

STORIES of NAIRN

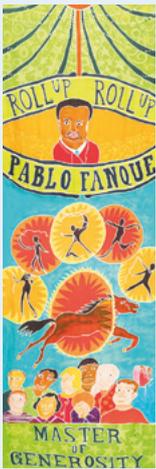
SGEULACHDAN SGÌRE INBHIR NARAINN

FLAG-MAKING
PROJECT
2022





KINETIKA
DESIGN THAT MOVES



A selection of flags designed and made by community groups with Kinetika

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Nairn
Book & Arts
Festival



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

INTRODUCING

STORIES of NAIRN | SGEULACHDAN SGÌRE INBHIR NARAINN

We are inviting you and your group to take part in this project, by sharing your story and designing an illustration of it, to be transformed into a beautiful silk flag. This year, Nairn Book and Arts Festival – the town’s annual celebration of the arts and Highland culture - is aligning its’ creative programme with Visit Scotland’s ‘Year of Scotland’s Stories’. In a major partnership with Kinetika and artist and storyteller Lizzie McDougall we will be working with local community groups to develop a collection of 20 stunning silk flags encapsulating in striking visual form just some of Nairn’s stories – who

we are, what we love about our town, where we come from, and the characters, histories, languages, myths and legends that make up the identity of Nairn and the wider area of Nairnshire. The flags will feature in several special events over the course of the festival period - 27th August – 4th September. They will form a community resource with a legacy to be built upon and expanded.

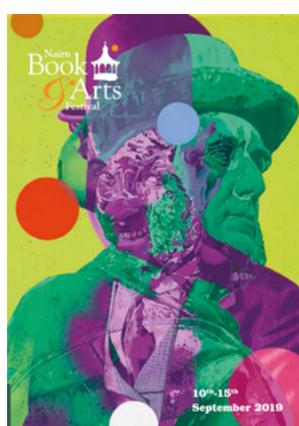
Thank you for helping us create a legacy of community will and spirit through difficult times and a beacon of hope for a brighter future.



John Wilson's
2015 Festival
programme
cover artwork



Fiona Rogers' mosaic
'Tin Wings', 2017
Festival programme
cover artwork



Shaun MacDonald's 'Dr
Grigor / Charlie Chaplin',
2019 Festival programme
cover artwork



Phoebe Roze,
2021 Festival
programme
cover artwork

ABOUT KINETIKA



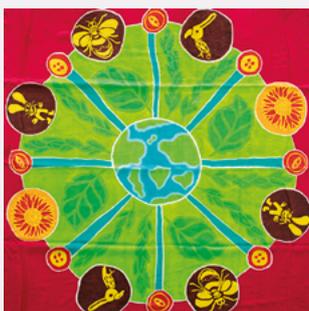
Kinetika is an internationally renowned company, specialising in creating large-scale handpainted silks. For over 20 years we have been combining world-class design with community projects to produce spectacular outdoor commissions that engage diverse audiences wherever they work. Founded by artistic director Ali Pretty in 1997 and inspired by her training in carnival arts in Trinidad and India,

Kinetika now has an unrivalled reputation for working with local communities on projects that change the way people feel about where they live. From local community walks in Essex to high streets and city squares across the UK, out to the Great Wall of China, Ethiopia and West Bengal. In 2020/1 Kinetika responded to the challenge of Covid-19 and produced projects with communities in Essex, the

Thames Estuary and Milton Keynes, developing online resources to facilitate the designs of flags working with local communities.

Have a look at this film of making the Milton Keynes Flags with community groups. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5vbJ4t00zQ&t=15s>

kinetika.co.uk



Top row:
Land of the Fens
community flags;
second row:
Milton Keynes
community flags

TAKING PART

IMAGINING YOUR FLAG

Artist and storyteller Lizzie McDougall will run a 1.5hour workshop with your group to gather your stories, and sketch out ideas for your flag.

For any enquiries contact Nairn Book and Arts Festival via Mandy Murray mandyclachtoll@gmail.com and Tanera Bryden tanera@tanerabryden.co.uk

PREPARING FOR THE WORKSHOP

Have a think about what might feature on your flag and which theme works best for you. Will your flag reflect your activities as a group? What does your group represent? Who belongs to the group? Where do you meet? Will it tell a story about your school / community / the area's history / feature a well-known 'Nairn character'? Brainstorm ideas, collect resources: images, old street maps, photographs, logos or trademarks, lettering, articles, stories and anything that will help you start to create ideas for your flag.

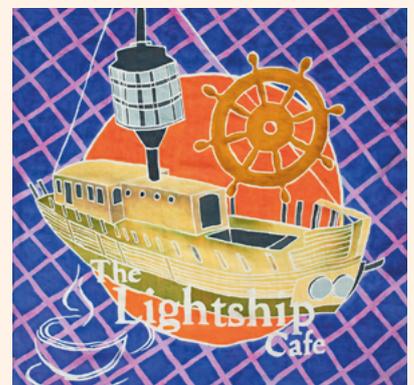
AT THE WORKSHOP

Bring your ideas and any reference material along to this session.

Artist and storyteller Lizzie McDougall will guide you, helping to gather your stories and discuss what you'd like to see featured on your flag. You will begin to sketch out images and consider the overall composition, shape and pattern the images are creating, and think about the colours you will be using. (Border colours will be chosen according to the theme you are working within).

There will be some additional Zoom sessions with Ali Pretty in June to further develop your ideas. The template design will be taken to Ali's temporary studio at Nairn Community and Arts Centre in July, to be scaled up and transferred onto silk with wax. Ali and a team of local volunteers will then paint the colours according to your design ideas – anyone from the groups is welcome to join in and help at this stage.

You will also be encouraged to write down the story of your flag as it evolves.



A community flag project in Grays. From top: Flag drawings, painting the silks, and one of the finished designs

PRESENTATION OF FLAGS / TIMELINE

We will showcase and celebrate the flags at Nairn Book and Arts Festival's 'High Street Takeover' event when 20 story flag bearers will move through the audience telling their tale featured on the silk. The day's events will culminate in a flag parade, featuring the 20 'Nairn Stories' flags and supplementary flags to create a stunning visual spectacle moving through the town.

The Story flags will then feature at various festival events throughout the week, including a special evening event at Nairn Community and Arts Centre where groups will be invited to tell the story of their flag to an audience.

On the Festival's Finale Day, the flags will be installed around Nairn's iconic Wallace Bandstand – the focal point for more storytelling events – creating a visual feast on Nairn Links.

Information about the project together with images of the flags will feature on the Nairn Festival website. We are also planning a special Instagram exhibition, featuring each flag and its story.

6th – 27th MAY

Group workshops with Lizzie McDougall.

13th / 20th JUNE 6pm

Zoom workshops / sessions with Ali Pretty.

20th – 30th JULY

Flag making with Ali Pretty at Nairn Community and Arts Centre. Lizzie MacDougall will discuss this with your group. You can sign up for a day or time to suit you. Times are tbc but will include some evenings.

27th AUGUST

Flag walkabout and parade at Nairn Book and Arts Festival's High Street Takeover.

30th AUGUST

Special Kinetika event at Nairn Community and Arts Centre to include sharing group flag stories.

4th SEPTEMBER

Flag installation encircling Wallace Bandstand, as part of Nairn Book and Arts Festival's Finale Day.



Left: The Wallace Bandstand. Top right: Sea goddess Storm, in Nairn last year. Bottom right: Kinetika's Beach of Dreams flags in Nairn last year



KINETIKA FLAG ARTISTS



ALI PRETTY

Ali Pretty is best known as the founding member and artistic director of the international outdoor arts company Kinetika, which she founded in 1997 after an established career in carnival arts and a growing commitment to community engagement. Ali has collaborated with, and led teams of artists to deliver large-scale events to diverse audiences all over the world, such as; WOMAD (1985 - 1991), FIFA World Cup (2009), the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

In recent years Ali has been developing her practice to develop transformational walking arts projects with diverse communities. Through these Ali brings people together by walking, talking and painting large-scale silk creations. Since 2012, Ali has led walking projects in Wiltshire, the Isle of Wight, Lincolnshire, Essex and Thurrock, where she has developed an annual walking, talking and making festival, Thurrock 100. This pioneering place-making model has been replicated internationally in various forms in Ethiopia, Chile and India. Her most ambitious project to date is Silk River, commissioned by the British Council as part of the UK/India Year of Culture in 2017. Ali has recently completed Beach of Dreams, leading a 500-mile walk involving 500 participants and 500 silk flags from Lowestoft to Tilbury.



LIZZIE McDOUGALL

Lizzie McDougall is one of Scotland's traditional storytellers. She travels around the Highlands and Islands gathering, telling and sharing Highland stories. To help keep the story tradition alive she creates projects for communities, museums, feisean, clan gatherings, festivals and schools 'because stories, art and music are a magical way of connecting people'. She made the 'Gold And Silver Darlings' Story Quilt (pictured above) as a celebration of the Storytelling traditions of the Moray Firth.

Lizzie will lead your group in a session to gather stories and images that highlight and celebrate your group and Nairn life. She would like group members to bring images and anecdotes about their group/ their lives in Nairn to help the ideas flow. We will be inspired by our chosen themes: **Sea Adventurers, Growing and Sowing, Folk Tales and Folklore, Yarns and Yarns, and Characters of Nairn.**

Lizzie says "It is really exciting to be a part of this amazing flag making project and I am looking forward to it. I find it is often the frequently repeated wee stories that knit communities together and tell the unique story of a place"

tracscotland.org/storytellers/lizzie-mcdougall/

www.scottishbooktrust.com/authors/lizzie-mcdougall

www.facebook.com/storyquilts

FLAG INSPIRATION

The flag designs will be inspired by our chosen themes:

SEA ADVENTURERS - AT WORK AND PLAY

Sea swimming, catching the waves, paddleboarding, kayaking, sailing, creatures of the sea - basking sharks, dolphins and the Silver Darlings. The fishing industry, charts, compasses, Nairn's safe harbour to generations of boats, and tales of seafaring adventures.

GROWING AND SOWING

Tree planting, apple growing, allotments, planting of seeds, green spaces, green ways through Nairn, Nairn in Bloom, farmland, cultivating the land, forests and marshes, Nairn birdlife – the Seeds of an Idea.

FOLK TALES AND FOLKLORE / YARNS AND YARNS

Tales and tunes handed down, historical events, mythological events, strange events, funny events! Superstitions, old wives' tales, old maps, disappearing villages, heroic rescues, sunken ships, crofts, castles, mermaids, selkies, fairies and wizards. 'Ne'er cast a clout till May be oot'

CHARACTERS OF NAIRN

Dr Grigor, William Gordon and his tin wings, Charlie Chaplin, the Fisherwoman, local people in history, historic and iconic buildings.

Resources can include old street maps and photos, group or organisation logo or trademark, lettering, group values.



DESIGNING YOUR FLAGS

1 **DON'T PANIC** – we will support you every step of the way!

2 Think about the story for each flag and select 1- 3 key images that will best illustrate it. This could be a building, the landscape, main character, a logo etc.

3 Either make a quick sketch, or compose your photos, tracings, logos, etc into a collage to map out how these images might be composed within the flag.

4 When designing your flag, draw or trace each image separately on an A3 or A2 sheet in pencil.

5 When you are happy with your drawings, go over each one with a thick black marker pen.



6 Cut out these images leaving a small border around the black line and place them on the dot and cross pattern and experiment with positioning them until you're happy with the composition.

7 Stick them down with masking tape or blue tack, ready to return to Kinetika. The event organisers will collect your designs from you and send them to Kinetika.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

The following images demonstrate the process from the drawing to a finished flag, including the layering of the textures that can be created through the double waxing technique.

First layer of paint after first waxing



Double waxing



Second painting



Finished flag



ABOUT MURSHIDABAD SILK

Kinetika is an importer of this heritage-quality hand-woven silk from West Bengal. Sales support Kinetika's charitable work and help the weavers to continue their skilled craft.

Murshidabad silk is now our preferred choice when making batik flags due to its ability to hold bright dye colours and the soft but durable texture.

Kinetika is internationally renowned for creating stunning large-scale hand-painted silks, using the process of batik to make beautiful flags, costumes and products for the last 25 years. While developing the Silk River project in India, Kinetika was introduced to a very

fine, high quality 100% hand-woven silk from Murshidabad, a district in West Bengal. Kinetika were very keen to work with this exquisite silk and through the Crafts Council of West Bengal (CCWB) were able to connect directly with the local weavers who still had the original looms and the required level of skill. Realising that the weaving skill required for this heritage fabric



is in danger of being lost, Kinetika is now working closely with Ajoy, a local silk merchant and CCWB to make it available in the UK to silk painters and lovers who will appreciate how unique it is. The silk is woven in Dangapara, a small village in Murshidabad by 14 families of weavers who are the last generation who have this skill. Kinetika hope that by creating a new demand for this silk, they will encourage this community to continue this ancient tradition.

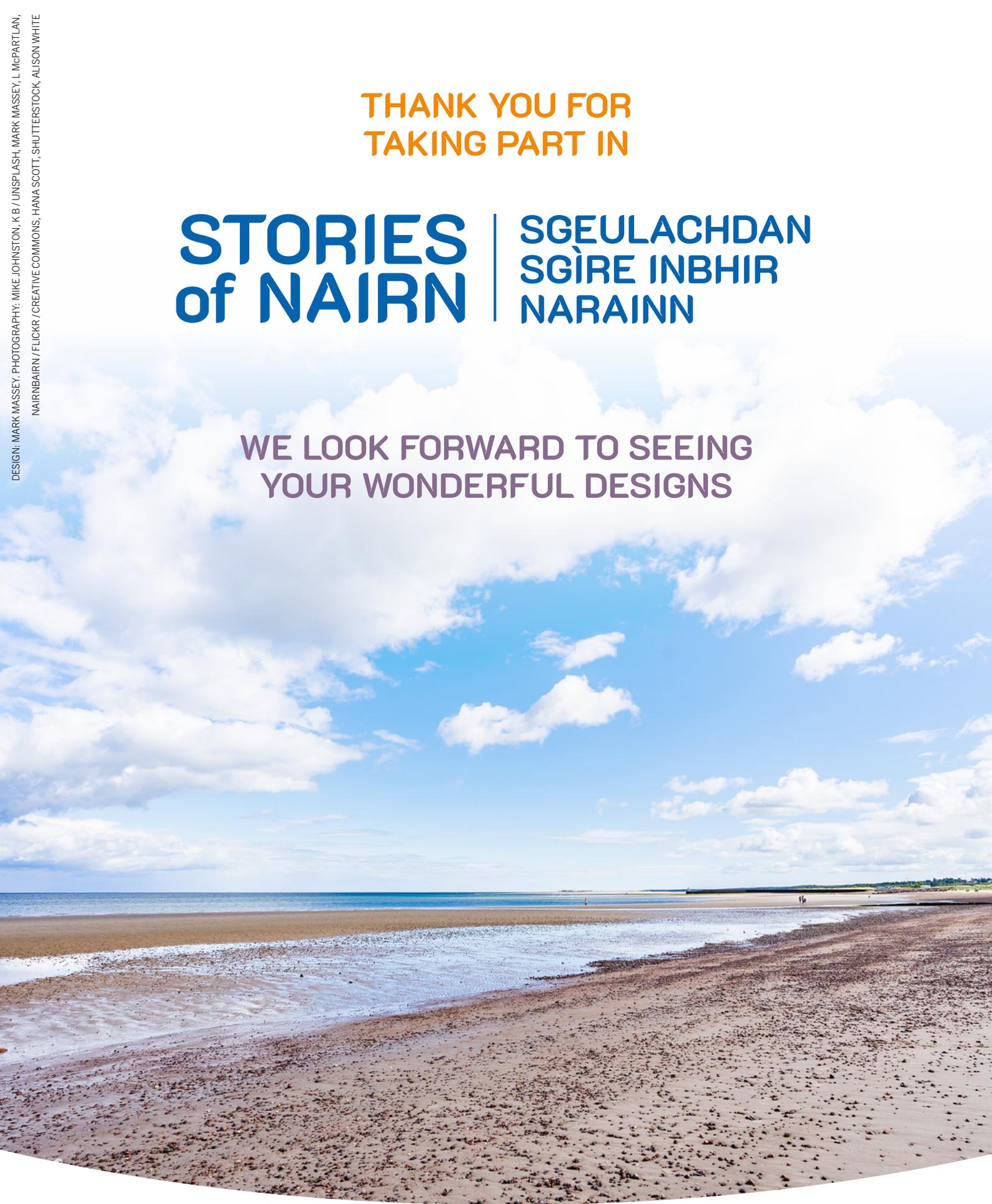
Find out more, and purchase, from <https://kinetika.co.uk/about-murshidabad-silk>

THANK YOU FOR
TAKING PART IN

STORIES of NAIRN

SGEULACHDAN
SGÌRE INBHIR
NARAINN

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING
YOUR WONDERFUL DESIGNS



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