

GRAHAM RICH *OPEN SEA*



Exhibition 14 May to 6 June 2011
Private View: Friday 13 May 6 - 9pm

Belgrave St Ives
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Born in Devon, Graham Rich has lived for a great many years on the banks of the River Exe. He built his first boat aged 10, since then boats and water have been a major part of his life. Having previously sailed from his native Devon to neighbouring Cornwall on many occasions, it seems to make sense to bring an exhibition of his work, that feature boats and sailing, to the seaside town of St Ives, itself founded on fishing and more recently host to a (still) thriving artist colony. Utilising found marine materials, the work has an aesthetic quality that enjoys a rich resonance with the town of St Ives. However, in Graham Rich's work there is an underlying conceptual aspect.

The artist says the sailing boat first appeared in his work subconsciously. He began scratching the image of his own boat on pieces of wood and other materials found during voyages. This realised a different kind of space within his painting and the discovery that 'the found is more powerful than the made'. The addition of the etched boat would mysteriously reveal the coastlines, weather conditions, harbours and underwater hazards of his actual voyaging experiences.

On another level, the symbol of the boat can stand as metaphor for life's journey and its difficulties and the elation experienced. As the poet Tom Clark has written, the relatively diminished scale of the sailing boat is both significant and critical. He said that the boat, which is beyond hailing distance, defined a boundary in human relationships. The boat can be seen as either sailing away from communication, or sailing towards it. A pertinent image of the way we live today.

Notes:

- 1) Photographs of work in this exhibition are available on request in high or low resolution.
- 2) The artist and/or curator are available for interview, please contact through Belgrave St Ives to make an appointment (tel. 01736 794888).
- 3) Belgrave St Ives, formally Belgrave Gallery St Ives opened in 1998 as sister gallery to Belgrave Gallery (established London 1974)
- 4) Michael Gaca is Director Belgrave St Ives and Curator of this exhibition.
- 5) The artist is represented in London by The Fine Art Society (established 1876)