



NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND and NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

3 April 2017

Sound archives inspire new Canna installation

Visitors alighting at Canna this spring will experience a beautiful installation inspired by the many archive recordings that are housed on the National Trust for Scotland's island.

The work has been created as part of a joint project between the Trust, the charity that conserves and promotes Scotland's heritage, and the National Library of Scotland's Connecting Scotland's Sounds project.

Musician and artist Yvonne Lyon worked with the Canna community, visual artist Anne McKay and Canna Archivist Fiona MacKenzie to co-create the new multi-media installation which was premiered on Sunday 2 April at the Pier Waiting Room on the Hebridean island.

The creation celebrates the National Trust for Scotland's Canna Sound Archive Collection – a unique treasure trove of audio recordings made from the 1930s onwards by folklorists John Lorne Campbell and Margaret Fay Shaw, who both feature throughout, and inspired the installation.

From Gaelic songs recorded by John Lorne Campbell and light-hearted recordings of Margaret Fay Shaw's cat to new songs created by Yvonne Lyon and the Canna community, visitors to the island will enjoy a unique interpretation of Canna's audio heritage.

Connecting Scotland's Sounds is a project based at the National Library of Scotland, championing the preservation and sharing of Scotland's heritage sound recordings from 2016 to 2017 with support from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

Yvonne Lyon said: "Working as a Guest Sound Curator on Canna has been enormously inspiring. To have the opportunity to mine old archives and have

space and time to re-imagine them, breathe new life into them, create new work and involve the community has been a profound privilege. Hopefully the new art created will encourage others to explore the old!"

Fiona Mackenzie, Canna House Archivist/Manager at the National Trust for Scotland said: "Turning our little empty waiting room on Canna Pier into a welcoming, interesting and vibrant place for visitors and locals to learn about our island's heritage has been a wonderful experience. The community has learned about our own Canna Sound Archive and the potential that we have for using the 'old' to create the 'new'. It has re-opened the community's eyes and ears to these treasures. It was also wonderful to work with professional creatives, whose activities the schoolchildren in particular have embraced fully! We thank the Connecting Scotland's Sounds project for giving us this chance."

Amy McDonald, Engagement & Learning Co-ordinator for Connecting Scotland's Sounds said: "We are delighted to have supported this Guest Sound Curator residency on Canna. The creative collaboration between the Canna community and Yvonne Lyon will help share the island's rich archive sound collection with new listeners."

Canna is in the Inner Hebrides and has been inhabited for thousands of years. In the early-Christian period, it belonged to the monastery on Iona. There are a number of archaeological remains on the island dating from this period, including a series of highly decorated cross shafts and the wonderfully located hermitage site, 'Sgur na Ban Naiomh'.

The island was gifted to the National Trust for Scotland in 1981 by Gaelic scholar John Lorne Campbell, who lived there with his wife Margaret Fay Shaw. As well as its rich cultural heritage, the island is renowned for its seabirds and boasts puffins, razorbills and Manx shearwaters. There are also sea eagles and golden eagles.

There are currently 23 residents on the island.

- ENDS -

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Editor's Notes:

Images: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/R327z0>

Film to accompany Yvonne Lyon's Centre of My World:

https://youtu.be/j0ev9Lbt_Qk

Scotland's Sounds network, National Library of Scotland

The Scotland's Sounds network is currently coordinated by the National Library of Scotland and includes a range of museums, libraries, archives and private collections which want to work collaboratively to care for and provide access to Scotland's heritage recorded sounds.

The strategic vision for the Scotland's Sounds network states: 'Through increasing visibility to sound collections we can help in raising standards and sharing best practice to encourage effective care and promote widespread accessibility while fostering a supportive public and professional network.'

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More information on Scotland's Sounds can be found at www.nls.uk/about-us/working-with-others/scotlands-sounds and www.scotlandssounds.org

The National Trust for Scotland

The National Trust for Scotland is the charity that celebrates and protects Scotland's heritage. It relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work of caring for the natural and built heritage of Scotland for everyone to enjoy.

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