



Sarah Jane Brown

Pembrokeshire, Wales, UK

Sarah Jane Brown lives in the heart of the spectacular Pembrokeshire Coast National Park in West Wales. Born in 1970, she had been painting for more than 20 years before studying as a mature student. She specialised in Fine Art Painting at the West Wales School of the Arts, where she was awarded a First Class Honours Degree and named student of the year. Since graduating Sarah Jane Brown's career as a full time professional artist continues to gain momentum and recognition, she has exhibited widely and her work is now attracting collectors throughout the UK and overseas.

Her expressive style combines a variety of techniques; staining and glazing in thin layers, building up to often very thick and textured impasto. Conceptually her paintings are an outpouring of personal feeling rather than representations of actual views. Most of the works remain recognisable as landscapes, but are open to interpretation. Many offer a duality, using the landscape metaphorically to describe thoughts and emotions.



Tell us a little about your background and how that influences you.

Before becoming a full time painter I spent most of my working life at sea. As a teenager I crewed on a yacht from Pembrokeshire to Spain, then worked on local boat trips around the Pembrokeshire coast. (To this day I still crew on these occasionally). I also worked for 10 years on the ferry to Ireland. The sea is part of who I am now and because I'm so familiar with the elements and the feeling of being at sea, it inevitably shows up as a sense of atmosphere and movement in my paintings.

What is the most challenging part of being an artist?

Wearing lots of different hats! People often have a romantic view of artists spending all their time creatively pushing paint around and being 'arty'. In reality much of my time is spent working on my website, social media, marketing, photographing, framing, cataloguing work, labelling, packing, transporting, answering emails, book keeping and so on. Essentially I am running a small business, which is actually very hard work. I often struggle with switching between administrative and creative tasks.

Tell us more about your painting series.

For my latest series of paintings I started thinking about the way I use memory in my practise. Walking, observing and absorbing the landscape is key to my process, and photographs, drawings, and painted studies help to embed those observations. Once back in the studio I put the preparatory work aside and just paint from my personal recollections of the coast.

This latest work explores the intense yet fleeting nature of memory and its effect upon the present. Forgetting the everyday, letting everything go and just absorbing the moment allows memories to come, ephemerally, like the sea washing in and out and leaving marks on the landscape. The details don't matter, what matters is the feeling, the sound of the sea, the gulls, the wind, the smell of the salt in the air, the feel of the elements on your skin, and the thoughts that pass through your head when you're alone on a beach or a cliff top.

I'm primarily interested in the emotions that these sensations often stir, so my paintings are really an outpouring of personal feeling coupled with a strong sense of place. The landscape becomes a metaphorical vehicle to describe more emotional concerns.

My style is expressive and I use rich colour evocatively. I use a variety of methods; staining, glazing and blending in many layers, gradually building up thickness and texture.





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