

She Makes Boats

A journey into the shipwrights' world

“She Makes Boats” is a new museum project that tells about the work and lives of female traditional boatbuilder. It is a journey into their world to discover their passionate work, the struggle to keep and transmit the intangible heritage, the strong connection with the coastal communities

Some of the themes developed in the project are:

- Strong community connections
The boatbuilder, her boat and the place for which the boat is built for, are bound.
- Knowledge as a heritage
The boatbuilder is the link with time, knowledge is an art handed down from one generation to another.
- The boatbuilder, a story teller
Through the boat she tells the community’s story and links the community to its past.

and the natural environment where they live and work. By this project, we wish to create a strong connection between the visitors of the exhibition and the boatbuilders’ world in order to explain, show and make the visitors understand and appreciate the challenging universe behind a traditional boat.

- Open-minded world
Rather than being an emulation to overcome gender distinctions, the presence of women enriches the community.
- Environment and sustainable economy
A conscious look towards a future in which environment and economy are important issues for future generations.
- Responsible management of forests
Loving traditional boats also contributes to understand forests and to protect the health of ecosystems.

The exhibition project is :

- A large exhibition with about 60 large format photos, videos and a sound track.
- Three European countries showcasing different geographic areas and communities.
- To-day two boatbuilders are already involved in the project, they are from

Åland Islands
Scotland

We look for a third traditional boatbuilder.



Jacopo Brancati, the author

International professional photographer and sociologist with a career spanning over 25 years.

Specialized journalist and author.
Associate member of the ICMM since 2015.

In cooperation with maritime museums, I carry out projects exploring professions linked to the sea from historical and geographical perspectives.

My objective is to contribute to the study, protection and enhancement of maritime cultural heritage.

As a journalist and historian I have written for French and Italian maritime magazines and published several books.

Infine-Arts is my working group in France.



Madeleine Harms

Åland Islands, Finland

“...It is a long process to learn how to build a boat without drawings, and a lifelong learning process to master the craft. I am glad to be part of this tradition and I carry it with pride for the future generations”.

Madeleine Harms is a traditional wooden boatbuilder.

She has been working with traditional clinker-built boats since 2002.

She lives with her husband and children in the Åland archipelago, where boats are an obvious part of everyday life.



Clinker boats have become part of her identity, as they have been for Åland women in the past.

There is a centuries-long bond between them: women used boats for everyday life and farming tasks, playing an important cultural and social role.

For Madeleine traditional clinker boatbuilding also has an environmental value given today's demands for long-term sustainability.



Building traditional boats is a major undertaking that requires time and energy.

Madeleine is a young mother who must work hard to succeed in both roles she pursues. And her family supports her.



Gail McGarva

Scotland

“I am a traditional wooden boatbuilder with a particular passion for working boats of historical resonance that I believe hold vibrancy in their present day communities.”

Gail McGarva is a traditional wooden boatbuilder.

Gail’s specialist area is the building of replicas or as she prefers to call them ‘daughterboats’ of these vessels of heritage.

For her the building of boats is an expression of ‘living history’ where people cherish a sense of belonging and connection to the boats and to the sea.

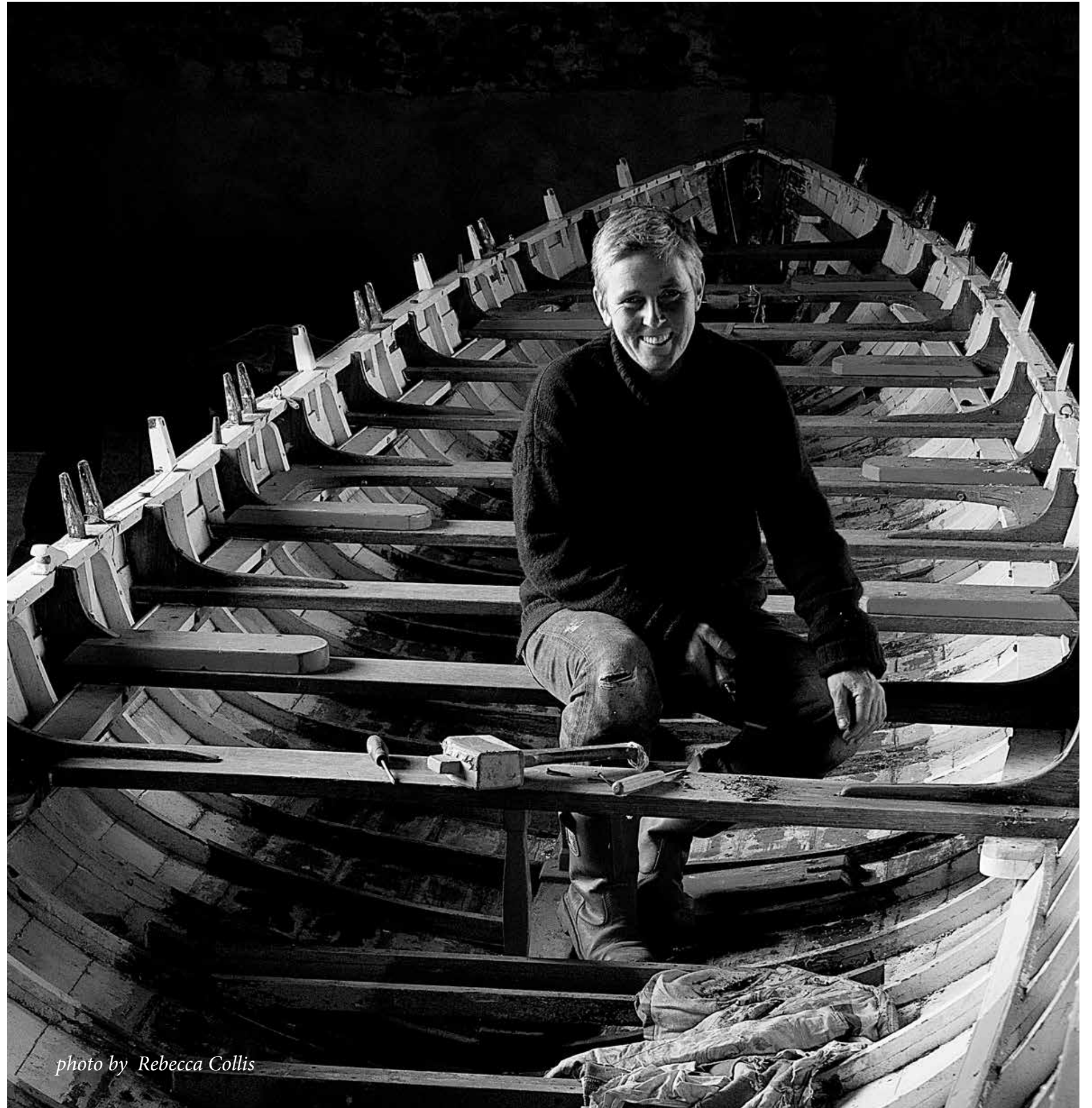
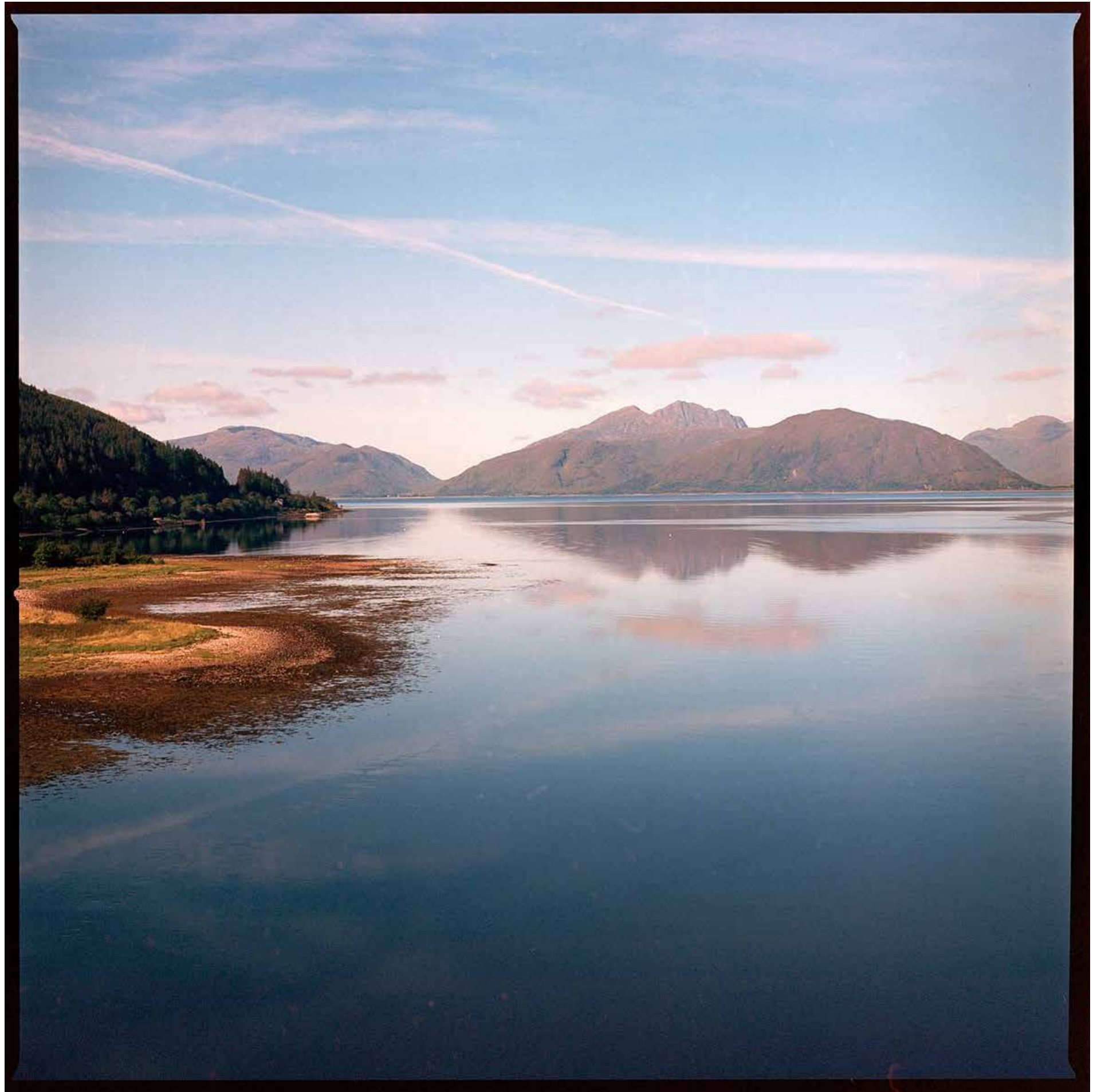


photo by Rebecca Collis

Gail is a facilitator of workshops, speaker and teller of stories, celebrating and sharing memories to connect people to their past.

This October 2024 she will start building a traditional tribute to the St Ayles skiff and will instruct two young trainees helping them to develop their skills and thus ensure the transmission of the knowledge.





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The project is supported by

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