



Transformation

a project compendium & compilation of artworks

Kenny Munro



Leaves



Rivers



Fireflies







Sandcastles, Shells, Rockpools and the Forces of Nature

Salt, Air and Smoke intoxicated the mood of anticipation for my first controlled creative experiment, on the 'back-sands' at Fisherrow Harbour, Musselburgh in 1962.

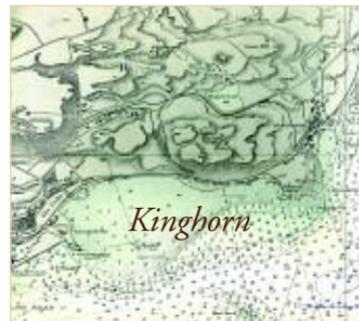
After melting lead net-rings in a rusty can I instinctively poured the liquid into mussel and cockle shells laid out on the sand. Play, Sculpture and Alchemy was fun. The process was exciting and the result satisfying for an eight year old.

Adventures like this; in and around the River Forth literally moulded my appetite for engaging with nature and trying to form an understanding of the elements which influence our path through life.

Walking through that garden gate onto the sands, nearly fifty years ago, to beachcomb with my friends between the low and high tide marks revealed a landscape, a workshop, a place of fantasy.

A gateway to freedom and adventure with 'creative danger'!

The key for me to unlock a spirit of exploration, which never wanes.



A wind never blew that did not fill somebody's sail'

France
Montpellier
Germany
India
Australia
Isle of Skye
Isle of Canna
Isle of Arran
Glasgow
Edinburgh
Dundee
Perth
Renfrew
Ballater
Dunbar



Berlin

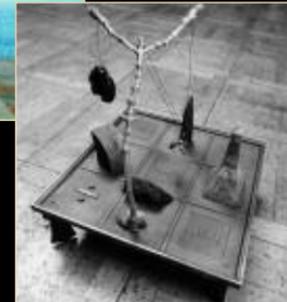
Australia



Bengal



Renfrew



Milan



Chameleon & The Golden Boat

Music, Clay and Stone is in my family blood. We are pragmatic folk; steelworkers, musicians, sculptors, carers and teachers.

However the heritage of musical expression has stimulated points at which the ear and the eye meet to create open and endless possibilities for exploration. Art in many forms. Telling the universal stories and maybe, just occasionally turning a fresh turf. Posing a quest?

The last thirty years reveals a woven career from bronze foundry, to educationalist; from sculptor/community artist and enabler. All now woven within the title of 'creative fieldwork'.

Exploring innovative local and international issues via the....Arts

“The nature of my art has meant being in public spaces and being beyond the gallery. Schools, clubs, colleges, societies, universities, media, theatre, journeying at home, abroad, in raz-a-ma-taz places and quiet places; roving, ranting, raving and interpolating” George Wyllie MBE

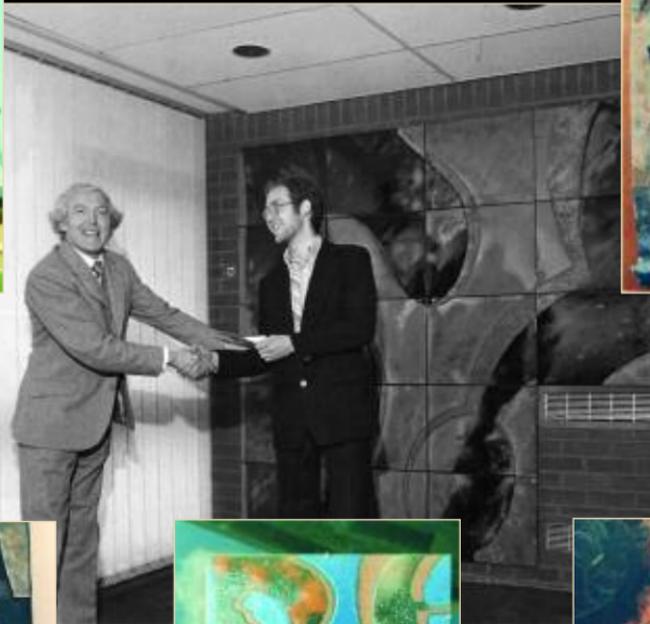


Daphne and Apollo for Ian Hamilton Finlay





*Kenny Munro with Sir Robin Philipson
Syntex commission 1976*





Many a false step is made by standing still

A whale skeleton provided the first major influence for steel sculpture in 1971. Paintings of grotesque still lives with sheep heids was balanced by more contemplative lead relief panels which seemed to take a trick with international collectors.

A vitreous enamel mural commission for Rickerton marked the commercial phase of trying to forge a career as an artist at Edinburgh College of Art, in 1976.

After a year as a town artist in Livingston I was supported by the Scottish International Education Trust to experience bronze casting at the Royal College of Art, London in 1979. And most significantly with George Mancini.

An arts foundry was established with Maurice Maguire and although significant work was undertaken, exploring life casting, the business closed in 1982.





Portrait of jazz musician Tommy Smith
(Bronze) July 1999



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myself
of Ill...

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A portrait drawing of Tommy Smith
is held in the SNPG collection



Ideas in the head

A solo show in 1988 spawned a series of heads and the sense of mood and direction was focused by playing jazz and a friendship with saxophonist Tommy Smith and George Wyllie.



An early metamorphic work 'fused' the saxophone and head in bronze. More recently the experience of working with 'polymath' George Wyllie MBE has inspired a series of portraits shown in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. A full portrait from 1994 and also composite / fragmented works, in bronze, created during a 'collaborative' week working together at the SNPG in 2003.



SOS Man

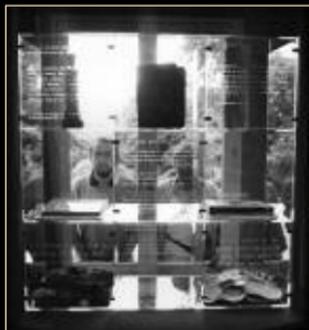


*Arrotino for the
Earl of Wemyss*



John Muir Globe

Arts Cabinet for
Montpellier and Munich



16 French & Scottish
Artists 1992



Travelling Folk



“turning difficulties into opportunities”



Fife Kissing Tree



Sourcing the Clyde with
Maurice Maguire



Patrick Geddes with students
in Bombay

Devolution and Empowerment via the Arts

Research trips with British Council support, in 1992, enabled reciprocal art shows and events, to and from Montpellier; adding energy to the Franco-Scottish exchange.

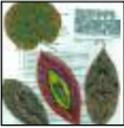
A passionate mission, following the footsteps of ecologist and town planner Sir Patrick Geddes who established an international Scots College in the south of France during the 1920s.

Inspired by the values of multidisciplinary teaching 'out doors' and located in the cultural melting pot of Languedoc – Roussillon with its heritage of Roman, Greek, and Moorish influence. His College des Ecosais paid homage to earlier centres of learning; both in Paris and particularly Montpellier with its medieval university of international repute for Botany, Law, Science and Philosophy. Believed to be one of the earliest centres for the study of herbal medicine. Respecting world culture Geddes and Poet Laureate Rabindranath Tagore enabled the creation of the Indian College on the same site in Montpellier.

One of the many responses to this rich source was the creation of a portable 'Arts Cabinet'; a grid structure of nine clear perspex cubic compartments; based on the Geddes 'Thinking Machines'.

One version travelled to Montpellier in 1993 and was gifted to Edinburgh's twin town Munich in 1994. A second version was taken to the south of France in 1998 and permanently installed. A team of artists, architects and activists have striven long and hard to reveal that the work of Geddes; in many ways presenting a philosophy of empowerment and 'visual thinking' which is even more relevant today.

Creando Pensamus - 'By Creating We think'



Navigation - A collaboration with David Hastings for the community and school on the Isle of Canna.



Skye

Canna

Edinburgh

Murray River

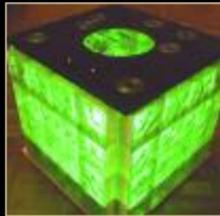
Australia

Forth

Clyde

Tay

Aquatic Cube RSA 1999



Cadell's Canoe, Forerunner III, 2001



"Within the rich, rough edged diversity of these stones lies a catalyst to encourage every person to look around, and sense their potential in this new political landscape; urban and rural."

Murray River, Australia



Stones of Scotland - Regent Road Park, Edinburgh

Skye, Sea and Stones of Scotland



A residency on the Isle of Skye in 2000 enabled the exploration of phosphorescent marine plankton as an environmental barometer and indicator of climate change.



In 2001 an award from the Friends of the Royal Scottish Academy enabled an arts/science survey of the Murray River, Australia. The project examined the river's ecosystem which has changed as a result of increased salination and due to the expanding irrigation schemes.



Concurrently a heritage project celebrated the river with the creation of replica canoes in Cockenzie and Goolwa. To celebrate the 800 mile navigation of the Murray by Capt. Francis Cadell in 1852. The original 7metre canvas vessel, 'Forerunner', was taken to Scotland after the epic antipodean adventure.



The Stones of Scotland is a contemporary statement about democracy. Forming a ring of 32 stones, (one from each political region), with a Scots Pine at the heart of the work. It is inspired by the poem 'Scotland' by Hugh MacDiarmid and the project was conceived as a collaboration with George Wyllie MBE and Lesley-May Miller. Development was supported by the Scottish Arts Council and the installation was realised with a Creative Scotland award given to George Wyllie in the year 2000.



However, over one hundred folk have assisted with the collection of stones. The Paul Hogarth Group developed the site design, Bob Wilson installed the work and the City of Edinburgh donated the location, in Regent Road Park, which has World Heritage status. The 'fieldwork' feature, overlooking the Parliament with Salisbury Crags on the skyline, provides an open public domain for debate, reflection and meditation.

Or just have a seat on a stone and admire the view!



“More outdoor awareness and creativity is needed, both to inspire and to provide essential skills for constructive engagements in our world.”



“We need, too, a philosophy of international fieldwork. Whether teamworking with a community to make an outdoor classroom, making a spiritual pilgrimage across the hills or sailing through the magical islands along the coast.”



Bengal Boats and Rickshaw Roads



Since 2002 creative links have been established between Bengal artists, a small school in Kolkata and rural schools in Aberdeenshire. The first project brought a 6 metre long Bengal boat; a poetry boat, (inspired by Tagore's poem – Sonar Tari /Golden Boat) from India to Scotland to be launched on Loch Kinord, near Ballater. Celebrating the birthplace and 150th birthday of Sir Patrick Geddes in 2004. This formed a catalyst for the second phase, entitled 'Song of the Rickshaw' involving artists and students in both countries.

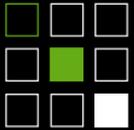
Two rickshaws decorated by pupils in the School of Art & Craft, Kolkata, have been shipped to Scotland to form part of a touring programme of 'Field-work'; travelling round the country engaging with schools and communities to raise the debate on alternative eco-friendly transport. A collection of DVDs are available which document the projects. Initial research supported by the Scottish Arts Council. Primary support for both phases has come from Aberdeenshire Council, the Royal Scottish Geographical Society and The Sir Patrick Geddes Trust.

A publication entitled 'A Vigorous Institution' edited by Walter Stephen, reveals the practical significance of Patrick Geddes and his influence. The essay Bengal Boats & Rickshaw Roads features in the Luath Press publication.

Current collaboration with filmmaker Edward O'Donnelly is developing a series of films, inspired by marine plankton, environmental poetry and the Indo-Scottish muse.



"Our aspirations come in the guise of children" Rabindranath Tagore



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Fergus Purdie and Lesley-May Miller present an outlook through the Arts Cabinet at the Geddes Scots College, Montpellier.