

Gary Clough

Port of Entry

9 August 2018 - 9 September 2018
Sun Pier House Gallery, Chatham, Kent
Preview: Wednesday 8 August 2018 6pm - 8pm



Port of Entry is a range of new drawings, prints and embroidery by Gary Clough exploring architectural space and geographical locations, while challenging notions of the imagined, the remembered and the known. In addition Clough is shaping an individual response to the different cultures engaged within his travels through China and the UK.

The images emerge from the habitual practise of drawing that artists use to explore and process the world around them. These drawings, most often contained within the intimate and private spaces of the sketchbook, happen when no one is looking, a form of practice that keeps the muscles of the hand, eyes and imagination working together, constituting a speculative work of re-imagining.

The sketchbook is an intrinsic part of Gary's practice, operating as both virtual and literal studio and collective cognitive landscape. The pages demonstrate how ideas are both generated and revisited in a constant process of analysis and reflection. It is driven by an innate playfulness and an ongoing discourse with the nature of the perceived, known and made. The sketchbooks innate mobility is clear in the pages as they document the artist's journeys, stopping off points and destinations through geographical, historical and disciplinary visitations and positioning. For the first time, Clough has made new works utilising cross stitch approaches, borrowing from its tradition as a homespun practice for documenting personalised interpretations of the world and mirroring his use of the sketch book as a starting point for assimilating the made environment. The work plays with the notion and challenges of the transformation into motif associated with this craft tradition, combined with the blue and white palate associated with rural Chinese embroideries.

The work in *Port of Entry* engages further with the notion of a shared entry, or starting point in the development of a repository, or archive of a highly personal genus of objects arranged and presented as sets, families and suites of images. The genealogy and heritage of the images draw from influences as broad as the pages of the Argos catalogue and the shelves of B&Q and Pound Land, to the Song and Tang dynasty blue and white Chinese ceramics, to the cotton indigo

embroideries of 18th century rural China. Clough has focused on developing contemporary notions of patterns and symbols as visual metaphor, intrinsic to global traditions of shared and/or remembered narrative histories within the creative industries and its cultural currency. The work attempts to investigate further contemporary notions of and relevance to the use of visual metaphors, motifs and symbols generated in the traditions of the decorative object essential to the sharing and evolving of shared visual language over generations through mnemonic and cultural exchange and interaction.

The work displayed in Chatham allow Clough to develop new drawings and new ways of working in the context of the architectural spaces and this geographical locations. The project's location in Chatham is essential as it directly engages with its position as a key cultural gateway and interface historically, for the UK which draws from an existing community who share the cultural heritage of the images, mark making, pattern and colour of the work. Chatham's historical positioning as a key military and commercial port and literary and narrative heritage is a conscious influence and reference for the artist's 20 year association with the location and communities. The exhibition also enables the engagement with the broader community of Chatham through national and international connections through the Universities and Education sector, supported by an artist talk and lecture.

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Sun Pier House Gallery

Sun Pier, Medway Street, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4HF

Open: Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 4pm & Sunday 12 - 4pm

Editors Notes

Gary Clough is a fine artist and educator whose practice is rooted in the traditions and cross-disciplinary nature of sculpture. As a graduate of UCA and the RCA he has exhibited across the United Kingdom, Europe, US and China. At galleries including Tate St Ives, Newlyn Gallery, The Ruskin School of Art, Georgetown University and The Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing. He also has associations with the Royal Society of British Sculptors and the Henry Moore Foundation, previously being appointed the Sculpture Fellow at Falmouth School of Art. Gary has over 20 years experience in art and design education, working across a variety of roles and institutions both internationally and in the UK, he is currently Senior Tutor and Lead for the Graduate Diploma at The Royal College of Art, London. Gary has continued to question the historical and contemporary positioning of the breadth of sculptural practices. On completing his degree he spent three years working in the building and restoration industry as a stone mason at Hereford Cathedral and granite technician at the Scottish Sculpture Workshop. His work is grounded on both craft and artifice, across a range of disciplines and materials this is driven and informed through drawing, focusing on the nature and notions of authorship, recognition and cognitive depiction and their roles and relevance to the made environment we inhabit.

<https://garyclough.uk>

Sun Pier House is a new creative venue in North Kent, located in a former bank and office block alongside the River Medway in Chatham. Part of a larger regeneration plan and cultural development for Medway, the Community Interest Company was formed in 2013 to promote and support Medway's growing creative industries. Across the 3 floors Sun Pier House has converted the empty offices into a large exhibition Gallery, a characterful Tearoom & Bar (open 6 days a week and available to hire for evening events), 11 artist studios, 2 art workshop rooms, a meeting room available to hire, Escape Plan event games, and a Princess Party Palace! Sun Pier House is a small family business with big ambition! Set up and run by husband and wife team Ed and Heather, Sun Pier House is an evolving project that started by accident in 2012. We're now 6 years in and still have a long list of ideas and developments for the space that we're working towards...<https://sunpierhouse.co.uk>

