

Press Release: Upcoming Exhibition

## **A Space to Breathe.** Post-lockdown contemporary paintings and ceramics.

Porthminster Gallery, St Ives and [porthminstergallery.co.uk](http://porthminstergallery.co.uk)  
3<sup>rd</sup> July – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021

Featuring paintings by: Nick Bodimeade, Freya Horsley, and Joanne Last; ceramics by Barry Stedman; Geoffrey Swindell.

Porthminster Gallery, St Ives and [porthminstergallery.co.uk](http://porthminstergallery.co.uk)  
3<sup>rd</sup> July – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021

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**A Space to Breathe.** Upcoming exhibition ... [click for press images and artist statements](#)

Porthminster Gallery's upcoming exhibition 'A Space to Breathe' opens on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July, with a breath of fresh air at the launch of artist and "gallery favourite" Nick Bodimeade's new series of post-lockdown paintings – 'A Space to Breathe'.

The exhibition also debuts fresh new paintings, and ceramics, made during the year that changed the world, by permanent gallery artists, Joanne Last, Freya Horsley, Barry Stedman, and Geoffrey Swindell. All are united in having found unexpected freedom to explore and redefine their creative practices.

Nick Bodimeade | painter



*In Silence*, 2021 by Nick Bodimeade, oil on canvas, h 130 cm x w 110 cm

Before the Covid-19 lockdowns, we had all sat on the beach conscious of both looking and being looked at. However, following the easing of lockdown, Nick Bodimeade's latest paintings explore the potential

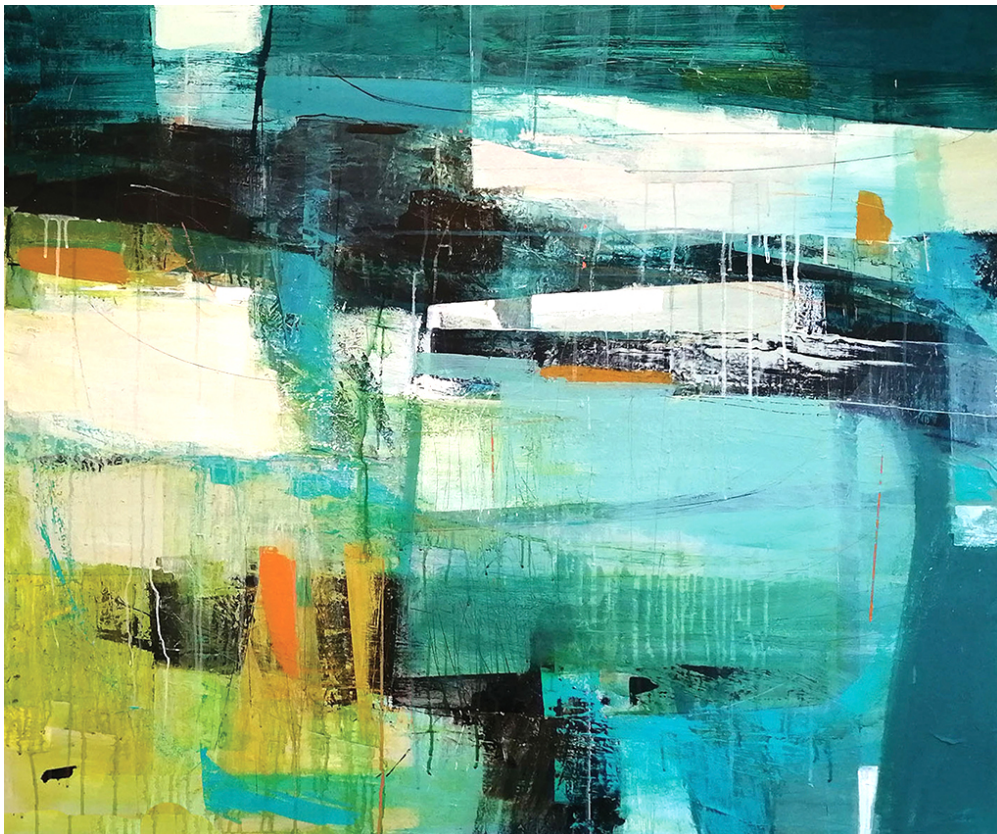
changes to the patterns, spatial configuration and underlying order in the apparent casual chaos of bodies on a beach, that were so central to his previous series of works ('Beach Geometry'). Will we subconsciously, or consciously, redefine our spatial and personal boundaries, as 'bodies in space'?

*"The beach starts each day like a blank canvas, people arrive and organise themselves, in relation to the sun, sea, land and wind, but most importantly to each other. It is like a grand experiment in social behaviour where all you need to know about human interaction is there, visible and paintable."*

Nick Bodimeade, June 2021

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**Joanne Last** | painter



*Night Harbour*, 2021 by Joanne Last, acrylic on canvas, h 100 cm x w 120 cm

How objects and places weather and become works of art themselves over time is a particular theme in this new body of mainly abstract coastal paintings by Joanne Last, who has undergone something of a renewal herself during the long period during which the artist wasn't able to physically visit the sea or travel far from her London home. Following a strong instinct not to tread the same artistic path as in recent years, Last has ventured into unknown territories in a desire to renew her own relationship with her art. Last's exploration of fresh colour palettes and new ways of applying paint and manipulating the picture surface has resulted in a bold move forward for the artist.

*"When I stood back to view the work all together, I realised that there was in fact a strong connection and cohesion between them. In spite of their enforced distance, the pull of the imagined tide, the colours or glorious Cornwall, the weathered surfaces and shoreline shapes had all crept in. My subconscious had been saying, 'Wish I was there' rather than 'Wish you were here'."*

Joanne Last, June 2021

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Freya Horsley | painter



Story, 2021 by Freya Horsley, mixed media on canvas, h 85 cm x w 85 cm

The paintings on show are from a new body of work that comes out of a year of drawing outside in the landscape, experimenting in the studio, travelling whenever possible and finding solace and escape in letting spaces and places emerge on the canvas.

Painting has always been a source of escape for Freya Horsley; she finds it is a way of transporting herself to remembered places and experiences. Never more so than in the last year or so, as we have all been restricted in our movements and have had to dig deep to chart our own ways through these strange times.

*“The rugged coastline, soaring skies and hidden coves of Cornwall draw on the sense of space and freedom of being outdoors, finding peace in watching the light change over the ocean, and listening to the comfortingly incessant sounds of waves and gulls. I have drawn on these captured moments in making this work, moments both newly lived and those stored away and remembered.*

*“I hope that in these paintings you can experience some of your own memories over again and can start to look forward to making more of them in this unique corner of the country.”*

Freya Horsley, June 2021

Barry Stedman | ceramicist



Vessel, 2021 by Barry Stedman, thrown and altered earthenware, decorated with slip, h 19 cm x w 17 cm

Barry Stedman's ceramics are those of a painter – influenced by his drawings, sketches and paintings of nature and the outdoors. He prefers to work with strong, simple forms, often in series, exploring a particular theme thrown up by a place, a drawing or a memory. The qualities of texture, energy of applied glazes and variety of colour from lightly applied subtle layers to vibrant splashes give his work a joyful, vibrant feel. Thrown on the wheel, his pots are manipulated into irregular, but simple shapes, and low fired to enhance the colour.

*"During the lockdowns, I tried to spend as much time as I could, drawing and painting outside. This helped to inform the ideas for these new works – influenced by the shapes, colours, light, and atmosphere in the places that nourished me at the time."*

Barry Stedman, June 2021

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**Geoffrey Swindell** | ceramicist



*New ceramic vessels (detail)*, 2021 by Geoffrey Swindell, wheel-thrown porcelain, h 7 cm – 14 cm

Recently featured on BBC2's *The Great Pottery Throwdown* and with work in many high-profile public collections, including the V&A Museum, ceramicist Geoffrey Swindell has also renewed his creative process during lockdown.

Working initially as a painter of illustrative images and then moving on to paint purely abstract canvases, Swindell then turned to pottery and seems to have found his true calling in this medium. Swindell is now well-known for creating objects reminiscent of fragile washed-up sea creatures and unidentified objects from a far-away galaxy that have an essential and inseparable relationship between form and surface.

*"Some people say my ceramics are like washed-up sea creatures, some still alive, some just remnants turning slowly to dust. Others see unidentified objects from a faraway galaxy, not sure whether they are organic or constructed, friendly or malevolent. My first experience as an artist was as a painter learning to paint classic illustrative images and then moving on to canvases that were purely abstract expressions of emotion through colour and texture. When I became a potter I carried this involvement with surface qualities through to my ceramics creating objects that are not just simply coated in glaze but have an essential and inseparable relationship of form and surface."*

Geoffrey Swindell, June 2021

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Price range of works in the show: £85 to £4,800. Own Art 0% APR purchase plan is available on all works in show.

All images: © the Artists  
Courtesy the Artists and Porthminster Gallery

**NOTES FOR EDITORS:**

- Press-ready 300dpi CMYK images of the works shown as well as other examples are available to download with the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yo72i6chznm2p49/AABAjNJmirPKT15q3iuDaKGha?dl=0>

- Detailed artists' biographies, statements, etc can also be downloaded as Word documents with the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ed96fw5uoq4y27b/AADo785tBWmHcqWUd3pHuF5ya?dl=0>