Ocean Swell

an Exhibition of

Linocuts and Etchings

by

Richenda Court

Exhibition: 26th July – 16th August 2018

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About Richenda Court:

Richenda Court's art and teaching centre on relief and intaglio printmaking, which she studied at Brighton University before developing her practice further at Morley College, London, under Richard Michell and Frank Connolly – esteemed master-printers to Birgit Skiöld. She continues to lecture for Morley, teaches adult classes at Ochre Print Studios in Guildford, and runs workshops from her Esher home studio. Court pulls her prints in Esher, at Morley, and with Huguenot Editions, Isleworth – drawing on large professional presses for her more expansive and complex prints. She exhibits her work widely across the UK, examples of which feature in the Victoria and Albert Museum Collection, the national collection of British printmaking.

For ***London 2012*** Court represented Surrey's contribution to the Olympics with an award-winning screenprinted poster, hand-pulled at Ochre and launched at the Royal Albert Hall before selling in galleries throughout Surrey. Begun in 2015, her ongoing project, ***Ocean Swell***, has encompassed loose-leaf linocuts and etchings, and a lithographically printed artist's book. Court's work is figurative, lyrical and dreamlike, forged through line drawing and mark-making. For her the process of drawing becomes a method of thinking through ideas – drawn spontaneously, her imagined visions bring to the surface subconscious thoughts and feelings, revealing new truths about the world she experiences.

Exhibition Works:

Perhaps the most compelling feature of Court's work is the transcendent lyricism with which she represents the human figure. With an emphasis on the movements of hands in proximity to faces, Court's figures possess an evanescence and poise that chimes with her interests in dance; besides her career as a fine artist, she trained at the Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and taught choreography across West London. Always amid the elements, humans, as she imagines them, are presented in states of reflection, reverie, and self-discovery. Though in Court's narratives characters are sometimes based on people she knows, including family members, she treats their facial features elliptically, eschewing a particularised portrait in favour of a more spiritual one that, with spare lines, powerfully adumbrates and encapsulates an inner emotional life. Indeed, Court's anti-naturalistic forms remind us that the soul, as we experience it, profoundly belies any ostensible likeness. Furthermore, in representing figures at close quarters she lays bare not one person's experience, but the universal human condition, confronting us head on with feelings and scenarios we recognise – she depicts characters' experiences of isolation, indecision, longing, sadness, and unity, as if holding a mirror to our essential instincts and needs. Arguably, there is a Jungian sensibility to Court's work – the suggestion of a collective unconscious that impels us to identify spiritually with her 'everyman' figures.

Court's visions possess an immanence that speaks of what it is to exist within one's own thoughts and to relate psychologically to the extrinsic natural and material world. She makes the ocean and stars her own, as elemental life-forces that animate human feelings and relationships; they are theatres in which the soul moves.

Her graphic novel ***Ocean Swell*** sets two main protagonists, The Boy and The Girl, within the context of an underwater adventure. In an English seaside town, disillusioned with the 'real world', they immerse themselves in a subterranean one in which their dreams are carried by spikey sea urchins and protected by Soul Keepers, who patiently guide and watch over them in tiny wooden boats. As The Boy and The Girl swim with marine life and find each other again, a quixotic narrative develops in which they begin to rediscover hope and optimism. The Boy's dream to become a writer is affirmed through words that migrate from his Soul Keeper's book pages, which imprint upon his face, foretelling his destiny. Eventually the couple realise their dreams beyond the fantastical underwater world. Fishes disperse into abstract shapes that form a stage curtain, beyond which a new 'real world' beckons, with the vista of a harbour scene in sight. From this they cautiously retreat back into their brooding dwam, dwelling in the sanctity of the oceanic paradise, from which they are roused by the Soul Keepers when a storm takes hold. Urchins, urgently gathered up, are presented to The Boy and The Girl, as a complete manifestation of their dreams, to carry forth into the 'real world'. Happy and fulfilled, they dine together under a sunlit sky, embracing a new life.

Ocean Swell was born out of Court's daily sketchbook drawing in Esher. With no fixed framework or textual basis, the graphic novel emerged through improvised drawing during the course of a year. Subsequent linocuts and etchings have further explored the theme, as inspired by the original sketchbook drawings. In contrast to the pared-down intimacy of the book, many of these are colourful works, of which several are large, to be encountered as standalone episodes of the Ocean Swell tale. They are among the most technically ambitious and arresting prints Court has made to date, in which she has combined relief and intaglio methods into single works (***Ocean Swell I and II***, which depict The Boy and The Girl at the beginning of their journey) and constructed elaborate composite lino matrices to realise expansive detailed designs (***Aquarius Pass***, which depicts The Boy holding one of the sea urchins towards the end of the story). Court vitally conveys the energy, excitement and lyricism of her imagined worlds with vibrant colours, interweaving marks and patterns, and varied surface textures. With an astonishing expressive mastery, she enthrals the viewer in visions that are at once extraordinary, magical, and unshakably 'human'.

Julia Beaumont-Jones, London.

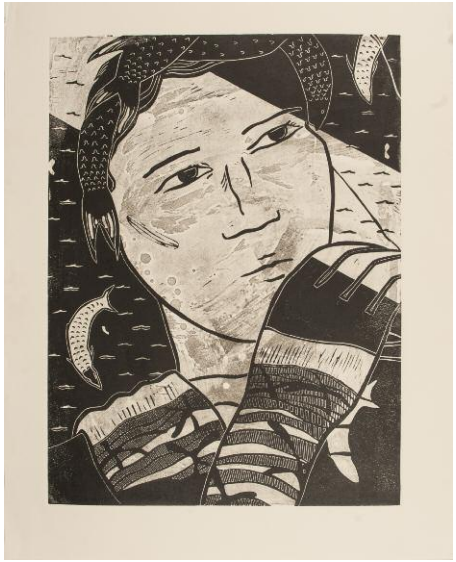
We do hope you will be able to come and view the exhibition which will be on display in the Print Department from Thursday 26th July – Thursday 16th August.

1. **OceanSwell I.** Original Linocut and Etching signed by the artist, edition 3 of 20, printed September 2015. 1380 x 880 mm. **£1,750**

2. **OceanSwell II.** Original Linocut and Etching signed by the artist, edition 3 of 20, printed September 2015. 1380 x 880 mm. **£1,750**

3. **Aquarius Pass.** Original Linocut signed by the artist, edition 2 of 20, printed September 2017. 830 x 830 mm. **£1,500**

4. **Watchful Wait.** Original Linocut signed by the artist, edition 2 of 25, printed September 2016. 560 x 420 mm. **£250**

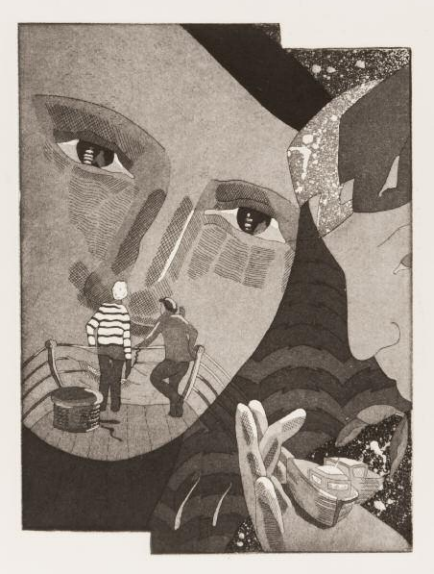


5. **Bashful Bait.** Original Linocut signed by the artist, edition 3 of 25, printed September 2016. 560 x 420 mm. **£250**

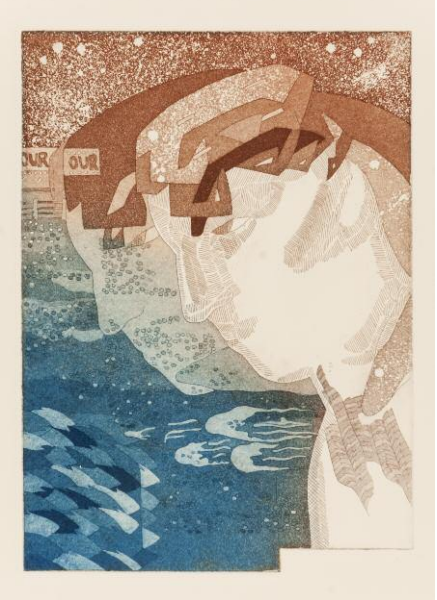
6. **Star Script.** Original etching signed by the artist, edition 2 of 25, printed June 2018. 170 x 230 mm. **£300**

7. **Star Script.** Original black & white etching signed by the artist, edition 10 of 25, printed June 2018. 170 x 230 mm. **£250**

8. **Awakened Chime.** Original etching signed by the artist, edition 2 of 25, printed June 2018. 185 x 140 mm. **£250**



9. **Awakened Chime.** Original black & white etching signed by the artist, edition 10 of 25, printed June 2018. 185 x 140 mm. **£200**

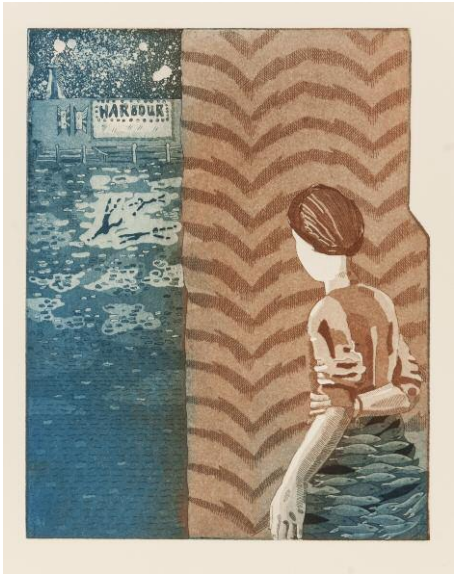


10. **Pursed Stare.** Original etching signed by the artist, edition 2 of 25, printed June 2018. 190 x 145 mm. **£250**

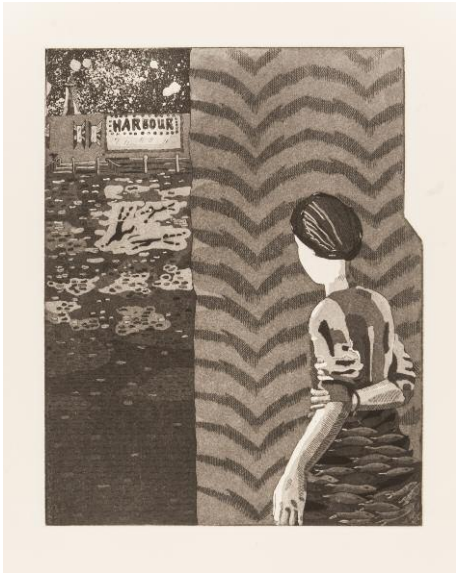
11. **Pursed Stare.** Original black & white etching signed by the artist, edition 10 of 25, printed June 2018. 190 x 145 mm. **£200**

12. **Dusk Dive.** Original etching signed by the artist, edition 2 of 25, printed June 2018. 190 x 145 mm. **£250**

13. **Dusk Dive.** Original black & white etching signed by the artist, edition 10 of 25, printed June 2018. 190 x 145 mm. **£200**

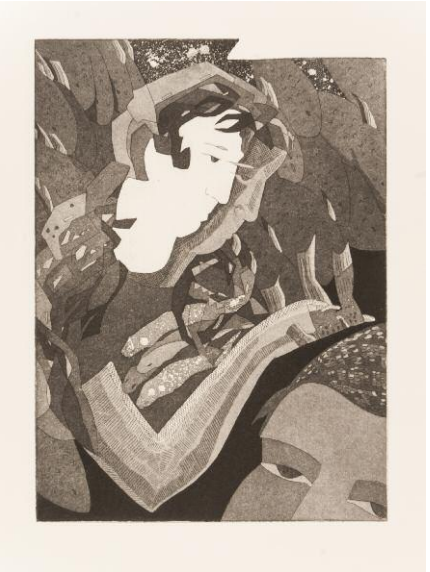


14. **Midnight and the bathers.** Original etching signed by the artist, edition 2 of 25, printed June 2018. 190 x 150 mm. **£250**



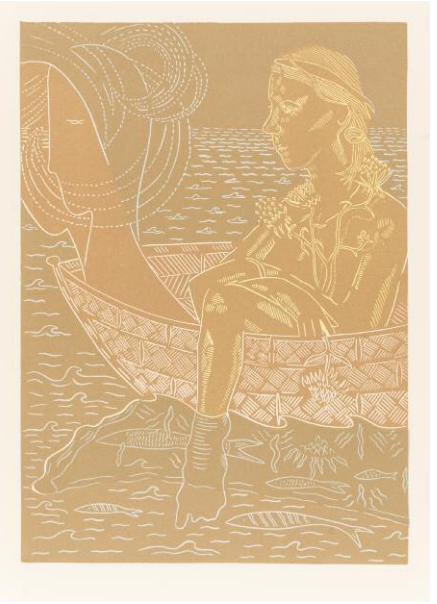
15. **Midnight and the bathers.** Original black & white etching signed by the artist, edition 10 of 25, printed June 2018. 190 x 150 mm. **£200**

16. **Choral Currents.** Original etching signed by the artist, edition 2 of 25, printed June 2018. 190 x 145 mm. **£250**



17. **Choral Currents.** Original black & white etching signed by the artist, edition 10 of 25, printed June 2018. 190 x 145 mm. **£200**

18. **Sweeping Day II.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 1 of 20, printed September 2016. 440 x 440 mm. **£250**



19. **The Wait.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 5 of 8, printed January 2018. 295 x 205 mm. **£200**

20. **The Embrace.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 1 of 20, printed September 2016. 200 x 150 mm. **£100**

21. **Sea Scape II.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 2 of 20, printed September 2017. 150 x 150 mm. **£100**

22. **Sweeping Day.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 2 of 20, printed September 2017. 150 x 150 mm. **£100**

23. **Black Water Kings.** Original etching signed by the artist, edition 3 of 25, printed Octoberr 2013. 670 x 600 mm. **£400**

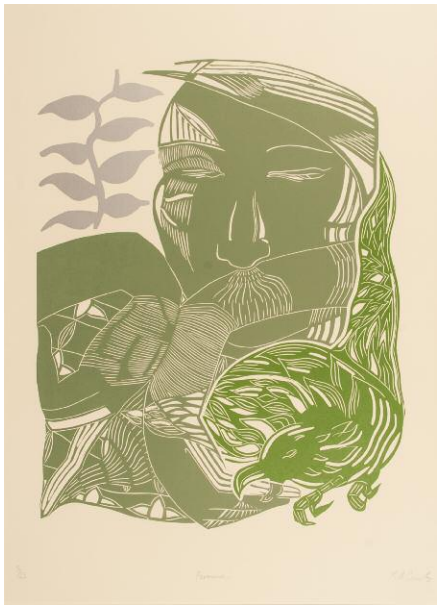
24. **Hours of Ours.** Original etching signed by the artist, edition 3 of 25, printed 2008. 560 x 420 mm. **£250**

25. **Charmed Adjustment.** Original etching signed by the artist, edition 5 of 25, printed 2008. 560 x 420 mm. **£250**

26. **Sumi.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 4 of 25, printed 2012. 560 x 420 mm. **£250**

28. **Urbino.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 3 of 25, printed 2011. 560 x 420 mm. **£250**

30. **Abos.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 3 of 25, printed 2010. 560 x 420 mm. **£250**

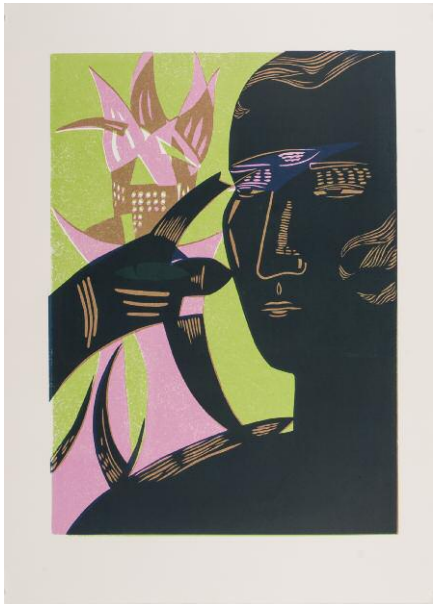


27. **Fermina.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 5 of 25, printed 2011. 560 x 420 mm. **£250**

29. **Amos.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 4 of 25, printed 2010. 560 x 420 mm. **£250**

31. **The Gardeners.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 3 of 25, printed 2008. 568 x 440 mm. **£250**

32. **Band of Independence.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 3 of 25, printed 2008. 440 x 610 mm. **£250**



33. **Surrey in the Olympics.** Original screenprint signed by the artist, edition 11 of 40, printed 2012. 560 x 400 mm. **£175**

34. **Shadow I.** Original linocut signed by the artist, edition 4 of 5, printed September 2015. 560 x 400 mm. **£100**

35. **Untold Wisdom.** Original etching signed by the artist, edition 1 of 10, printed September 2015. 220 x 180 mm. **£200**

36.

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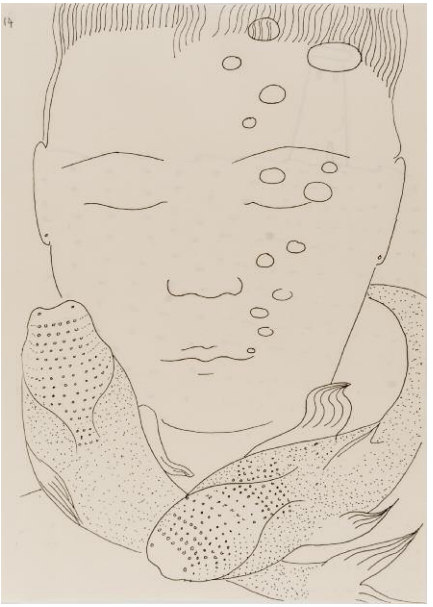

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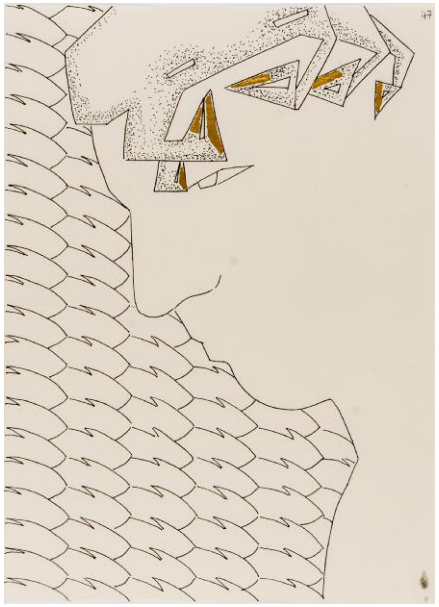

Original drawings from the Ocean Swell Book. Original ink on paper, drawn June 2015. 300 x 210 mm.

Set of six sold individually. **£195 each**

42. **Ocean Swell.** Book printed and bound in Hersham, Surrey by Impress Print, published by Richenda Court in 2016 from a numbered edition of 2000. **£12.99**

Richenda Court

Linocuts and Etchings

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