

Pilgrims and Pilgrimage Conference & Exhibition

Pilgrims and Pilgrimage

Sights and Sounds of the Sacred

Govan Old Church

Curated by: Jim Harold, David Jasper and Donald Orr.

Conference and Plenary session: **Saturday 19th May 2018 - 10am – 5.15pm**

Exhibition: **19th May – 3rd June 2018**

Opening times: **1 – 5pm daily**

Pilgrims and Pilgrimage: Sights and sounds of the sacred is a one-day Conference and two-week exhibition involving artists, poets, musicians and theologians. The exhibits and conference are intended firstly, to act as catalysts for dialogue between the languages of pilgrimage in their many forms, whether theological, philosophical, poetic or pragmatically driven; and secondly, to complement the very important collection of early church relics and sculptures on show in Govan Old Church.

While pilgrimage may be defined as a mode of journeying towards a highly significant focus or goal – a shrine or other sacred place – in its broadest sense, it is also a journey undertaken for reasons of curiosity or as a matter of sentiment. What also characterises pilgrimage is the form and effect of the journey, which often takes the traveller or pilgrim out of their conventional and habit world into a kind of liminality, or in-between place, that leads to a transformative state.

The proposed exhibition and conference aim to bring into focus many of the ways in which pilgrimage is transmitted, shared or remembered; historically within the church and more recently in the secular West. **The conference will comprise a rich mix of academic analysis, poetry readings, textual memories and narratives brought back by pilgrims, as well as performances of early and contemporary church music. These will be expanded upon through the contemporary art on show, using a range of media, including video, sound, printed texts and sculptural objects.**

Conference presenters and performers include Prof Ian Bradley (University of St Andrews), Chris Taylor, David Hamilton (Royal Conservatoire), poets Gerrie Fellows, Vicki Husband and Jane Hartshorn, introduced by Sam Tongue (University of Glasgow), as well as readings by some of the artists exhibiting, followed by a roundtable discussion chaired by Prof Heather Walton (University of Glasgow).

Exhibiting artists: Sara Alonso, Susan Brind & Jim Harold, Conor Cook & Joanna Peace, Jasper Coppes, Victoria Evans, Cristina Garriga, Birthe Jorgensen and Emil Lillo (staff and alumni from

Glasgow School of Art's M Litt Fine Art Practice course).

Both the exhibition and conference are free and open to members of the public at Govan Old Church – just a 2-minute walk from Govan Underground Station.

The conference and exhibition have been made possible by the financial support of Bishop Gregor Duncan and the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway, and Literature and Theology (Oxford University Press). Thanks also go to Professor Stephen Driscoll, the Govan Heritage Trust Scio, as well as the volunteers at Govan Old Church.

Further information:

Govan Old Church, the site of which dates back to the late 9th century and possibly earlier, was itself once a site of pilgrimage. The present building holds within its walls some very fine objects of historical and sculptural importance: among them, the 9th-century sarcophagus associated, by some, with the Scottish Saint, Constantine, who is thought to have lived circa 6th century. It is known that, historically, his tomb was once a focus for pilgrimage. Also, within the church are a number of early stone crosses and gravestones, including five 10th century 'hogback stones'. Tourists and locals regularly visit the church to view these historic objects and there is still a small community who pray there on a regular basis. The building acts now as both a spiritual hub for the community and as a museum, and its changing conceptual form may be considered as providing a parallel narrative to accompany the changing nature of pilgrimage.

For more details and information contact David Jasper (davidjasper124@gmail.com).

Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway

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