

GEOPOETICS NEWS

February 2011

Dear all

A warm welcome to new friends I met recently in Orkney and at the Cultural Learning Network day in Argyll who are interested in finding out more about geopoetics.

Good News: Atlantic Islands Centre

The Isle of Luing Community Trust planning applications to build an Atlantic Islands Centre on Luing have been unanimously approved by the Argyll & Bute Council planning committee after a full debate. The Trust hopes to now move forward by bringing islanders together and raising the remaining funding.

Going Outward Geopoetics Weekend on Saturday 26 March and Sunday 27 March 2011 at Brantwood (Former Home of John Ruskin), Coniston, Cumbria

With only six weeks to go there are still some places available if you book soon.

Going Outward is about making real connections with the world as the key to understanding and practising geopoetics as a way of being in the world which places the planet Earth at the centre of our experience. It seeks a new or renewed sense of world, of space, light and energy which is experienced both intellectually, through developing our knowledge, and sensitively, using all our senses to become attuned to the world. It is a theory-practice which involves going out into the world with a heightened awareness of it and all the possibilities for responding creatively to it. It seeks to express that sensitive and intelligent contact with the world creatively in many different ways for example, oral expression, writing, visual arts, music and other art forms, science, philosophy and in various combinations of these.

'Geopoetics and John Ruskin: A Conversation'

The outstanding setting of John Ruskin's former house overlooking Coniston Water in the Lake District will enable us to explore his response to landscape and his relationship to geopoetics in the company of Howard Hull, Director of the Ruskin Foundation and Sally Beamish, Head Gardener and Estate Manager at Brantwood (see attached biographical notes).

A Visual approach to Geopoetics: Artist Talk

Richard Ashrowan is a moving image artist, living and working in the Scottish Borders. He will show extracts from his recent works - *Alchemist, Mutus Floris, Lament* and *Reflections, Inversions, Symmetries*, while discussing the relationship between the theoretical basis for these works and *geopoetics*. A diffusion of boundaries between the real and the unreal, the seen and the imagined, the present and the past, lie at the heart of his work, which seeks to move beyond perception to arrive at an embodied material consciousness, drawn from an intense and elemental engagement with nature.

See more at www.ashrowan.com

Art with a Geopoetic theme

This will feature a series of short experimental films which might broadly be described as 'geopoetic'. This film programme has been selected from artist filmmakers from around the world for their sensitivity toward our relationship with the natural world, while also evoking the poetic in terms of their form. The screening will be followed by an open discussion.

Walk in the Coniston area

On the Sunday there will be a three hour walk in the area led by Tim Brennan of the University of Sunderland.

The weekend provides a good opportunity for our many members in England and Wales to discuss with us how a geopoetics network of like minds might be developed there.

The cost of the full Saturday programme including buffet lunch on Saturday, but excluding the evening meal, is £30 and the Sunday walk is free. Comfortable accommodation has been arranged at the St Andrews Youth Centre in Coniston on the evenings of Friday 25 March and Saturday 26 March at a cost of £15 per night. The total cost including 2 nights' accommodation is £60.

Please return the completed booking form and full payment ASAP to Bridie Ashrowan: Phenzhopehaugh, Robertson, Hawick, Roxburghshire TD9 7NQ.

Email: bridie@ashrowan.net tel. 01750 62204. Further information and images: www.brantwood.org.uk and www.standrewscdyc.org.uk

Facebook Discussion Group for members

The group has got off to a good start with lots of members posting photographs, poems and their views about the title of our online journal. The favourite so far is Stravaig but other suggestions are still welcome either by e-mail to me or by joining the group. You can now become a member of the Scottish Centre online here: <http://geopoetics.org.uk/page12/Shop.html> and fill in this form: <http://geopoetics.org.uk/page11/contact-us.php>. Then sign up to Facebook, let me know, and I'll add you to the group.

Geopoetics Online Journal

We're aiming to have the first issue ready by the Brantwood Weekend.

Test Trenches and Slate, Sea and Sky at the Pier Arts Centre, Orkney

This trans-disciplinary residency led by Claire Pençak broke new ground in bringing together artists and archaeologists in a series of creative investigations based on the Ness of Brodgar site which led to installations, a seminar, a collaborative poetry reading on the move, a talk and discussions. You can read more about it here: <http://northings.com/2011/01/31/test-trenches-2/> and about Claire's work at www.tabularasadance.co.uk

Ongoing Events

**Until 4 March 2011 Scottish Society of Artists Exhibition RSA Galleries,
The Mound, Edinburgh 10 am – 5pm**

The work in this year's exhibition from invited graduate artists, members and non members reflects the spirit of the SSA. Our member Liz Douglas has two works in the show - 'Another world' and 'Raft'. See www.s-s-a.org

2 April - 15 May 2011 'Mire': Liz Douglas Exhibition at Harestanes Countryside Centre, Ancrum, Jedburgh from Saturday

An exhibition of work- an exploration of microscopic organisms - diatoms - from a Site of Special Scientific Interest at Whitlaw Mosses in the Scottish Borders. The project has been grant-aided by Scottish Natural Heritage with assistance from The Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, Scottish Borders Council and The Scottish Environmental Protection Agency. See www.lizdouglas.co.uk

Until 20 March 2011 at the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh, John Hope Gateway Gallery *Conserving Ecologies: Craft and Biodiversity* 10am – 6pm Free

This exhibition explores biodiversity through contemporary Scottish craft by six Scottish craftmakers. [Fiona Byrne-Sutton](#), [Georgia Crook](#), [Caroline Dear](#), [Rachel Elliott](#), [Anne Murray](#) and [Jenny Pope](#) produce work in a range of disciplines from ceramics to willow weaving which successfully reinterpret and combine traditional techniques to create work that sensitively reflects our need to conserve both our natural and craft ecologies.

Until 6 March 2011 at the Edinburgh City Art Centre 10 am – 5pm Free [Window to the West: The Rediscovery of Highland Art](#) (Uinneag Dhan Àird an Air: Ath-Lorg Ealain na Gàidhealtachd)

Drawing on both historical and contemporary art, this major exhibition asks significant questions about art and the Highlands with particular reference to the Gaelic language. How does art relate to Gaelic language and culture? How are memory and history represented? How do artists respond to geography and cultural change? The exhibition is curated by Murdo Macdonald and Arthur Watson and there is a varied events programme for adults and families. Looking forward to hearing from you.

All very best

Norrie

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