

An aerial photograph of a turbulent ocean surface. The water is a deep, swirling blue-green color, with numerous white, frothy waves and eddies creating a complex, textured pattern across the entire frame. The lighting highlights the crests of the waves, making the white foam stand out against the darker water.

RAMSAY GIBB SEASCAPES

Ramsay Gibb

Solo Exhibition

June 2019

CATTO GALLERY

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"The sea
isn't a place
but a fact, and
a mystery"

Mary Oliver "The Waves"

What happens when, as a landscape painter, you abandon the horizon? In 2017, I decided to find out. The answer was profound.

Landscapes represent a place and time – real or imagined. The horizon defines this sense of 'somewhere'. There is a relationship between the ground, water and trees below the horizon line and the sky above it.

Actually, my decision to abandon the horizon crept up on me. I had begun to move it to the top of my paintings until, one day, it vanished out of the frame.

I soon realised that, without the horizon, we change the way we look at a painting. We gaze downward. We focus on the subject and on our own connections with it. We reflect.

Meanwhile, as a painter, I realised that a view without horizon demands a deeper observation. The specifics matter more.

It made perfect sense for me to start this new direction by painting the sea. I have been a landscape painter of many years, and seascapes and coastal locations have always been at the core of my work.

Sea is one of the elements along with sky, trees, earth, rivers that create the basic vocabulary of landscape.

Painting the sea without a horizon forced me to contemplate the details: the depth and volume of the water, the surface contours, the play of light, the movement, a captured moment of time.

Because of this, the location is unimportant. I want to make these paintings about the common experiences we all have. Not places we may or may not know.

We all have a connection to the sea, somewhere and at some time in our lives. We are drawn to it. Perhaps we need to be near it. This is the sea of our collective culture and memory.

And yet, the sea is inscrutable. The greatest part of it lies below the surface. We can only gaze unknowingly from the safety of the shore.

For this reason, I believe the sea is one of the great subjects for art. A painter like me can hope only to capture it for a fleeting instant.

I painted these works over many hours in the studio. There are no shortcuts. It takes a process of careful slow drawing, of building layers of transparent and opaque paint, to make the fleeting become animate again.

So these paintings are my memories, my act of remembering, fuelled by my own feelings of distance from the sea and my desire to be back again.

Ramsay Gibb, 2019



Clear Water and Foam
Oil on Canvas, 140 x 120cm







After the Wave
Oil on Canvas, 140 x 120cm





After the Storm, the Dawning of the day
Oil on Canvas, 70 x 140cm

Curling Waters
Oil on Canvas, 140 x 100cm



Morriña
Oil on Canvas, 120 x 180cm



Sea, Sand, Evening Light
Oil on Canvas, 140 x 160cm





Back Cover: Spindrift, Oil on Canvas, 61 x 160cm



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Opening times: 10am - 6pm Mon - Sat • 12.30pm - 6pm Sunday • and by appointment

Exhibition dates: Saturday 8th – Monday 24th June 2019