

Abstract

In the loop . Shetland Museum

Since graduating from Glasgow School of Art in 1992, Deirdre Nelson has pursued a parallel career in creating work for exhibition and commission and in working as a tutor to various groups. Her art practice has evolved through experimenting with materials and methods of making in which hand work and craftsmanship provide both direction and context. Hand skills are used though the work in a humorous commentary on social and textile history within the contemporary gallery. Her textile work employs a variety of techniques and materials fusing traditional textile skills and contemporary reinterpretation through photography and digital manipulation.. She has been artist in residence in a variety of locations from Sutherland, Outer Hebrides to Western Australia creating work for exhibition and with local communities.

Through an illustrated presentation of her practice Deirdre will demonstrate her work which combines social and textile history relating to places where knitting is embedded into culture and history. Shetland museum and archives have provided much source material for exhibited works and resulted in an ongoing fascination and connection with Shetland. A series of works will be presented which incorporate contemporary reinterpretation of traditional skills and narrative in highlighting human stories.

Recently research into locations such as Shetland and Uist have provided many stories and inspiration for exhibited textile works and work with local communities. Working with these communities has developed an interest in quiet activism in the form of knitting groups who work quietly for a variety of charity projects. Those working do not consider themselves as artists or craftspeople and possess fine traditional skills working in a less overt manner for sometime now.

This interest in Deirdres practice will be highlighted through presenting 'the fish exchange' a community fish knitting project.