Development Programme which provides funding for curators and visual arts professionals to attend a series of designated

research trips, with the aim of encouraging closer working and knowledge sharing between permanent collection and temporary exhibition curators.

This year's programme includes visits to:

- The Venice Biennale
- Edinburgh Art Fair
- Pier Arts Centre, Orkney
- Documenta, Kassel, Germany
- Munster Sculpture Projects, Germany
- Frieze 2008, London

For more information visit:

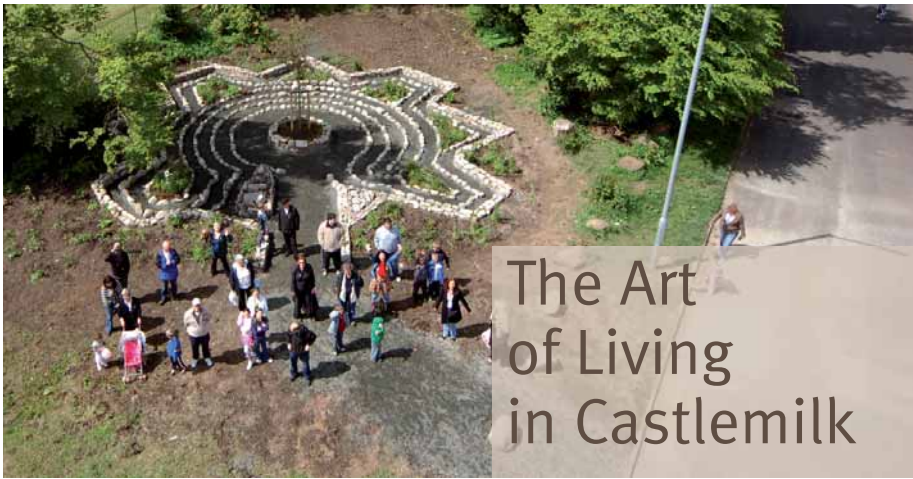
 www.scottisharts.org.uk

Top: Venice 2005.

Photos: Steven McKenzie

Above right: 'Colourland' oil on linen by Sean Scully.

Photo: courtesy The Pier Arts Centre Collection, Orkney



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 www.scottisharts.org.uk

The Art of Living – a new permanent public artwork created in collaboration with local residents was launched in Holmyre Woods, Castlemilk, Glasgow, last month.

London-based artist Edwina fitzPatrick was commissioned by the Castlemilk Environment Trust as part of the Reputations art programme. Throughout the 18 month project, the artist worked closely with local residents and environmental and biodiversity experts from across Scotland to create a unique Blood-Chlorophyll labyrinth which acts as a spiral pathway into newly created woodland walks.

A Sorbus Embley tree, the leaves of which are green in summer and

turn blood red in autumn, grows at the heart of the labyrinth at the exact point where two underground streams intersect. Embedded in the labyrinth walls are 100 texts, tags and drawings made by local residents.


As part of the project a wild plant nursery was set up in the middle of housing on Holmyre Road as a space for local residents to meet with the artist, learn about plant life, and generate ideas about how the woodlands could be transformed.

Speaking about the project Mary Scott, Castlemilk resident and participant in the Art of Living, said: 'It's really magical! Edwina's project has completely transformed

the woodlands area. We've cleared away burnt out cars and all sorts of rubbish from the woods and created a new tranquil and beautiful space for people to enjoy'.

The project is the second phase of the Reputations Public Art Commission Programme which has been funded by the Scottish Arts Council lottery fund and Glasgow City Council's Department of Culture and Leisure Services.

For more information on Reputations visit:

 www.reputations.org.uk

Above: Photo of local people taken at the public launch. Castlemilk, Glasgow.

Photo: Hawkeye

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