

# Great Scottish Canvas

Visions for a greener,  
fairer Scotland.



WWF

FOR  
YOUR  
WORLD



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to everyone who took part and shared their art and poetry with us. We wish we could have included it all.

We would like to give heartfelt thanks to Jackie Kay and Alexander McCall Smith for their thoughtful and inspiring contributions to the Great Scottish Canvas. Their early involvement helped shape the initiative and inspired people across Scotland to be part of a shared movement for a better future.

Thanks also go to Emma Gillespie and Stephanie Straine, curators from the National Galleries of Scotland, and to poet Stuart Paterson, for their insights and time in selecting the artworks that make up this beautiful, diverse and inspiring exhibition and book.

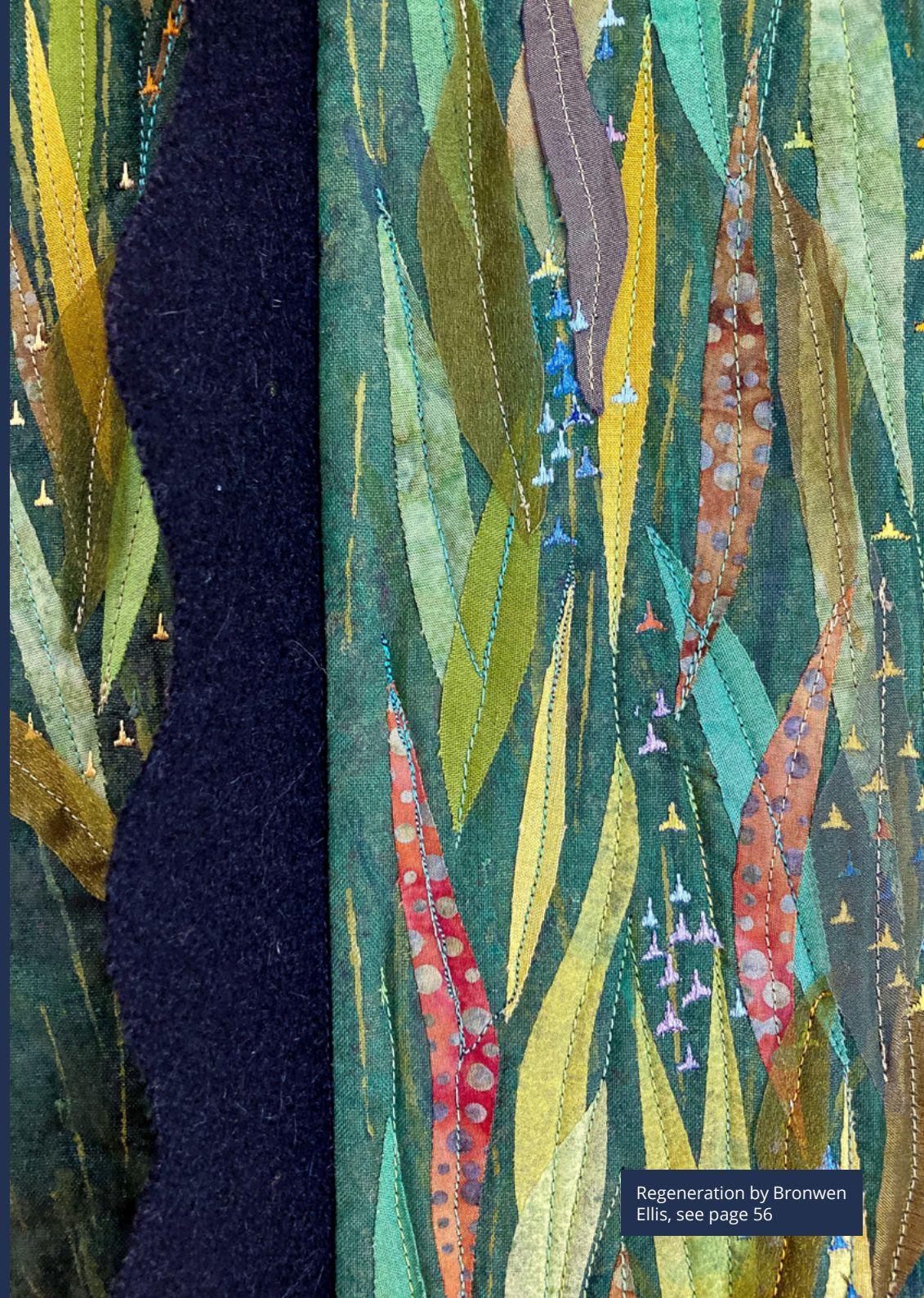
The Great Scottish Canvas has been kindly supported by the Cruden Foundation, and players of People's Postcode Lottery.

The views expressed in the artworks and their descriptions are those of the artists and writers, and do not necessarily reflect the policies and views of WWF.

*Book designed by [www.daughter.studio](http://www.daughter.studio)  
Printed by Pyramid Press*



Regeneration by Bronwen Ellis, see page 56







By Aurora Light by Nadia Davidson, see page 93

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# FOREWORD

In 2021, the year Glasgow would play host to the crucial UN climate negotiations, WWF asked people across Scotland for their creative responses to the climate and nature emergencies, and their visions for the future greener, fairer Scotland they wanted to see.

Artists and writers have found inspiration from our four climate and nature themes: protecting and restoring nature, farming and food, warm homes for all, and climate-friendly travel. These four themes run throughout this book – and its art and poetry – showing how the ways we tackle the nature and climate emergencies are interconnected.

With hundreds of submissions from all over Scotland, in many languages and mediums, this book is the culmination of a year of conversations and creative endeavours about climate, nature and people.

In this book you will find inspiring messages from today's young people, the words of poets and writers from across Scotland, and paintings, textile, sculpture and digital pieces from artists, which in different ways, illustrate the future we hope to see for ourselves, our nature and climate, all pulled together in the Great Scottish Canvas.

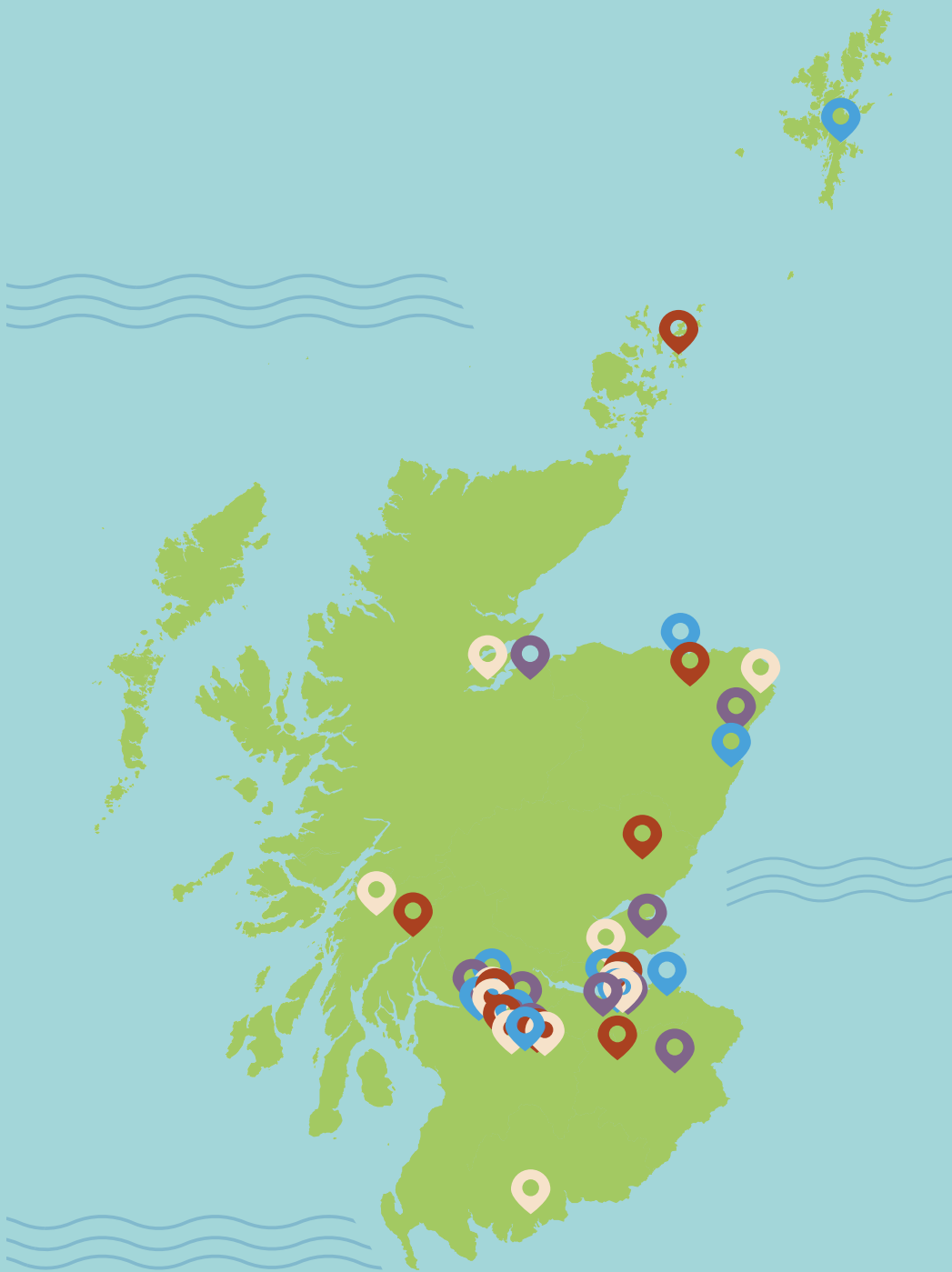
Our hope is that the artwork and poetry will inspire conversations about the Scotland you want to see tomorrow.

**Lang Banks,**  
Director, WWF Scotland



Ghost Fishing by Jan Brown, see page 66





## THE GREAT SCOTTISH CANVAS MAP

We have brought together voices from the four corners of the country - from Shetland to the Borders, Aberdeen to the Western Isles, in Punjabi, Gaelic, Scots and English. On this map, you can see where in Scotland the art and poetry of the Great Scottish Canvas has come from.

The Great Scottish Canvas is also a virtual exhibition that you can visit online by scanning this QR code on your phone.\*



\*The gallery will be open until September 2024.



Scottish writer Alexander McCall Smith, best known for his bestselling The No.1 Ladies Detective Agency books, wrote this moving poem in spring 2021, especially for the Great Scottish Canvas.



© Kirsty Anderson

*“I am delighted that so many people are joining together to celebrate this key moment for the world. The words and images that this project gathers all have one thing in common - they recognise that this is simply the most important issue that humanity faces.”*

## ONLY ONE HOME

Alexander McCall Smith, 2021

It's always useful, we're told,  
To ensure a spare is ready to hand:  
About the house an extra pair  
Of spectacles may come in useful,  
A front door key, or two perhaps,  
Concealed for emergency use;  
These things are simply prudent, signs  
Of a cautious mentality, of planning ahead  
For the unexpected, the contingency  
We never thought would come about;  
And yet there are some important things,  
Of which we may possess only one:  
Each of us has only one heart, one life,  
One memory in which  
to lodge the remembrance  
Of the things we know and love;  
These are private and individual limitations;  
Singularity applies, though, just as much  
To that which belong to all:  
We have only one home, one planet,  
One earth on which each of us may sit down

And speak of and treat as our own:  
Only one, irreplaceable, unduplicated  
By a spare earth somewhere else;  
Just this one, this one we love.  
And that, perhaps, is what we might  
Tell ourselves as we look upon it  
With a lover's eyes, this precious place,  
Source of all meaning to us,  
Site of all that we've ever known.  
Ever felt, or ever dreamed about,  
This spinning place, green and blue.  
Shrouded at times by cloud, made golden  
By sunsets that make us want to cry;  
This is the only one we have;  
This is the one that we must cherish,  
Distinctive in the light of our individual moods  
And different ways of looking at things,  
Yet equally dear, equally nourishing,  
Equally in need of our stewardship  
Now, as never before; our only home.



## WILDLIFE

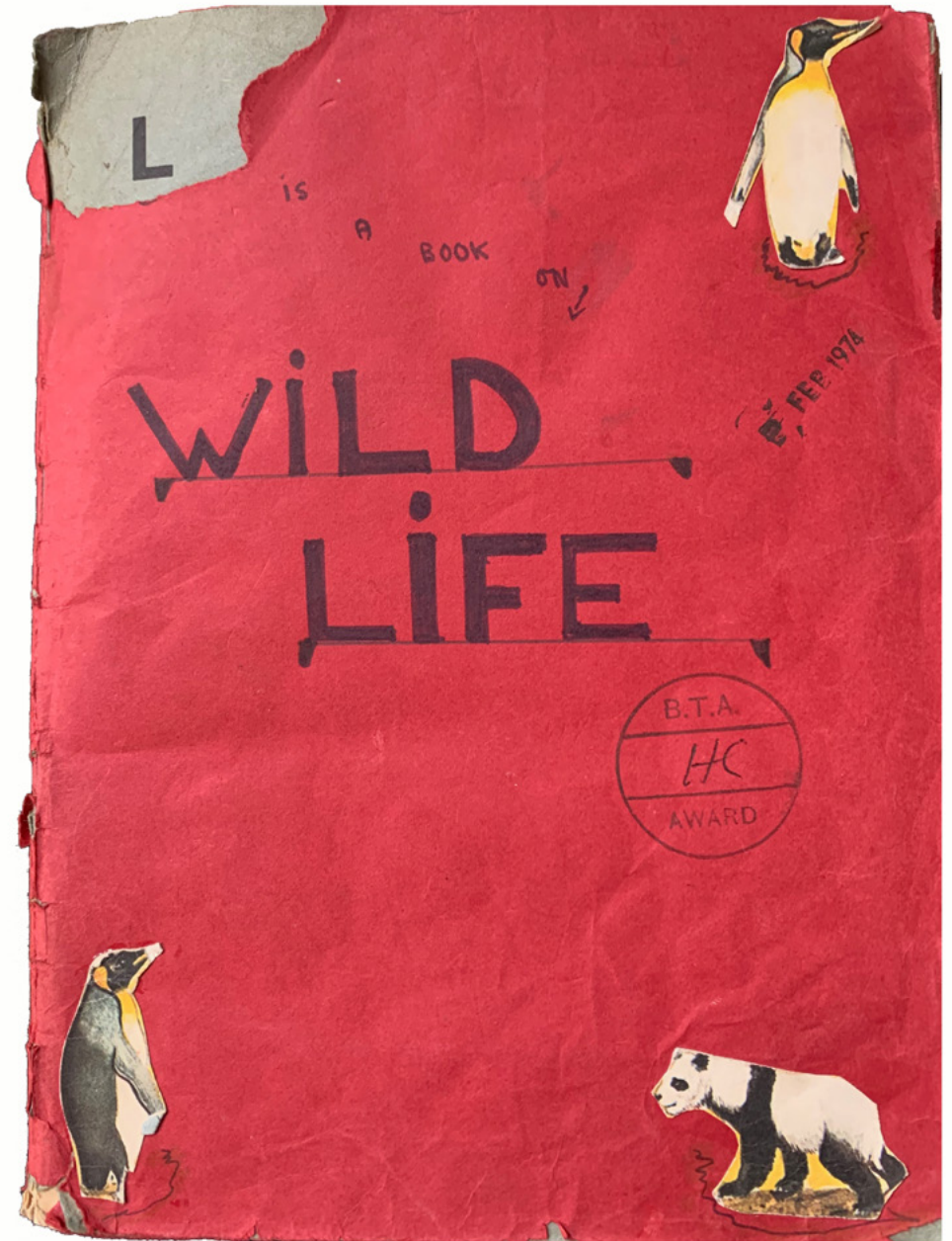
**Jackie Kay**  
**Poet and novelist**  
**Wildlife, 1974**

Award-winning writer and former Scottish Makar, Jackie Kay, wrote *Wildlife* in 1974 when she was 12 years old. It was the first piece of writing she received an award for, the World Wildlife BTA. In it she describes her concerns about the future of the natural world, and the need for urgent action.

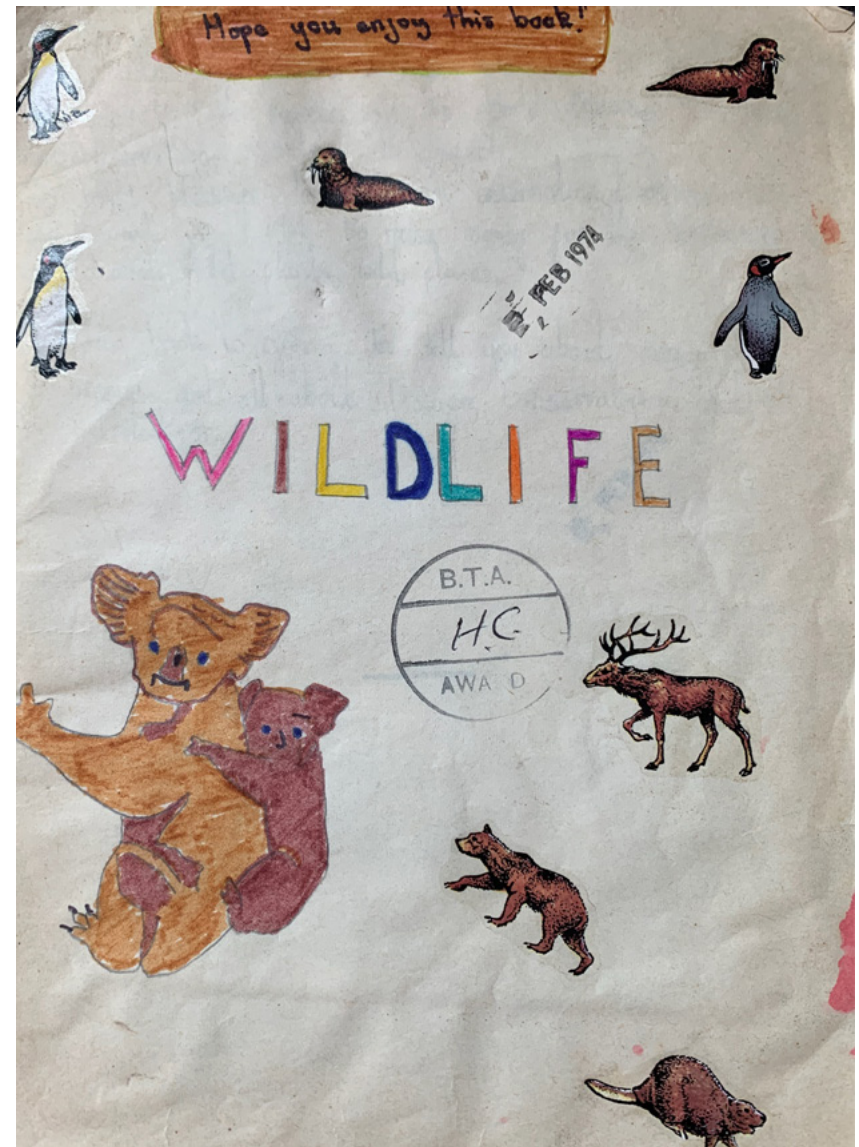
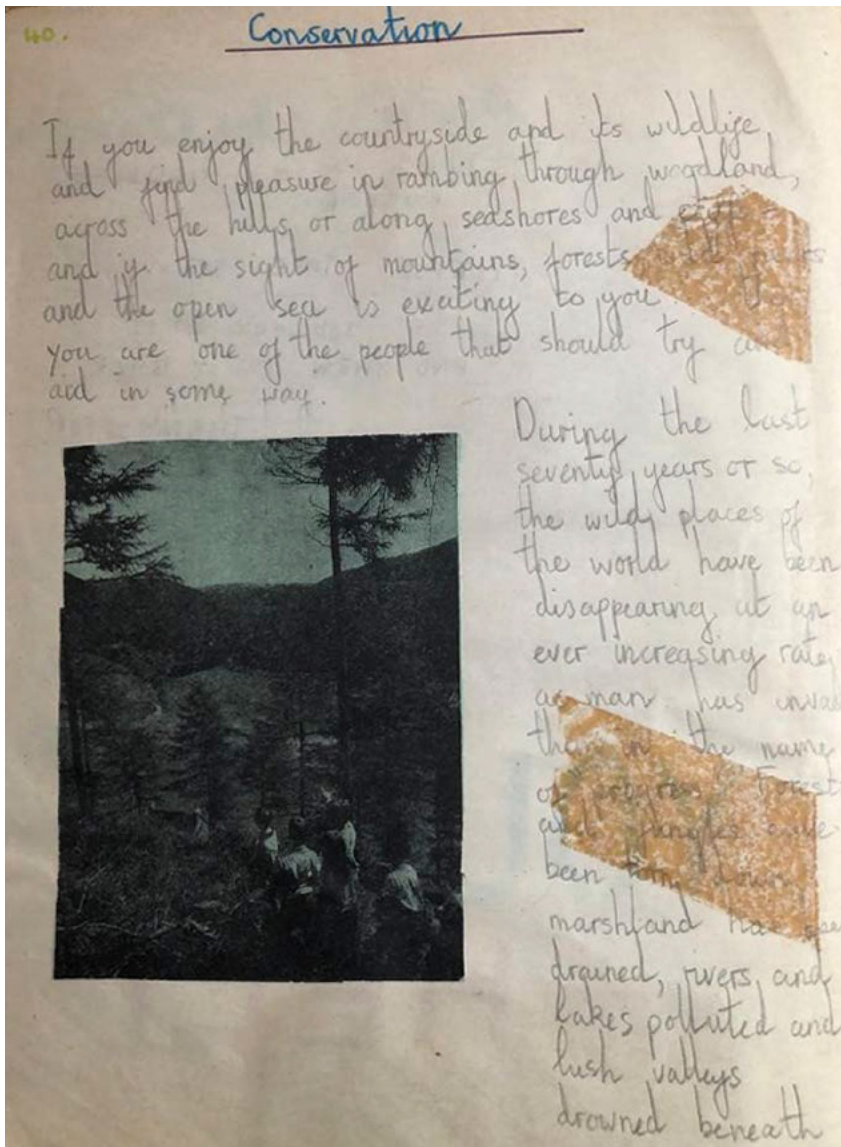


© Mary McCartney

*“I remember taking ages to write this book, it was all about the kind of Scotland I wanted to live in, the kind of world that I wanted to live in. I was particularly concerned about the future of the natural world, and it’s shocking that nearly 50 years on, that concern remains the same. That’s why I’m so delighted to be taking part in the Great Scottish Canvas”*









# HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

We are facing nature and climate crises and around the world, young people are raising their voices for action. Young people across Scotland used the Great Scottish Canvas as an opportunity to channel their activism through art - exploring their hopes for a future where decision makers act on the climate and nature crises.



## POLAR BEAR

Katie Murphy (12),  
Airdrie Academy



The Arctic is warming about twice as fast as the global average, causing the ice that polar bears depend on to melt away.

Loss of sea ice also threatens the bear's main prey, seals, which need the ice to raise their young.

We can help by using our cars less and walking more, turning off electric devices when you aren't using them, don't let food go to waste because it uses energy to ship, preserve, refrigerate etc.

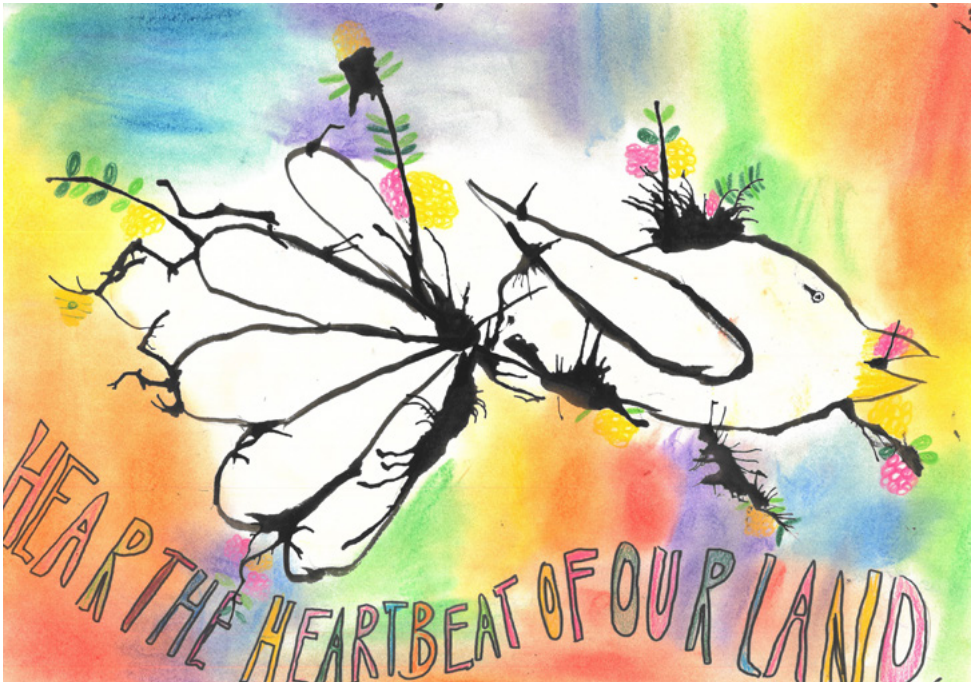
Finally, DON'T LITTER! Polar bears have died from eating plastic!

You never know where the wind could take your one wee piece of rubbish, or how much it could affect someone somewhere! Think about the consequences!





The Great Scottish Canvas



## BIRD

**Coco Oakes (9)**  
**St. Mary's School, Melrose**

Coco's class at St Mary's School in Melrose have painted striking, colourful birds to represent the future of our nation. This is one of the beautiful paintings created by the pupils.

## SCOTLAND'S FUTURE

**Abigail Kirkness (11)**  
**St. Mary's School, Melrose**

St Mary's School in Melrose took inspiration from the work of environmental artist Friedensreich Hundertwasser when designing their own artworks.

## CLIMATE CHANGE POEM

Arran Wilson (14),  
Airdrie Academy

Global warming affects us all  
It is putting holes in our great big wall  
This is called the ozone layer  
Climate change is giving us a big hot stare

Everyone has to do their part  
Electric cars is a good start  
The ozone layer is getting thinner  
We don't want no plastic in our dinner

To save the planet from global warming  
This is our final warning  
It is not too late to slash our emissions  
Protecting all species and saving millions

## OUR WEE HAME

Murron Wilson (12),  
St.Eunan's Primary School,  
Clydebank

Scotland.  
Where we feel at home.

Where the friendliness of Glaswegian people makes you smile,  
or where the beauty of Edinburgh takes your breath away.  
Where animals roam freely in fields of islands that give you solace.  
Where the buttery taste of shortbread crumbles in your mouth.

Where towering mountains stand tall and still and the dark lochs'  
waves ripple into rocky or sandy beaches.  
Where you catch the ferry at Largs to cycle around Millport.  
Where the fairy trails at Luss makes you believe in real magic.  
Where The Kelpies protect you and keep you safe.  
Where the freshest of strawberries taste sweeter than sugar.

But if we don't take action and fix  
our climate it will crumble into ruins  
and oor wee hame , will be hame no more...



## BIRD

**Hannah Violet Johnston (6)**  
**Stronsay, Orkney**

*"I live on Stronsay, Orkney,  
a small island with lots of birds  
and wildlife. I want everyone to  
look after the birds so that we have  
more healthy wildlife for everyone  
to enjoy for Scotland's future.  
My artwork is a golden eagle flying  
between the cliffs of Hoy, where  
a pair have recently nested for  
the first time in many years."*



## CLIMATE CHANGE AND SCOTLAND'S FUTURE

**Phera Connelly (8),**  
**Auchinraith Primary School,**  
**Blantyre**

Auchinraith's Primary 3 class has spent time learning about climate change and used this knowledge when creating their artworks. Phera's vision of a future Scotland shows animals and homes and windfarms all in harmony together.

# OUR WEE SCOTLAND!

Amelia Harkin (9)  
Underbank Primary School,  
Crossford

Scotland is our country  
It is a treat  
We want to keep it neat  
It is a place to meet.

To climb the hills  
And look out of your windowsills  
There may be a chill  
But don't head for the treadmill.

This is right  
There is no rubbish in sight  
As you're at the hills you can see the aurora light  
It is pleasure at night.

When you feel the cold air on my skin  
When I'm with my kin  
We then wish  
To keep our country bliss.



*"This picture and poem show how I would like to see our Scotland in the future – still beautiful and with no rubbish or pollution. I would like to see animals such as porpoises, Highland cows, stags and capercaillie roaming free in our wee Scotland."*





The Great Scottish Canvas



## THE FUTURE OUR FAMILY WANTS

**The Dyer Family:**  
**Gary (age 42),**  
**Kareen (age 42),**  
**Eilidh (age 11)**  
**and Ava (age 7)**

*"Our piece was created during Earth Hour 2021. We sat and worked on the canvas together in candlelight. Our piece is everything we hope our world to be. People making changes to protect the environment."*

## SCOTLAND'S FUTURE

**Amelia Callaghan (11)**  
**St. Mary's School, Melrose**

Amelia's class studied artists working on environmental themes, and used this as inspiration for their own visions of a future Scotland that protects nature and fights climate.



# A BONNIE SCOTLAND

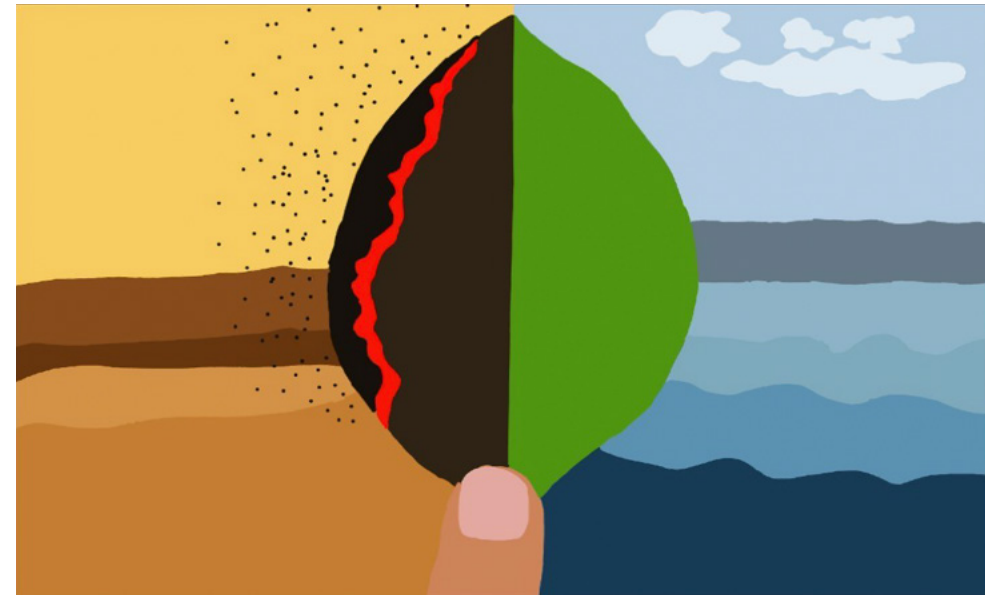
**Erin Jackson (9)**  
**Underbank Primary School, Crossford**

*“I wrote a poem about a  
brighter and better Scotland  
that I would like to live in.”*

Scotland should be a place that is green and fair  
All animals safe and wanting to live there  
The skies will be blue and clear  
Kids out playing in clean fresh air  
No litter anywhere, sitting in bins where it belongs  
The rivers run clear, birds splash in fresh water singing their songs

Children going to school with a full tummy  
No hunger or poverty, everyone eating fresh food that is yummy  
The fine soil and water grows the best food  
Everyone thriving in a country so good  
Kids walk and scoot to school, choosing a healthier way  
Less cars on the road, keeping pollution at bay

A better and happier life  
With less stress, trouble and strife  
Our great country leading the way  
Showing how to care for each other and our precious land each day  
A Scotland so bonnie and fair  
I'll always want to live there



## CLIMATE CHANGE

**Madison Johnston (12)**  
**Airdrie Academy**



## ECO BUS

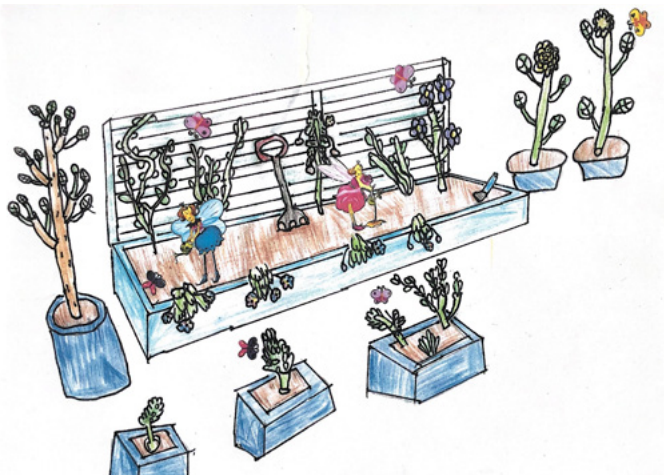
**Betty Mary Colburn (17)**  
**Cairndow**

*"This entry was created by my mum and I together and named Eco Bus. We envisage a future with more sustainable and affordable public transport options and one where we are no longer using polluting modes of transport. We have represented these thoughts with our Eco Bus made with plants from our garden, featuring happy plant-people in the bus windows."*

## JUST DOING A LITTLE SOMETHING

**Rebecca Lloyd (10)**  
**Lanark**

Just doing a little something  
 Can lead to something big  
 Can lead to something huge  
 Can lead to something enormous  
 or even something gigantic  
 as small as a window box  
 as big as a raised bed  
 as huge as rockery  
 as enormous as a garden  
 as gigantic as a field  
 fill the world with plants, shrubs,  
 fruit, and vegetables.  
 Insects, bees and butterflies.  
 Love nature  
 Love the world



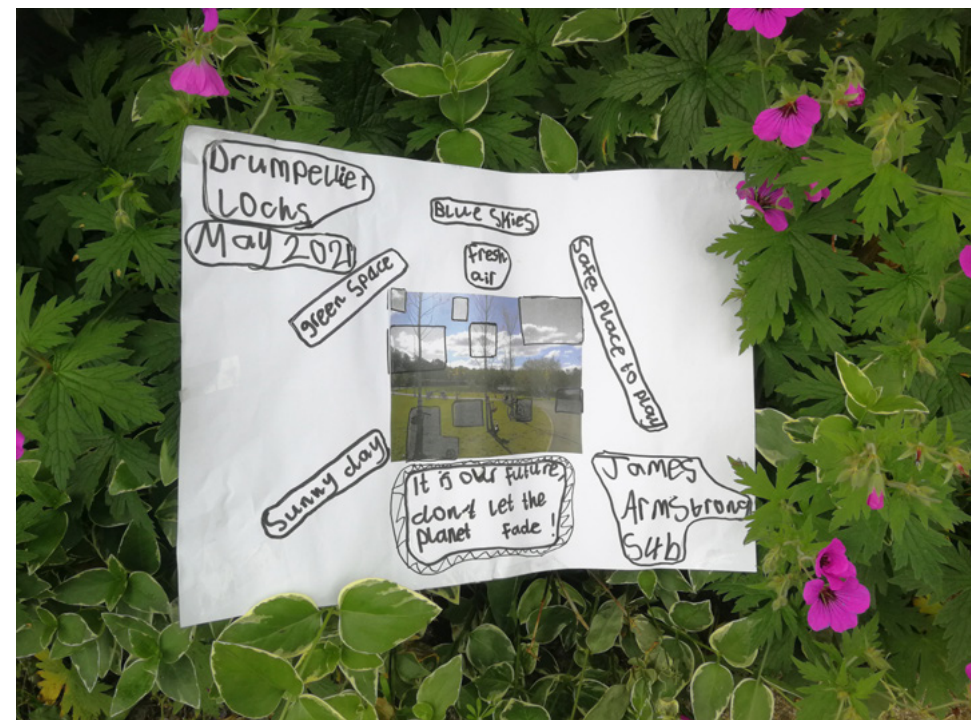




## VISION OF THE FUTURE

**Freya Isabella Johnston (7)**  
**Stronsay, Orkney**

*"I live on a small Island in Stronsay, Orkney, where I am surrounded by clear blue seas and green farmland with lots of nature. I feel very lucky to do so and wish everyone could enjoy what I do with no worries about the future of nature. My vision of Scotland's future was made with collage on canvas using various media and showing the sea, sand, shells, local farming & green mountains & insects."*



## GREEN SPACE - DON'T LET OUR PLANET FADE!

**James Armstrong (17)**  
**Buchanan High School, Coatbridge**

*"This photo was taken on a walk to Drumpellier Lochs at Coatbridge with my 4b class in May 2021. It is a wonderful country park close to the school with access for all and I love the green space, clean air and being able to spend time in nature. It is my wish for future pupils to continue to enjoy nice places in nature therefore it is essential we look after our planet!"*



# VISIONS OF SCOTLAND

Through words, paint, textile and sculpture talented people from all over Scotland have expressed their hopes for the future of our nature and climate. These creative responses to the climate and nature crises explore the wonders of nature and the urgency of action.



In The Rain by Heather Smillie, see page 78



## THIS WOMAN'S PLACE

**Melissa Corkhill**  
Pastel, watercolour  
and charcoal on paper

*“This was inspired by the local landscape of the Hermitage of Braid Nature Reserve in winter’s snow. I walk here often and every time I see something new. It’s an incredibly valuable local resource for our community: cyclists, walkers, dog-owners and climbers. During 2020, it became a precious space for local residents. I want to see a future Scotland that protects these pockets of green space within our city boundaries. Not only do they support a variety of fauna and flora, but they provide an accessible way for us all to re-connect with nature. The landscape may not be as majestic as the Highlands, but it is no less important. These everyday green spaces, where city children learn to identify wildflowers and birds, keep us grounded and aware of our environment.”*



# SCOTLAND 2030

**Lorna McNae**

*“I wrote this poem hoping to capture  
a little of the future I want to see  
for Scotland. I love Costa Rica’s  
approach where money saved by  
disbanding the military in favour  
of peace has ensured that funds  
have been available for reforestation  
and engaging with ecotourism and  
celebrating the country’s natural  
gifts. Here, we have such an  
opportunity for renewable energy,  
peatland restoration and ocean  
recovery that we now just need to  
grasp the potential and run with it.”*

Pause and listen to air fresh with birdsong  
People flock to hear.

Defence disbanded in trust of peace,  
we hold out our hands.  
We use our funds to build and nourish,  
not destroy

Trident moves to memory,  
leaving turbines to tick in the tidal ebb and flow  
and sun to glint off panelled roofs and verdant living walls.  
Bringing our homes clean light and warmth,  
and life.

We grow our forests, reaching across canopies to entwine our stories with  
those of bugs, and birds and deer.  
The peatbogs of our ancestors soak carbon from the leaden skies,  
so too the seagrass beds, slurping carbon from the briny waves  
Marine reserves and fish are managed well,  
for plate and future.

We ride, we walk, take buses, trains and trams,  
hither and thither across our land at will.  
We have no need for cars.  
Flying rarely and thoughtfully, we taste the world’s variety,  
returning home to share the joy and inspiration and to pause  
To listen to air fresh with birdsong  
People flock to hear.





## BANFF SHORE

**Douglas Cameron**  
**Digital drawing printed on canvas**

*"Banff Shore is one of many pictures created during lockdown. It depicts items such as stones, twigs, metal or pottery shards scattered all over the Moray shoreline reflecting the history of its industries, arts and lifestyle. These items are evocative of society past and present and will eventually be shaped, by the power of the ocean, into sand. Only the detritus of our modern age, such as plastics, will stubbornly remain to pollute our beautiful land and ocean life. We can only hope that in mankind's few seconds in the cosmic timescale we will learn to evolve and call a halt to the destruction of our truly beautiful and magnificent planet. I hope that Banff Shore reflects my love for this Earth and its place in the universe."*

# EXTINCTION REBELLION

William Hershaw



Illustration by Les McConnell

I fauldit a wittin  
In a tuim plastic bottle  
And flung it faur out in the weet.

“Gin ye find this gae rescue  
The hetteran Warld.”  
The waves brocht it back tae ma feet.

**Fauldit:** folded

**Wittin:** message

**Tuim:** empty

**Faur:** far Weet: wet, the sea

**Hetteran:** boiling

**Brocht:** brought



# EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON US

## Maryhill Integration Network's creative writing group

*“Everything depends on us was collectively written by Maryhill Integration Network's creative writing group for the Great Scottish Canvas. The group is made up of refugee, asylum seeking, migrant and local writers who have been meeting online to talk and write together. This poem expresses the hopes and desires the members of the group have for the future of Scotland's nature, from an urban perspective.”*

The weather in future is important.  
Seas without plastic, people each day who care  
sowing flowers in every cement back court  
to bring happiness and colour. Can you drink one less juice each day?  
Bottles lie everywhere. The protection of rivers and the sky  
will make this place colourful and bright.  
It is very clear. We need education  
for the practical, we need walls made of trees.  
We will not cut down a tree to make a house  
we will build the house around the tree.

Less concrete  
more gardens. Each of us plant a tree  
to create this new space. People  
will take responsibility for their actions. We can take  
from the past, swapping things, growing things. Rainwater harvesting.  
Two walkways along each side of the river. Plenty  
of space for us all in this beautiful city. Collect the rain  
for the beauty of the garden. A path for our bikes,  
no plastic cups, houses which blossom. Spare spaces can flourish,  
walls send messages  
of respect. Care exists. We and the animals exist.  
What we give is what we get back in return.

## SPOTLIGHT ON PROTECTING NATURE

Nature is vital. It provides our life-support system and is crucial to our quality of life and wellbeing. But it's under threat like never before. 1 in 9 Scottish species - like the red squirrel, capercaillie, and wildcat - are at risk of extinction. All habitats are important for biodiversity, while many - such as peatlands, forests and seagrass - help us fight climate change by storing away carbon.



This Woman's Place by  
Melissa Corkhill, see page 38





## LINK BY LINK

**Kate Ive**  
**Hand-sculpted moss and chain,**  
**cast in rusted Jesmonite on slate**

*“This sculpture symbolises the power of nature’s ability to adapt and survive. Inspired by Scotland’s creeping leafy mosses, this tiny plant is growing abundantly along the chain against all the odds, reclaiming it as new habitat. An ancient rootless plant, humble mosses have survived extreme climate changes and help re-establish new ecosystems in often uninhabitable locations. They play an important frequently overlooked role in biodiversity.*

*The moss in this artwork shows a strong, realistic and hopeful future for Scotland’s nature. Our past choices and future actions have an undeniable chain reaction effect on the natural world. Link by Link acts as a reminder of the fragile balance within which we all live and the importance of protecting and conserving Scotland’s flora and fauna to ensure a better future.”*

# BATTER ON

Lizzie Smith

*“If every person in Scotland adopted  
a local green space and loved it and  
protected it, our cities would breathe.  
I live in a city and there are Friends  
of the local parks and even Friends  
of the Cemetery. We post photos  
online of birds, trees and flowers.  
We watch the unfolding of the  
seasons in their still natural rhythm.*

*The first flowers of spring,  
snowdrops, begin to appear in  
February, around Pancake Day.  
This year, I bent down to have a  
good look and the leaves reminded  
me of spears. We have to fight for  
green spaces. They are always under  
threat. Although the future does not  
always look rosy, if we want it to be  
green, we have to keep trying.”*

On Seeing Snowdrops on Pancake Day

This bunch is more green than white  
the seed is merged with its mother stem  
a bud appears.

In this clump the pods are open,  
leaves unfurl, spears protrude, some will  
become warriors,

while others will keep their frilly knickers  
primly tucked up beneath, just as  
Ma told them to.

Despite the loads of snow poured on top,  
you have grown tall and proud  
little gallants.

These white beginnings will give way  
to royal pavings of violets in the forest  
and bluebells will call  
to clear skies

till the snows come again  
and you are summoned to  
mount the stage another time, to  
batter on.



# HOLYROOD

**Laura Johnson**  
**Oil on panel**

*“This painting was made in Holyrood Park, winter 2021. I am new to Scotland, when we were told not to leave the boundaries of Edinburgh during lockdown, I was struck by how much outdoor space Edinburgh has. I often rode my bike to the Pentlands, photographing and drawing the beauty I found there. On days where I didn’t have as much time, I would run around Holyrood Park. It is amazing this park and all its natural beauty is available in the middle of the city. The preservation of green space is essential for our future.”*



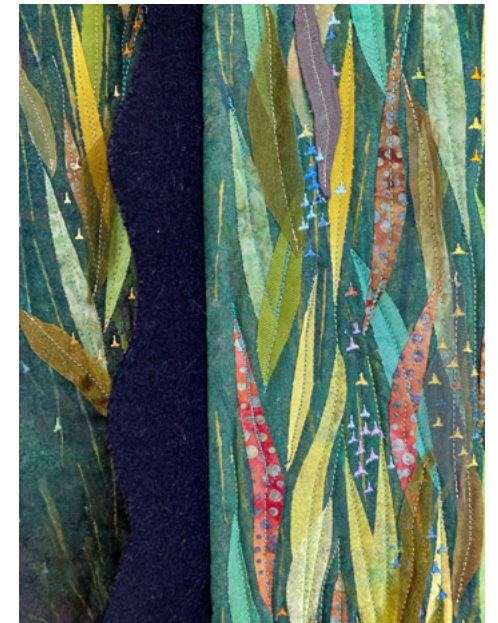




## REGENERATION

**Bronwen Ellis**  
**Quilted wall-hanging**

*“This wall-hanging was inspired by the history of Scottish textile mills and other derelict industrial sites. From the left, the hand dyed and painted fabrics progress in colour from the dark homes and mills to shiny metal machinery that is then rusting decay. The vertical felted inserts represent cogs, an iconic industrial image, sharp shapes but eventually becoming soft humps, returning their minerals back to the ground. I am intrigued by sites such as these, the way nature and wildlife return to regenerate and soften the area. It is a joy to see the flowers grow tall and wildlife flourish, when given a chance.”*





# FROM GRAN

**Chris Ross**

*“I wrote this poem for my 7-year-old grandson Ryan. Recently he asked his mum if he and his best friend could go to their wee park to ‘pick up litter’. Everyone was amazed because he wouldn’t take no for an answer and nagged till the rubber gloves came out and an empty plastic bag. Off they went and collected a full large bag of litter. I try to encourage children to look at the natural world around them because I did this when I was young. My dad taught me to recognise birds, and I’d like Ryan to be the same. It’s never just a walk, it’s a search and listen too.”*

From Gran...

I’d like to see the next generation  
viewing Scotland through WWF eyes  
Inspire my grandchildren to think  
Teach them to protect our planet  
Tell them if we’re on the brink  
Of losing bird, plant or beast  
Get them to look at the sky and sea  
Let pupils cycle or walk  
Make nature their natural home  
Help each child to draw and talk  
Show them the martins high  
Warbling wrens down low  
See harebells, gorse and vetch  
Open their eyes to restoration  
And spot the plastic in the ditch.

Let each child be a sentinel  
Aware of melting ice caps  
Our weather’s unpredictability  
Floods, drought, fire, quakes  
Make them aware of possibility  
The changes we all must make  
Our next generation should know  
It’s how we live that taints  
The nature they’ll inherit  
Show there must be constraints  
On Grannie’s plastic generation  
Which must quickly cease  
Get schools to restore, rethink  
Grandchildren please amend  
Gran’s paper trail must end.



Seasonal and Home-Grown Food  
by Hilary K Craig, see page 63

## SPOTLIGHT ON FOOD AND FARMING

Did you know that the food we eat has climate impacts right through from farm to fork to landfill? In fact, the way we produce and consume food today is contributing to habitat loss, biodiversity decline and climate change. Farmers in Scotland are at the frontline of climate change. Crops and livestock are vulnerable to extreme weather, pests and disease. But they also hold the solution as managers of the land - our biggest natural defence against climate change. That's why farming of the future should be nature and climate-friendly.



## NATURE AND NURTURE IN BALANCE

**Catherine Hamilton**  
**Mixed media wall-hanging**

*“My wall-hanging is designed to show agriculture existing in harmony with the environment. For our continued existence, both our environment and agriculture are of the utmost importance, and during the recent lockdowns this has been brought home to all of us. Our daily exercise is enhanced if we can access the countryside or other green spaces. The recent limitations on global transportation and the continuing effects of global warming are emphasising the importance of growing and producing food as close to home as possible. I created this piece during the first lockdown, and it helped me personally during that time.”*



## SEASONAL AND HOME-GROWN FOOD

**Hilary K Craig**  
**Water-mixable oils on canvas**

*“As an amateur artist, I take my inspiration from nature and studying the work of other artists. My painting is a vision of the future where most of our food is seasonal and home-grown. I believe we are becoming increasingly separated from where and how our food is produced; in particular, transporting food around the world is increasingly hard to justify. To eat more sustainably and cut our carbon footprint we need to move to more local mixed-farming systems, thereby boosting the health of our planet as well as ourselves.”*



# THE WORLD I WANT

**Jock Stein**

*“Someone said that the world is run by middle-aged people who are invested in maintaining the world as they know it. When we are young, we have ideas and imagine all kinds of possibilities, and then we look for a job and so on and become immersed in the world as it is. Now that I am in my 80th year, I am growing younger again, and want to see the world as it ought to be.”*

I want for Scotland what I want for all  
the world that congregates in Glasgow soon,  
I want commitment, promises fulfilled,  
no hint of COP-out 26.

I want to wake and breath in air that’s clean,  
hear news of oceans cooler, reefs revived;  
I want proper recycling, no more litter  
by the roads, and fewer cars.

I want to listen to the sound of bees,  
strike out the use of harmful pesticides;  
I want to ban rare metal batteries,  
and change the way we think of fuel.

I want the poor to drink in safer places  
water from an unpolluted well;  
I want to cut the felling of the forests,  
nurse these frayed and fragile lungs.

I want the can-do spirit of Prince Philip,  
with the nous of David Attenborough  
and the voice of youth like Greta Thunberg  
sounding in our public ears.

I want the rich to practise carbon pricing,  
turn their economics right way up;  
I want a government that hears my voice  
no less, no more than any other.

I want to put some money where my mouth is,  
pay for stuff that’s ethically sourced;  
I want to buy more eco-friendly products,  
pull my weight, reduce my footprint.

I want the human species to be modest  
stewards of our home on planet earth;  
I want respect for every form of life,  
and start by saying, ‘Yes we can!’



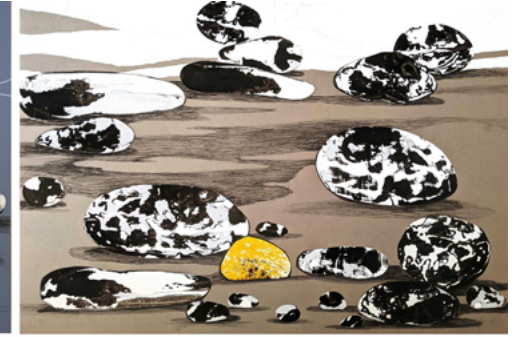


## GHOST FISHING

**Jan Brown**  
Mixed media on board

*"I'm a Marine Biologist and beachcomber and I'm acutely aware of the problem of plastic and other pollution on our beaches. This piece was made to illustrate the huge hidden problem in our oceans caused by discarded fishing gear which ends up on the seabed and carries on catching and killing marine life. As it's not as obvious as beach litter, most people are unaware of the enormity of the problem and its effect on the marine environment."*

The Great Scottish Canvas



## IMMIGRANT STONES

**Tatiana Titova**  
Mixed Media (collage  
on cardboard, acrylics,  
colour pencils)

*"In this artwork, I use stones to visualize my idea of a more tolerant Scotland. Many stones found in Scotland came from what is now Norway and Sweden. They were brought here by a glacier during the Ice Age. As the climate changed, the glacier melted, and the immigrant stones settled on Scottish soil. In my compositions, it is hard to see which stones are native and which are not; often they help one another maintain their balance. Millions of people around the world are displaced due to global warming and the countries least responsible for climate change are the most vulnerable. We in Scotland must do what we can to help tackle the global climate crisis."*

# THE FIGHT OF THE WYLD CATTIS

Rae Cowie

*“As soon as I learned of the Great Scottish Canvas, I knew I wished to write about the Highland wildcat. Such a majestic animal, one Scotland must do everything in its power to protect. Then during research, when I discovered how symbolic the wildcat was for both the Picts and Highland clans, I knew my piece must revolve around the battles the animal endured in the past, but, more importantly, the fight it now faces to survive. The only way I could tell that tale was through the eyes of a wildcat.”*

We arrived after the Ice Age, when pine was dense, seeking the shallows of lochs to wash scent from our paws. Solitary shadows that stalked north in the moonlight. We dined on moles and mountain hare, chased rodents that squeaked.

To become a totem for Picts. Slain so our pelts could adorn their skin. A symbol of bravery, of their combative spirit.

Still, we roamed.

Centuries spun on, when spears became swords, as clan fought clan and our heads became prized - for their sporrans. Our clawed feet brushed and mounted as fluffy tassels.

Not satisfied with severing our body, they claimed our nature too. Our agility, our strength. Our image fixed in family crests.

Then the gentry took to sport, and gamekeepers sought ‘beasts for the chase’, setting hounds upon us. But we stood our ground, teeth bared, as dogs howled and men with shotguns inched near. Until stories around the fireside grew, of our ferocity, our savagery.

So, they trapped us. Like vermin. Us! Once revered by the ancients; worshipped by the Cait people of Caithness.

Us! A cat who climbs trees. A cat who can swim, between mainland and isle. Across lochans when we’ve a mind to escape.

At twilight we stealth, belly low, grass and litter leaf beneath our feet. We stare. We wait. One lightning flick of a paw, a sharp bite to the back of the neck, and we eat.

Wind ripples my fur, as I prowl ancient woodland. My ears prick. A swoosh of wings. An eagle dives at my young. I growl, spit... pounce. I hook my claws into its chest, kicking and tearing at feathers as it rises, until innards fly free. Bloodied, we plummet...

Deer roar. A capercaillie clucks as kits tumble around the cairn. Their eyes blink, pale blue. I curl my bushy tail about me.

When food is plentiful and the sun warm, I bask on rocky outcrops.

I seek a quiet life. A den, to rear my kittens without fear.

But we are endangered. Our numbers perilously low. My family may not survive. The warriors we have been, the place we’ve earned in history, is not enough.

Battle-scarred, we need your help.

We know you can fight.

Yours,

A Wildcat





## RUNES

Trisha Gow  
Woven tapestry

*"This woven tapestry is made from wool dyed with mushrooms found in Scotland. In weaving Runes, I was thinking about times when the balance of man and nature was not so destructive. I am concerned about the sustainability of fungi and adhere to a code of practise governing the ethical harvesting and safe dye practice. Looking forward, I want Scotland to be a country which promotes biodiversity of species through managing our land using sustainable farming and forestry practices."*

# GIFTS

Elizabeth Craig

*“I wrote this poem after walking  
in our local park, beside  
Carlingwark Loch in Dumfries  
and Galloway. At the time, I was  
thinking how much nature has  
contributed to our well-being,  
especially during lockdown,  
even if it is just the appreciation  
of a patch of sunlight or  
listening to the birds. This led  
me to think about how fragile  
our eco-system is, and how each  
of us can have a positive impact  
on it by making changes to how  
we live. Even small changes can  
make a difference.”*

The glint of the sun on the water  
The silvered swans the loch  
The lap of the waves on the shoreline  
And willows’ whispering sough

The desolate cry of the seagulls  
Far inland from harbour or sea  
The rippling wind through the grasses  
And the change of light on the lea

The sudden loud hiss of the rain  
From the umber and purple clouds  
The air charged with hair-raising tingle  
And the thunderclap long and loud

The dancing of ozone-charged atoms  
Alive in the thunderous force  
The clouds of white blossom petals  
As the waning storm runs its course

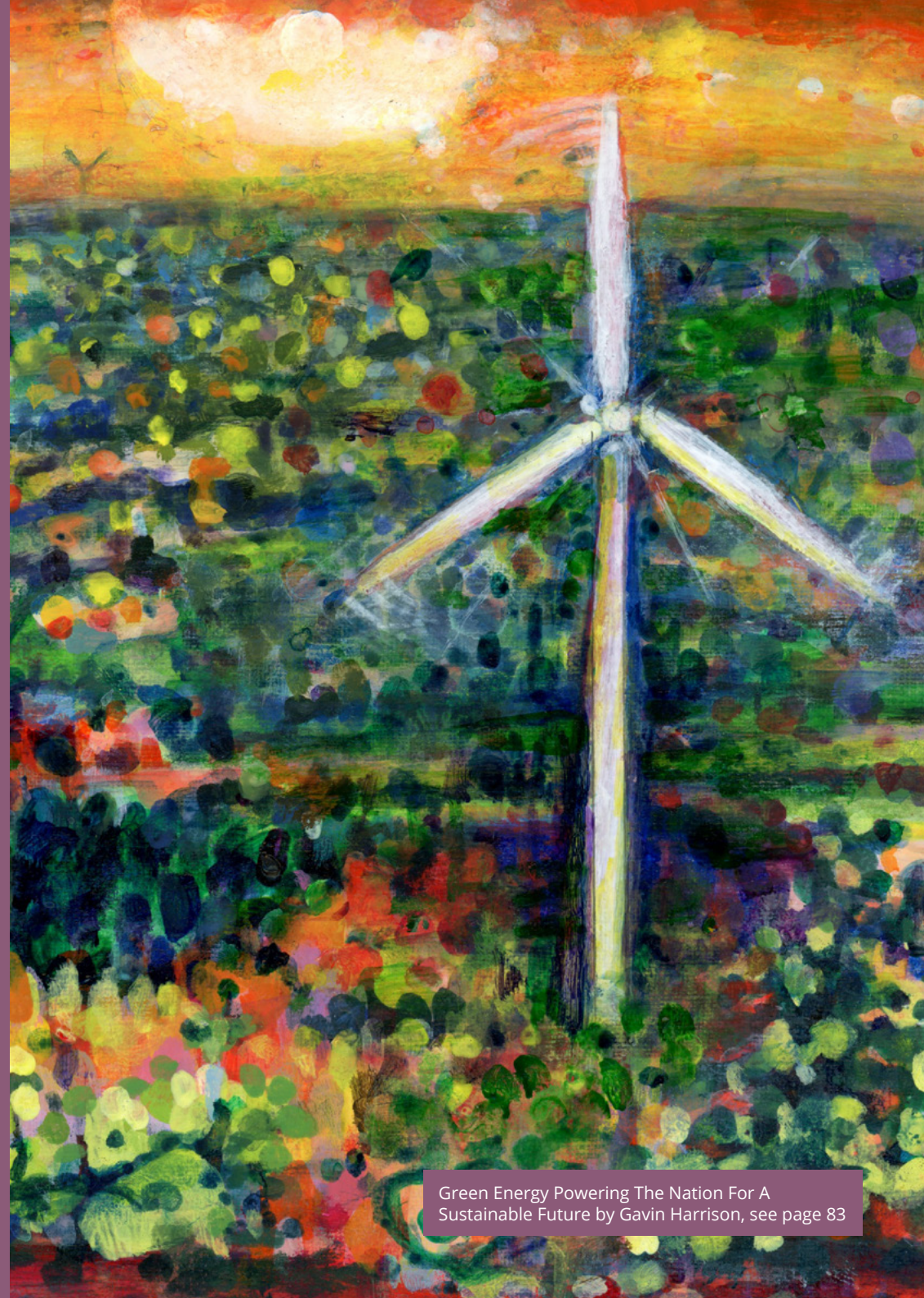
The abacus of starlings  
Like beads on the overhead wires  
A loud iridescent gathering  
A chirping and chattering choir

The glint on the aureate water  
The lowering sun on the loch  
The liquid gold on the shoreline  
And the willows’ whispering sough



## SPOTLIGHT ON HEATING AND ENERGY

The way we heat our homes is damaging ourselves and the climate. That's the cold truth. In fact, did you know that heating accounts for almost half of Scotland's climate emissions? It's time to bring our buildings into the 21st century. A Green New Deal for Homes will help us kick out fossil fuels from our homes, saving money, cutting fuel poverty and creating jobs. Making our homes greener is a big opportunity for green jobs in Scotland. It's time to swap gas boilers for renewable systems, to think bigger and invest in low carbon heat networks that bring heat to whole communities, and to help tackle fuel poverty by insulating homes and cutting energy bills.



Green Energy Powering The Nation For A Sustainable Future by Gavin Harrison, see page 83

# HARNESSING THE KELPIE

**Sandra Ireland**

*“I am a National Trust for Scotland  
volunteer at Barry Mill, in Angus.  
This is an old watermill which,  
until the 1980s, ground corn for  
the entire community. Once, there  
were as many watermills in Scotland  
as there are now supermarkets.  
I cannot help but contrast the carbon  
footprint of my local supermarket,  
with its enormous electricity usage  
and inflated food miles, to the quiet,  
constant revolution of the water  
wheel, generating power from  
a free, natural, abundant resource.*

*My poem is a plea for us to use  
our natural, sustainable resources  
for our energy needs. Sometimes,  
the old ways can be made new!  
Traditionally, every watermill was  
guarded by its own water kelpie,  
which protected the families who  
used the mill from fairies and other  
malevolent creatures.”*

The old mill is derelict, locked up,  
shuttered,  
and from the broken gutter, a single rain drop  
leaks  
and lands  
on the spike of a thistle.  
Moss coats the sullen water wheel, while  
down in the hollow, the black- backed burn  
snarls  
like an angry kelpie.  
Don't you remember?  
Don't you remember when death hovered in the gap  
between the millstones? When survival depended  
on the turn of a wheel?  
The water of life, indeed.  
The power to grind,  
the power to eat,  
the power to feed.  
A single splash of rain lands on the spike of a thistle.  
Within it,  
I can see the whole of Scotland;  
a microcosm in a tear drop.  
We have always had the power.  
Time to harness the kelpie.





## IN THE RAIN

**Heather Smillie**  
**Watercolour and acrylic paint**  
**on heavy-weight paper**

*“Nature has a wonderful ability to repair itself: replenishing and regenerating. We should be making this easier by taking our rubbish home and leaving areas how we found them - creating safe and peaceful habitats for our plants and animals. We are appreciating nature, the scenery of Scotland and the ever-changing weather, now more than ever. We are known for our dreich weather; however, rain has such great properties for not only our native species but also, the air. This piece aims to portray a stormy, Scottish scene with the rain lashing down and no litter in sight.”*

# BAWD BI THE DEE

Sheena Blackhall

*“The Bawd bi the Dee appeared in my pamphlet A Boorich o Breet, published by Severin Books in 2002. I’ve always been aware of how fleeting mortal life is, compared with the Bens and Rivers of Deeside, and I foresee that when men as we know them have vanished from the planet, the Glens of the Cairngorms and their animals will survive.”*

There’s a bawd in the park aside the Dee,  
Far the Tulloch wid’s hing broon,  
Fin the birk trees shakk, his lugs preen back,  
Gainst the win he’s hunkered doon.

Tho my tales be telt, an my heirskip selt  
The Dee is an on-gaun story  
The bawd in the wid wi his fur hauf hid  
An the beech in its copper glory

My fowk an their spikk hae fled like rikk,  
Nane here noo share my bluid,  
Yet this snaaflake airt ay claims my hairt  
I am my faither’s seed.

Fur an feather an hoof an horn  
Are fashions that dinna change,  
An the mighty stag on the muckle crag,  
Is tap o designer range.

Tho monarchs crummle an empires cowp,  
Like wauchts o winnlestrae,  
The flash o finn ower the tummlin linn  
Will be there till the eyn o day.

Commuter chieles bi the Tulloch puils,  
Will be stoor an aisse an smush,  
Bit the troot, the erne, an the wyvin fern  
Will be here wi the hurlygush.

Fin the ile rins oot, an the gushers sproot  
On Galaxy X or Mars,  
The bawd’ll be bi the dimplin Dee  
Wi his preen-prick friens, the stars.





## GREEN ENERGY POWERING THE NATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

**Gavin Harrison**  
Acrylic on paper

*"My vision of a future Scotland is a green and pleasant land powered entirely by renewable energy; this will ensure that the environment is preserved for generations to come."*

# I STAND UP FOR WHAT I STAND ON

Eilidh O'Henley

*English Translation*



I stand up for what  
I stand on



# A GRANDMOTHER'S HOPE FOR THE HEBRIDES

**Madeleine Gorham**

*“I was born in England but have lived in Scotland for 49 years. I am a wife, mother and grandmother. I love the Scottish scenery and wildlife. I have a particular love for the Hebrides where I have enjoyed many inspiring holidays with my children when they were young, and with my husband in our retirement. This poem arose out of my concern that we care for the Earth, the wildlife and these special places so other generations may benefit and enjoy them. The poem speaks of my hope that my two little granddaughters, aged 4 years and 20 months, will be able to know, appreciate and care for these wild places.”*

My little ones, when you are fully grown,  
may there still be pristine beaches.  
May Hebridean seas delight you  
with iridescent blue-green colours,  
changing constantly with light.

May you know the places where  
the seals bask on low tide rocks,  
and listen to their song.  
And as you walk along, may  
some swim up and take a look at you.

I hope the seas are full  
of dolphins leaping  
swiftly over the waves,  
making your heart leap too  
with joy at the sight of them.

Let there be otters rolling  
playfully in liquid heaven,  
or taking a morning swim  
in quiet rocky bays,  
looking for breakfast.

May clouds of puffins be  
whirring overhead on Mingulay  
to find their burrows. And sheer  
cliff edges teem with  
noisy sea bird life.

Let gannets plunge and dive  
like stream-lined missiles  
into the sea. May they make  
you breathless with  
their speed and skill.

And may you thrill  
to see an eagle soar  
high above the hill,  
where lapwings sing  
their plaintive call.

Ah may you know all this.  
Treasure, and protect it all.



Eco Bus by Betty Mary Colburn, see page 32

## SPOTLIGHT ON CLIMATE-FRIENDLY TRANSPORT

What's on your wish list for your neighbourhood? From more green spaces and better air quality to shorter, safer commutes and greater mobility, zero emissions towns and cities can help make your wish a reality. Did you know that over a third of Scotland's climate emissions come from transport? It's time to invest in other ways of getting from A to B: walking, cycling, public transport and cleaner vehicles. New fossil fuel vehicles are set to be phased out in Scotland in 9 years time, but electric transport remains out of reach for too many of us. We need an electric transport revolution.



# GROW A PEAR

Ruth MacInnes

**transport**

*why*  
the car pollution  
*why not*  
the chip fat solution

**garden**

*why*  
leave the garden bare  
*why not*  
grow an apple, or a pear  
  
*why*  
plant ornamental trees  
*why not*  
cherries, berries, fruit and veggies

**home**

*why*  
switch on the central heating  
*why not*  
toddy drinking, pandrop eating

*why*  
turn up the thermostat  
*why not*  
put on a coat and hat

*why*  
wood smoke and coal fumes  
*why not*  
insulate the attic and rooms

**animals**

*why*  
animals, birds, and fishes  
*why not*  
vegan and vegetarian dishes

**environment**

*why*  
drink from a styrofoam cup at ceilidhs  
*why not*  
bring your own to the wailidh wailidhs

*why*  
walk away from the dog’s aftermath  
*why not*  
flick it with a stick off the woodland path

*why*  
the rat race, the big spend  
*why not*  
make do and mend

*why*  
the upgrade, the new phoneses  
*why not*  
be unswayed by the Joneses

*why*  
treat Scotland like a tip  
*why not*  
take pride in custodianship



## GOOD MORNING

**Susan Drever**  
Mixed media on canvas

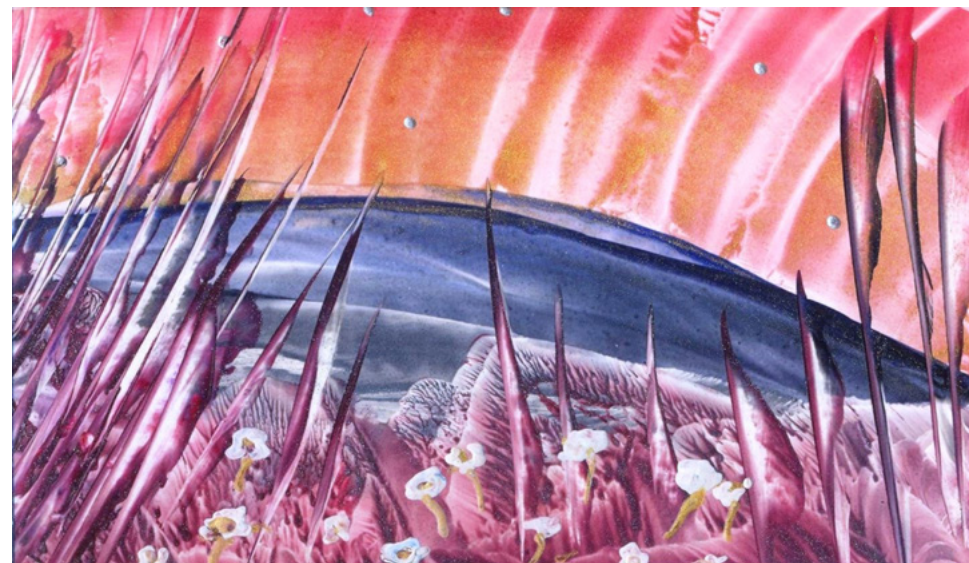
*“My collage was inspired by my dad coming home from a night shift and telling me about the beautiful morning skies. I mixed different shapes and colours that I thought worked well together into one shared space. I would love a future Scotland to do the same; work together to preserve all the treasures that make us a nation. It is how nature works at its best, and it is how we should too.”*

The Great Scottish Canvas

## BY AURORA LIGHT

**Nadia Davidson**  
Encaustic wax on sealed card

*“My greatest hope for the future is for there to be more hedgerows and wild spaces in nature. In areas which are being developed, I would like to see businesses and companies encourage the planting and renewal of green and wild spaces, not the removal of them. I have witnessed the Aurora Borealis many times living in Scotland and use this as a metaphor for hope and dramatic impact in many of my paintings. In this painting the wilds are flowering under the magical light of the aurora. This is my hope for the future of the wilds in Scotland.”*





## ਪ੍ਰਦੂਸ਼ਨ (ਜ਼ਹਿਰੀਲਾ-ਧੂੰਆਂ) Pollution

“ਸੁਣੋ ਬੱਚਿਓ ਸੁਣੋ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗੋ, ਆ ਪਈ ਹੈ ਪ੍ਰਦੂਸ਼ਨ ਦੀ ਮਾਰ।  
ਪ੍ਰਦੂਸ਼ਨ ਹੈ ਜ਼ਹਿਰੀਲਾ ਧੂੰਆਂ, ਇਸ ਵੱਲ ਦੇਣਾ ਪਉ ਧਿਆਨ।  
ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੁਝ ਸੋਚੋ ਸਮਝੋ, ਬਣੇ ਸਿਆਣੇ ਹੋਵੋ ਤਿਆਰ।  
ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਬਹੁਤੀ ਔਖੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਨਾ ਸਮਝੋ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਵੱਡਾ ਭਾਰ।  
ਜੇ ਮਨੁੱਖਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਕਰਦੇ ਪਿਆਰ, ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਦੀ ਹੁਣ ਲੈ ਲਓ ਸਾਰ।  
ਕੰਮ ‘ਤੇ ਜਾਣਾ ਸ਼ੇਅਰ ਕਰੋ ਕਾਰ, ਬੱਸ-ਰੇਲ ਨੂੰ ਵਰਤੋ ਵਾਰੋ-ਵਾਰ।  
ਨੇੜੇ ਜਾਣਾ ਤਾਂ ਜਾਵੋ ਤੁਰ ਕੇ, ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਸੋਹਣੀ ਵਾਕ Walk.  
ਸਕੂਲ ਹੈ ਨੇੜੇ ਤਾਂ ਤੁਰ ਕੇ ਜਾਵੋ, ਸਾਈਕਲ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਕਰੋ ਇਸਤੇਮਾਲ।  
ਨਹਾਉਣਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਸ਼ਾਵਰ ਵਰਤੋ, ਪਾਣੀ ਵਰਤੋ ਘੱਟ ਤੋਂ ਘੱਟ।  
ਪਲਾਸਟਿਕ ਨੂੰ ਕਰਕੇ ਜ਼ੀਰੋ, ਇਸ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਰ ਦਿਓ ਕੱਟ”।

Listen children and adults, we are under risk of pollution.  
Pollution is a poisonous smoke, we must think about it.

Consider something, be wise and be prepare for it.  
This is not a big thing, do not think and say that I can't do it.

If you love humanity, start to play your role right now.  
If you go to work at same place share care and use the train  
and bus more frequently.

If you go a short distance, you can walk.  
If your school is close, you can use a bike.

If you want to have a bath, have a shower instead.  
Cut the use of plastic and make it zero.

# FEY

**Kirsteen Lovell**  
**Digital collage**

*“This is Fey, my homage to Scottish Modernist writer and poet, Nan Shepherd.*

*Feyness is the iridescent exhilaration that comes over climbers, making them appear in Shepherd’s words “a little mad in the eyes of those who do not climb”. The design is inspired by my love of Nan’s writing and the mountain memoir *The Living Mountain*.*

*As a keen hillwalker, her words are as essential as a map and compass. It is my hope that my artwork will guide more people to Shepherd and her writing, so they can see nature through her eyes. Perhaps then, they will care a little more for the very thing that sustains us all. However small the change, as Greta Thunberg proves, you are never too wee to make a difference.*

*The eye used in the design is my own. Fey also incorporates my landscape photography.”*





# CLUMLIE LOCH

Nat Hall

*“I am a poet fae Shetland,  
whose work is mainly inspired  
from nature in my archipelago.  
This poem is about Clumlie  
Loch at spring, celebrating  
the teeming wildlife and place.  
Tis one of the last corners  
of semi-wilderness in the  
South Mainland of Shetland,  
Scotland where we, humans,  
can still watch wildlife, nature,  
as it happens on Earth.”*

*\*Glossary fae da Shetland dialect:*

*Bonxies: Great Skuas;*

*Hellery: adverse weather (heavy precipitation  
falling diagonally / horizontally due to gales);*

*Rain goose: Red-Throated Diver / Loon;*

*Burn: a stream;*

*Voar efter voar: Spring after spring (season)*

A mean wind talks over them all.

Two bonxies\* joust above

the loch - was it for

love or tug of

war?

Black headed gulls

laugh from

the side...

Trio of manes

just off

the

holm,

two

meadow pipits on

wire,

eager to court tucked in

heather;

invisible crooning

curlews as

line chorus fill a sky blue in

defiance to each outburst from

the prowler that heaves wavelets on the water.

Everything yields in its presence:

from the lichen stricken fence posts to

daffodils back from the dead,

hell, hellery\*, blown at

Easter...

They,

like the

dwellers from

the loch, stood to

its wrath and raging claws;

yet skylarks hoist high into sky and

sing along in spring evening

cacophonous around

it all -

rain goose\* elegance, scarlet throats,

sleek and silent as

spectators...

And

water hums

through the old sluice, iris and

burn\* down to Troswick via

grinding stones,

forgotten

times,

Iain

fixes

voar efter voar.\*

# NOTES



# NOTES

WWF asked people across the nation to share their visions of the future Scotland they wanted to see. The Great Scottish Canvas is the result – showcasing art and poetry on the themes of climate, people and nature.



Cover art is of Holyrood  
by Laura Johnson,  
see page 54.

WWF Scotland  
The Tun, 4 Jackson's Entry,  
Holyrood Road,  
Edinburgh, EH8 8PJ

0131 659 9100  
[wwfscotland.org.uk](http://wwfscotland.org.uk)  
@WWFScotland



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