

## WE ARE GOING TOWARDS THE SEA ...

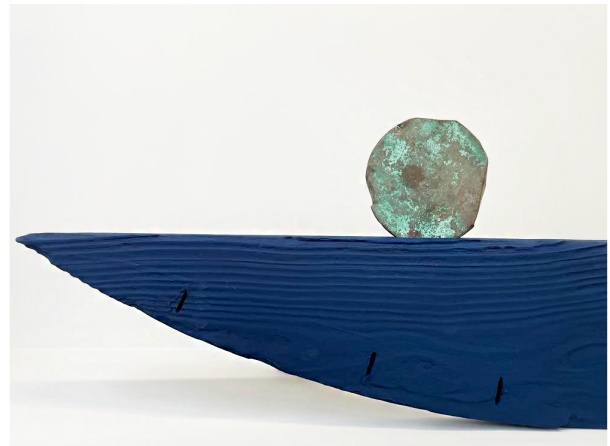
**Zoe Benbow**  
**John O'Carroll**  
**Sally Hampson**

**16 April - 14 May, 2022 | Floor 2 + Online**

**Opening Reception: Saturday 14th April, 12 - 4pm with artists present and refreshments served**

Last summer, painter **Zoe Benbow** and conceptual artist **Sally Hampson** joined **John O'Carroll** for a week in North Cornwall. This exhibition is a paean to the Cornish coastline and the sea.

Like so many people for so many reasons, both Sally, John and Zoe are bewitched by the sea. The sea is both mother and mirror, the inbreathe and expiration, the leaving and returning - artists and poets have always felt the sea is a conduit for the imagination, its euphonious sound seeping deep into their psyche.



*From where I stand on the SW coast path I can draw a line across the sea which edges past County Cork before heading into the deep atlantic ocean.*

All three artists fuse reality and abstraction to create space for the viewer to find their own interpretation. Sally's cryptic navigation charts reveal a knowledge of maritime anthropology and a poetic imagination, inherited from her Irish storytelling ancestors. Sally weaves to the pulse of the sea. She makes blankets, comforting and sensuous - her cloaks of memory - this time in Cornish hues: slate grey, cream and summer sky blue.

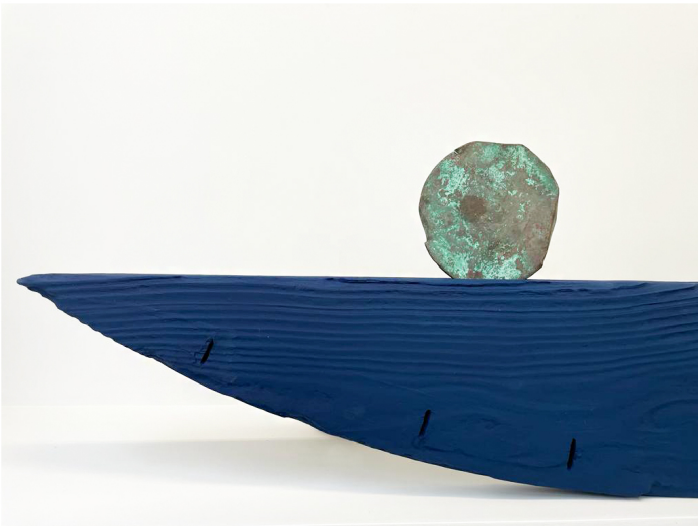
*The flag is limp, a light south easterly this morning. Colours are hazy - raw umber melts into a grey blue sea lit with flecks of pale serpentine - the green stone worn by bards and the contemplative orders.*

Zoe shows us semi abstract oil paintings which play with geometry - the lines of cliff and sea. Walking the coastal paths she made sketches and took photographs, analogue only, as digital phone images lack depth of field and physical body. In the studio Zoe puts her source material to work shaping her memories and her complex brushwork into gorgeous paintings trembling with human presence.

*Dashing to the sea before dusk I head straight into the wind. Clouds and waves mock each other as they race and scroll. One black cormorant in a silver sea.*

John O'Carroll gives his abstract paintings elemental titles - his big gestural strokes glide about the plywood surface. Veils of thin oil paint interflow with gold and silver leaf to create romantic evocations of land and sea. John is presenting a set of distinctive wall pieces honouring our Celtic and coastal heritage and his love of archeology - markers of time and tide found over the moors and harbours of north Cornwall.

CIRCLE, Hawksfield (A39) Cornwall PL27 7LR  
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Images from top left - right:

Zoe Benbow  
Sally Hampson  
John O'Carroll  
Sally Hampson

### ABOUT

CIRCLE is a cool and elegant art gallery in Cornwall, covering two floors showcasing emerging and well known artists. Circle's distinct style is shaped by a tribe of artists and artisans who live and work in country and coastal places - in short, nature. We are a principled gallery that show paintings, prints, photography, sculpture and fine crafts which are imbued with the integrity of the maker.

While we feel it is important to represent Cornish 'localness' we also believe in one world and currently show work by contemporary artists from Wales, Europe and Australasia, Egypt, and the USA.

Circle supports artists who literally take a hand in emphasising the natural beauty of our planet through their visual art practice. They are united by a global truth - the truth of immersion in, and reverence for, their natural landscape.

From a city dwellers perspective, landscape inspired art practice is often dismissed as romantic and unquestioning. However, at CIRCLE we believe art born from a true dialogue with nature is life affirming, ever present and continually evolving.

Gallery directors Lucy Thorman and John O'Carroll have an eclectic approach to sourcing and presenting artists with a strong personal style and excellent craftsmanship are prerequisite. The galleries core group are rotated throughout the year with guest artists who are included in solo, duo, mixed shows with bio-monthly online zine slots.



### OPENING HOURS

Monday - Saturday, 10-4pm, or by appointment.  
Sunday, closed

### FACILITIES

Picture Framing Studio  
Free parking  
Award winning cafe Strong Adolfos + independent retail shops

**Google Maps:** <https://goo.gl/maps/4aZVPq3cZxToC8r18>  
Circle Contemporary, Hawksfield, Atlantic Highway (A39) Cornwall PL27 7LR

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