



NATIONAL
GALLERIES OF
SCOTLAND

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FOR **BOOKING** INFORMATION

LEANAILTEACHD AGUS ÙRACHADH LÈIR SINNEACH AIR GÀIDHEALTACHD NA H-ALBA
CONFERENCE STATE OF THE ART • STAID NA H-EALAIN
VISUAL TRADITION AND INNOVATION IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND

When **June 2010**

Thursday, 24th · 17.15-18.45: Registration & Public Lecture

Friday, 25th · 09.30-16.45: Sessions · 18.00-19.00 Reception in RSA Building

Saturday, 26th · 10.00-13.00: Sessions

Venue Hawthornden Lecture Theatre, *Weston Link** National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh

*Please use the main Weston Link entrance



William McTaggart
LOBSTER FISHERS, MACHRIHANISH BAY
c.1901

Courtesy of the University of Dundee
Museum Services

The Gaelic language has given the world one of its great oral, literary and musical cultures, but the visual aspect of Scottish Gaelic culture has received relatively little attention, even though it is known to be important. Think, for example, of the monks of Iona creating the *Book of Kells* at the beginning of the 9th century or of the Gaelic speaking painter William McTaggart laying the foundations for modern Scottish art in the late 19th century.

- **The purpose of this Conference** is to explore that visual culture of the Gàidhealtachd, from both the historical and contemporary perspectives.
- **The event begins with an evening lecture on Thursday 24th June**, by Murdo Macdonald, Professor of History of Scottish Art at the University of Dundee. His topic is *A Highland Art: Reclaiming the visual for the Gàidhealtachd*.
- **Beginning proceedings on Friday 25th June** we welcome Michael Russell MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning in the Scottish Government. Michael Russell has written two books on the work undertaken by Werner Kissling in the Hebrides in the 1930s. His paper is entitled: *Werner Kissling; from Ethnographer to Photographer*. Kissling's analysis of—and contribution to—the Gàidhealtachd underlines the international ethos of our Conference.
- **The event is organised by a research group** based at the Visual Research Centre of Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design at the University of Dundee, and at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the Gaelic College of the University of the Highlands and Islands. That project, *Window to the West/Uinneag dhan Àird an Iar* has as its purpose the redefinition of thinking about the visual with respect to the Gàidhealtachd.
- **Other speakers on Friday's programme** include, from Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, a distinguished list of thinkers about Gaelic culture: Hugh Cheape, Meg Bateman, John Purser and Mike Cormack; from the University of Dundee, Lesley Lindsay, research fellow with the Window to the West project, and from the Royal Scottish Academy, Joanna Soden whose work as curator of the collections has helped to reveal the significance of their Highland aspect. Also programmed for Friday is a paper from Malcolm Maclean, who, as Director of Pròiseact Nan Ealan has made a major contribution to the development of Gàidhealtachd art, not least through his advocacy of *An Leabhar Mòr/The Great Book of Gaelic*. Friday's programme concludes with a presentation by two artists closely involved in *An Leabhar Mòr*, Will Maclean and Arthur Watson (Watson is a key teacher and researcher at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design at the University of Dundee, Maclean is now Professor Emeritus of that institution.) Their sculpture, *Cranngal*, is now a feature of the Sabhal Mòr Ostaig campus in Skye.
- **Our event concludes with a group of speakers** on the morning of Saturday 26th who take the debate further. We begin with Georgina Coburn, who as an independent art historian and critic has contributed not least through her work with the Iona artist Mhairi Killin and her writing for the *Hi-Arts* journal, *Northings*. We then turn to the work of the environmental/installation artist Alastair Noble. Extending the vision to cover the non-Gaelic speaking Highlands and Islands we explore new archaeological research in Orkney with Antonia Thomas, but to return us firmly back to the Gàidhealtachd we conclude with a presentation from the distinguished tourism and heritage consultant, Coinneach MacLean, who specialises in Gaelic Scotland.
- **The Conference is part of a programme of events** that includes an exhibition at the City Art Centre, Edinburgh, from November 2010 to March 2011.

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Will Maclean & Arthur Watson
CRANNGHAL, 2006
Courtesy of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig
Photo © Murdo Macdonald

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BOOK NOW

Advance booking is essential for the Conference and for any catering requirements

BOOKING: INFORMATION & COSTS

- Attendance at the Conference, including teas/coffees and an evening reception at the Royal Scottish Academy on Friday, 25th June: **£25.00** (concessions: **£15.00**)

On Friday 25th June, at a reduced rate for delegates, *The Scottish Cafe* at the Gallery has agreed to provide Lunch and then, prior to the reception, High Tea.

- To book a Soup/Sandwich Lunch the cost is: **£10.00**
- To book a 'Princes Street' High Tea, including a glass of wine, the cost is: **£15.00**
- Cheques should be made payable to **The University of Dundee** and sent to **Lesley Lindsay**

FOR CONFIRMATION OF YOUR BOOKING

please send your cheque with the following details:

- (1) your name
- (2) email (postal address ONLY if no email)

ATTENDANCE

- (3) £25.00
£15.00 (concession)

MENU CHOICES

- (4) £10.00 for Soup/Sandwich Lunch
- (5) £15.00 for 'Princes Street' High Tea, including a glass of wine

• **Lesley Lindsay**

Uinneag dhan Àird an Iar / Window to the West
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duncan of jordanstone
college of art & design

VRC
visual research centre



RSA
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