

Here are my questions:

Where did you grow up and where do you live now?

I grew up in the North East of Scotland in the beautiful village of Braemar in Royal Deeside. I now live and work from my studio in rural Strathdon, Aberdeenshire.

What or who were your early influences and how did your upbringing influence your work?

My early influences were without doubt my parents who's inherent characteristics were creative, practical, artistic and promoted a 'can do' approach to most things. I had access to a sewing machine from a young age and continued to be creative when I could while running a business with my husband and bringing up a family.

Do you have artistic or textile training?

In 2010 I enrolled on a College course to study traditional Kilt making. It was really interesting and satisfying to take 8 yards of tartan wool cloth and turn it into a beautiful fitted kilt which will last beyond a lifetime, handed down the generations.

I knew I wanted to work with cloth but in a less prescriptive way, so in 2013 I enrolled on to a 4 year City & Guilds course in stitched textiles, design, patchwork and quilting. It became clear to me during this time that my direction would be in exploring surface design to create unique art. I finished my Diploma in 2017 armed with information and ideas to explore and take to finished work.

What is it about textiles as an art form that appeals to you?

With textiles I can take a blank canvass which is usually white or black cotton and transform it into a unique piece of cloth using dyeing, printing, rusting, discharging to name but a few techniques. Sometimes I take notes so that I can recreate but mostly I freestyle knowing that this piece of cloth will be a one off



How do you work? Can you describe the development of a piece from idea to finished artwork?

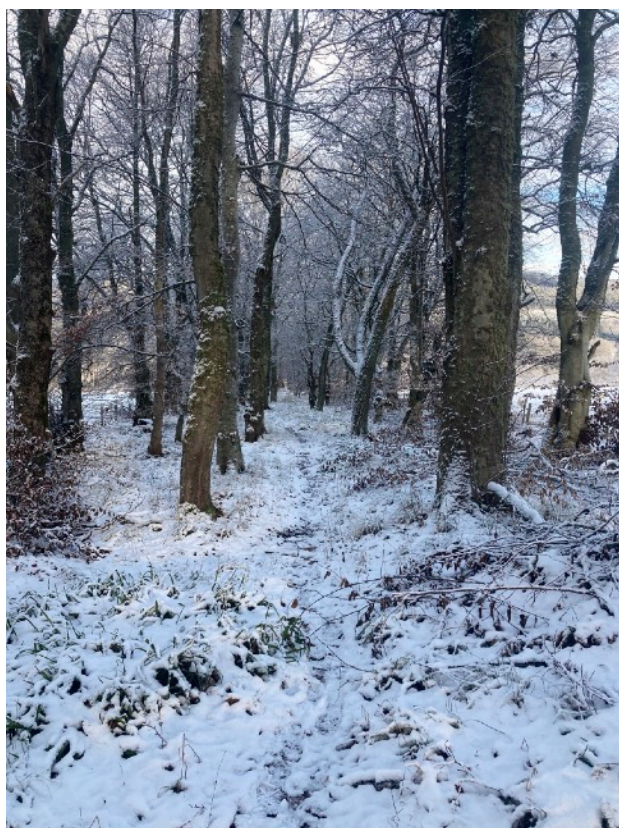
The piece I'm working on at the moment is for an upcoming exhibition with 4 textile artist friends and we gave ourselves the open theme "permission to create". This particular piece has come about from a walk with my dog over the Christmas period. The weather was wintry but also there were blue skies and the trees were stunning. I was listening to some music and the track *Days Like This* was playing. I had my inspiration. The only boundary for this piece was size. It had to be fixed 60" long and 20" wide, a shape I wouldn't normally gravitate towards.

DAYS LIKE THIS

I used cotton, linen and wool which I discharged using thermofax screens then added colour back in where I needed to. I also used some breakdown printed cloth and some naturally dyed wool. Dyes include procion mx, natural indigo and onion skins. I added small pieces of commercially dyed black and gold fabric.

I pieced it all together on my Bernina and added free macing and hand stitch to give texture and finish.

INSPIRATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS FROM MY WALK





*Left Pieced on my Bernina
Above free machine and hand stitch finish*

I love your quilt "Parallel Motion", can you tell me more about your thoughts when creating it?

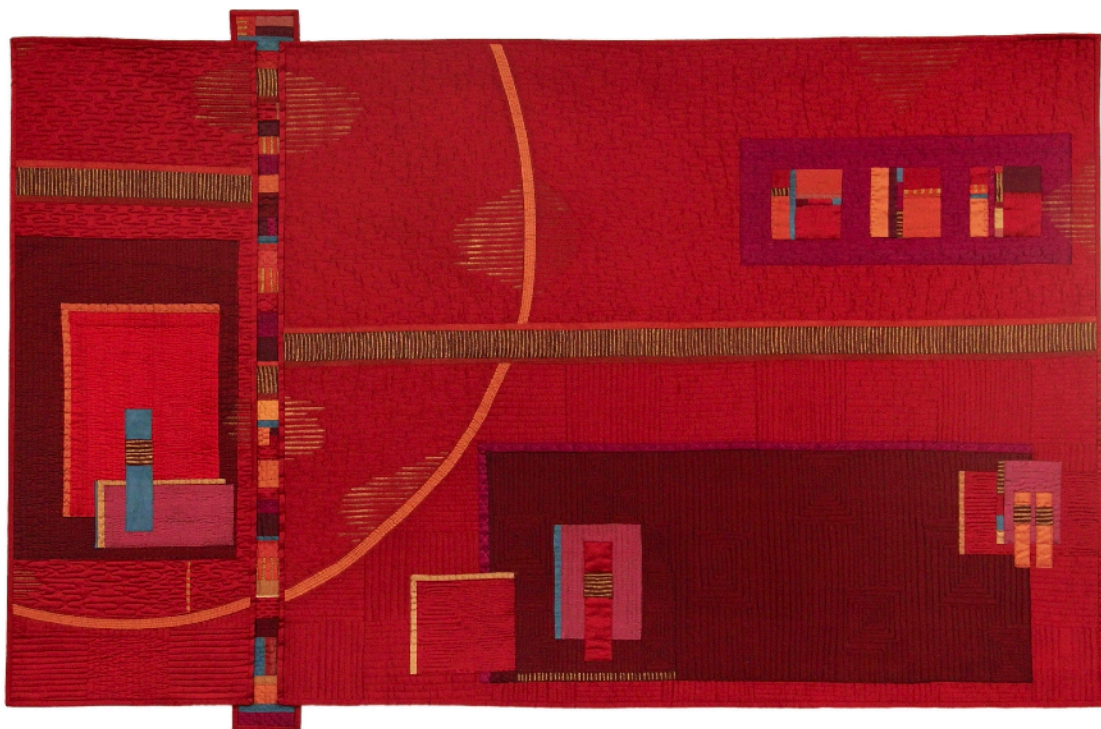
Parallel Motion - 'when 2 voices move in the same direction'

This piece was commissioned by June and Peter who were celebrating a particular moment in their lives together. My brief was that it should be abstract and I should 'let it sing'. They did not want to inhibit my creativity with any further restrictions. I visited their home to get to know them a little and to get a feel for their lives and the space where the piece would hang.

My own noted points were

- The piece should be relatively simple and clean on first view
- Red and its derivatives should be the dominant colours
- Circle of life, Glorious skies, changing horizons, representational figures and family detail should be included in an abstract form which only the family would relate to and understand

I had a box of silk which I'd purchased on a trip to India and was keeping for the right moment and so the lid was opened. Parallel Motion was pieced and free machine stitched on my Bernina 830.



Tell me more about your 3D work. I do like this kilt!

Its good to move out of your comfort zone from time to time. The kilt was one of my design pieces for my diploma. I decided to combine my skills and came up with the Patchwork Kilt. I used old jeans and corduroy trousers and some tartan all in the colours I could see from my studio in the autumn. I broke free from the precise traditional kilt making skills and left raw edges and a frayed hemline.

Patchwork Kilt



The Silver Darlings

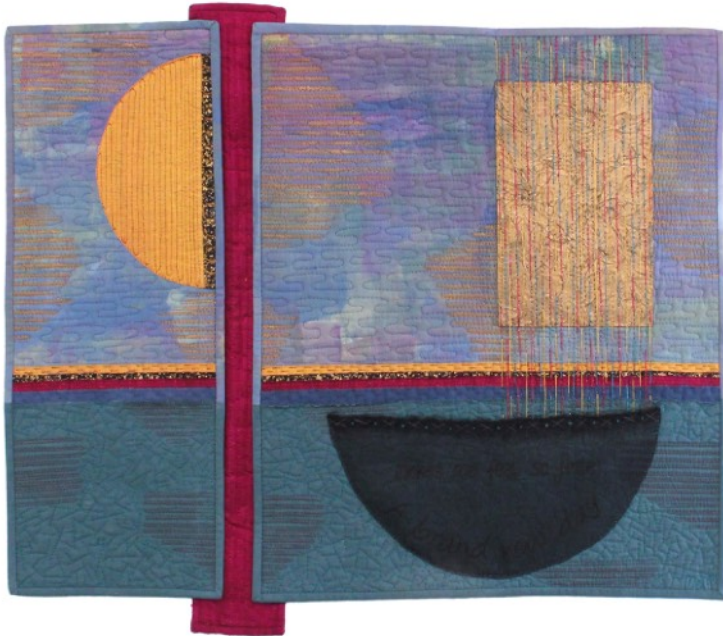


This piece is a response to Neil Gunn who wrote the book and Bob Halfin who wrote the poem about the fishing boom and the hard lives of the Herring fishermen and women in late 18th - early 19th century Aberdeen.

Do you like to work on specific themes?

I'm at my happiest it when I'm creating a body of work with no specific end game or theme. With no restrictions I can design through process which helps me develop as an artist and maker.

Brand New Day



That said, I enjoy rising to the demands of a theme. It forces me to work within certain boundaries and to challenge them.

Rising Free



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