Exhibition of The Argyll Collection

29/03/2011

The Argyll Collection of art works was originally established by the inspirational Jim Tyre working with Naomi Mitchison between 1970-1990. It was created as a learning resource in schools for the young people of Argyll and Bute. However over the years it became underutilised, dispersed and largely forgotten. This will be the first time that this prestigious collection has been available for the public to view.

Thanks to funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Argyll and Bute Council, The Creative Arts in Schools Team (CAST) has been able to bring the collection together, restore, reframe and digitise it and will soon redistribute it to secondary schools to be used as originally intended.

John MacPhee, QIO/former art teacher, Argyll and Bute Council, says: "I am absolutely delighted to see the collection renovated and re-presented back in public view allowing our children to see these unique pieces of quality artwork. I am also glad that the collection will be available in digital formats and on the world wide web so a wide range of people can have access to it."

The full collection consists of 172 pieces of art including paintings, prints, sculpture, textiles, ceramics, drawings and mixed media covering a wide range of subject matters including sea/landscapes, portraits and abstract art. It has become an important snapshot of late 20th-century Scottish art and contains work by Ann Redpath, Dame Elizabeth Blackadder, Joan Eardley, John Houston, Ethel Walker, James Morrison, Leon Morrocco, Will Maclean, David Cohen, Glen Scouller, David McClure, Sir Robin Philipson, Sir William McTaggart, Sir William Gillies, William Gear and many others.

A website allowing full access to the entire collection will go live in May. The site will include the history of the collection, digital images and notes on each piece.

As part of the renovation CAST is trying to locate as many of the artists as possible to ask them for information on any of their artworks which may be part of the collection and to invite them to the relaunch.

At the opening event on 11 May, the Adopt Art Scheme will be launched. A small number of the works are in serious need of conservation before they can be exhibited. The scheme invites members of the public to adopt an artwork by paying for the conservation and reframing of these works. Once adopted the name of the sponsor will appear on the label adjacent to the artwork whenever it is being shown.

Exhibition Events will take place on 21 and 27 May to coincide with the relaunch of the exhibition and will include talks and/or demonstrations by leading conservators, photographers and framers who have worked with the collection.

Notes to editors

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic

places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. To date it has invested over £500 million in Scotland's heritage.

Jim Tyre was the Art Advisor for Argyll and Bute Council.

The Duke of Argyll has generously agreed to allow free admission for Argyll & Bute school children during the run of the exhibition. 12 – 31 May 2011.

Adopting art schemes to allow conservation work to be carried out have been successfully run in Europe.

Helen Creasy from the Scottish Conservation Studios will give a talk on 21 May. Photographer Alan Dimmick and framer Jan Fraser will give a practical workshop and talk on 27 May. Booking essential for these events.

Please contact Alicia Henderson for the list of artists CAST are still searching for via email leestudio@btopenworld.com or call 07590 385 571.