

An Ealdhain Arts Trust – Summer Exhibition 2015

(www.anealdhainartstrust.co.uk)

An Ealdhain Arts Trust was founded in November 2014 with the mission to: "excite and inspire by delivering free access to the highest quality of art in Fort William, for the benefit of the local community and visitors to the West Highlands of Scotland." Based at the Lime Tree Gallery in Fort William, the concept for the trust was initiated due to the ongoing success and demand for free access public art exhibitions held by the Gallery.

From 18th July to 30th August 2015, An Ealdhain Arts Trust presented "A Window to the West", an exhibition from the collections of the Royal Scottish Academy (RSA). Showcasing works from the late 18th Century through to present day, the exhibition focused on the Highland landscape and its ever-changing interpretation over the years. The impact of this landscape has been evident throughout the history of Scottish art, with artists drawn to the rugged wilderness in search of inspiration and a return to primitive romantic ideals. The exhibition was influenced by the accomplishments of the 2008 project "Highland Art: A Window to the West", a collaborative endeavour between the RSA and Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design culminating in the publication and associated exhibition.

The Highland Society of London helped to fund an education programme around the exhibition, including a talk by Dr Joanna Soden (formerly Collections Curator at the RSA); and two workshops for children and young adults held by award winning artist Kate Downie RSA. Separately, the Society awards an annual prize at the RSA Summer Exhibition in Edinburgh for "the best work by a Highlander", this year won by Edward Summerton RSA.



After the completion of the programme, Joanna Macauley from An Ealdhain Arts Trust wrote to say:

"The last couple of weeks have been busy. We've had the following educational events:

- 4th Aug - Talk: A Window to the West led by Dr Joanna Soden
- 11th Aug - Over and Under: Drawing the Land - Artist workshop with Kate Downie RSA
- 24th Aug - School visit - 22 Primary 3 & 4 pupils from Lundavra Primary, Fort William
- 25th Aug - School visit - 22 Primary 3 & 4 pupils from Lundavra Primary, Fort William (different group)
- 26th Aug - School visit - 22 Primary 4 & 5 pupils from Lundavra Primary, Fort William
- 27th Aug - School visit - 160 1st year students from Lochaber High School, Fort William (4 groups)

“The Trustees are extremely pleased with this turnout and the involvement of the local schools. This is the first time that the High School has been able to visit the gallery and a great start for the Trust. This marks the beginning of a great relationship with the High School who are hindered by the lack of funding for buses and staff cover to leave the school to attend such events.

“Thanks to the help of the Highland Society we were able to bring Joanna Soden and an acclaimed contemporary artist to Fort William. Both of these events were incredibly successful so much so that the Trust hopes to implement something similar with each exhibition.”

OVER AND UNDER: DRAWING THE LAND



ADULT & YOUTH WORKSHOPS WITH KATE DOWNIE RSA
An Ealdhain Arts Trust – Lime Tree Gallery, Fort William
11TH August – 10am and 2pm

An active exploration of drawing led by Kate Downie RSA, taking inspiration from both the epic and the intimate aspects of the local landscape. Charcoal supplied, bring your imagination!

10am Adults
2pm Young Adults (14 years+)
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Separately, Ian Peter Macdonald (a Member of the Society, and chairman of the Trustees of An Ealdhain Arts Trust) also wrote to say:

“I just wanted to report back on the results of the Society’s support for educational doings at our recent exhibition showing works of the West Highlands by members of the Royal Scottish Academy.

“The show ran from mid-July to the end of August and thus we only had a week or so of school time. In this week we have had over 200 schoolchildren through, with 160 pupils from Lochaber High School and 66 from primary schools locally. Both the teachers and children were delighted and one 6 year old reflected of a painting by Douglas Percy Bliss “This looks like paradise, just like Fort William!”

Furthermore, the Highland Society of London’s contribution allowed us to invite Kate Downie RSA to host a day's teaching. The attendees were absolutely delighted by Kate's approach and ideas and left fizzing with enthusiasm. Huge thanks to the Society, and please do convey this to our fellow Members.”