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28 March 2011

Japanese Consul to Open Japan Earthquake Charity Exhibition

A group of Scottish artists whose work has been inspired by Japan, is staging an exhibition at a Glasgow gallery to raise money for the stricken country. **Japanese Consul General, Mr Masataka Tarahara**, will officially launch *The Way To Northern Cherry Blossoms*, along with the RGI President Gordon Macpherson, at the **RGI Kelly Gallery on Douglas Street on Wednesday 6 April at 11am**.

Artist Blair Thomson came up with the idea for the exhibition which will donate 70% to 80% of sales to the Japanese Red Cross to help the people of the Tohoku, the area worst hit by the recent earthquake and tsunami, and also to the Japan Society appeal.

The exhibition runs at the RGI Kelly over 6 and 7 April (day & evening) before moving to Blair's West Regent Street studio where it continues until Sunday 10 April.

As a painter and Artist Council Member of The Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts, Blair has exhibited in Japan twice in the last two years, including representing the UK at the four yearly ART/X/TOYAMA international show in 2010. Other participating artists include Campbell Sandilands, Japanese glass artist, Keiko Mukaide, American photographer Laurel Casjens, and illustrator Stuart Kerr.

"As we have all spent time in Japan, it has had a strong influence on our work," explains Blair. "This exhibition is a celebration and general message of support to Japan, whose art, culture and environment (city and landscape) has made such an impact on us, as well as reflecting the wider connection between our two countries.

"We felt that rather than doing nothing, we could turn our feelings around and bring people together to raise money and offer support. We really want to help the Tohoku survivors. We also have a lot of friends and family there, who if not directly affected are fearful and depressed, so we are sending them a positive supporting, colourful message from the UK."

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Press & photographers are cordially invited to the launch of *The Way To Northern Cherry Blossoms* with the Japanese Consul and RGI President, at 11 am at the RGI Kelly Gallery, 118 Douglas Street, Glasgow G1 4QR.

The show runs from 10.30am-7pm Wed and 10.30am-5pm Thurs, moving to Blair Thomson's studio on West Regent Street where it will continue from 10.30am-5pm Friday & Saturday, and 12noon-5pm Sunday.

For further information, images or interviews call RGI Kelly Gallery Curator Lynne MacKenzie Tel: 0141 248 6386 curator@royalglasgowinstitute.org www.royalglasgowinstitute.org or Heather MacLeod on 07891144157 words@heather.uk.net

Notes for editors

The Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts (Charity No SC044650)

The RGI was founded in 1861 and has since been forward thinking in encouraging and supporting contemporary art and artists through regular exhibitions and events at its own Kelly Gallery.

It also promotes a major annual exhibition at The Mitchell in Glasgow.

The Award of RGI is given to artists for a high level of artistic merit and dedication to the Institute, and is limited to a maximum of fifty at any given time.

2011 is the RGI's 150th anniversary year.



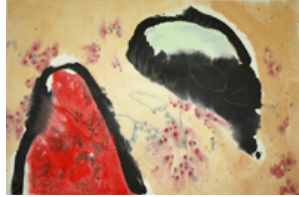
Keiko Mukaide



Stuart Kerr



Laurel Casjens



Campbell Sandilands



Blair Thomson