

## Nick Davies

After having an extensive career working in the media industry, Nick has spent the past ten years developing her own portfolio of images relating to the landscape. During continued study at Masters level (2013-2015), she had the freedom to push personal boundaries with experimentation in printmaking (lino embossing), photography, film and sculptural techniques (plaster casting/carving) which led to a fascination with circles and ovoids found within natural phenomena.

Nick's arts practice is informed by nature and therefore it is her aim to look at reintegrating nature into art through capturing the energy and rhythm of the natural world. Nature has been a fascination for artists for hundreds of years and has the capacity to evoke thought and emotion. Inspired by the landscape, her coastal environment is fundamental to her practice as a visual artist. By stepping outside into nature, she allows herself to become open to contemplation through contact with natural phenomena. Constructed clay forms inspired from organic shapes, or found natural objects (pebbles/rock strata) that are cast with plaster, have focussed her attention to looking at the more physical aspects of fragility and strength in the natural world.

During an arts and wellbeing project in 2019, Nick's readings led her to the subject of 'hag stones' (*stones with holes*) and the spiritual beliefs associated with mystical stones possessing healing properties and used as protective talismans. Other myths acknowledge the presence of *other worlds* becoming visible through the natural occurring burrowed circles. This has inspired further research with documented theories relating to '*psychogeographical*' sites, where larger holed stones were used as part of healing ceremonies. The concept of exploring view points seen through a cylindrical aperture of an ancient holed stone has captured her imagination and in turn has raised a curiosity of how geology, archeology, spiritualism and art are interconnected.

The chosen title of '*Standing Still*' reminds us as human beings to find stillness; observe and re-engage with our natural surroundings. It also acknowledges the solidity and strength found in places of geological interest which inform sculptural approaches. In an ever increasing technological world where we so rarely stand still and observe our surroundings, the theme of creating a sacred presence becomes more relevant than ever. In current times, the topic of environmentalism becomes more present where damage and erosion to our shorelines and habitats feature as a poignant reminder of the fragility of our natural world. Nick sought an artistic partnership with Sasha and Jayne for their similar aesthetic approaches and phenomenological principles relating to the evolving landscape. The relationship has since strengthened from documenting their journeys along the Jurassic coastline and continued dialogue relating to their professional development.

Nick's exhibited constructions explore the shaping and forming of nature's cycles associated with the imprint of time through the continuous movement of a rolling stone. The artistic responses have developed as freestanding sculpture (plaster/steel), low relief wall carvings (plaster) and experimentation with new materials combining oxides with plaster to replicate the shale, limestone and blue lias found along the walks from Nash Point to Monkash. The combination of both manmade and natural objects are intended to signify time and erosion.

As the *Standing Still* exhibition draws attention to how one interprets the view seen through the cylindrical aperture, this also acknowledges the shape and symbolism of the circle; referring to the connectedness of existence, the beginning and end of all things, emptiness or fullness, presence or absence.

## Sasha Kingston

Since Sasha's postgraduate research on Constructed Textiles at the Royal College of Art she has continued to develop and be inspired by the manipulation of paper pulp as an artistic medium.

During the intuitive creative process images begin to emerge which are abstracted in imagery, minimal in content and direct in feeling. The work for this exhibition has been inspired by her family experiences and recent studies of the Jurassic coast in Llantwit Major where she grew up.

Inspiration starts with field based studies involving mixed media drawing and photographs, followed by detailed sketchbook work in her studio which elaborates, interprets and develops images. This entails papermaking, printing and interpretive marks and movement of line within isolated areas, especially her trial circular constructions. Her extensive recording and comprehensive images in her sketchbook form inspired precursors to her final exhibition work.

Sasha works from her studio in Penarth, returning to Wales in 2010 having completed teaching and artist residency placements in schools and colleges near London. With works in many private collections, Sasha regularly exhibits in galleries and has been a member of the Makers Guild Wales since 2011.

## Jayne Walker

Thoughts about landscape reflected in a body of water has been a key inspiration to Jayne for her work in Standing Still. Themes of mindfulness, stillness and healing reminded her of a reflection in a mountain lake in North Wales, which gave her a sense of calm and reassurance after hearing of a family bereavement.

Ancient peoples believed that water was a sacred and healing force and the reflective surface was a way through to the “Otherworld”. She has therefore wanted to make works which highlight the mirror image, thus showing the restorative and contemplative nature of a reflection within the landscape and exploring the idea that we can mentally remove ourselves from the stresses of our busy world by looking through a reflection into the “Otherworld”, as perhaps our ancestors once did.

Jayne graduated with a BA Hons in Ceramics from West Surrey College of Art in 1980 and now works from her studio in Andover, Hampshire. She has exhibited across the UK and was previously Guest Maker here at Craft in the Bay in 2018.