



This Is The Seventh Wave

Regency Town House, Brighton, 1st - 15th May 2024

Curated by Dee Ferris and Judy Stevens, in collaboration with Artists Open Houses 2024.

This Is The Seventh Wave is a hopeful show about transformation and belonging, which brings together a group of international but locally-based artists for whom the sea, and specifically the sea of Brighton and Hove, has come to constitute a strong source for creation and dialogue.

Referring to the idea that in a set of waves, the seventh one will always be the strongest, it offers up the ocean as a site for (human and more-than-human) collaboration and connection, not only a place of reflection and becoming, but a *call to action* on issues such as climate futures/pasts, migration and sustainability.

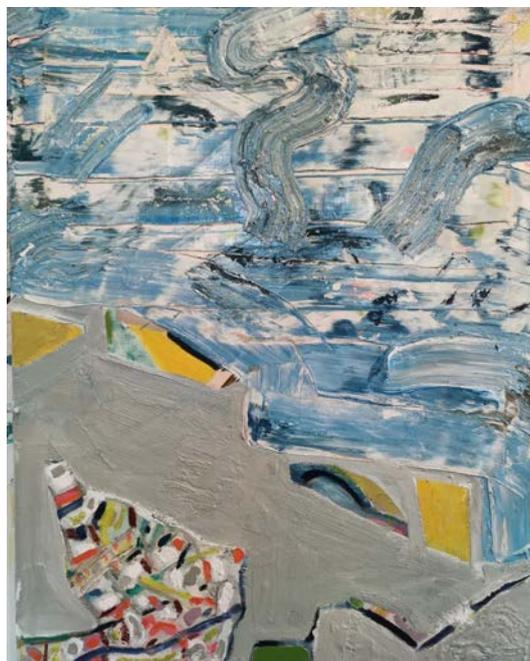
The sea, and the experience of being-in-the-sea/being close-to-the-sea is presented, in a diverse range of forms, as a liminal and inclusive space/experience, a *practice* which encompasses multifarious narratives and textures.

Polly Arnett's wallpapers draw on her background in illustration and design to translate her experience of sea-swimming into a set of simplified vignettes, held together by line. In her hand, sunsets, seagulls, waves, swimmers and beach towels all become part of an endless repeat, a pattern which, on closer inspection, reveals scenes of half-glimpsed and half-fictitious moments. The overriding sense is one of nostalgia; a mournful yearning which permeates the forms and colours of an ostensibly cheerful vintage seaside aesthetic.



Polly Arnett *Title* 2024

Nicholas Carrick draws on old photographs, sketches and found objects to communicate an appreciation of the sea as memory. A recurring motif in his work, the ocean manifests itself above all as explorations of form and colour. It is still there, but at a remove, semi-observed and fragmented (sometimes viewed from above in a cluster of referential elements reminiscent of an aerial map). In recent paintings, he has ventured into more abstract territories, in which the seaside is offered up as palimpsest, rendered and re-rendered, sanded and pared down to suggest half-forgotten experiences of holidays past.



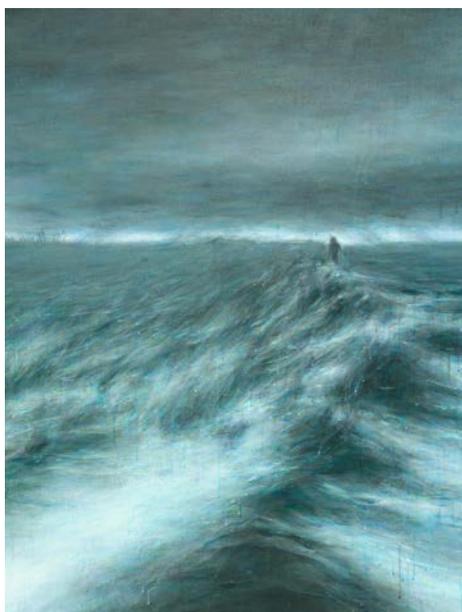
Nicholas Carrick *Sea Défense* 2024

Emma Critchley is an artist who uses a combination of photography, film, sound and installation to continually explore the human relationship with the underwater environment as a political, philosophical and environmental space. *Sirens* is a triptych of short films where we witness an encounter between a dancer and three creatures from the deep-sea. The music and performer's movements offer the audience a portal for connection. Part of the research and development stage of Emma Critchley's ongoing investigative project *Soundings*, the work explores how film, sound and dance might be used to connect us with the deep ocean, and provides a moment of reflection for us to consider our relationship with the deep and all life that exists there.



Emma Critchley *Sirens II & III*, 2023, HD, Stereo sound, 2.30 mins & 3.20 mins

Dee Ferris's paintings reflect an ongoing enquiry into the languages of desire, longing and nostalgia. Using the sea as a vehicle to explore themes of solitude, displacement and migration, she has previously manipulated the alluring images of escape and the pleasurable pursuit of water-based leisure promoted on online travel and social media platforms, subjecting these to an intense process of dissolution to re-emerge as paradoxical and precipitous visions whose implicit promise of fulfilment is called into question. Her two new large-scale works on canvas, *Silver Linings* and *Love is the Seventh Wave* continue to explore the territory between abstraction and figuration, but bring her artistic enquiry closer to home, drawing on the artist's personal experience of living by, and frequently swimming in the sea, and suggest a more intimate and optimistic connection to her source.



Dee Ferris *Love Is The Seventh Wave* (detail) 2024

John Haywood uses watercolour to explore a very intimate connection to the sea. Often executed in situ, the work has a very personal, 'lived' feeling in which narratives are evoked but never spelled out. His tiny watercolour *Brighton Beach at Sunrise* 2024 is typical of his minimalist, even impoverished aesthetic, eschewing detail and colour to convey a pervasive sense of stillness and melancholy.



John Haywood *Brighton Beach at Sunrise* 2024

Solange Leon's *Bluescapes* are cyanotypes/solar etchings born out of an intuitive response to shifting borders in seaside urban enclaves, and a desire to visualise and explore, in an abstract way, concepts of social mobility, equality, interdependence. Reflecting the movement of waves, and in a delight in the unknown, they convey an ethereal and delicate set of complex overlapping shapes with indistinct edges that express the brevity of a moment in permanent form, where merging individual components in flux remain recognisably distinct.



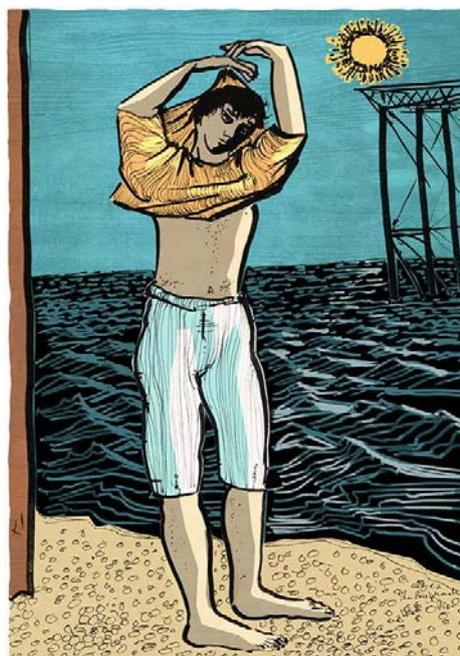
Solange Leon Iriarte *Everybody's Twenty One Minutes* 2021

Andre Lichtenberg's large-scale seascapes, *Impossible Utopias* use the moonlight, the stars and the sea to create long exposure detail photographs, rich in texture and painterly detail. Surreal oceanic scenes that could hold thousands of memories of untold stories, they aim to provide a calming canvas for reflection, "a moment of pause to hopefully inspire and entice debate on important current issues, such as global warming, the oceans, migration, borders, inclusion and sustainability. In his view, everything is connected. The project also hopes to inspire a new relationship with the planet, to promote a more humble view of our world that engenders a caring response to all species and the environment, whilst moving away from the dangerous idea of human exceptionalism.



Andre Lichtenberg *Indian Summer Memories (Impossible Utopia)* 2023

Alej Ez's 'A Sea Swim by the West Pier' takes a lone male figure out of his group setting in John Minton's *La Baignade* 1946 and transports him to the artist's own local swimming spot in front of the remains of the West Pier in Brighton. A nod to the Romantic escapism of British Art of the 1940s and 50s, it is a profoundly intimate work, imbued both with a sense of empathy for past generations of artists living before the Wolfenden Report in 1957, when homosexuality was far from socially acceptable in Britain, and a celebration of the openness and inclusivity of the seaside town often referred to as the gay capital of the UK. A Spanish artist living in Brighton since 2000, Alej Ez brings to the melancholic tone of his artistic reference, a Mediterranean warmth and positivity characteristic of his oeuvre as a whole.



Alej Ez *A Sea Swim by the West Pier* 2021

Catalina Mejia Moreno's *A song to Sana in (becoming) sea* is a love letter to her unborn son. An audio piece that works through grief, it recognises that grief as embodiment is a series of processes of accumulation, as well as of weaving and attuning to multiple human and more-than-human beings and bodies of water. Drawing upon Michrochimerism, or the fate of travelling cells from mother to son, this piece is constructed of seven citations that dwell on Astrida Neimanis's "becoming bodies of water". It speaks to the multiplicity of entanglements and the impossibility of separation, as Katherine McKittrick reminds us: "what I know, where I know from, who I know from, and why I cannot possibly know."



Catalina Mejia Moreno *A song to Sana in (becoming) sea* 2023

Judy Stevens' playfully macabre linocuts reference origin myths, ancient Greek ideas of the Chimera and introduce the mythological form of the Mermaid into the Brighton sea; a figure embodying both the eternal seduction and pull of the ocean and its undercurrents of danger. The figures are re-presented here not only as species but gender-fluid creatures, reflecting the inclusive nature of the seaside town in which she has resided for most of her adult life. In her words, "a place for those not necessarily at home elsewhere".



Judy Stevens *The Chimeric Mermaids* 2024

Maria Francisca Vidal Vergara, a Chilean Brighton-based textile artist and researcher, will be bringing the project she has been developing with her Patagonian collective **Pulso Austral** to the UK for the first time. A woven artwork of almost 11 metres navigating the many connections the families of Cochrane have with their river, *Textile and Emotional Memories of the Cochrane River Waters* will be presented here as an ongoing and expansive proposition and undertaking. Through a series of workshops, the women of Pulso Austral will swap with their UK counterparts, stories, poems and experiences (the majority of Pulso participants are also part of a community of Patagonian cold-water swimmers called “huillinas”), and discuss what it means to be immersed in the waters of two very different parts of the world. The project is intended as a springboard for cross-cultural dialogue, with the aim of creating a new collaborative work to be exhibited at a later date.



Pulso Austral, *Textile and Emotional Memories of the Cochrane River Waters* 2023

Arantza Vilas is a textile artist, designer and researcher with an interdisciplinary and experimental studio practice, for whom the long coastal stretch of her adopted home is a place of chance, abundance and possibility, providing tools, processes, form and colour. Her work is deeply invested in process, driven by material investigation and spans multiple disciplines, combining ancient crafts with sustainable methods to innovate, provoke reflection and develop a sense of narrative. The textiles proposed for this exhibition are created in collaboration with the waves as they break into the shore, sourcing fibres that have been developed from seaweed and extracting pigments from foraged seaweed from the beach at Brighton and Hove. They take the form of wall pieces and vessels that explore the limitlessness of the liminal; the area where the sea meets the land is neither one or the other, an in-between, a threshold and a transition from one state into another.



Arantza Vilas *Sea water colour study* 2020

Carole Villain's paintings, prints, tapestries and words, explore the multi-dimensionality of experience and reveal connections between beings. Objects, humans, places, and animals; artificial or natural, fictional or real, inner or outer, are all intertwined in structures which are not as solid or rigid as they seem. Her 3D works will be shown here alongside her publication *Indigo Skin of the Sky*, a booklet formed of two poems, photos of the seaside in Hove and photos taken during the process of making a series of works with paper, agar agar and indigo ink. As she describes it, "What could be child play is alchemy. The wind on the beach, the line of the horizon, and the sound of pebbles on the shore are all involved. They are not external sources of inspiration or imaginary friends, they collide, collaborate and transform to create a new skin. This new skin is like the horizon in the photos or the border between pages; it is fixed and moving at the same time. It is the limit between the sea and the sky, between the inside and the outside."



Carole Villain *Abstract Alchemy III* and *Indigo Skin of the Sky*, 2023

Jonathan Wright works with images, materials and structures derived from the fabric of modernity. But since he is also fascinated by craft techniques, his compositions using this modernist vocabulary often become mysterious and seemingly functionless through the intervention of personal and felt elements, in a personalised and romantic critique of the modernist project. The exhibition will include one of his *Not fit for purpose* wall hangings, inspired by migrant journeys where the material structure of the boat becomes merged and interwoven with the stories of those on board, blurring the lines between the physicality of the journey and the aspiration of those making it; and a drawing, *Hull 2017*, part of a commission for 'Legacies' at New Art Gallery Walsall as a reference to JMW Turner's fascination with the sea.



Jonathan Wright *Not fit for purpose II* 2020

Artist's Bios

Polly Arnett grew up in Brighton and is based in Brighton. She teaches full time in the art department at BHASVIC sixth form.

Nicholas Carrick has exhibited widely in London and the South East, including the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2012, 2013 and 2014. In 2015 Nick Carrick's painting "Night Shift" was selected by Tom Hammick for the Towner Gallery Exhibition "Towards Night" alongside works by Peter Doig, Julian Opie, Ken Kiff, Craigie Aitchison and many other well established artists. In 2006 he was a resident at the Pouch Cove Foundation, Newfoundland, Canada; and in 2017 Artist in residence at Manor Laurette Bordeaux.

Emma Critchley is an artist who uses a combination of photography, film, sound and installation to continually explore the human relationship with the underwater environment as a political, philosophical and environmental space.

She is Royal College of Art alumni and has developed works funded by organisations including The National Media Museum, The Photographers Gallery, Arts Council England, the British Council, the Singapore International Foundation and the European Regional Development Fund.

Awards include the Royal College of Art Sustain 'Moving Minds' award, winner of the British Underwater Image Festival, a finalist in a number of Saatchi Gallery awards including New Sensations 2011. Her work has been shown extensively both nationally and internationally in exhibitions at The Australian Centre of Photography, the ICA Singapore, Gerhard Marcks Haus Germany, Eyebeam New York, The National Portrait Gallery, The Photographers Gallery, the Royal Academy and Tate St Ives. A recent commission from Opera North Projects toured to the Southbank Centre and the BAL TIC Centre for contemporary art.

In 2017, she completed a year's residency called Culture & Climate Change: Future Scenarios. From this, she is developing a public soundscape about underwater acoustic pollution and a film about deep-sea mining, funded by the Jerwood Charitable Foundation.

Dee Ferris is a British painter. She studied at Christ's College, Cambridge, and the Royal College of Art. Ferris has participated in group exhibitions at Saatchi Gallery, London; Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo; Tate Britain, London; City Gallery Prague, Prague; Prague Biennale, Prague; Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York; and the Royal Academy. She has had solo shows at Taro Nasu Gallery, Tokyo and Corvi-Mora, London. Her works are held in the Tate Gallery, UBS, Saatchi and Swindon Museum and Art Gallery collections.

John Haywood is a Brighton-based watercolour artist and (fair weather) sea swimmer. He is an elected member of the Sussex Watercolour Society, and has had work selected for the British Art Prize (2023), the Royal Society of Painters in Watercolour (2023), and The Fabriano Watercolour Convention in Bologna representing England and Wales (2024, 2023 and 2022). He was named a top 200 World Winner in the International Watercolour Masters contest (2024) and received a top 200 merit award from the International Watercolour Masters for his 'pursuit of excellence' (2022).

Solange Leon Iriarte is a Scottish-Chilean artist and interdisciplinary designer working in Sussex, often outdoors in unforgiving conditions. Her architectural training strongly influences her work and her passion for drawing. She feels the liveliness of line work helps her weave the complexity of the movement of both subject and space, capturing the distinct feel of a place. Her dedication and loyalty to subject is evident in each intense mark. Incorporating atmosphere, line and technical skill, her works are immediately recognisable and are found in many private collections. Her MA in Sustainable Design introduced her gestural abstracts, focusing on opacities, interdependence, balance and our relationship to Time and the environment. Her work was awarded a DYCP grant by Arts Council England to continue her environmental artistic research with organic chemistry & sustainable practices. Solange is on the advisory board of Forests Without Frontiers.

André Lichtenberg is a German/Brazilian artist (based in UK) whose work explores the intersection between photography and other art forms such as painting, collage and drawing. In an era of overproduction and consumption of digital images, André is concerned with the creation of memory and translating that into a final physical object. Lichtenberg's practice is informed by a highly technical and yet experimental approach to image making, a blend between art and science. "I am interested in the creative process and the subjective and poetical aspects of photography". His large scale artworks, such as the Within Series, take weeks to be constructed and often includes subtle references to his own childhood memories. Since as a young boy growing up in Brazil, Andre had a strong relationship with architectural drawings and imaginary visual representation of cities and the land. His work has been exhibited in museums and private galleries worldwide, including the Barbican Centre, London in 1998, Centre Pompidou/IRCAM, Paris in 2015/16 and Fabrica, Brighton in 2018. His artworks are represented in numerous international art collections including the NHS Trust in UK and the prestigious Joseph Cohen Family Collection in NY.

Alej Ez is an architect and printmaker. His first exhibition was in 1998 at Artefacto Gallery in Seville, Spain. Since moving to Brighton in 2000 he has participated at the Artists Open Houses Festival. I have exhibited in Gallery 94 at Glyndebourne and had solo exhibitions at the West Pier Trust and the Regency Town House, both located in Brighton, as well as in selected galleries from East to West Sussex.

Catalina Mejía Moreno is a sea swimmer, spatial practitioner, writer, educator and researcher. She grew up in Bogotá but has been based in the UK for the past fifteen years, the last seven in Brighton. She is interested in practices of resistance, environmental, racial and spatial justice, as well as ecofeminist practice and thought. Through creative practice, activism and critique, she imagines tangible pathways for social and ecological restorations and imaginations.

Catalina is the Climate Studies Lead across Spatial Practices at Central St Martin's, London. Since joining CSM she has been working in developing the Climate Forum (climate-forum.com), a research, curriculum and exchange platform that brings the urgent focus of the climate and ecological emergency to the core of the Spatial Practices Programme. Originally from Colombia, now based in the UK, her research and practice are predominantly focused on the global majority, intercultural dialogues and forms of situated practice. She has been Mellon Fellow on the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) and a DAAD and J. Paul Getty Trust grant holder, and more recently a Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, and a 2023/24 re:arc institute initiatives grant awardee.

Judy Stevens is a Brighton-based artist, printmaker and illustrator, and AOH Festival Director. She and her partner, graphic designer Chris Lord, ran their own open house, SIX, in the 7 Dials trail for many years, exhibiting work of local artists and makers. In 2004 she and Chris were instrumental in setting up Artists Open Houses (AOH) Ltd, to co-ordinate and promote the Artists Open Houses as an artist-led festival in its own right. In 2008 Judy and Chris initiated HOUSE, a programmed and curated visual arts event, offering commissioning opportunities to regional and international artists.

Maria Francisca Vidal Vergara is a Chilean Brighton-based textile artist and researcher.

She works with Pulso Austral, an interdisciplinary organization of women from the Aysén region located in the Chilean Patagonia, who weave networks to promote the wellbeing of communities, designing and implementing creative methodologies focused on strengthening territorial and community ties, integrating arts, culture, education and science as tools of social transformation. Their project *Textile and Emotional Memories of the Cochrane River Waters*, a transdisciplinary participatory practice-based research developed in alliance with the Chilean Patagonia Ecosystem Research Centre, was launched in Cochrane, located in the Chilean Patagonia, it was exhibited at the first Textile Art Biennial held in Santiago de Chile in October 2023.

Arantza Vilas is a Spanish textile artist, designer and researcher with an interdisciplinary and experimental studio practice, who has lived and worked in the UK for 23 years, and in Brighton since 2018.

Arantza's work is deeply invested in process, driven by material investigation and spans multiple disciplines. She is interested in combining ancient crafts with sustainable methods to innovate, provoke reflection and develop a sense of narrative. She is affiliated to research groups such as the Wearable Computing team at Universität der Künste Berlin and the Bio-Inspired Textiles Research group at University of the Arts London, and is a visiting lecturer at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London.

For more than a decade Arantza worked under the name of Pinaki Studios with a network of professionals that assisted and collaborated on projects. As a project-based studio it grew into a renowned practice with a host of high profile clients including HBO and the BBC, as well as exhibiting in museums and galleries in Spain, Italy and Cuba. The crisis of Covid-19 was the catalyst for an in-depth re-evaluation of this vision and a shift towards a more considered and mindful practice.

Carole Villain was born in France. She has lived in the UK since 2012 and is based in Brighton. After a career as a graphic designer in Marseille, Carole went on to study painting at the University of Brighton and the Royal College of Art.

Jonathan Wright graduated from the Royal College Of Art in 1987 where he was awarded the Henry Moore Bursary for the duration of his studies. In 2012 he was awarded a 3-D Foundation residency at Verbier, Switzerland; his Hoodwink Commission for Profound Riches was at The Forum, Tunbridge Wells (2013-2016), and he was commissioned with Diane Dever to create a series of five water tower sculptures: Penthouses for Folkestone Triennial 2014, Fleet on Foot' 2017 Folkestone Triennial. Recent projects (2017) include Constellation for The Fourth Plinth, Hove, and Harnessing Smoke, (2017), the Turner Exhibition Commission for the exhibition Legacies: JMW Turner and contemporary art practice organised by the New Art Gallery, Walsall. Jonathan Wright's solo exhibitions include Synthetic Rubber, Edge Projects, Herald St, London (2016); Tidemark Curious Projects, Eastbourne (2015); Shoes selection No 8 Shoes or no shoes, Kruishoutem, Belgium (2013); No Head For Heights (2011), and On Looking Up (2010), both at Strange Cargo, Folkestone; Restoration & Romance 11th Street Space, New York, (2008).