



## **CHAIRMANS REPORT 2022**

Before I start my report I would like to express thanks to my fellow committee members who have given their time, and tirelessly served, to ensure our Association not only continues but flourishes with new and relevant initiatives.

Our aim this year has been to stimulate engagement amongst the membership and while results to date have been less than we hoped for, we are committed to developing the Association to be the premier meeting place, and marketing tool, for artists and makers across Skye and Lochalsh.

So to that end I'd like to review a number of areas which we have been focusing on this year.

But firstly...

### **THE COMMITTEE**

Your committee has been made up of eight members including myself who represent many of the disciplines of the membership. We have Stuart Whatley who serves as our treasurer, Beverley Scholefield as committee secretary, Ian Williams who looks after exhibitions and fun ie member events! Karen Davies who also helps with exhibitions and social media, Michelle Seviour who recently resigned from the committee due to work commitments, who was involved with the constitution and developing a members pack, Cathy Myhill who is responsible for organising distribution of the Art Skye marketing material and Liz Myhill who is also involved with events and represents Slaca to a wider arts audience.

During 2022 the committee has met regularly online using Zoom technology with meetings lasting no more than an hour. During the year we have adjusted the constitution to make it more relevant and robust for the Association, implemented the 2022 Art Skye marketing campaign, created an online members pack for prospective members, attempted to organise two exhibitions and participated in the inaugural Highland Art Prize in Perth.

In terms of specifics:

### **ART SKYE 2022**

This year's Art Skye campaign saw 12k booklets printed and distributed to members and quality outlets with an additional 15k leaflets going to high traffic venues. Again many thanks to Stuart Whatley and Beverley Scholefield for warehousing the booklets and leaflets. Feedback from members suggest that this years campaign has been the best and most effective yet with 30+ members reserving their place for 2023.

### **EXHIBITIONS**

It's been a frustrating year for Ian Williams and Karen Davies who make up the Exhibitions sub-committee. They have spent a lot of time pursuing a variety of venue leads only to be eventually disappointed. The most bothersome being Armadale Castle where a post-easter member exhibition was in its final stages of planning only to have the castle cancel at the last

minute. Ian has continued to keep in touch with them throughout the year trying to see if we could re-visit the opportunity in 2023 but with little success. However, on a more positive note we have been contacted by Gallery Talla Dearg at Isle Ornsay in Sleat regarding staging a reduced member exhibition at their venue, discussions are ongoing albeit the date proposed wouldn't be until 2024.

### **HIGHLAND ART PRIZE**

Five member artists represented our Association at the inaugural Highland Art Prize held in Perth during the Royal National Mod in October, with two artists Liz Myhill and Karen Davies being nominated for the final judging selection. Liz represented the Association on the prize giving day and while we sadly missed out on any prizes Liz reported that overall standard of work submitted was very high and the general exposure of our Association very good. We will be looking to be involved again next year so start thinking about if you would like to be involved.

### **MEMBER INTERACTION**

As I mentioned at the start of this report our aim this year has been to try and stimulate a greater engagement with and from the membership, however due to the ongoing covid restrictions the opportunity to meet publicly only became possible later on in the year. To that end we organised two special Zoom events during the winter and early spring of 2022 where two artists/makers per event presented their work, talked about what inspired them and took questions from those present. It was unanimously agreed that each event was not only successful but very informative, the only sadness was that not more members attended.

Social media, which is so vital to all our businesses success has been a rather mixed bag. Currently we don't have anyone on the committee able to commit to posting regularly on social media and although we have a Facebook and Instagram presence, the number of members using these media streams are small. However in saying that Karen Davies and myself are currently working on making both platforms more accessible to the membership, with the additional development of a members group page where minutes of committee meetings can be posted and discussion can take place about all the subjects we consider at committee, hopefully all ready for the beginning of 2023.

Also for 2023 we are hoping to organise a members BBQ at Edinbane Pottery in the Spring. Historically this was a much anticipated event in the SLACA calendar and thanks to Stuart one we're happy to reinstate.

In conclusion I would like to express the committee's thanks to Russell Sherwood who stood down from the committee at the beginning of the year. Russ was the face of Art Skye distribution being the person who rocked up with boot loads of booklets and a cheery smile, that, and his hosting of the Association's Facebook page has proved a valuable contribution over the years.

I'd also like to mark the sad passing of Association members Donald Mackenzie, painter, of the Blue Studio Tarskavaig and John Parsons, wood turner, Broadford, they'll be sorely missed.

Lastly, I believe SLACA represents the cream of creativity found in Skye & Lochalsh, and I look forward to another exciting and vibrant year where the rich diversity of the membership can not only be marketed by Art Skye, but where we can encourage members to come together and engage as artists and makers, sharing individual inspiration and learning from each other while perhaps sharing a dram or two.

**Peter McDermott** - Chair