

Arran Open Studios

Clearly, 'open studios' as a concept is nothing new. In Scotland alone, Dumfries and Galloway's Spring Fling has been gaining a great reputation in recent years. Ditto, East Neuk (pronounced nuke) Arts Festival whose epicentre at Pitenweem, becomes the cultural capital of the East coast in May and October (two events!). But there are more, Argyll Open Studios, Cowal Open Studios, Courtyard Open Studios....the list goes on. Click http://www.scottish-art-scene.com/scottish_art_festivals_open_studios.html for more information.

Add to that a relative newcomer ; **Arran Open Studios**. The Isle of Arran, Scotland's southernmost island, is a gem-of-an-isle in the Firth of Clyde. A haven for wildlife, a Shangri la for hill-walkers, a destination of choice for whisky-lovers and connoisseurs of good ales, a place of indigenous cheeses, soaps and perfumes , all of which have made their way to stylish London emporia. Holiday romping ground of the Scottish central belt and picturesque hideaway for international settlers, Arran clearly has a charm.

But add to that list, fine arts and fine craft-workers. **Arran** has over the years always attracted creatives; Margo Sandeman, Joan Eardley, John Maclaughlan-Milne, Joseph Noel-Paton are a few notable artists from the past. Include Craigie Aitchison, Jack Knox, Kurt Jackson, Tim Pomeroy, and you have a dynamic and varied list of respected and collected artists.

This is only the third year **Arran** makers have opened their studios to the public. 34 artists/ makers are taking part over the long weekend *Friday 15th August-Monday 18th August inclusively*, and this year a special Art Bus has been chartered to take interested parties to far flung studios which of course gives visitors the chance to see the spectacular Arran landscape in between studios. Painters and sculptors of high order rub studios with wood-workers, printmakers, basket-makers, textile artists and ceramicists. To get round the 34 artists in four days will be a tall order. But try. Riveting conversations with artists will hinder your progress but you will not mind. Piecing together the common visual threads will be a challenge. But you will prevail. Finding studios dug deep into glens and villages will excite. But you will discover. And discover on every level.

Art works are for sale directly from the studio without gallery commission so organisers invite you to, like good boy scouts, be prepared. For more information contact Josephine Broekhuizen on 01770 600287 or visit the website www.arranopenstudios.com