

The sea's power to transform inspires the exhibition 'A Sea-change' which opens on 26 April 2014 at the Arts Club

A Master Mariner's daughter who first went to sea at the age of two and a magazine art director whose move to Penwith has brought him back to his artistic roots are the painters behind a new exhibition at the St Ives Arts Club (Sunday 26 April to Friday 2 May). 'A Sea-change' brings together recent paintings by Barbara Nolan and Anthony Viney, who both work from the studios at Higher Bussow Farm in Towednack.

Taking its title from Ariel's song in Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*, the exhibition celebrates the power of the sea to bring about change and transformation in both places and people.

The daughter of a Master Mariner, Barbara Nolan first went to sea before the age of three. In her teens, she made two trips to the Netherlands with her father. She says: "The ship was a small coaster, so I soon learnt that the sea can be calm and benign or angry and threatening – but always beautiful and mysterious."

On moving to Cornwall, Barbara – who had pursued a teaching career based on her lifelong love of fashion and textiles – was drawn to paint seascapes in the context of the local landscape. "My paintings mainly depict the calm moods of the sea. Weather-beaten boats and harbours are other favourite subjects as they show the effects of the sea and weather on fragile man-made structures."

The power of the sea is more sensed than seen in the work of Anthony Viney, for whom the sights and the sounds of the elements at play in and around St Ives Bay are an important influence. He says: "For me music and natural sounds evoke an equivalent visual form. The low roaring of sand being shifted by the ocean on Hayle beach, the constant pitch of the sea and the rising notes of curlews in Copperhouse Pool – all leave a visual trace in my mind and are themes I return to again and again in my work.

"Since I moved to Penwith three years ago, my painting has undergone a sea-change. It's been affected by the environment and feels as though it's been plunged into a new element. There's continuity from before but all my recent works have been influenced in some way or other by this part of Cornwall."

It hasn't all been change, however. The move has also meant a return to his artistic roots. As a Fine Art student at Bath Academy of Art in Corsham, Anthony's tutors included the painter Adrian Heath along with other painters influenced by the St Ives modernist tradition.

The work of Anthony Viney and Barbara Nolan can be seen at the St Ives Arts Club, Westcott's Quay, St Ives from Saturday 26 April until Friday 2 May. Opening hours are 10.30am to 5pm.