

Ross MacDonald Ryan at CRINAN GALLERY

The Art Gallery with Rooms

Always in transit afloat or on land - there have been very few periods I have been at ease in one place and the studio environment has become alien and often dull. The difficult but rewarding process of working onsite directly suits my lifestyle, allowing me to paint outside which is where I am most comfortable.

While in Scotland during the fair weather months, time is spent aboard an old fishing boat "The Sgarbh" cruising the rugged west coast. The evening shipping forecast dictates my paintings as strong winds and rain make painting hard work since the oil does not always adhere to the canvas.

Over the last two winters I painted in Bremen and now Berlin. There could be no stronger contrast from these ultra urban locations to my water based home. Primarily in Germany I spent six months recording Bremen's vast industrial lands during the night. Using large format and painting only with a head torch the results have been energetic, often due to the extreme cold. Even wearing a north sea survival suit a two meter canvas must be completed in 4 to 6 hours, as at minus ten and below you can feel your hands and toes no more. White oil colour too becomes like clay below minus 15. Preparing for these works is similar to a life at sea . . . Latterly in Berlin while working towards a show I made 70 black ink line drawings of my neighborhood. A mugging, daily harassment from dealers and even an arrest was the price paid for painting in the liveliest of places. The picture in the end is only a part of the journey, a moment in time.

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