

ABSENT VOICES MEDIA INFORMATION

March 2014

WHO: Eight artists-in-residence at Greenock's historic Sugar Sheds

WHAT: Absent Voices Pop Up Show

WHEN: Friday 28th March 2014 from 2.30-8.30pm

WHERE: Beacon Arts Centre, Custom House Quay, Greenock, PA15 1HJ

SWEET DAY OUT ON OFFER AT BEACON ARTS CENTRE

A group of Inverclyde-based artists and musicians is holding a free day-long event featuring live music and art at Greenock's Beacon Arts Centre.

The group of eight artists-in-residence at Greenock's historic A-listed Sugar Sheds have been working on a project called Absent Voices, exploring the rich legacy of the sugar industry in Inverclyde.

Primary schools, community groups and members of the public have been collaborating with the artists-in-residence and now the group wants to share this work-in-progress with the public.

The artists are also looking for people who worked in the sugar industry to come forward and take part in the Absent Voices project. Their memories will contribute to a visual and sonic archive which the artists are currently building up as a lasting legacy.

The Absent Voices Pop Up will take place on Friday, March 28 from 2.30 until 8.30pm.

The eight artists will be joined by celebrated Inverclyde maritime artist, James Watt, who will display several of his iconic Clydeside paintings for one day only. Mr Watt will be speaking at the event about the importance of drawing as a tool for gathering information.

Absent Voices lead artist, Alec Galloway, said: "As a group we have all been working on creating an archive which will tell the story of the once-mighty sugar industry in Inverclyde.

"This pop-up event will give us a chance to spread the word about Absent Voices far and wide and to encourage members of the public to become involved in this exciting initiative."

POP-UP HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- A display of drawings, paintings, photography, stained glass and poetry inspired by Inverclyde's sugar industry heritage
- Artwork produced by Inverclyde primary schools and community groups
- Absent Voices artists, Rod Miller & Anne McKay, sharing their experiences of Sugar Sheds drawing walks in which members of the public have taken part

- Live performances from Kevin McDermott and Yvonne Lyon ((check Absent Voices website for timings)
- Samples from an under-construction soundtrack of the Sugar Sheds by Ryan King & Alan Carlisle
- Beautiful Sugar Shed-inspired photography by Alastair Cook, alongside new writing from Scottish poet John Glenday.
- The opportunity to sign up for FREE workshops in stained glass, urban sketching tours around Inverclyde, digital photography and songwriting.

ABSENT VOICES ARTISTS

Alan Carlisle & Ryan King

Two Greenock-based artists and musicians working on the construction of a soundtrack of the Sugar Sheds. They are inviting anyone with experience of having worked in the sugar industry to share their memories. These conversations will be recorded and could eventually form part of the finished soundtrack.

Alastair Cook

Prize-winning photographer and film-maker, Alastair , will be exhibiting new photographic work inspired by the sugar sheds as part of a planned book with Scottish poet John Glenday. John has contributed brand new poetry alongside Alastair's photography, offering a taste of the book and exhibition to come. Throughout the summer, Alastair will be working from the Dutch Gable House in Greenock where he will make wet plate Collodion photographs of the Greenock community, as well as delivering a series of Film poems with Sheree Mack on the darker side of the sugar trade.

Alec Galloway

Well-known throughout the UK as a glass artist, Greenock-born Alec will be inviting people to sign up for free classes in stained glass, glass casting and urban sketching. The classes will include instruction in stained glass with the focus being on ideas and creative responses to Inverclyde's sugar industry. Alec will guide his group around various locations in Inverclyde, drawing as they go. They will be joined by well-known Inverclyde artist, James Watt, who will talk about locations he has painted around the dock areas.

Yvonne Lyon

Well-known Greenock-based singer-songwriter, Yvonne Lyon has been working with Anne McKay in Inverclyde primary schools, leading workshops on singing and making songs inspired by the sugar sheds. She plans to create an archive of songs – new and old – based around people's memories of working in the sugar industry.

Kevin McDermott

Better known as the singer-songwriter behind The Kevin McDermott Orchestra, Kevin started his working life as a ships' draughtsman and worked with shipbuilders, Yarrows, for nine years before his band signed to Island Records. For Absent Voices, Kevin is planning a new album based around the sugar industry and its connections to Africa and the Caribbean. Kevin will be performing at the pop-up event.

Anne Mckay

For the last six months, Gourock-based artist, Anne, has been busy working with primary school pupils, community groups and members of the public, delving into the legacy of Inverclyde's connection to sugar. With Rod Miller, she has led the monthly drawing walks of the Sugar Sheds as well as working with local primary schools, All Saints PS and Whin-hill PS. An inspiring teacher, she has been sharing her vast experience and enthusiasm for drawing and painting as she goes. She is also making her own highly personal artwork inspired by the sugar sheds.

Rod Miller

Greenock-based photographer and painter, Rod Miller, has been working with Anne Mckay in leading the monthly walking and drawing tours of the Sugar Sheds. He has been immersed in the history of the sugar industry and is planning photography tours of the Sugar Sheds during the summer while working on his own paintings, inspired by the legacy of the sugar industry. Rod recently assisted in the making of a BBC documentary, Stanley Spencer: The Colours of the Clyde, about the time artist, Stanley Spncer, spent in Port Glasgow.

Links:

www.absentvoices.com

<http://twitter.com/AbsentVoices>

www.facebook.com/AbsentVoices

www.blipfoto.com/SugarSheds1

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