

# A PICTURE OF CORNWALL REPRINT

Ray Balkwill

Cornwall is artist country, immortalised by the colonies at St Ives, Newlyn and Lamorna. For generations this peninsula of big skies and swelling seas has beguiled artists with its renowned quality of light. So much so, that today Cornwall has one of the highest populations of artists and crafts-people in the country. Its ancient landscape has also been a popular retreat for poets, writers and musicians, both resident and visitors alike. Whether inspired by her dramatic coastline, countryside, moorland, rivers or harbours, the Cornish landscape has more than matched their creative needs.

This book is a celebration of the character and 'spirit' of a unique landscape in words and pictures. It presents the reader with a fascinating glimpse into the artist's own personal and physical relationship with the place and it also brings together for the first time some of its most celebrated contemporary artists. Some are published for the first time, alongside others who have received much international acclaim. Between them they encompass a wide variety of subjects, styles, media, as well as working methods. Complimenting the paintings the author provides a fascinating commentary, which also includes musings and extracts from poets and writers associated with the county.

The author is a professional artist and a native of Devon. However, his connections with Cornwall go back a long way and have been instrumental in shaping both his life and career. This lavishly illustrated book features 130 paintings, many of which have been reproduced for the first time. All who are passionate about the Cornish landscape will treasure this handsome volume.

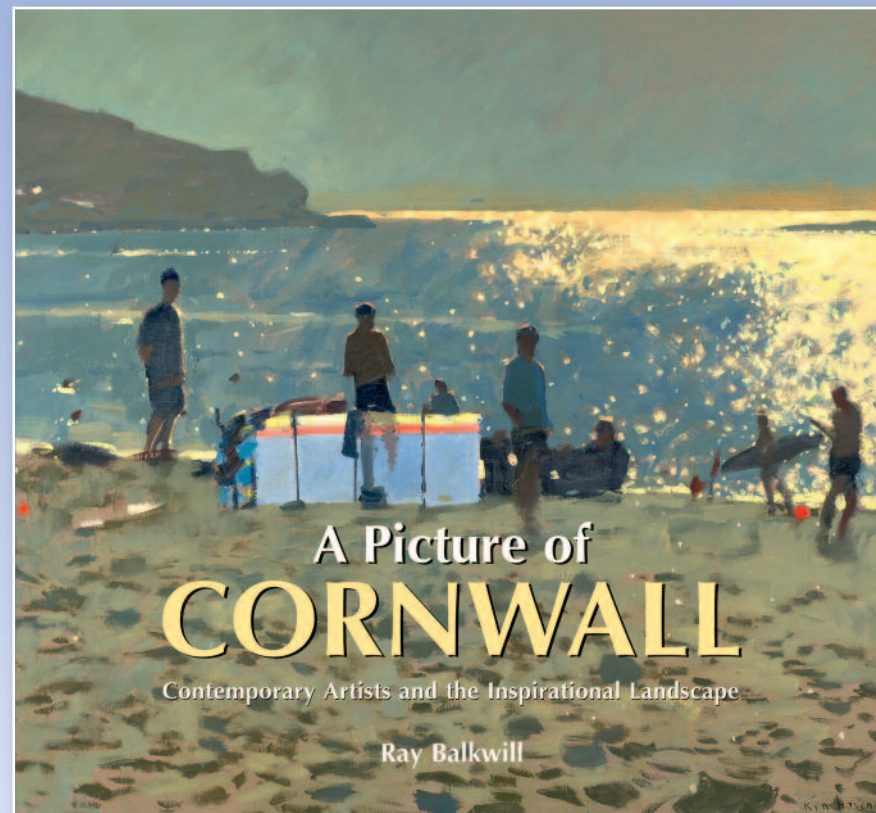
## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Ray Balkwill, SWAc** is a well-known West Country artist whose connections with Cornwall span five decades. Although his roots lie deep in the red earth of Devonshire, Cornwall has been instrumental in shaping both his life and career. Born in Exeter in 1948, he graduated from Exeter College of Art, thereafter making a career in advertising as an Art Director. In 1990 demand for his paintings led him to give up his job to become a professional artist. He has held many successful solo exhibitions and his work has featured in numerous group and open exhibitions. He also teaches painting and for the past twenty years has run painting holidays in Cornwall, as well as throughout the UK. An art instruction film *Capturing Estuary Moods* has also been made by APV Films. He is a regular contributor to *The Artist Magazine* and his work has also featured in many other publications. He is author of seven art books including *Ray Balkwill's Exe Estuary*, *A Picture of Devon* and *Travelling Light* also published by Halsgrove. In 2006 he was elected an Academician in the South West Academy of Fine and Applied Arts and has been a member of the St Ives Society of Artists since 1999.

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## HALSGROVE TITLE INFORMATION



**Format:** *Hardback with full colour cover, 238x258mm, 144pp  
profusely illustrated in colour throughout*

**Price:** *£29.99*

**ISBN:** *978 1 906690 23 6*

**Imprint:** *Halstar*

**Published:** *2010, reprinted May 2015*



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# A PICTURE OF CORNWALL



Above: John Raynes. *Bathers, Portreath II*  
Oil 12x12in (30x30cm)



Above right: Richard Tuff. *Alongside the Foreshore*  
Gouache 19x19in (49x49cm)



Right: Ray Balkwill. *Wet Sands, St Ives*  
Mixed Media 17x17in (43x43cm)

Example of a double-page spread.



CHAPTER FOUR  
**From picturesque fishing harbours to bustling ports...**

**A** man who has ever watched a boat fishing had nothing along the horizon but the horizon past to the horizon, followed by the indistinct line of wharfing gables, came to be replaced by the scene. Fishing has been an integral part of the coastal life of Cornwall for generations and its abundance of ports has also provided a wealth of material for the water painter. I had to choose my location before to paint. I would have to be at the right time and sounds of a bustling fishing harbour of which Cornwall boasts many, both large and small. For there are in Cornwall a dozen things to stir the imagination and touch all the senses. It may be the sound of scud and splashing of nets in the harbor water, perhaps the cry of gulls or the jangling rattle of a fishing net. I took particular pleasure in seeing fishermen hauling their catches on the quay, or repairing their boats at low water, the men shouting to each other as they worked. But even more than this, harbours held a much deeper significance of sea-scurvy and honorable retirement. These are remote places to paint where stories of hardship and tenacity are commonplace and where fishermen still wear their living from the same capacious Cornish sea. It is hard work of men, often hauling a boat full of fish, but their gains are every considerable and at all times precarious, as has Dr Jonathan Coussé described them. He was a Victorian medical practitioner who lived in Portreath and made them his home. He has written that these men were visible in the atmosphere. It is said that he has taken

his name from the sixth century missionary St Ivo, who landed here having sailed from Ireland on an ox boat. His associations with St Ivo go back to the early '60s when I joined a number of painting courses here for 187 holidays. Then in 1969 I was elected a member of the St Ivo Society of Artists, and was pleased to strengthen my connections with this charming town further. Deeply moved, with its crescent of beaches, ancient, ornate buildings, and narrow, twisting streets, I painted right around in harbor. It has provided much inspiration for painters old and new. Indeed the harbor's lighthouse, the inspiration for Virginia Woolf's *Wave* novel. To the fishermen, which involve the rest of the harbor, are a quiet spot in the town. The carry of light at the end of the pier, where the ground is so in common, partly due to the close proximity of the sea on all three sides of the pier. In the past St Ivo has also served the north coast fishing grounds, with the small-scale boat fishing fleet in every cove and inlet from Plymouth Sound to the far west. The immense stacks of pilchard and herring, which visited the bay in former times, were a source of considerable revenue. The pilchard season came in autumn after the oystering, or as the saying went, "when the corn is in the stack, then the fish is on the rock". This was then followed soon after by the herring shoals, which were of far less importance than pilchard, for while the regular fishermen were concerned with herring, a large number of local people often voluntarily pursued other occupations, with their work likely the season to catch, cure and export the pilchard.

Other on the painting trip, enjoy meeting all fishermen who, in contrast with many Cornish fishermen, are a great source of information on times gone by. On one such occasion at Newquay harbor, a fisherman regarded me with some of the local superstition. He said that

Ray Balkwill. *Bathers, Portreath II*  
Mixed Media 14x13.5in (35x34cm)



Amanda Hoskin. *Setting Sun, Mount's Bay*  
Mixed Media 27.5x40in (70x101cm)



Neil Davies.  
*Swirling Snow over Little Trevalgan*.  
Oil 30x23in (76x58cm)



Ken Howard.  
*Kite Flyers at Sennen*  
Oil 24x20in (61x50cm)