



University of the
Highlands and Islands
Shetland College



Shetlandarts

SHOORMAL

— c o n f e r e n c e —

New coasts & shorelines: Shifting sands in the creative economy

He tinks - Wirds onlie brakk
læk waejiev's along biechis
quhar dæ waash up ydieis.

(Robert Alan Jamieson)

Wed 18th - Sat 21st
September 2019
Mareel, Shetland

SHOORMAL

c o n f e r e n c e

New coasts & shorelines: Shifting sands in the creative economy

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WELCOME

On behalf of UHI's Centre for Rural Creativity, I'm delighted to welcome you to Shoormal, our first conference. As a creative economy research centre based in Shetland, we know how fascinating and fruitful coasts and shorelines can be for creative practitioners, researchers, professionals and arts organisations. The range and quality of proposals submitted was impressive, and we're excited to meet so many of you in person and learn more about your work.

While there are points of connection between many of our sessions, the days fall into broad themes:

Wednesday: Shaping Futures

On day one of Shoormal, we're looking to the future and asking how we get there. Presentations and workshops feature some technology talk and a long view of the creative economy, followed by an evening of contemporary entertainment, with a little bit of time travel along the way.

Thursday: The Space Between

On day two, we'll be exploring the spaces between land and sea, human and non-human, dispersed communities and island places. Researchers and creative practitioners will investigate the potential of in-between spaces and points of contact for intellectual and creative engagement, followed by music and film that crosses boundaries.

Friday: Heritage and Resilience

The emphasis of panel sessions on day three is on heritage-making practices and how they shape resilience in cultural, community and ecological terms. After talks and workshops, enjoy an evening of performance including a chance to experience some Shetland dialect.

Saturday

On the final morning of Shoormal, say goodbye with an informal, open-mic brunch in the café-bar.

Finally, many thanks to all those involved in planning and organising Shoormal, across both UHI and Shetland Arts Development Agency.

Dr Siún Carden

Shoormal Conference Commissions

Shetland Arts Development Agency have commissioned work from three artists to be presented as evening events during Shoormal 2019.

The works will be presented in the Main Auditorium in Mareel, Lerwick on Wednesday 18th, Thursday 19th and Friday 20th September alongside local artists.

Each commissioned artist will share a short live performance in response to one of these conference themes:

- **Shaping Futures:** Looking to the future and asking how we get there.
- **The Space Between:** Exploring the spaces between land and sea, human and non-human, dispersed communities and island places.
- **Heritage and Resilience:** Exploring heritage-making practices and how they shape resilience in cultural, community and ecological terms.

We were excited by the quality of applications and delighted to work alongside very well-known artists, from two of Scotland's most distinctive musicians Fraser Fife and Graeme Stephen, to Extinction Rebellion artist Martin Disley creating a series of audio composition and performance artist David Sherry who will share a new performance series that consists of ten ideas that will be: actions, performed stories and readings delivered in quick succession.

Shaping Futures

WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

Early session: 9:30am - 10am (30mins)

Session 1:
10am - 11am (1hr)

Break: 11am - 11:30am (30mins)

Session 2:
11:30am - 12:30pm (1hr)

Lunch: 12:30pm - 1:30pm (1hr)

Session 3:
1:30pm - 2:50pm (1hr 20mins)

Break: 2:50pm - 3:10pm (20mins)

Session 4:
3:10pm - 4:30pm (1hr 20mins)

Break: 4:30pm - 7:30pm (3hrs)

Events:
7:30pm - 9pm (1hr 30mins)

Auditorium

Dr Siún Carden & CRC Director Mark Sheridan Welcome & Overview

Graeme Howell

Don't Give Me Broadband, Give Me Bridges

A welcome to Mareel and some reflections on connectivity.

Fleur Ward

ICT and Creative Industries

Scottish islands and connectivity.

Maya Darrell Hewins

Between Grubby Flesh and Insubstantial Pixel: The importance of social sustainability in maintaining digital archives of moving images.

Break

Janette Budge and Dr Siún Carden

ShetlandPeerieMakkers: Value and Change

Skill transmission, value and Shetland hand knitting

Josie Steed, Dr Yang Jiang & Karen Cross

From Augmented to Authentic: Weaving the Past into the Future

Dr Siún Carden

Hand, machine and automation: skill in the knit industry in Shetland and Ireland

Lunch

Katherine Wren & Dr Gemma McGregor

From the Northern Isles to Greenland: Exploring environment and culture through improvisation and sonic art.

A presentation/demonstration based on creative workshops for young people.

Break

Panel Discussion: Sustainable Creative Communities and Economies sponsored by Promote Shetland

Opportunities and challenges of running creative businesses in Shetland.

PROMOTE
Shetland

Break

Roseanne Watt & Kathy Hubbard

Local Poet and Film maker Roseanne Watt and fellow Kishie Wife Collective member Kathy Hubbard discuss the joys and challenges of working as a collective.

Suzanne Briggs

Local musician, Suzanne Briggs composed a short piece inspired by Sumburgh Head

Fraser Fifield & Graeme Stephen

Shoormal Commissioned Artist

Green Room

Break

Dr Lesley Mickel

Ruin and Decay. Time, Memory and Place: an exploration through performance – The Nairn Ballerina Ballroom
Theatre and performance studies research and pedagogy.

Paul Bloomer

The Return of the Light
Artist talk.

Natalie Cairns-Ratter

Music and Communication Skills – Music Listening with Children with ASD-Autism Spectrum Disorder in Shetland within a home setting.

Lunch

Caroline Dear

Edges: matter, the verge as indicator of edge entanglements
Join artist Caroline Dear to explore different ways of engaging with the edge.

Break

Prof Ullrich Kockel

Reclaiming the Commons and the Creative Economy: Exploring Waterscape Perspectives
Workshop exploring "waterscape" perspectives with their emphasis on an indeterminate, fluid and shape-shifting actuality.

Break

Cinema Screen 2

Amber Rivers

Unearthing Prehistoric Creative Economies
Applying spinning and weaving practices to uncover an emergent textile industry in Orkney in the 3rd-4th centuries AD.

Keith McIntyre

Drinking Dragons and Towers of Refuge
Contemporary imaginings of heritage on the Isle of Man.

Dr Antonia Thomas

Art and Archaeology in Orkney: Past, Present and Future
Exploring two decades of Contemporary Art-Archaeology work in Orkney.

Break

Dr Ragnhild Ljosland

Time Travel Tourism: Issues of sustainability, re-creation, authenticity, belonging and dark heritage
Interactive Viking tourism in Scandinavia and the Northern Isles of Scotland.

Dr Lauren Doughton

Performing Monuments: The role of performance theory and creative practise in developing new understandings of archaeological heritage
Archaeology as a performative practice.

Julie Cassidy

Heritage Branding – Orkney "The Brand"
Orkadian heritage and place in the marketing of alcoholic products.

Lunch

Break

Break

RECEPTION sponsored by HIE
Mareel Café Bar - Wednesday 18 September, 5:30pm
Join us in the Upper Café Bar for light refreshments and networking.

WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

Shaping Futures

EARLY SESSION:

9:30am - 10am (30mins)

AUDITORIUM

Dr Siún Carden and CRC Director Mark Sheridan

Welcome and overview

SESSION 1:

10am - 11am (1hr)

AUDITORIUM

Graeme Howell

Don't Give Me Broadband, Give Me Bridges

A welcome to Mareel and some reflections on connectivity.

Fleur Ward

ICT and Creative Industries

This presentation will look at understanding the crucial role that information and communication technologies (ICT) play in the creative economy and industries. From local craft producers to those with a global brand, this presentation will focus on creative industries across the Scottish islands with a special focus on Shetland. Creative business owners employ a variety of ICT not only to produce their products, but to help with accounting, administration, business promotion and visibility in the marketplace. In covering the impact of ICT, discussion will cover the challenges, opportunities and creative solutions businesses in the Scottish island context make when using ICT to enhance their business.

Maya Darrell Hewins

Between Grubby Flesh and Insubstantial Pixel:
The importance of social sustainability in maintaining digital archives of moving images.

Seldom mentioned in discussions on community participation in digital heritage practices is the active management required to ensure digital assets remain accessible now and into the future. This poses challenges for community-led groups, such as Shetland Film Archive, where volunteer capacity and technological issues have restricted development. Arguing that technological and social sustainability in community-led digital archives are linked, I introduced activities that equate care of material in the Shetland Film Archive with social visibility. The mixed success of these activities suggest however, that sustainability relies on adaption and embedding of digital management models by community-led groups through their own social behaviours and networks.

CINEMA SCREEN 2

Amber Rivers

Unearthing Prehistoric Creative Economies

This paper shall discuss the application of spinning and weaving practices to uncover an emergent textile industry in Orkney in the 3rd-4th centuries AD, part of a greater trend towards personal adornment and creative expression at the end of the Middle Iron Age. This study relied on an assemblage of spindle whorls and long-handled weaving combs found at the Cairns on South Ronaldsay, Orkney. The aim of this study was to determine the type of fabric these probably produced. Using replicas, trials indicated that the site's inhabitants were producing cloth ranging from thick, sturdy fabric suitable for everyday wear to fine cloth, possibly for elite consumption, with an emphasis on weft-facing fabric. This period in the Northern Isles is marked by a shift from the employment of communal monumental architecture to highly-decorative personal objects, but textiles being more perishable, have not yet been given serious consideration. The results of these trials suggest that fine cloth also began to play a larger role in communicating individual identity at The Cairns. Finally, this tool assemblage was compared with that at Howe, Orkney. The two collections displayed a consistency, which would suggest an emerging textile economy across Orkney. This study demonstrates the importance of a practical, skill-based approach to reconstructing creative economies in archaeological contexts. It led to the development of a joint project between the University of the Highlands and Islands, Heriot Watt, and the Orkney Museum which will employ these experimental practices alongside traditional archaeological methods to weave a broader picture of the emergence and development of wool exploitation and woollen textile technologies throughout Orkney and Shetland.

Keith McIntyre

Drinking Dragons and Towers of Refuge

Contemporary imaginings of heritage on the Isle of Man.

Dr Antonia Thomas

Art and Archaeology in Orkney: Past, Present and Future

The archaeological imagination looms large in Orkney. The islands' landscapes, monuments and artefacts have long inspired artists and creative practitioners, and there is a rich and long-standing tradition of collaborative Art-Archaeology work. More recently, many archaeologists have themselves become creatively engaged in their own work, challenging traditional tropes of archaeological practice. The tideline has shifted. No longer purely representational in outlook or focussed on the ancient monuments that the islands are so famous for, many artists and archaeologists in Orkney are now working together in unexpected ways. This collaborative energy has led to a number of exciting research projects, many of which are explicitly experimental and contemporary in focus, blurring distinctions between artistic and archaeological practice. This innovative research is drawn upon in the delivery of two new modules in Contemporary Art and Archaeology at the UHI, with an MA programme also in development. Uniquely this teaching is delivered largely online and through video conference, challenging traditional pedagogic models for such 'hands-on' subject areas, yet opening up the exploration to allow more participatory and conceptual practice. In this talk I will explore the exciting directions that the past two decades of Art-Archaeology work have taken in Orkney and discuss the challenges this transdisciplinary work brings to research, teaching and practice.

SESSION 2:

11:30am - 12:30pm (1hr)

AUDITORIUM

Janette Budge & Dr Siún Carden

ShetlandPeerieMakkers: Value and Change

In 2016-17 Dr Siún Carden carried out a short research project with ShetlandPeerieMakkers, a voluntary group that exists to provide free Shetland hand knitting tuition to school-age Shetland children. Janette Budge is a ShetlandPeerieMakkers tutor. They will share their different perspectives on the role of ShetlandPeerieMakkers and how Shetland hand knitting is valued.

Josie Steed, Dr Yang Jiang & Karen Cross

The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen

From Augmented to Authentic;

Weaving the Past into the Future

As our understanding of the provenance and inherent value of artisan textile and craft skills alters through our increasingly digital and fast paced world, there needs to be a revaluing of hand/human processes that reconnect people and products in an empathetic and meaningful way. This paper discusses a multi-disciplinary knowledge exchange research project, across computing and textiles that aims to inform consumers about the craftsmanship, heritage and value of traditional fashion and textile products both in the UK and China, where both countries have long histories and cultural traditions related to textiles. Exploring how immersive experience and techniques could be used to represent and preserve the history and heritage of traditional fashion and textile products the project team are working together with academics and creative practitioners and organisations in Shanghai and Scotland, specifically within Harris, Orkney and Shetland with the aim of establishing long-term and sustainable research and industry partnerships. The paper will specifically discuss a recent 2-day workshop which brought together academics and the creative industries across Scotland together with textile businesses and organisations to explore the opportunities and research and industrial challenges that exist in the areas of fashion/textiles and technology.

Dr Siún Carden

Hand, machine and automation: skill in the knit industry in Shetland and Ireland

GREEN ROOM

Dr Lesley Mickel

Ruination and Decay. Time, Memory and Place:
an exploration through performance –
The Nairn Ballerina Ballroom

The theme of ruination and decay has been suggestive in terms of theatre and performance studies and has offered the opportunity to combine a new strand in my own research with insights derived from curriculum development and a focus on pedagogy that have been generated through writing a new degree programme, BA (Hons) Drama and Production. In particular, it offers the opportunity to define a UHI approach to these academic practices.

Paul Bloomer

The Return of the Light

A poetic meditation through a series of etchings exploring the powerful effect of the return of light in the Northern Hemisphere after the intensity of winter darkness.

Natalie Cairns-Ratter

Music and Communication Skills - Music Listening with
Children with ASD-Autism Spectrum Disorder in Shetland
within a home setting

A small qualitative study was conducted involving children with ASD-Autism in Shetland to examine the impact music has on communication skills. This included; verbal and non verbal, attunement and family bond.

CINEMA SCREEN 2

Dr Ragnihild Ljosland

Time Travel Tourism: Issues of sustainability, re-creation, authenticity, belonging and dark heritage

As the tourism industry seeks new ways of becoming sustainable, and individuals seek new ways of understanding their past and their cultural heritage, interactive immersion is arising as a creative response. Using "Time Travel Tourism" as shorthand for a range of immersive experiences, this presentation explores this new creative field within interactive tourism. Through interactive adventure tours such as "Viking Hiking" (Brimi et al. 2016), past and present identities are negotiated, and tourism moves beyond the traditional dichotomy of passive versus active tourism to becoming interactive (Rogerson 2019). In the current political climate it is also interesting to note that white supremacy is here proactively challenged and confronted as the past comes alive in the present imbued with values and meanings. The experience of adventure and authenticity, its main selling points, is necessarily carefully balanced with risk management. "Viking Hiking" has proven to be a deeply felt experience for participants, connecting with the history of the local area and the participants' personal sense of their own cultural heritage. This presentation is intended as a starting-point for further exploration of the meanings attached to interactive Viking tourism, as experienced by the providers and the participants, in Scandinavia and the Northern Isles of Scotland.

Dr Lauren Doughton

Performing Monuments: The role of performance theory and creative practise in developing new understandings of archaeological heritage

This paper will explore the notion of archaeology as a performative practise, examining how dialogues between 'the watcher' and 'the watched' can be employed to enrich understanding of archaeological heritage. In particular, it will focus on the use of creative practise as a tool to engage with, challenge and create new perceptions of past activities, and will explore the idea of whether it is possible to 'perform' an archaeological site. What insights can we as archaeologists gain from inviting practitioners to engage with our work and how might these insights impact on public understanding and engagement with the archaeological heritage which surrounds them?

Julie Cassidy

Heritage Branding – Orkney "The Brand"

Orkney has two whisky distilleries, one rum distillery, three gin distilleries and two breweries. This paper will look into the creativity and marketing decisions behind using Orcadian heritage and place in the branding and marketing of local alcoholic products. Is there such a thing as "Orkney The Brand"?

SESSION 3:

1:30pm - 2:50pm (1hr 20mins)

AUDITORIUM

Katherine Wren & Dr Gemma McGregor

From the Northern Isles to Greenland:

Exploring environment and culture through improvisation and sonic art

A presentation/demonstration based on creative workshops for young people.

The workshops took place in Kirkwall Grammar School and Stromness Academy in Orkney in 2018. The aim of the workshops was to create a short improvisation based on aural stimuli collected from the Faroes, Iceland and Greenland. These included environmental sounds and examples of indigenous music. Participants were encouraged to reflect on similarities and differences of these sounds to those familiar to them. The workshop ended with a sharing session of the end results. These were subsequently shared with participants on a private link online.

The presenters will demonstrate the process of developing a piece of music/sonic art in schools using melodic instruments, portable percussion, recorded and improvised sound. Delegates will be encouraged to take part on a voluntary basis. An ability to read music and prior musical knowledge are not a prerequisite.

GREEN ROOM

Caroline Dear

Edges: matter, the verge as indicator of edge entanglements

Join artist Caroline Dear to explore different ways of engaging with the edge. An illustrated visual essay exploring aspects of the verge will be followed by an interactive session working with ropes and communal mapping processes, feeding into a discussion of how we can understand more clearly the rich depth of networks and connections - how to value noticing.

Caroline invites you to join her for a short 'verge walk' on Saturday morning.

SESSION 4:

3:10pm - 4:30pm (1hr 20mins)

AUDITORIUM

Panel Discussion: Sustainable Creative Communities and Economies

sponsored by Promote Shetland

Local businesses, policy makers, and industry experts discuss the role of the creative industries in creating sustainable and vibrant communities in remote and rural locations like Shetland. Topics for discussion include the benefits and challenges of operating a creative business in a remote and rural location, creativity, recreation and talent attraction, and the role that creative businesses and agencies play in ensuring that remote and rural locations continue to be viable, positive places to live, work, study, visit and invest.

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GREEN ROOM

Prof Ullrich Kockel

Reclaiming the Commons and the Creative Economy:
Exploring Waterscape Perspectives

While as phenomena they have existed for a long time, "creative industries" and "the creative economy" only rose to conceptual prominence and gained political traction of sorts when the decline of classical manufacturing industries left policy-makers and their neoliberalist economic advisers stranded, on the lookout for alternative sources of development and the fin-de-siècle oxymoron of "sustainable growth". The concepts first emerged in the context of regeneration in urban and industrial settings, quickly spreading to the rural periphery for whose economic malaise the injection of low-skill branch plant operations by heavily subsidised multinationals no longer provided a viable treatment. In conjunction with tourism and an ubiquitous resource called "heritage", "creative industries" came to be seen as the salvation of regions that were otherwise considered economic basket cases, and "the creative economy" as one sustained by its continuously renewable, freely available primary resource: human creativity. The neoliberal ideologues had finally invented the economic Perpetuum Mobile which, once kick-started by a small subsidy, would continuously generate growth, employment and profit through the ready self-exploitation of its practitioners. The problems of urban decline and rural underdevelopment were solved – or so it seemed.

Like their neo-classical predecessors, most post-industrial models of how the economy works are based on highly questionable assumptions about, and an often blatant disregard for, cultural and ecological actualities. Reclaiming the commons is a key step on our journey towards developing more appropriate approaches. This workshop will explore "waterscape" perspectives with their emphasis on an indeterminate, fluid and shape-shifting actuality, to see if they offer a way forward in that direction. Examples of creative work produced or identified by the workshop participants will provide reference points for this joint exploration of a different meaning of "creative commons".

EVENING EVENTS:

7:30pm - 9pm (1hr 30mins)

AUDITORIUM

Fraser Fifield & Graeme Stephen

Shoormal Commissioned Artist

Two of Scotland's most distinctive musicians, over many years exploring where new music meets old and composing meets improvising. On low whistle, soprano sax, border pipes and guitar, the duo create music to evoke many places at once, an inspired globe-spanning amalgam of influence through a Scottish lens.

This wholly improvised music performance is fore-titled by its inspiration, The Space Between, and encompasses a hint of introduction to the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta, from which one might decide afresh: was the music thoughtful or thoughtless?

"To call a musician's work 'unique' is a bold statement. However, if any musicians come close, then Fraser Fifield would be among them. The originality of his work, the breadth of his inspiration, scope of invention and variety of instruments he uses to create his music make him unique – and one of Scotland's most enthralling artists" - folkradio.co.uk

Roseanne Watt & Kathy Hubbard

Local Poet and Film maker Roseanne Watt and fellow Kishie Wife Collective member Kathy Hubbard discuss the joys and challenges of working as a collective. They will discuss two of the short films from STOAL, an installation by Roseanne and the Kishie Wife Collective, which will be showing at The Booth in Scalloway for the duration of the conference.

*'Though some say otherwise
She was the first
Who went to fetch the fire
From the hills
Of course she was'*

(Kishie Wife)

Suzanne Briggs

Local musician Suzanne Briggs composed a short piece inspired by Sumburgh Head, a unique place which is significant to our islands and beyond, with its thriving colonies of migrant seabirds in the summer, such as puffins, guillemots and razor bills; the Stevenson lighthouse which is still a beacon of safety to maritime traffic; the Second World War radar station which averted major disaster at Scapa Flow; and the iron age archaeology leading us back to the early settlers on these islands. It is truly fascinating that such a small area of land can hold so much significance.

The Space Between

THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER

Auditorium	
Early session: 9:30am - 10am (30mins)	Prof Neil Simco The University of the Highlands and Islands Taking Stock, Celebrating Achievements, and Defining the Future
Session 1: 10am - 11am (1hr)	Meg Rodger Iceland: Aud the Deep Minded & North Atlantic Sheep <i>Sheep farming and cultural history, voyaging to Iceland from the Hebrides.</i> Catherine Munro 'True Island Type Ponies': Landscape and History in Contemporary Shetland Pony Breeding. <i>How pony breeders use lessons from Shetland's history to make creative use of the land.</i> Clair Aldington Out-cast / Re-cast; the potential for the gifted co-created artefact to build a bridge over the gap caused by crime in an island community <i>Creative restorative solutions to conflicts, harm and crime in island communities.</i>
Break: 11am - 11:30am (30mins)	Break
Session 2: 11:30am - 12:30pm (1hr)	Dr Mandy Haggith A-B-Tree. <i>A poetic inquiry into the links between literature and forestry, based around the Gaelic Tree Alphabet.</i> Dr Andrew Jennings From Fografiddle to Giltarump. <i>An exploration of Shetland's place-names, showing how they create a feeling of Shetlandness, and how people even today are coining names which express a Shetland identity.</i> Dr Susan Graham Creativity in Island Tourism Logos: Embedding Themes Related to Islands in Island Tourism Logos. <i>The creative ways island tourism destinations are using their "islandness" as part of their brand identity.</i>
Lunch: 12:30pm - 1:30pm (1hr)	Lunch
Session 3: 1:30pm - 2:50pm (1hr 20mins)	Scott MacLeod (VC) Woman Waiting by the Sea – Iceland Settlement Series IV <i>Artist talk on the cross-cultural links between Norway and Scotland and how they are connected to the settlement period of Iceland.</i>
Break: 2:50pm - 3:10pm (20mins)	Break
Session 4: 3:10pm - 4:30pm (1hr 20mins) Performance: 4:30pm - 5:20pm (50mins)	Panel Discussion: Arts organisations & Island contexts Shifting roles and civic duties Katherine Wren & Dr Gemma McGregor Nordic Viola: A Journey Around the North Atlantic in Words and Music Performance and Post-Concert Discussion
Break: 5:30pm - 7:30pm (2hrs)	Break
Events: 7:30pm - 9pm (1hr 30mins)	Morag Currie The Idea of North Renzo Spiteri Stillness Martin Disley Shoormal Commissioned Artist

Green Room

Mary Carol Souness

Stick weaving workshop

Learn a low-tech, high impact and easily achievable craft.

Break

Aimee Labourne

Plastiglomerates and Nature's 'Otherness'

Talk and drawing workshop.

Lunch

Dr Michael Johnson and Dr Marianne McAra

Creative Engagement in the H&I Creative Economy: challenges, approaches and innovation. *Workshop using Design Innovation techniques.*

Break

Dr Michael Johnson and Dr Marianne McAra

Continued.

Break

Cinema Screen 2

Break

Malcolm Innes

Landscape Light Art as a Mediator for the Interpretation of Intangible Cultural Heritage
Cultural heritage is often totally enmeshed within a landscape; how can light help to reveal the vital atmosphere that turns a space into a place?

Helen Robertson

A Sense of Place – Innovation from Tradition – Design Evolution in my Own Practice –
Textiles and Jewellery. *A Shetland artist on their jewellery & textile design practice.*

Roxane Permar

Connecting and collaborating through socially engaged art practice

Education for social art practice promoting innovation and sustainability in local communities.

Lunch

Break

Break

THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER

The Space Between

EARLY SESSION:

9:30am - 10am (30mins)

AUDITORIUM

Professor Neil Simco

The University of the Highlands and Islands
Taking Stock, Celebrating Achievements, and
Defining the Future

SESSION 1:

10am - 11am (1hr)

AUDITORIUM

Meg Rodger

Iceland: Aud the Deep Minded & North Atlantic Sheep

In February 2019, Meg spent a month as an artist in residence at the Icelandic Textiles Centre in Blönduós, Northern Iceland. The purpose of her residency was to bring together the two strands of her creativity - The Birlinn Yarn Company and her art practice.

This paper will relate the resulting research and experience of time spent with Icelandic sheep farmers and cultural historians. It will draw comparisons between Icelandic sheep farming with Hebridean practice and discuss the genetic variations of North Atlantic sheep now found in the voyage pathway of the Vikings as they travelled Northwards to Iceland. It will discuss the direct cultural Norse links between the Hebrides and Iceland, through historical accounts and recent DNA research. It will relate the gripping Laxdale Saga of Aud the Deep Minded, the only female Viking to establish a settlement in Iceland in her own right. All this will be done through a creative and artistic response with plans for future voyages to Iceland from the Hebrides.

Catherine Munro

'True Island Type Ponies': Landscape and History in
Contemporary Shetland Pony Breeding

Throughout Shetland's history, crofters are believed to have survived great hardship through their clever adaptations to a challenging environment. Shetland ponies played an active role in the survival of these households. The shared lives and shared characteristics of humans and animals, living well, within Shetland's landscapes, are directly linked to contemporary ideas of home and belonging.

Recent decades have seen significant and rapid change to lives and landscapes. Crofting is rarely a primary economic activity anymore, as work in other sectors, particularly the oil industry, means people have less time to spend on the land. Few Shetland ponies now live on large areas of communal grazing and much of this land has been fenced. These areas were more than just somewhere that ponies lived, they are considered central to the formation of valued breed characteristics. Such changes are thought to result in Shetland ponies becoming 'overly domesticated' in much of the UK. Pony breeders in Shetland believe these changes are harming both humans and animals, separating them from the landscapes in which they thrive, and eroding the knowledge required to truly belong in Shetland.

With a downturn in the oil industry, the threat of climate change and shifting agricultural policies, there are many concerns about the future. In this paper I explore how, amidst this uncertainty, pony breeders use lessons from Shetland's history to make creative use of the land they have to encourage equine intelligence and autonomy. Maintaining these links between people, animals and landscapes is considered essential to the continuation of a meaningful and healthy life in Shetland.

Clair Aldington

Out-cast / Re-cast; the potential for the gifted
co-created artefact to build a bridge over the gap
caused by crime in an island community

This paper will examine the potential for creative restorative solutions to conflicts, harm and crime in island communities. Specifically, it presents initial findings from my doctoral research into the ability of a gifted artefact to bridge the gap caused by an offence between the person responsible for causing harm, the person harmed and the community. The artefact is co-created through a collaborative relationship between an artist-maker and a participant in a Restorative Justice process.

The research gathered through an in-depth case study within a practice based phenomenological enquiry suggests particular feelings of isolation and of being 'out-cast' experienced by a RJ participant in an island community and examines the potential for the process of making and gifting to help enable a re-casting into the community. The case study was carried out with the Space2face Restorative Justice Arts charity in Shetland.

My inter-disciplinary PhD crosses borders between design, making and the social sciences and has used making and dance as part of my investigations into the role of co-creation, gifting and place within Restorative Justice processes.

GREEN ROOM

Mary Carol Souness

Stick weaving workshop

Learn a low-tech, high impact and easily achievable craft. If you can hold a pencil, you can do this! Stick weaving activity, discussion and postcard making and exchange. Look out for her exhibit 'Islands with Views', two long pieces of stick weaving with postcards, work done on South Uist and Malta.

SESSION 2:

11:30am - 12:30pm (1hr)

AUDITORIUM

Dr Mandy Haggith

A-B-Tree

A poetic inquiry into the links between literature and forestry, based around the Gaelic Tree Alphabet. Since the project began in 2011 Mandy Haggith has been gathering folklore, from the Celtic, Norse and other traditions about our native trees, plus ecological and practical facts about trees, plus poetry. She weaves these together into a knowledge base that she uses as the basis of creative work, both of her own and in creative writing workshops. She edited *Into the Forest*, an anthology of tree poetry, while she was poet in residence at the Edinburgh Botanics, and wrote her sequence of tree poems, A-B-Tree, which was runner-up for the Overton prize.

Dr Andrew Jennings

From Fograiddle to Giltarump

Place-names are how human beings turn empty spaces into places, invested with cultural and linguistic significance. The study of place-names, called onomastics, helps us, as users, engage in dialogue with the creators, who might be separated from us by thousands of years. Place-names can provide landscapes with unique identities. If we are struck by unusual names when we visit somewhere new, we feel we are in a 'different' place, even if the fields and hills might look familiar. In this presentation I would like to undertake a short exploration of Shetland's place-names, showing how they create a feeling of Shetlandness, and how people even today are coining names which express a Shetland identity.

Dr Susan Graham (VC)

Creativity in Island Tourism Logos: Embedding Themes Related to Islands in Island Tourism Logos

Islands have a long established allure and romanticism for travellers the world over. The characteristics that make islands unique relative to non-islands extend beyond geographic interpretations and boundaries that define islands.

The island brand, like all brands, is a marketing tactic designed to succinctly express a specific value proposition often in simplistic and even trite formats which might include a brand symbol, logo, slogan, or other visual representation meant to easily distinguish one brand, or island, from another. This paper/presentation will examine island tourism logos and consider if and how those logos incorporate themes related to being an island in the tourism logo. First, the tourism logos will be assessed to determine if and to what extent themes related to being an island are embedded in the logo. Then, the island tourism logos will be reviewed to examine the creative ways that these themes related to being an island are included in the logos. The purpose is to consider the creative ways island tourism destinations are using their "islandness" as part of their brand identity.

GREEN ROOM

Aimee Labourne

Plastiglomerates and Nature's 'Otherness'

An illustrated talk and a drawing workshop. Plastiglomerates are a proposed new kind of human-made rock consisting of melted plastic debris and natural sediment, and samples have been found on coasts across the world.

In exploring plastiglomerates and themes of nature's 'otherness' in coastal visual art, I hope to open up discussion about shifting divisions between the urban and rural in our times of environmental crisis.

Plastiglomerates found on shorelines unsettle our pre-conceived ideas about a clear division between humans and the environment i.e. between the orderly and chaotic, culture and nature, known and unknown.

By drawing these examples of coastal pollution, isolating them from their usual shoreline context, I hope to heighten awareness of their presence on our beaches. I also hope to make participants visually engage with and draw these real twisted, matted, melted examples of the man-made merging with the natural, and so create unexpected images.

CINEMA SCREEN 2

Malcolm Innes

Landscape Light Art as a Mediator for the Interpretation of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage is often totally enmeshed within a landscape; how can light help to reveal the vital atmosphere that turns a space into a place?

Helen Robertson

A Sense of Place – Innovation from Tradition - Design
Evolution in my Own Practice - Textiles and Jewellery

My first inspiration for creating textile jewellery was the fine Shetland shawls created by brides for their wedding. This led to my Classic Collection of Shetland Lace Jewellery. My attempt to get folk to Look Up to Shetland Knitting led to my creation of the Shetland Lace 'Lookin Up' Lampshades in the Shetland Museum and Archives Restaurant.

This in turn led to 'Hentilagaets' which aimed to celebrate the role of female knitters and crofters of the past by incorporating wire lace knit pieces into a croft fence. The 'Farlin' project organised through Shetland Arts led to me creating 'Crang' inspired by the poetry of Paula Jennings.

This in turn led to my Beachcombers collection featuring knit bird skull brooches and knit feather earrings. The Beachcombers collection inspired a series of photos staged in the Shetland Landscape.

My practice has evolved to feature knitting as a key design feature alongside my increasing metal working skills. A Ding Fellowship in 2018 allowed me to innovate and explore crossing my design processes and opened windows in my head.

This journey has led to my designs being shown and sold in shops and galleries in Shetland, London and Bergen.

Roxane Permar

Connecting and collaborating through socially engaged
art practice

This presentation looks at projects created by artists from Shetland who are part of the UHI postgraduate programme, Art and Social Practice. Work produced through this programme demonstrates the potential of art and design education to promote innovation and sustainability in peripheral and island communities. The programme is delivered entirely virtually, thus enabling those who live "on the edge" - whether through geography, mobility issues or desire to take risks - the opportunity to join a uniquely dynamic and mutually supportive community of practice which contributes to new collaborative networks, different approaches to creative community engagement and new experiences of teaching and learning.

SESSION 3:

1:30pm - 2:50pm (1hr 20mins)

AUDITORIUM

Scott MacLeod (VC)

Woman Waiting by the Sea –
Iceland Settlement Series IV

Film maker and artist Scott MacLeod will join us from Canada to discuss his work on the cross-cultural links between Norway and Scotland and how they are connected to the settlement period of Iceland.

Followed by Scott MacLeod's short film *First Contact*.

GREEN ROOM

Dr Michael Johnson & Dr Marianne McAra

Creative Engagement in the H&I Creative Economy:
challenges, approaches and innovation

What challenges can impact effective engagement in cultural and creative projects in the Highlands and Islands (H&I)? What creative approaches could be shared and integrated across the creative economy to innovate such practices? These will be the questions explored through a half-day workshop inviting an inter-disciplinary range of participants across academia, public sector, cultural sector and the creative economy. Participants will explore approaches to creative engagement, the role of innovation and the creative economy in such contexts, and generate ideas for how creative engagement could be innovated in their respective contexts. The workshop draws on Design Innovation techniques and recent AHRC-funded Creative Economy Engagement Fellowship projects delivered in the H&I: Dr Marianne McAra, on 'Future Heritage' and youth engagement; and Dr Michael Pierre Johnson, on 'Craft and Place' in relation to innovation in the H&I creative economy.

The workshop will be of interest to: academics, public services, cultural institutes, social enterprise, creative enterprises interested in exploring more creative engagement with their different audiences.

This workshop will continue into Session 4.

SESSION 4:

3:10pm - 4:30pm (1hr 20mins)

AUDITORIUM

Panel Discussion: Arts organisations & Island contexts:

Shifting roles and civic duties

Panel:

Graeme Howell, Chief Executive, Shetland Arts

Elly Fletcher, Chief Executive, An Lanntair, Stornoway

Neil Firth, Director, Pier Arts Centre, Stromness

Keith McIntyre, Chair of Trustees at Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Arts Centre, North Uist

Fiona Dalgetty, Chief Executive, Féis Rois, Dingwall

Is there a greater expectation for arts organisations to increasingly take on civic duties and have a greater role in our island communities and how does this impact on the creative economy? Taigh Chearsabhagh in the Western Isles for instance has recently appointed an Art Therapist and a Digital Skills tutor while Pier is establishing a new studio resource at Birsay in the north of mainland Orkney.

Art Centres and Festivals in Shetland, Orkney and the Western Isles offer a rich and diverse range of cultural experiences that are community and visitor facing. Each have a national and international reputation for their distinctive programming and audience engagement. Each are located in stunning harbour locations and a haven for creative makers and thinkers. In this panel discussion Directors and Trustees from Shetland Arts, Pier Arts Centre in Stromness, An Lanntair in Stornoway and Taigh Chearsabhagh in Lochmaddy discuss their specific organisations and their increasing collaborative projects with external stakeholders and partners. The panel will also include Fiona Dalgetty who will discuss the educational outreach work of Féis Rois across the Highlands and Islands

Katherine Wren & Dr Gemma McGregor

Nordic Viola: A Journey Around the North Atlantic in Words and Music Performance and Post-Concert Discussion

Nordic Viola will take you on an extraordinary journey in words and music to the Faroe Islands, Orkney and Shetland, Iceland and Greenland. The islands are bound together by a common seafaring heritage and share musical and cultural connections.

The performance will feature solo and duo works composed and improvised by Katherine Wren and Gemma McGregor as well as other composers from the North Atlantic Region. Performing on their principal instruments (flute and viola), Katherine and Gemma will also incorporate electronic sound, small percussion instruments and found objects, showcasing how a rich palette of sound can be generated from limited resources.

GREEN ROOM

Dr Michael Johnson & Dr Marianne McAra

Creative Engagement in the H&I Creative Economy: challenges, approaches and innovation

Continued from Session 3

EVENING EVENTS:

7:30pm - 9pm (1hr 30mins)

AUDITORIUM

Martin Disley

Shoormal Commissioned Artist

Following a recent commission by the climate breakdown protest group Extinction Rebellion, Martin Disley will be creating the second in a series of audio compositions around the themes of bio-diversity loss and ecological regulatory systems.

At Shoormal, the artist will present and perform this new audio work, which will focus on the 'intertidal zone' in response to the theme 'The Space Between'. The work will combine synthesised material with field recordings of Shetland coastline collected in the days preceding the conference.

Renzo Spiteri

Stillness

Stillness is a solo performance of sounds, field recordings and electronics. The performance combines the use of field recordings gleaned from Shetland and sound objects such as stone, wood and metal. During this immersive solo performance, the audience is taken on a journey that is experienced through personal perception of time, space, sounds and memory. Sound Artist, composer and percussion player Renzo Spiteri has had the opportunity to spend long stretches of time carrying out field recordings in various parts of Shetland and its isles, where the predominant feature is the natural environment with little or no contamination from manmade sounds.

Morag Currie

The Idea of North

A multimedia composition for fiddle, viola and Ableton Live digital workstation; with visual imagery and selected prose.

What defines "North"? Where does it start? What does it sound like? What Lies Beyond?

The title of the work, The Idea of North, was inspired by the book of the same name written by Peter Davidson. In it, Davidson explored the concept of North and "Northness" throughout history, literature and World culture. This fascination echoed my own compositional output for the MA Music and the Environment course at UHI, where I had been exploring the spaces, place and people of my own heritage in Caithness and the Pentland Firth. The Idea of North is comprised of eight short musical scenes, where the audience follows an unseen traveller on a voyage, through both space and time, from the North coast of Caithness, via Orkney, Shetland and finally to "Beyond" - Ultima Thule. At each stop on the journey, we are introduced to a person, event or object connected to the space. At the journey's end, our traveller crosses the boundary from the known world to that of the imagination: the mythical Ultima Thule, the land beyond the North that becomes a metaphor for "otherness" or the unknown. Each scene is accompanied by photographic imagery and selected prose and poetry, evoking the space.

The Idea of North is an electroacoustic work, performed on viola, 5-string fiddle and Ableton Live. Although the melodic material is very much rooted in the folk tradition, this is then fused with electronic sounds, field recordings and an effects board to create a unique soundscape.

Heritage & Resilience

FRIDAY 20 SEPTEMBER

Early session: 9:30am - 10am (30mins)

Session 1:
10am - 11am (1hr)

Break: 11am - 11:30am (30mins)

Session 2:
11:30am - 12:30pm (1hr)

Lunch: 12:30pm - 1:30pm (1hr)

Session 3:
1:30pm - 2:50pm (1hr 20mins)

Break: 3:10pm - 7:30pm (4hrs 20mins)

Events:
7:30pm - 9pm (1hr 30mins)

Auditorium

Prof Máiréad Nic Craith
Mainstreaming the Peripheral: Perspectives on the Artist Maria Simonds-Gooding

Dr Marc Chivers, Kharis Leggate & Dr Esther Renwick
The Noost is a Place Where Minds Meet
Coastal maritime heritage: the noost as a place where art and heritage meet and engage.

Catherine McCullagh
At the ebb
Co-curating creative, critical and anticipatory responses for assembling futures across the Northern Isles.

Break

Iain Detrey
Shetland's Peatlands
PhD research on Shetland's peatlands.

Sue White & John Haswell
Trowies on the Bog
Reflections on a peat bog restoration project.

Lesley Harrison
A collective imaginative (re)construction of the northern coastline

Lunch

Panel Discussion: Art & Achaeology
SIRFA archaeology conference cross-over event

Break

David Sherry
Shoormal Commissioned Artist

Shetland ForWirds
A short variety concert from Shetland's dialect champions, Shetland ForWirds. Poetry, storytelling and music celebrating Shetland dialect.

Green Room

Mark Sheridan & Bryan Peterson

Money, Money, Money

A discussion on funding and opportunities in the arts, academia and creative industries.

Break

Dr Esther Renwick

Keeping it Real: communicating authenticity in the cultural sector

Authenticity, engagement and education.

Dr Simon Clarke

Research, Conservation and Presentation: Balancing management priorities at Scatness Broch and Iron Age Village

The lifecycle of a major heritage project.

Dr Sarah Jane Gibbon

Magnus 900: The impact of a combined local anniversary and Scottish themed year on creative and academic outputs

Lunch

Panel Discussion: Voluntary Sector

Vibrancy in voluntary organisations

What does it take to sustain a vibrant voluntary organisation in a place with a small population?

Break

Discovering Shetland

Site visits and creative activities

We have left a free session to allow you to explore Shetland at your leisure. Look out for suggestions of trips and activities on

www.shetlandarts.org/Shoormal



FRIDAY 20 SEPTEMBER

Heritage and Resilience

EARLY SESSION:

9:30am - 10am (30mins)

AUDITORIUM

Prof Máiréad Nic Craith

Mainstreaming the Peripheral: Perspectives on the Artist
Maria Simonds-Gooding

The universal and the particular are often perceived as opposite ends of a spectrum which can also be aligned with a divide between civilisation and culture, urban and rural. While the universal is a trans-national phenomenon, the particular is rooted in the local and often in the periphery. A stereotypical model of development suggests that those on the periphery only make progress through contact with the centre. Drawing on the artwork of Maria Simonds-Gooding, this presentation focuses on the wisdom that is found on the periphery - a wisdom that is universal rather than marginal. It explores an artist's quest to understand human life among a local peripheral community off the coast of Kerry in south-west of Ireland, which has led her to other peripheral communities in places such as Bhutan, Sinai, India, the Greek island of Amorgos, New Mexico and Mali. The artist's journeys to marginalised areas in the five continents explore the universality of the peripheral experience. In her case, the focus on the particular pointed the way towards modernism in the art world. Her mainstreaming of the peripheral was a crucial step towards the internationalisation of Irish art. This case-study is used to explore the peripheral as a reservoir for folk wisdom and human understanding

SESSION 1:

10am - 11am (1hr)

AUDITORIUM

Dr Marc Chivers, Kharis Leggate & Dr Esther Renwick

The Noost is a Place Where Minds Meet

The noost, a form of boat shelter; sometimes esoteric in form, comprising little more than a scoop from the coast's edge. The Shetland noost was the garage of its day, and the boat it contained was equivalent to the family car. A generation or so ago the sea was the highway upon which everyone travelled. The sea road was used by families to: fish, flit livestock to islands for summer grazing, go to the local shop, fetch home the peats, go to church, and to visit family and friends.

Lifestyle changes in Shetland mean that people have lost touch with their inherited maritime past. Noosts, once everyday structures, now lie abandoned, forgotten: eroding as a consequence of increased storm events, rising sea levels, animal and human destruction.

Within this paper the authors discuss how the noost has become a cultural place where art and heritage meet and engage. Each author speaks of the influence noosts have on their own disciplines. From an innate creative space of holding and protection, where the noost is the starting point for the creation of textiles, drawings and written word, to one of placing the noost into a social historic context ensuring the passing on of heritage to future generations.

Catherine McCullagh

At the ebb: co-curating creative, critical and anticipatory responses for assembling futures across the Northern Isles

Orkney and Shetland have been centres in the international flows of people, goods and ideas for millennia. Now, their open economies, high youth out-migration, and ecosystems abraded by climate change indicate precarity, leaving them liable to being positioned as marginal. Based on an extended public ethnology and performative praxis with communities and groups across Shetland and Orkney, this multimedia paper describes how a virtual museum emerged in response to researching the interplay between complex, diverse and dispersed heritages, and local futuring (Byrne 2008). The narrative is illustrated through a series of co-produced films in which participants from throughout each island group open-up these heritages, of pasts, present and futures, as resources for sustainability. The films, virtual exhibits of people in place, explore these Northern Isles inhabitant's concepts of their contemporary maritime heritage-making as "ecosystems of memory" (Nora 1989), in which skills, stories, knowledges and innovations are tools for anticipating and responding to the constancy of change. These 'future heritages' (re)-materialise the "connectivity ontologies" (Harrison 2015, p.29) of people living with and from the sea that some islanders had believed were becoming 'endangered species of heritage';

Can we afford to be islands, when [we can't] build up boats; know where the fish are; know weather, and when the tide's about to catch?

GREEN ROOM

Mark Sheridan & Bryan Peterson

Money, Money, Money

A discussion on funding and opportunities in the arts, academia and creative industries.

SESSION 2:

11:30am - 12:30pm (1hr)

AUDITORIUM

Iain Detrey

Shetland's Peatlands

Iain is a PhD student enrolled at the Environmental Research Institute (UHI) and is supported by the NAFC Marine Centre. He is working with the Shetland Gas Plant to assess the viability of long term peat storage for use in future restoration. His project is funded by the European Social Fund.

Sue White & John Haswell

Trowies on the Bog

Reflections on a peat bog restoration project.

Lesley Harrison

A collective imaginative (re)construction of the northern coastline

This presentation discusses our collective imaginative (re)construction of the northern coastline. I have explored this idea in my own poetry, prose and creative engagement with archive texts: I identify and bring forward the ways that we talk about the coastline, presenting this language as a form of mapping, of mapping the self-in-place. The process of languaging place is a form of continual self-orientation, or self-triangulation, within our environment. There is great similarity between the construction of the cartographic map (selection, prioritisation, symbolic representation, conceptual framing) and the process of construction of place in prose, poetry and direct speech. This process, I would argue, is most visible in poetry's concentrated, condensed, reflexive use of language and space. The poem itself, I argue, can be understood as a form of map.

My own poems of the northern coastline are cartographic gestures towards an area which is distant from heavily-occupied, stabilised, deeply over-written population centres and fixed ideas of language use and meaning; along the northern coastline, it is possible, through experimentation with language and grammatic form, to see this human process of self-orientation and self-location at work.

GREEN ROOM

Dr Esther Renwick

Keeping it Real: Communicating Authenticity in the Cultural Sector

"Keep it real: to stay true to oneself; to resist the temptation to be fake" (onlinedictionary.com)

This paper explores a personal journey from researching authenticity in World Heritage visitor experience to becoming Marketing Manager at Shetland Arts Development Agency and connections made along the way. Drawing together common themes of authenticity, engagement and education, this paper delves into the power of human experience, narrative and the role of authenticity when communicating with the public in the cultural sector.

Dr Simon Clarke

Balancing management priorities at Scatness Broch and Iron Age Village

This paper looks at the lifecycle of a major heritage project, to excavate, consolidate and present an important Iron Age monument (the research element of which has just completed its final publication). It considers the successes and frustrations of a coalition of agencies from inside and outside Shetland that collaborated to achieve their sometimes very different short and long term objectives. The author was a participant in, but not a leader of the project, and it is hoped therefore can offer an informed, but non-partisan assessment of the whole. The study will explore how collaboration is necessary and beneficial, but also involves making compromises, surrendering some individual aims for the collective good. The competing priorities of the different players; local and national; academic, professional and amateur are a product of their very different needs with regards to research, educational and recreational outputs and also the balance between immediate results and future orientated management.

Dr Sarah Jane Gibbon

Magnus 900: The impact of a combined local anniversary and Scottish themed year on creative and academic outputs

Looking at the impact of local government led anniversary events on academia, tourism and creative outputs and how a practitioner who straddles two different worlds can manage this, using 'St Magnus and Me' as a case study. The anniversary of St Magnus (patron saint of both Orkney and Shetland) has provoked responses including academic research, the creation of the St Magnus Pilgrimage Way and creative outputs such as songs.

SESSION 3:

1:30pm - 2:50pm (1hr 20mins)

AUDITORIUM

Panel Discussion: Art & Archaeology

SIRFA Symposium cross-over event: Scotland's Island Research Framework for Archaeology (SIRFA) is a four year project which aims to develop and disseminate Regional Research Frameworks for the Western Isles, Shetland and Orkney - within a broader, island-wide archaeological research agenda for Scotland. The project is coordinated by Dr Rebecca Rennell at Lews Castle College UHI, based at the Benbecula Campus in Uist.

The second SIRFA Symposium will be held in Lerwick from Friday 20th September to Monday 23rd September 2019. Delegates of both Shoormal and the SIRFA Symposium are invited to this session.

GREEN ROOM

Panel Discussion: Voluntary Sector Vibrancy in Voluntary Organisations

Volunteering is vital to many aspects of island life. 55% of adults in Shetland volunteer formally through an organisation or group, compared to a national average of 28% (Scottish Household Survey 2017). What does it take to sustain a vibrant voluntary organisation in a place with a small population?

EVENING EVENTS:

7:30pm - 9pm (1hr 30mins)

AUDITORIUM

David Sherry

Shoormal Commissioned Artist

David Sherry, Glasgow based performance artist, will present a new performance series that consists of ten ideas: actions, performed stories and readings delivered in quick succession.

His live performances develops with each presentation, acting out real and imagined scenes for the audience to link and weave together. Sherry will perform works that look at the passage of time, travel and technology, processing how the media instructs us how to live a righteous life. These will look at the distance between past and present, and ideas of dislocation from a constantly changing world. How do we hold onto our identity in the face of an ever-renewing culture?

'I will look at my relationship to the community I grew up in, often feeling like a tourist in my home town. In this new work I will be focusing on the deeper meanings of an artist community. Looking at the people I have met and connected to, discussing my relationships to social media as an artist. Asking what has been gained and what has been lost?' (David Sherry)

Shetland ForWirds

A short variety concert from Shetland's dialect champions, Shetland ForWirds. Poetry, storytelling and music celebrating Shetland dialect.

Shetland ForWirds aims to foster and promote the use of written and spoken Shetland dialect as a valued and essential element of Shetland's distinctive heritage and culture.

OPEN MIC BRUNCH with Seth Travins

Mareel Café Bar
Saturday 21 September, 11.30am - 1.30pm

Join us in the café bar for an informal open mic session before heading on your way. Delegates and members of the public are welcome to perform.





FRASER FIFIELD

Fraser Fifield is a highly innovative musician and composer with 20 years professional freelance experience to date. Fifield is experienced in international as well as domestic performance and collaborations. For the Shoormal Commission he will be collaborating with fellow musician Graeme Stephen.

These are two of Scotland's most distinctive musicians, over many years exploring where new music meets old and composing meets improvising. On low whistle, soprano sax, border pipes and guitar, the duo create music to evoke many places at once, an inspired globe-spanning amalgam of influence through a Scottish lens.

This wholly improvised music performance is fore-titled by it's inspiration, The Space Between, and encompasses a hint of introduction to the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta, from which one might decide afresh: was the music thoughtful or thoughtless?

"To call a musician's work 'unique' is a bold statement. However, if any musicians come close, then Fraser Fifield would be among them. The originality of his work, the breadth of his inspiration, scope of invention and variety of instruments he uses to create his music make him unique - and one of Scotland's most enthralling artists"
folkradio.co.uk

Fraser Fifield has 5 critically acclaimed solo albums with original composed content. He won the Ignition Award for Innovation in Scottish Traditional Music from Hands Up For Trad, and has been Nominated for Instrumentalist of The Year and Composer of The Year by Scots Trad Music Awards.

Fifield has a record of around 25 years to date playing as a professional musician both in Scotland and abroad with groups such as Wolfstone, Old Blind Dogs, Salsa Celtica, Capercaillie, Karen Matheson, Afro Celts, Zakir Hussain and many more. He has regularly collaborated with Graeme Stephen combining their personal musical interests. Graeme has won awards for his jazz guitar performances and a portfolio of imaginative compositions.

Fraser and Graeme's performance will be on **Wednesday 18th September**, Mareel Auditorium.

www.fraserfifield.com
www.graemestephen.net



MARTIN DISLEY

Martin Disley is a sound and new media artist based in Edinburgh, who makes compositions, installations and web-based interventions.

His work has been exhibited at locations across Scotland including the V&A Museum, Dundee, the CCA, Glasgow, and Summerhall and Hidden Door Festival, Edinburgh, as well as further afield in the Guterhallen Gallery, Solingen, Sala Aranyo, Barcelona, and various venues in Banjul, The Gambia.

Martin was recently commissioned by the climate-breakdown protest group Extinction Rebellion to create an audio installation for their co-curated exhibition at Summerhall as part of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. For this project he built several bespoke hydrophones (subaquatic recording devices) and used them to record the source material for the work - the creaking of melting ice; the hum of industrial shipping; the trembling of ferric debris. These materials were then shaped, arranged and spatialised in the studio to produce the final work- a four channel electroacoustic composition.

For Shoormal he will repeat and extend this process with a new composition, bringing hydrophones alongside normal microphones to record and process source material, on location, in the days preceding the conference. After manipulating and arranging this new material in response to the theme, he will perform an improvised version of this new composition live.

In response to the theme 'The Space Between', Martin will focus his audio recording in the intertidal zone, the liminal space between land and sea. Intertidal zones are hubs of ecology and industry; they are interesting sources of sonic material and the sites of human and non-human collaboration and collision. Intertidal zones, as subject matter, are made all the more interesting in the Northern Isles as under Udal law they do not automatically belong to the crown - a quirk of law that reveals a unique relationship between these islands people and their land/ sea.

These notions of collaboration and collision in the space between, both between ecology and industry and between place and people, will be foregrounded through composition and arrangement of the material.

Martin's performance will be on **Thursday 19th September**, Mareel Auditorium.

www.martindisley.co.uk



DAVID SHERRY

David Sherry is a well known performance artist based in Glasgow. In 2017 he spent one month on residency in Shetland in the Booth at Scalloway and wishes to further his relationship with Shetland through this commission; making a performance lecture, performing new pieces and recently developed works relating strongly to the themes of Space Between, Spaces Between Land and Sea, Human Non- Human, Dispersed Communities and Island Places.

Earlier this year he performed at Platform Glasgow for the Outskirts Festival, and more recently twice in Berlin for an exhibition at The Hilbert Raum, looking at Border places. He will use these performances as background to develop the new performance here in Shetland.

Sherry's performance will be presented as actions, performed narratives and stories. He will perform a new series that consists of ten ideas and related short works, delivered in quick succession. His live performances develop with each presentation, acting out real and imagined scenes for the audience to link and weave together.

'Sherry is an artist best known for his performances: absurd, sometimes on the verge of painful, usually hilarious.'

Moirra Jeffrey, The Scotsman

These works will look at the passage of time, travel and technology. Making sense of the ideas of non linear time. Processing how the media instructs us how to live a righteous life and the distance between past and present.

They will also explore ideas of dislocation from a constantly changing world and processing this change, and how to hold onto one's identity in the face of an ever renewing culture.

David's performance will be on **Friday 20th September**, Mareel Auditorium.

