

Is a thing lost if you know where it is? - Islands project -

Devised for an Lanntar and other partners by Ian Stephen, in collaboration with other artists and curators

Is a thing lost if you know where it is – is a line from a family story from Lewis - but suggests a way of exploring how a story may take different forms. It can cross mediums and the narrative can change direction but only within certain limits.

This idea was further developed in collaboration with the artist Emmanuelle Waeckerlé (based in London and St Yrieix) – who proposed to examine how the concept could relate to the Echo and Narcissus myth. A storyteller is, like Echo, restricted in that he can only repeat what he has heard but not initiate. And the artist, like Narcissus is also restricted because he is bound to filter all perceptions through his own consciousness.

While both artists' practices are rooted in language and storytelling, there are great differences which form the basis of their collaboration. Ian Stephen's work and use of Language is strongly rooted in the Hebrides and his experience of the sea while Emmanuelle's language is attached to the body and speaks of mixed cultural heritage (Morocco, France, London).

If telling a story is seen as an act of navigating through it, both are "restricted in their ability to manoeuvre." The nautical symbol shown by a vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre, ball diamond ball shown in line, has become a recurring motive appearing in several works made so far.

In the same way as such a vessel has to operate within a restricted range of possibilities, characters in traditional stories live within a limited scope. The storyteller is also limited to work within the established framework of the story. And the artist can be limited by his or her own perception or by practical concerns.

*a vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre
can't keep out of the way*

*a storyteller can only make an echo
of what's already there*

*an artist looks inside out
for something not there yet*

Their approach has led to a series of works and exhibitions, funded by Creative Scotland, an Lanntair arts centre, Highland Print Studio, UCA Farnham, Collins Gallery, The Pier Arts Centre and by their own contributions

DOCUMENTATION

CROSSING ALBA



Gerry Loose, Morven Gregor, Ian Stephen, Emmanuelle Waeckerlé
Collins gallery, Glasgow - 20th August to 18th September 2010, with catalogue.

JL, MG, IS and EW began the crossing of Central Scotland, by the Forth and Clyde canal system then IS and EW departed to make a crossing of the north of Scotland, from Stromness to Stornoway while JL and MG's rowing was still in progress. The correspondence and contrast between the two crossings is the subject of the *Crossing Alba* exhibition.

Two stories were exchanged at the beginning of the voyage, **King Lindorm** and **Falling man**, timeless stories, tales of survival, exploring human psychology.

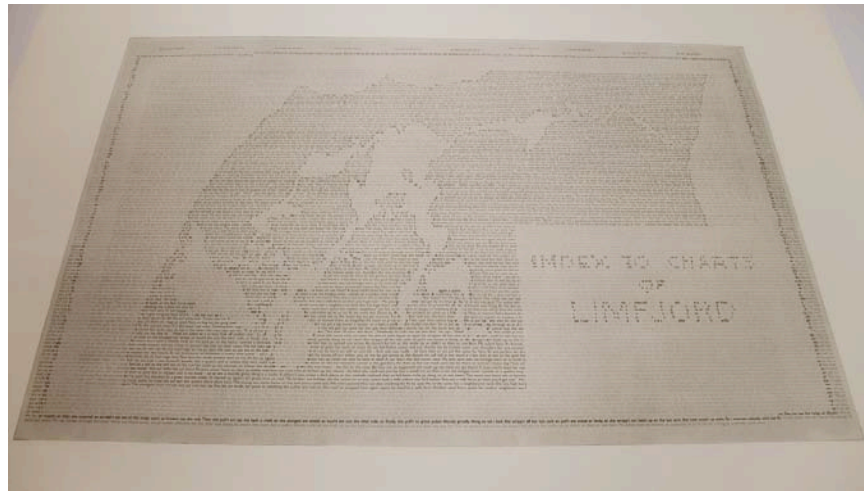
These stories have been retold by IS and EW in a range of different mediums: video works; a series of photogravures; two photographic diptyches and customised male and female garments, both showing an image based on the international signal for "I am restricted in my ability to manoeuvre".

A feature on the show was published in The Herald and it has also been spotlighted on STV news and BBC Scotland website.



Fourteen skins – ISWE production

7 Restricted all-in-ones and 7 cutty sarks related to *King Lindorm* and *Falling man* stories
concept Ian Stephen and Emmanuelle Waeckerlé
design Emmanuelle Waeckerlé, screenprinting Highland Print Studios



a story from the *Limfjord* - Emmanuelle Waeckerlé and Ian Stephen – 2010

Edition of 20 - photo-polymer print - 800x500 mm - printed by John McNaught, Highland Print Studio – concept and design ; Emmanuelle Waeckerlé, made from a photograph and the words of Ian Stephen (telling of the Danish story) research by Karen Bek Pedersen. Doric version by Alex Patience.

a story from *Hiort* - Emmanuelle Waeckerlé and Ian Stephen – 2010

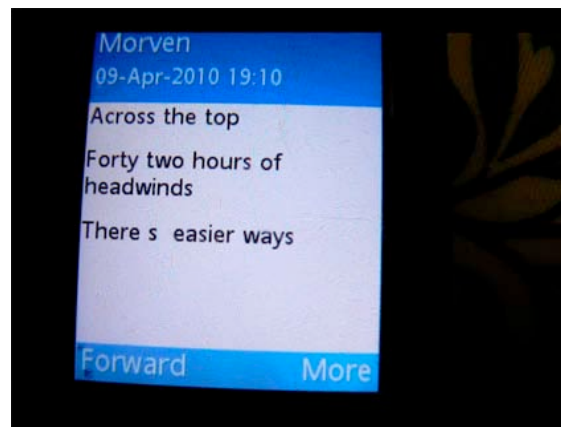
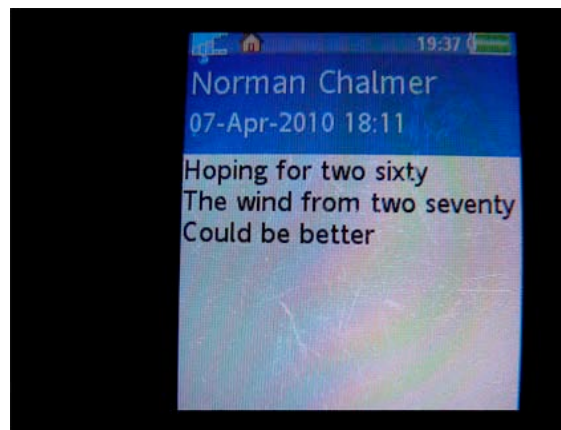
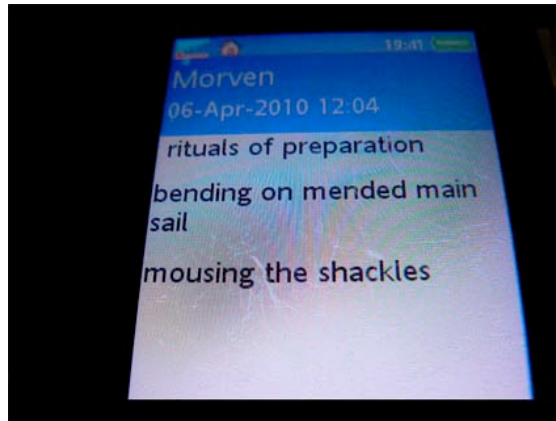
Edition of 20 - photo-polymer print - 800x500 mm - printed by John McNaught, Highland Print Studio - concept and design ; Emmanuelle Waeckerlé, made from a photograph and a premonition tale from St Kilda retold by Ian Stephen, (Gaelic version by Magaidh Mac a' Ghobhainn).

a story from *The Shiants* - Emmanuelle Waeckerlé and Ian Stephen – 2010

Edition of 20 - photo-polymer print - 800x500 mm - printed by John McNaught, Highland Print Studio - concept and design ; Emmanuelle Waeckerlé, made from a photograph and a tale from retold by Ian Stephen.....



Falling man – 2010 – ISWE production
single channel video – 6 mins
storytelling and climbing Ian Stephen
camera and editing Emmanuelle Waeckerlé



msn poems – Ian Stephen - 2010

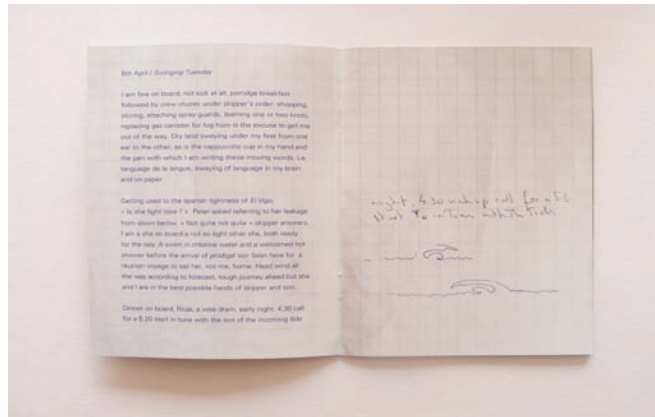
Video loop – 1'30

Voyage, Stromness to Stornoway, logged in text-messages



The crossing – *beginning, middle, end* – 2010 – ISWE production

single channel video – 9 mins
camera Emmanuelle Waeckerlé and Ian Stephen
editing, Emmanuelle Waeckerlé



Stromness to Stornoway – Emmanuelle Waeckerlé - 2010

(A6, 16pps stitched . edition of 20)

Diary / log of the northern voyage from Stromness to Stornoway with pen drawings made during voyage and the only three photographs taken from down below; self portrait as sick crew and two sick crew views

DOCUMENTATION

IS A THING LOST ?



Ian Stephen in collaboration with Emmanuelle Waeckerlé and Colin Myers
Pier arts centre, Stromness - 4th September to end of November 2010

A former artwork made for the Green Waters exhibition, originated at the Pier in 1998 no longer exists in the same form. Most of the timber from “9 planks for Emily” has been stripped and used in the renovation of two traditional island boats, now in commission. So the timber from the artwork is in the structure of Broad Bay and the tillers for Jubilee.

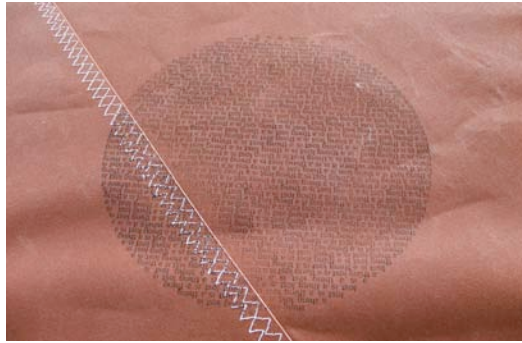
Jubilee (1935 *sgoth Niseach*) was sailed to Orkney, from Port of Ness on the 2nd september 2010, a 26 hour long crossing with a crew of 4, Ian Stephen, Colin Myers, Diyanne Ross and David Skelly. Photo and video documentation was edited into new video works.

The shipwright and photographer Colin Myers produced a drawing, imagining how he thought the 9 planks for Emily might have looked. He also crewed on the voyage and gave a talk (linking with the Orkney Science Festival) comparing the design, function and structure of Orkney and Lewis boats.



Two gloves – 2010 – Ian Stephen

a. Antifouling gloves Stromness. b. printmakers gloves, Inverness
Edition of 20 - Digital print on somerset paper box framed – 54 cms x 20cms



(close up)



RESTRICTED storm sail – 2010 - ISWE production

screenprint - printed at Highland Print Studio
concept Ian Stephen and Emmanuelle Waeckerlé
design Emmanuelle Waeckerlé



(close up)

Two planks –2006/10 - Ian Stephen
(redressed by Colin Myers)

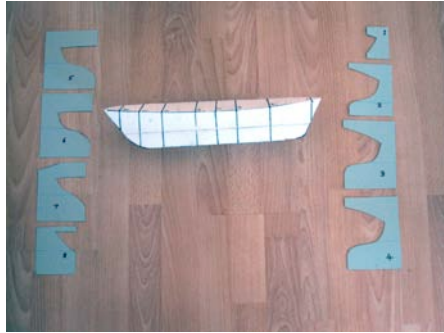


Jubilee's voyage – 2010

Single channel video – 3'40

camera and photography Ian Stephen Diyanne Ross Emmanuelle Waeckerlé

Editing Emmanuelle Waeckerlé



Restoration of Broad Bay – 2010

Single channel video ; video Ian Stephen - photography Colin Myers
Editing Emmanuelle Waeckerlé