

RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION

WILL MACLEAN: POINTS OF DEPARTURE

4 June – 2 October 2022

City Art Centre, Edinburgh

Spanning fifty years of work, this rich visual feast of 150 items celebrates Will Maclean's position as one of the outstanding artists of his generation, still at the height of his powers. The exhibition, knowledgeably curated by David Patterson, CAC Director, is presented as part of the Edinburgh Festival 2022.

Maclean's work is anchored in the history, archaeology and literature of the Scottish Highlands and the Highland people, including members of his family. The exquisite, poetic nature of his box constructions, drawings and sculpture often alludes to Surrealist orthodoxies of assemblage, of flotsam and jetsam found on beaches and transformed in the studio, while they also focus on wide-ranging themes relating to the sea. His narratives are at once personal and universal. On occasion the strongly felt, well considered memorials he creates, are for those individuals and communities who might otherwise never have them. His art eloquently brings the past into an immediately felt present, igniting fresh interest and renewed, dynamic connections for viewers of all ages.

Maclean respects legacy, he delves into history, and the stories, songs and poetry of those who brought him and us into our contemporary culture. The wit, the 'symbols of survival', the occasional tragedy referenced in his subject matter, are delivered with a honed brevity and a reflective, tactile beauty that is always a tribute to the real.



Fhir a Bahta, 2012
mixed media construction, 109 x 123 cm



A Short History of North Rona, 2010
lead and mixed media, 154 x 102 x 7cm

Accompanied by two new publications, this eagerly awaited exhibition will be drawn from public and private collections, with many works going on public display for the first time, thanks to loyal private collectors.

To find out more about related events taking place at City Art Centre throughout the exhibition, visit www.edinburghmuseums.org.uk to make your bookings.

For information about those works which are available for acquisition, please inquire at the City Art Centre office, Or contact [Art First](#) for details and a price list.

The two new publications are available from the CAC bookshop, see below.



The Voyage of the James Caird to South Georgia, 2012
mixed media and found objects
67 x 52 x 9cm



Memory Board, 2012
mixed media and found objects
109 x 24 x 6 cm

Will Maclean: Points of Departure

Authors: Duncan Macmillan, Murdo Macdonald, Kim Ness

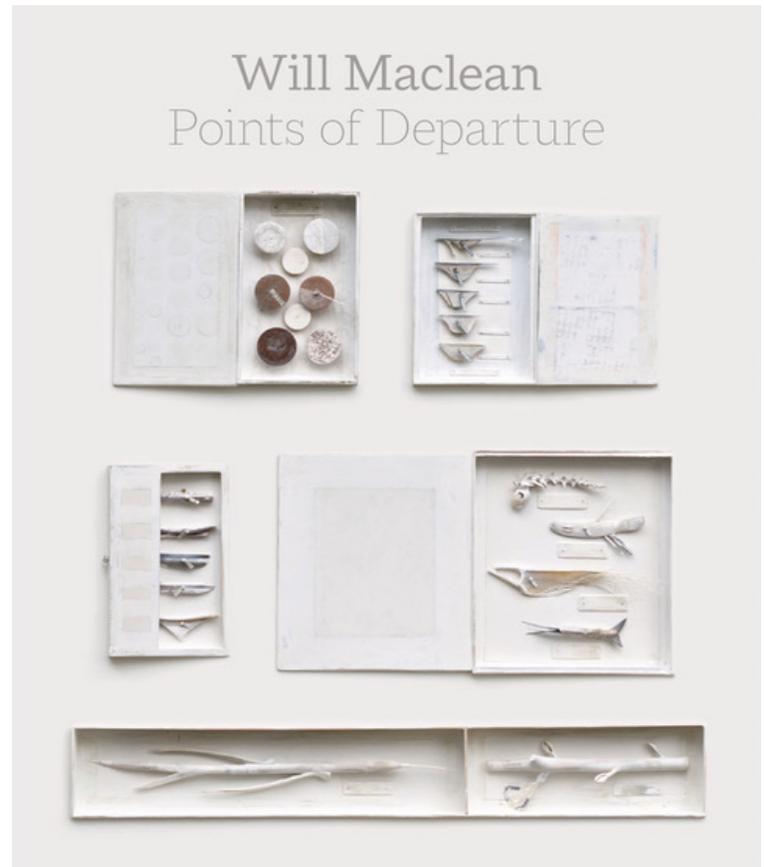
This publication is the catalogue for Will Maclean's 2022 retrospective exhibition at the City Art Centre in Edinburgh. It brings fresh insight into his practice from a variety of perspectives and is richly illustrated, covering work from over five decades.

Born in Inverness where his father was harbour master, Maclean's family history is inextricably linked with the Scottish west coast and the Isle of Skye. His first ambition was to follow in his father's footsteps and go to sea himself. After a period as a midshipman between 1957 and 1959, a failed eye test cut short his career and Maclean entered Gray's School of Art in Aberdeen in 1961. He spent another period at sea in 1968 as a ring-net fisherman which led to an important bursary in 1973 that enabled him to study this traditional fishing method in detail. The body of work, numbering well over 400 drawings, prints and watercolours, is in the collection of the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art.

In 1981 he was appointed lecturer at the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, University of Dundee, where he remained for fifteen fruitful years, becoming Professor of Fine Art in 1994 and in 2004-2006, Senior Research Fellow and now Emeritus Professor. He was elected Royal Scottish Academician in 1991 and in 1997 he designed and as part of the team, won the Scottish Natural Heritage Supreme Award for three Memorial Cairns in Lewis. The British Library and Tate's *Artists Lives Sound Archive* made a valuable recorded interview with him in 2005, the year he was awarded an MBE for services to Education and the Arts.

Perhaps best known for his wall constructions, Maclean is equally at home in sculpture, drawing, printmaking, video and installation. Combining exquisitely hand-made pieces with found or (on occasions) mass produced objects, his work balances between simplicity and complexity and invites the viewer to linger, to admire and to contemplate the themes which he explores.

The publication is available from the City Art Centre bookshop, as well as from [Art First](#), or it can be ordered directly from [Sansom & Company](#) (£20 + postage)



Cover: *Mariner's Museum, Taxonomy of Tides*, 2014
mixed media construction, 123 x 108 x 9.5 cm

Compelled by Memory: The Lewis Land Monuments 1994 - 2019
Will Maclean, with Marian Leven and Arthur Watson

Authors: Lindsay Blair, Joni Buchanan, Duncan Macmillan and Tom Normand

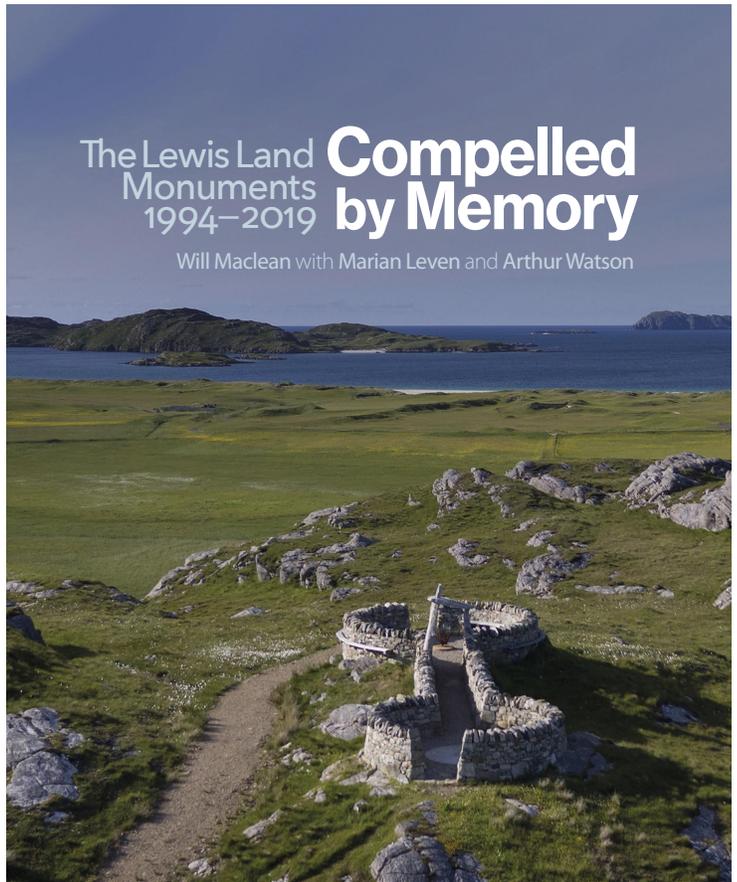
To accompany the exhibition, *Will Maclean: Points of Departure*, Art First has produced a book about five award-winning Lewis Land Monuments of extraordinary power and beauty. All overseen by artist Will Maclean, *An Sùileachan*, in Uig and the *Iolaire* memorial in Stornoway, both recently completed commissions, were co-designed with his wife, Marian Leven. Bronze sculptures by Maclean and Arthur Watson play a central role in the tragic narrative of the *Iolaire* memorial, which was unveiled on New Year's Day in 2019, exactly a century after the maritime disaster at the end of World War I. The stone monuments have been documented by photographer Robin Gillanders, portraying them in their glorious landscape settings on this remote, Outer Hebridean Isle.

Essays by distinguished art historians bring the history of the events behind these contemporary monuments to light, offering a vivid insight into memory, place, and a profound, collective sense of tribute to the courageous struggles of the 'heroes of the land raids'; those crofters who stood up to power and defended their rights and their Gaelic culture over a century ago.

Published by Sansom & Co, copies are available for £20 + postage directly from [Art First](#) and from the City Art Centre bookshop throughout the exhibition, or by ordering directly from [Sansom & Company](#)

For any further enquires or to order: contact clare@artfirst.co.uk

Image (right): *Gress*, referring to 1915 land raids and the 1918 – 1920 conflict with Lord Leverhulme. Completed in 1996



Art First is delighted to be participating in the 31st edition of the British Art Fair, Saatchi Gallery, 29 September - 2 October 2022. Please save the date.



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