



PRESS RELEASE  
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**Cape Farewell celebrates 10 years with a 4-year Scottish Islands programme and *High Arctic* exhibition at the National Maritime Museum, both launching July 2011**

**Award-winning artists and scientists explore the impact of climate change on Scotland's Island communities:**

42 artists and scientists including award-winning novelist/filmmaker Xiaolu Guo, sailor Jo Royle - best known for sailing from America to Australia in a catamaran made entirely from plastic bottles, Gaelic singers Julie Fowlis, Mary Jane Lamond and Mary Smith, artists Alison Turnbull and Annie Cattrell, theatre maker David Harradine, playwright Iain Finlay Macleod, storyteller Ian Stephen, poet Jo Shapcott, chef Oliver Rowe and environmental scientist Debora Iglesias-Rodriguez will travel through the Outer and Inner Hebrides this summer as part of a series of voyages organised by Cape Farewell, in partnership with Cove Park.

The four week-long expeditions will investigate the impact of climate change on the cultures and ecologies of Scotland's island communities. A recent report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation warned that rising sea levels are likely to have a 'severe impact' on much of the UK's coastline in coming decades, in particular across Scotland's outlying 'bellwether' islands which face the full force of increasing extreme weather events. Scotland's Highlands and Islands are, however, exceptional in the range of pioneering sustainability programmes, adaptation projects and knowledge transfer schemes being developed at both grassroots level and at the forefront of EU sustainability policy. They offer new imaginative approaches to the relationship between place, stewardship and community agency.

The voyages are themed around the Gaelic language, island musical tradition and storytelling, marine and environmental science, local resources and the built environment. Ideas and practice ranging from the Eigg community buy-out to the use of seaweed as a biofuel will be explored as a starting point for a longer term, four-year project which will include artists' residencies across the islands, the documentation and dissemination through exhibition and public events of the experiences of artists and islanders, in particular stories of cultural resilience and survival, and the bringing together of local communities, artists and scientists across the Scottish islands to create a meaningful extension of the voyages.

The project is supported by Creative Scotland, Arts Council England, Lighthouse Foundation Germany, The Bromley Trust and the Compton Foundation.

The Scottish voyages have been organised by Cape Farewell Associate Director Ruth Little who comments:

'One of the aims of the project is to challenge the widespread assumption that climate change impacts are only relevant to coastal communities in the global south. The environmental, social and economic situation in Scotland's island communities resonates strongly with that of other island and coastal cultures worldwide, and we believe that

acknowledging and communicating both the problems and the possibilities confronting islands in the north and the south is vital to develop the profile, confidence and lobbying power of island communities, and to support knowledge and skills transfer and the promotion of viable and relevant adaptation technologies. The expeditions and residencies will seek to develop new forms of communication for the human experience of climate change, and new forums for collaboration and bold imaginative response to the profound changes we all face.'

Amanda Catto, Portfolio Manager for International, Cultural Export and Visual Arts, Creative Scotland comments:

'Cape Farewell is an exciting project which Creative Scotland is delighted to support. The unique blend of artists and scientists working with island communities opens up a wide creative horizon to explore the impact of climate change on the cultures and ecologies of Scotland's remote communities. As well as a new and challenging context for the artists, we hope that the islanders will also gain from the experience and see their world through a different perspective. We are looking forward to seeing some great work as the project evolves.'

The voyages take place on a high-tech, low-carbon impact dolphin and whale research boat skippered by Jim Compton (Marine Conservation Research).

**The four week-long trips are as follows:**

Week 1: 15 – 22 July: Oban, Mull, Muck, Rum, Eigg, Skye, Mallaig  
Theme: Community buy-out and food

Week 2: 22 – 29 July: Skye, Canna, Mingulay, Pabbay, Barra, S Uist, Benbecula  
Theme: Ecology, Wildlife, Energy and local resources

Week 3: 29 July – 5 August: N Uist, Monachs, St Kilda, Harris, Lewis  
Theme: The Gaelic language, song, currents, and story telling

Week 4: 5 – 12 August: Lewis, Shiantas, Skye, Raasay, Mallaig  
Theme: Ideas of Home

Full list and biographies of participating artists and scientists are available

***High Arctic* exhibition at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich**

14 July 2011 – January 2012

Matt Clark (Creative Director, United Visual Artists) took part in Cape Farewell's 2010 expedition to the Arctic archipelago of Svalbard. Conceived as a response to the expedition, *High Arctic* uses a combination of sound, light and sculptural forms to create an abstracted arctic landscape for visitors to explore. The work conveys the scale, beauty and fragility of the unique Arctic environment through an immersive installation, inviting us to question our relationship with the world around us. Ultraviolet torches unlock hidden elements, constantly shifting patterns of graphics and text that react to visitors approaching; an archipelago of thousands of columns fills the gallery space, each representing a real glacier in Svalbard; an artificial horizon borders the gallery as a seamless canvas of light, shifting in

intensity and colour. A Max Eastley and Henrik Ekeus designed generative soundscape flows through the gallery, weaving in the voices of arctic explorers across the centuries as well as the poetry of Nick Drake who travelled with Matt to Svalbard.

**Cape Farewell** is internationally recognised for pioneering a cultural response to the climate challenge. Founded by artist David Buckland in 2001 to help communicate the science of climate change to a wide audience through a cultural lens, over the past 10 years Cape Farewell has invited world-class artists working across a range of media to join scientists undertaking field research on a series of sailing expeditions to the Arctic. The expeditions have supported encounters between artists and scientists and with the fragile environment, stimulating interdisciplinary dialogue and the creation of new artistic work that aims to provoke a shift in our thinking and our behaviour in a rapidly changing world.

Creative responses have included poems and commissioned plays by Lemn Sissay, Nick Drake, Mikhael Durnenkov and Mojisola Adebayo, music by KT Tunstall, Ryuichi Sakamoto and Martha Wainwright, the novel *Solar* by Ian McEwan, and art by Anthony Gormley, Lucy Orta, Amy Balkin, Dan Harvey and Heather Ackroyd amongst others.

Cape Farewell marks its tenth anniversary with a new focus, investigating how environmental and economic change impacts on communities and individuals. In relation to the Scottish islands, this includes investigation of the innovative use of local resources, the effects of environmental change on marine ecosystems and wildlife, the preservation of local culture and language, and cultural interventions to support and reflect life on the islands.

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