

## Imaginary Virginia

In her book *Moments of Being*, Virginia Woolf writes about her memories of her childhood "*...of lying half-asleep, half-awake in bed in the nursery in St. Ives. It is of hearing the waves breaking one, two, one, two and of hearing the splash and sending a splash of water over the beach and then breaking one, two, one, two behind a yellow blind.....It is of lying and hearing the splash and seeing this light, and feeling it almost impossible that I should be here. Of feeling the purest ecstasy I can conceive.....I could fill pages remembering one thing after another that made summer in St. Ives the best beginning to a life conceivable....*"

A childhood spent by the sea has a powerful pull on the imaginary world of the psyche. Comprising drawing, video and installation, this exhibition is a reflection on Virginia Woolf, childhood memory and the sea. Virginia Woolf spent much of her childhood in a place by the sea. Her memories of this time and place were ecstatic - she returned to these fleeting moments over and over again in her imaginative writing and sometimes, by stealth, in reality. She described these remembered moments as 'moments of being'. In many ways, the repetitive rhythms and sounds of the sea set the underlying tempo of her work. Ian Everard spent much of his childhood in the same place by the sea as Virginia Woolf, and the rhythms, sights and sounds of the sea recur in much of his work. In turn, his daughter, Pippa Possible, spent her childhood by the sea and her childhood memories of the sea have influenced her work. For this exhibition, Ian Everard returned to images of a remembered sea. He drew waves on the floor with chalk and, on the surface, placed a writing table for an imaginary Virginia. It is as if Virginia's room is flooded with her remembered sea. Day by day, as the exhibition progressed, many visitors left their footprints on the waves.

The exhibition includes, in addition, a collaboration between Pippa Possible and her father. 'Shipbuilding' is a video record of a re-enacted memory: when she was a child, Pippa Possible and her father would build ships from driftwood, flotsam and jetsam, and launch them on uncertain voyages. Daughter and father returned and relived their activities and memories at their place by the sea. The traces of this experience are projected in Shipbuilding.

