

## ***Woven in Renfrewshire:***

### ***Artists Responses to Caring Stories visits Sma' Shot Cottages:***

***Friday, 7th September to Saturday, 14th September***

For 9 months, four socially-engaged artists listened and responded to the experiences of women carers - community and family-based - across Renfrewshire. The project, led by Paisley-based cultural organisation Fablevision, was funded by Creative Scotland, National Lottery, Renfrewshire's Culture, Heritage and Events Fund, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde as well as the local Health and Social Care Partnership.

Lead artists Beall, with Audrey O'Brien, Karen Herbison and Kayleigh McGuinness heard first-hand of the heroism and resilience required to be a carer and their 'soundings' were translated into artworks that help to tell these stories. An exhibition is currently installed in the dining room of the Royal Alexandra Hospital (RAH), Paisley, and the touring exhibition visited the Paisley Shopping Centre and the Scottish Parliament to raise the issue of care with MSPs.

The final stop on the circuit of the touring exhibition will be Sma Shot Cottages for two weeks in support of Doors Open weekend and to mark the final weekend of the cottages being open to the public before they close for the winter months.

**Opening times: 13:00-16:00**

**Friday 6, Saturday 7 and Sunday 8**

**Wednesday 11, Friday 13 and Saturday 14, September 2024.**

## **Background information**

### ***Woven in Renfrewshire:***

With Funding from Creative Scotland, National Lottery and Renfrewshire's Culture, Heritage and Events Fund as well as the local Health and Social Care Partnership, Fablevision's ***Woven in Renfrewshire*** is a year-long artist residency programme gathering the stories of Renfrewshire women care workers: both in formal health and social care settings, and informal within their families and communities. In spring 2023 four socially engaged artists were appointed by a steering committee drawn from representatives of Renfrewshire's health and social care partnership, community based organisations and creatives who are now connecting the artists with women in caring roles within Renfrewshire. Listening to the anonymised stories of Renfrewshire's undervalued carers is core to how the project artists will respond creatively to those stories, through pop-up installations and events in Paisley, Johnstone and Renfrew during Spring 2024. A touring exhibition will visit the Royal Alexandra Hospital and the Scottish Parliament in Spring/Summer 2024, alongside an online exhibition that forms part of an international project - Woven Network (<http://wovenart.works/>). The European exploration was initiated by cultural operatives in Mariupol, Ukraine and is led by Intercult in Stockholm, Sweden.

The whole process has 'kicked off' with a chance to see an exhibition of some of the work that was created by Glasgow based artists and carers from Govan using similar methods (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pd7MVNJ6M-0&t=4s>). Images from the Govan experience are available in the Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley - accompanied by a series of taster events designed to reach out and engage potential participants. We are looking for Renfrewshire based carers willing to share their stories, to come forward and would welcome any contacts from interested parties by phone (0141 230 7321) or email ([info@fablevision.org](mailto:info@fablevision.org)).

**Fablevision Director, Liz Gardiner said:**

*We are honoured to be able to deliver Woven in Renfrewshire as the Scottish partner in a high profile collaboration called Woven Network which compares and contrasts the experience of Scottish women with those in Eastern Europe (Ukraine) and Northern Europe (Sweden and Nordics). The lived experience of carers is vital for the Scottish Government's current consultation around what should be the shape of a National Care Service and MSPs have already commented on the value of feedback in a creative medium which hits home and is much more accessible for audiences than dry papers and reports. We wanted to hear as many voices as possible and now we want to share our findings with as many people as possible, so please visit us in Sma Shot Cottages until the 14th September or in the RAH dining room until Christmas time.*

**Dr t s Beall, Lead Artist, said:**

*I know I speak for all the 'Woven in Renfrewshire' artists when I say that it has been an honour to speak with care workers across Renfrewshire for this project and to highlight their experiences in some small way through our creative work.*

*Research clearly suggests that the burden of care for care workers has increased, but all too often that burden is entirely unseen. This project aims to make some small portion of the work, voices, and stories of carers in Renfrewshire – both paid and unpaid – more visible.*

Operating outwith traditional cultural venues, **Woven in Renfrewshire** takes place where audiences **are** - in hospitals, shopping centres and various community settings. Providing a creative platform for undervalued carers, our process highlighted topical issues - allowing their voices to be truly heard and understood. Contributing to important debate in the Scottish parliament about the shape of a proposed national care service, participatory creative practices have impacted on policy making and wellbeing: raising spirits within clinical environments; raising morale, confidence and self esteem amongst undervalued women who care. As we have seen with recent threats to Creative Scotland funding, artists and carers share experiences of precarity - standing in solidarity

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For more information contact Liz Gardiner at [info@fablevision.org](mailto:info@fablevision.org) or call 0141 2307321.