



**Ian Hamilton Finlay  
Maritime Works**

**23 March – 30 June**

**Tate St Ives  
2002**

**Notes for Teachers**

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# Introduction

This season Tate Gallery St Ives devotes its galleries to the internationally known Scottish artist and poet Ian Hamilton Finlay with a rare thematic exhibition presenting maritime works. This remarkable exhibition is perfect in the unique coastal context of Tate St Ives and brings together newly commissioned works and groups of works which have never been presented before in the context of this particular theme. Also on display is a selection from the Tate collection including Joseph Mallord William Turner, Christopher Wood, Oskar Kokoshka, Alfred Wallis and Barbara Hepworth

## **So how do we approach these displays?**

As you work your way through the galleries you will be taken on a journey of intrigue and discovery. The exhibition offers a number of visual surprises, especially to those unfamiliar with Ian's work. You will find a range of themes and ideas explored in a variety of ways and media. Many of the works are simple to look at but complex in meaning. You need to spend time and slowly explore the connections and puzzles. Ian describes each room as a single entity, a unique composition and you might just want to focus on one installation or a part of the exhibition.

There are many starting points appropriate to this exhibition that you could develop according to your group's interests and needs. For example you could take any of the following subjects or themes as starting points:

- Constructing and making objects
- Words (names, word-play, riddles, words as sculptures)
- Poetry (concrete poetry, shape poems, one-word poems)
- Words and images
- The maritime
- Land and sea
- Voyages past and present
- Boats, boat names and boat making
- Sailing
- Fishing boats and warships
- Boat names and flower names
- Stories of the sea
- Installation art
- Conceptual art

The aim of this pack is to provide information about the works on display, trigger questions and further points for discussion. A biography of Ian Hamilton Finlay along with key ideas and themes are included together with suggestions for further reading, a glossary of useful terms and a selection of poems.

## Ian Hamilton Finlay: a brief biography

Ian Hamilton Finlay was born in Nassau, Bahamas in 1925. As a child Ian's family returned to Scotland. During World War II, he was evacuated to the Orkneys, ending his formal education at the age of 13. He briefly attended Glasgow School of Art until he was called up in 1942 at the age of 17. During his three and a half years of army service Ian became a sergeant in the Royal Army Signal Core and he saw service in Germany.

After the War Ian was a shepherd in the Orkneys. This place had a great effect on him and prompted him to rename it 'Arcady'. Whilst there, Ian developed his ideal of 'Sweet Philosophy' in which he found visionary happiness amongst classical philosophers. Although Ian did not formally study philosophy it is a constant factor in his art.

During the 1950s, Ian divided his time between agricultural labouring and writing. His plays were later broadcast by the BBC. He moved to Edinburgh in the late 1950s and became involved with rhyming poetry incorporating native Scottish speech. In 1961, with Jessie McGuffie, he founded the Wild Hawthorn Press, publishing the works of contemporary artists. Today the Press deals exclusively with Ian's own work. In 1962 he founded the periodical Poor.Old.Tired.Horse.

In 1966 Ian and his family settled at Stonypath in the Southern Uplands of Scotland. He renamed their home Little Sparta in 1978. During this period his art and love of nature completely connected. Little Sparta has become a world famous garden incorporating his artistic work and ideologies. Ian became the Scottish representative on the 'Comite International' of the concrete poetry movement in 1967. He held his first solo exhibition at the Axiom Gallery, London in 1968.

1978 marked the start of a long-running tax dispute with his local regional authority concerning the status, for rating purposes, of works in the garden. Ian insists that the garden at Little Sparta should be designated a religious site and not a secular one. He has fought this political and legal battle through his art (known as the Little Spartan Wars), raising themes from the French Revolution and modern warfare set against a natural background (*Et In Arcadia Ego* series, 1977). He regards the dispute to be about 'nature and culture' and 'the relation between law and culture'.

Currently Ian spends his time working on Little Sparta and the art that has evolved from it. He has exhibited widely and received commissions for his work in Europe and America. In 1985 he was shortlisted for the Turner Prize. The positions he has held include an Honorary Doctorate at the University of Aberdeen (1987), an Honorary Doctorate Heriot-Watt University (1993) and an Honorary Professorship at the University of Dundee (1999).

## Ian Hamilton Finlay: key themes and ideas

Ian Hamilton Finlay's work embraces a range of themes and ideas. On the one hand his work can be poetic and lyrical, on the other it can be direct and confrontational. It is frequently witty and playful. His work explores and challenges the relationship between text and image; between poetry and the visual arts. He is preoccupied with the problem of how we confer meanings upon the world. He explores, through a variety of form and media, how to 'construct' and create connections and ideas.

*A lot of my work is to do with straightforward affection (liking, appreciation) and it always amazes me how little affection for ANYTHING there is in art today.*

Ian Hamilton Finlay, 1994

### Diversity of objects and materials

Ian's installations are made from a diversity of objects and materials, offering unusual juxtapositions both in terms of content, scale and materials used. This exhibition includes prints, poems, inscriptions, rugs, a neon and sculptures.

### Everyday objects

Ian is interested in how ordinary objects can catch the imagination. He takes things from our everyday lives and transforms them into special objects. He is interested in how ordinary objects are crafted and in the 1960s he started making toys because he liked the simplicity of what they could say. In this exhibition you will find objects such as chairs, tea caddies, rugs and model boats.

### Collaborations

Since the mid 1960s Ian has collaborated with a number of other artists on diverse projects. This partly explains the range and diversity of his art and he has worked with some collaborators over a long period of time. As you will see, when works are exhibited or published the collaborator's name is included along side Ian's as author of the work. This exhibition has been selected by the artist in collaboration with Pia Maria Simig.

### Concrete Poetry

Ian is a poet. He first made his name writing short stories and plays in the late 1950s. These early writings, often written in a highly symbolist manner, gave way to experimentations with concrete poetry which involves texts arranged for their visual as much as their verbal effects (see Glossary).

**In his first collection of concrete poetry (Rapel, 1963) Ian combined formal coherence with a strong degree of visual or atmospheric suggestion. Poems such as *Net* (see Appendix) explore the balance between representing the subject and evoking its lyrical content. As a poet, Ian has continued to explore and develop new techniques of presentation for the word, ranging from standing poems, to booklet poems to large-scale sculptures and installations. Ian was the first to experiment with the possibilities of concrete poetry in an architectural setting. As you will see in this exhibition Ian is constantly extending the boundaries of poetry. What happens, for example, when you transfer a printed poem onto wall or glass or woven rug? What happens when you engrave poems onto bells or chairs?**

## **The maritime**

This exhibition focuses on the maritime theme within Ian's work. It is the first exhibition to concentrate entirely on this area of work. Such a theme is particularly appropriate for Tate St Ives built overlooking Porthmeor Beach. The sea has been a subject for the artist since the 1960s and this exhibition includes work from throughout his career.

## **Land and sea**

Ian's work explores the subject of land and sea. Throughout this exhibition the juxtaposition of land and sea (and sky) are explored. Right at the beginning, in the stairwell leading to the main galleries we are confronted with the words MARE/TERRA (Latin for sea/land). Throughout the exhibition you will find works that play with this polarity reminding us of the distance between land and sea.

## **Boats**

Ian explores the subject of fishing boats, sailing boats and warships again and again. He is fascinated by their names, their shape, their function, their construction, their materials and their history. This exhibition includes not only prints and postcards of boats but model boats and even a full-size real sailing dinghy. It also includes works that bear the names and numbers of actual boats. You find them printed, engraved on stone or blown up into giant 3-D sculptures on the gallery floor.

## **Sewing and sailing**

A common theme within the show is the metaphor Ian draws between sewing and sailing. This metaphor is best exemplified by his poem,

Evening  
will  
come

They  
will sew  
the blue sail. (The Blue Sail, 2002)

Ian makes the connection between sky and sea and stitching (the blue sail and blue sky and sea). The sewing of sails is something that might be done in the evening when the boats are back in port. The evening brings land and sea together as darkness falls. The sewing could also suggest the end of life – the sewing of a shroud.

In this exhibition we are introduced to this theme in Gallery 1 with Ian's print *The Little Seamstress* [Collaboration with Richard Demarco] 1970. Here we are presented with an image of a boat moving through the waters literally 'stitching' through the waves. In Gallery 3 we find the subject again explored with the rugs and in Gallery 5 the poem on the wall includes the words 'stern stitches'.

## **The garden**

Ian is not only a poet, he is also a gardener and his garden at Little Sparta is perhaps his most important artwork (see biography). Although this exhibition focuses on the maritime, garden subjects are evident just as a visit to Little Sparta reveals many connections with the sea. As discussed above, land and sea are always connected for Ian. In this exhibition Ian makes links between flowers and the sea and in particular the rose as a common name for boats.

## **The pastoral**

Ian is interested in the pastoral. By this he means the simplest relationship of man to the natural world. Ian first developed a love of pastoral working as a shepherd in the Orkney Isles after the Second World War. The idea of the pastoral (see Glossary) links Ian's interest in land and sea. It is interesting to note that on the islands and coasts of Scotland, fisherman and farmer are often one and the same. Within this exhibition fishing boats are a symbol of the pastoral.

*Still in the twentieth century, the vehicles of the hunter-gatherer, in search they make their tracks across the trackless oceans looking to the perfect order of the stars to guide them through the imperfections of this world. Like words identified in their serial numbers by typography, they stand for focused meaning in the sea of unmeaning, just as the garden does at Little Sparta.*

Duncan Macmillan, Wood Notes Wild: Essays on the poetry and art of Ian Hamilton Finlay, p2

## **Romance, nostalgia and melancholia**

There is a strong sense of the romance of the sea within the show. Ian's fascination with the maritime comes across in many forms. The lure of the sea, its mysteries and stories are evident. There is also a nostalgia for bygone times. The absence of boats, marked only by their names, numbers or bells create a mood of melancholia. He repeatedly refers to the old Scottish fishing boats and to the use of sails. Both are part of the past - today the sail itself is outmoded, restricted to weekend yachting and many of the small fishing boats have been replaced or simply taken out of service.

## **Literary and classical references**

Ian's work often includes a literary element, strongly influenced by his studies of classicism and ancient (Pre-Socratic) philosophers (see Glossary). He is both a great reader and 'thinker' and his work is regarded as a unique poetic statement on the state of European culture. There are numerous references to classical literature, mythology and philosophy in this exhibition.

## **War, battle and power**

Ian's interest in the maritime embraces the polarity of peace and war: Fishing boats represent the pastoral, battleships represent both power and war.

Through his career Ian has drawn on a range of imagery from the military in his work and he has made investigations into military and totalitarian regimes. His interest in war is ambiguous – it is as much to do with revisiting and reclaiming an image as it is to do with a fascination with the idea of beauty and terror. Ian describes his own role as an artist akin to 'a soldier at war with the disposable and trivial'. In this exhibition there are a number of works that allude to warships and conflict at sea.

## **Metaphor and enigma - simplicity and directness**

Ian's work is full of metaphor and layers of textural and visual allusions. He is continually bringing things together and making connections. He creates links which appear very simple but which are enormously expansive. His work often refers to mythology and politics combining many layers and references. Yet these layers of meaning are usually combined with an immediacy of visual impact.

As Brian Kim Stefan writes 'From one angle he is a visionary involved in a private symbology, from another a political propagandist as blatant as a soviet poster artist'. This complexity leaves us puzzled and at times hesitant to embrace his work. We worry that hidden meanings we had not expected might emerge. But this complexity is also the joy of his work – we can unpick the layers as briefly or as deeply as we like. The journey of connections and meanings is a fascinating one.

*Why doesn't anyone write about the CLARITY in my work, and its LYRICISM, and its (frequent) LOVE of the ordinary*  
Ian Hamilton Finlay, 1991

## Gallery 1: Maritime Works from the Tate Collection

In this Gallery you will find works that have been selected to complement Ian's exhibition. The majority of works relate to the maritime theme and the display provides a context for the rest of the exhibition. The display includes work by Peter Lanyon, Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, Alfred Wallis, Christopher Wood and Barbara Hepworth as well as nineteenth century artists such as Joseph Mallord William Turner, Henry Moore and William Evelyn Osborn. It includes both painting and sculptures and both representational and abstract work. A group of early prints by Ian, selected from the Collection, are also shown here.

### Key works

Christopher Wood (1901-30)  
*The Fisherman's Farewell*, 1928

Osborn, William Evelyn (1868-1906)  
*Beach at Dusk*, *St Ives Harbour*, c1895

St Ives' harbour features in both these paintings. In *The Fisherman's Farewell*, a man can be seen in the foreground with his wife and child saying their farewells. Behind them, in a dramatic change of scale, men are launching the boats in preparation for going to sea. Ian was particularly keen to include this painting in the display. The painting focuses on a poignant moment and Wood's bold use of colour and line and distortion of scale (emphasised by the horizontal format) reinforces this.

In contrast Osborn's painting focuses on the atmospheric light of fisherman at dusk. The empty beach in the foreground leads our eyes to the centre where the boats are being pulled up. Behind the lights of St Ives are beginning to flicker. Osborn, like Turner was interested in landscape painting that could convey the mood and atmosphere of a particular light and weather effect.

### Trigger questions

- Look around the room and find a work that catches your eye – look at it closely. Why do you think you noticed it more than the others? Can you find words to describe it?
- Now glance around the whole room again. What sorts of things are these artists interested in? Make a list.

### Things to think about:

**Land and sea.** This display introduces us to the maritime theme and provides an interesting context for the work of Ian Hamilton Finlay. Boats, harbours, ports, wrecks, marine objects, shells and birds are all alluded to here. By placing Ian's prints amongst these paintings and sculptures direct connections can be made. Consider the range of ways these artists have approached the maritime theme.

**St Ives past and present.** All of the artists included in this display have a connection with St Ives or the West Country. Many of the works actually depict St Ives as in the key works discussed above. Another example includes Wallis' *St Ives* (c1928). It is interesting to compare St Ives in the nineteenth and early twentieth century with today and to consider why so many artists have been drawn to the picturesque qualities of the town.

**Shipwrecks.** A number of works refer directly to shipwrecks and the drama and danger of the sea. For example, Turner's *A Wreck with Fishing Boats* (c1840-5), Wallis' *Wreck of the Alba* (c1938-9) and Lanyon's *Wreck* (1963).

**Boats and the fishing community.** This display provides the opportunity to explore the subject of sailing and fishing. Many of the paintings depict boats or refer to their shape and form. For example, Moore's *Catspaws off the Land* (1885), Wallis' *The Blue Ship* (c1934) Heron's *Boats at Night* (1947) and Barns-Graham's *June Painting, Ultramarine and Yellow* (1966). In various ways the paintings document the fishing community providing evidence of particular types of boat and fishing. For example Wallis' *P.Z.11* (c1928) shows a Mounts Bay Mackerel Driver registered at the port of Penzance. Mackerel Drivers would have been seen in quantity in Cornwall in the 1890s.

**Romance of the sea; nostalgia and memories.** Many of the works evoke the drama and excitement of the seas. There is also a sense of nostalgia and memories of past times. Wallis' paintings were based on his memories of the deep-sea fishing voyages of his youth. By the time he painted his pictures these boats were no longer in use. In more recent times the decline of the fishing industry has led to dramatic changes within the traditional fishing communities and ports. Much of the maritime experience is confined to memories and stories rather than real life experience.

**Realism – abstraction.** This display introduces a range of styles and painting techniques. It also contrasts realistic works with the more abstract use of shape, form, colour and line. It is interesting to compare the ways artists convey the experience of the sea and the shape and movement of boats. For example compare Lanyon's *Wreck* (1963) with Moore's *Catspaws off the Land* (1885).

**Ian Hamilton Finlay's prints.** Ian's prints introduce us to some of his key concerns within the maritime theme as well as his skill at juxtaposing word and image. For example, his association of lemons and shells with the shape of boats, his interest in boat names, the connection between flowers and the metaphor of sewing and sailing (see Key ideas and themes). All the prints have been produced with others, thereby introducing us to the fact that nearly all Ian's work is the result of a collaboration.

## Lower Gallery 2: Ian Hamilton Finlay Maritime Works

In this sea-facing space the artist has drawn inspiration from the Gallery's architecture and created an installation for Tate St Ives, using colour, scale, word-play and poetry to make a strong visual surprise. Along the curved wall are three strips of separate colour, red, yellow and blue. At one end is the word **ark**, at the other **arc**.

With this work, which is based on an earlier poem (*Ocean Stripe Series 3*, 1965), Ian plays with the shape and structure of the space. By changing one letter the idea and shape of a ship are suggested. The metaphor does not stop there. The biblical story of Noah's Ark is evoked with the arc of the rainbow at the end of the flood.

On the curved window opposite there are vinyl stripes of red and blue and the words **this hull is a flag** and **this flag is a hull**. As with *ark/arc* Ian plays with both the words and the architecture of the building. By simply changing a letter or placement of a word he draws our attention to the shape, space and sounds of the building we are in.

On the floor Ian has put four benches known as his *Four Rose Benches* (2002). These benches are made of slotted beams of solid oak and each has the names of four boats and their port numbers carved on them. All the names are based on the rose. For example, one bench includes LOTHIAN ROSE, BRIAR ROSE, ROSE BLOOM and WHITE ROSE.

### Trigger questions

- What do you notice first about this room when you enter it?
- Why do you think Ian has used such bold areas of colour next to words?
- When you first see the words *ark* and *arc* what do you think of?
- Why do you think Ian evokes ideas about a ship in this space?
- What do the benches make you think of?
- What has been carved onto these benches?
- Where else do you think you might find benches like these?
- If you had one of these benches where would you put it and what would you carve on it?

### Things to think about

**The Gallery building as an ocean vessel.** Ian's installation encourages us to think about the actual shapes and spaces of the building. Situated so close to the beach the idea that we are in a ship is suggested.

**Noah's ark.** Ian encourages us to explore the story of Noah. In the story at the end of the great flood a rainbow appears to confirm God's covenant with earth. The primary colours become the rainbow and the sound-identity of *ark* and *arc* reinforce the idea of the divine covenant and promise.

**Installation art.** This display is an installation in that it has been conceived specifically for this space and for the duration of the exhibition. Although Ian draws on earlier work and themes already evident within his work it is unique to this space.

**Word-play.** This installation demonstrates Ian's love of words and his direct and simple techniques of word-play which are full of wit.

**Land and sea.** This installation makes numerous links between land and sea. The shape of the building (on land) echoes the shape of a boat (at sea). The benches sit between land and sea. Ian links garden with ocean. Are the seats for a garden or for a coastal setting? They suggest both a rose-arbour and a ship's harbour. The texture of the benches reminds one of drift wood. The solid oak is too thick for a ship yet the material immediately connects with Noah's wooden ark. Because wood floats it is the essential mediating element between humans and the sea. As Tom Lubbock writes in the catalogue 'no trees, no sea-going'.

**Rose names.** Ian encourages us to think about the symbolism of roses. It is common for fishing boats to be named after flowers, particularly roses. The rose is the symbol of England. Roses conjure up images of sweetness, safety and homeliness. The rose is also an emblem of Aphrodite (see Glossary).

**Contemplation and theatre.** Ian invites us to both quietly contemplate but also envisage the more dramatic aspects the maritime. The benches invite us to sit and contemplate a particular view. The inscriptions remind one of the ancient tradition of carving a beloved's name in a tree. They also make one think of the names of lost loved ones which are often carved on a bench in a scenic place. There is a sense of loss, of death. Where are these boats? Are they lost at sea? Through simple and minimal use of word, colour and material Ian creates a sense of both reverie and theatre.

## **Apse**

### **Ian Hamilton Finlay Maritime Works**

In the Apse a selection of Ian's maritime postcards are displayed. Ian has made postcards throughout his career embracing all his concerns and themes. The selection here demonstrates how he uses the postcard format to convey ideas in a very direct way.

A Postcard usually functions as a quick message, a simple greeting or reference to a place or event. Ian uses this function for his own purposes. He plays with simple juxtaposition of colour, image and text. In one the letters M.F.T.V. are set against strong colour. Underneath on the postcard mount is written 'Motor Fishing Vessel Tea'.

Many of the postcards demonstrate Ian's use of wit. They convey funny visual and verbal puns. For example, an image of a traditional iron is given a nautical reference with the words 'Iron Ship'. In another, below an image of a battle ship are the words 'Imprisoned in every Italian Battleship, an espresso machine is wildly signalling to be let out'. In a similar way, Ian has fun playing 'homage' to Kandinsky, Seurat, Victor Silvester and Donald McGill.

### **Trigger questions**

- Why do people write and send postcards?
- How do we feel when we receive a postcard?
- Where do we put postcards?
- What's different about a postcard being shown here in a Gallery?
- Why do you think Ian makes postcards?

### **Things to think about**

#### **Postcards as works of art**

Each postcard is an original work of art, not an illustration. Ian regards these works as important as a book, a sculpture or a gallery installation.

#### **Wit**

Look at how simply Ian creates visual and verbal puns. The postcard format is very effective.

#### **Word and image**

As we see elsewhere in the exhibition Ian loves to play with the juxtaposition of word and image.

## Gallery 3

### Ian Hamilton Finlay Maritime Works

This gallery includes an unusual display of sculpture and multiples, including four recent woven blanket-stitched rugs. On the wall opposite the rugs is the work *Coble* which consists of planks of half a hull of a fishing boat (see Glossary). In the centre of the room are four rose-wood chairs on which are various inscriptions exploring the maritime theme.

#### Key work

*The Divided Meadows of Aphrodite*  
(with Ron Costley) 1975

Between the Greek and English words THE DIVIDED MEADOWS OF APHRODITE is an aerial outline drawing of a modern warship (an aircraft carrier) flight deck. The contrast between the words and image, between the black rug and white lettering emphasise the division referred to in the text.

Ian plays with the juxtaposition between a warship and the reference to the Greek goddess Aphrodite. The combination of words and image create a 'riddle' with many layers of meaning. Aphrodite is the goddess of both land and sea. Legend has it that she was born on a wave and floated in a shell to the Isle of Cythera. She was the goddess of calm seas and was worshipped by sailors and fisherman. She was also the goddess of the meadow or 'sacred grove' and both the rose and myrtle are sacred to her (see Glossary).

The words refer to the Pre-Socractic writer Empedokles (see Glossary) who evoked the cosmological forces through the Olympian deities. Aphrodite is a power of nature, living and working in the three elements of air, earth and water. The aircraft carrier becomes a modern day equivalent for the elements – earth (its surface), air and fire (its dynamic action) and water (through which it floats and moves).

Aphrodite's shell is replaced by the modern 'shell' of warfare. The 'divided meadows' (or parting waves) become both the warship cleaving through the water and the experience of war itself. Aphrodite is also Venus goddess of love. Once again the warship encourages us to think about beauty and power – about love and strife.

#### Trigger questions

- What are your immediate impressions when you walk into this room?
- What sorts of connections and links can you find between the works?
- Have you ever seen rugs or chairs like these before? What's different/similar?
- Why do you think Ian uses words on his rugs and chairs?
- Why do you think Ian has placed the planks of a half hull of a fishing boat on the wall?

#### Things to think about

##### Layering of meaning

Ian's works are multi-layered. Our first impressions change as we explore the physical and verbal associations suggested by his works. The range of work and materials in this room emphasise this sense of layering. Ian creates works which have directness and immediacy but which are also full of complexity and endless connections. The

rugs themselves become a metaphor for this process. They are the type that cover, protect and enclose - perhaps suggesting a nursery. Yet they combine words and images in strange and often menacing ways. Aphrodite is evoked in relation to a modern warfare, a lullaby is linked to the repeated image of an aeroplane.

**Shape, material and movement of boats.** With *Coble* Ian has literally 'flattened' out the curve of a fishing boat's hull. The rug *A HEART-SHAPE* refers to the shape (and patching) of a ship's sail, *SAILS/WAVES* evokes simply the shape and movement of sea, sail and boat while in *THE DIVIDED MEADOWS OF APHRODITE* the image of the warship ploughing through the waves is suggested.

**Making and constructing.** *Coble* draws attention to the making or 'constructing' of a wooden boat. The stitched rugs refer to diagrammatic drawings of warships and aeroplanes. The chairs have been made out of wood and inscriptions carved onto them.

### Words and images

In the early 1960s Ian became interested in typography and design. The combination of text and image is a strong feature of his work. With the rugs, Ian demonstrates a range of ways to combine words with pictures using simple diagrammatic drawings and 'hand-written' type. Ian is interested in the idea of the **emblem** which can convey a complex idea in a visually simple and often witty form (see Glossary).

### Riddles

Some of these works can be seen as riddles (see Glossary). Consider what happens in a riddle – for a while you speculate with the clues and then all of a sudden the idea 'clicks' into place.

### Aphrodite

Aphrodite becomes a way of linking land and sea for Ian. Reference to the goddess can be found in other works in the exhibition, particularly in relation to the names of boats (see the *Four Rose Benches* in Lower Gallery 2 or the *Boat Names* which includes the name HAZELGROVE in Gallery 4).

## Gallery 4 Ian Hamilton Finlay Maritime Works

In this room you will find included an installation of *Boat Name* sculptures and a new work consisting of *Twelve Ship's Bells (One-word poems)*. Together they create a unique atmosphere in this gallery.

On the floor are four giant boat names and numbers constructed in painted wood. They are HAZELGROVE, LEA RIG, TANK and D19 and all refer to the classification of boats. Along the walls on opposite sides are hung, at eye level, twelve ship bells onto which Ian has had one-word poems engraved such as AN UNFINISHED EPIC – OCEAN and ROCK-A-BYE – BUOY.

### Trigger questions

- Describe the atmosphere created in this room.
- Look at the word sculptures on the floor.
- Where have these words come from?
- Where else might you find these words?

- Where do you think you would find bells like these?
- Why do you think there are 12 bells?
- Why do you think Ian has engraved words onto the bells?
- Look closely at the words on one of the bells. How do the words relate to ideas about land and sea?

## Things to think about

**Words as sculpture.** What do you think of the idea of enlarging a word and making it three-dimensional? How does it change from a word on a printed page? Ian has separated the names and numbers from the actual boat they belonged to. He places them on the floor like a flotilla. The gallery space becomes the harbour.

**The classification of boats.** Every boat has a name/number which identifies its port of origin and ownership. Today boats are registered through MAFF (Ministry of Agriculture, Farming and Fisheries) and the Register of Seamen and Shipping based in Cardiff. Details used to be recorded in the Olssen's Almanac which maintained an up-to-date list of photographs of boats with their classifications. Most people choose the name of their boat. In Scotland traditional common names for boats often referred to flowers (especially the rose), religious subjects, local place names or family names.

A key theme within Ian's maritime work has involved an exploration of this subject. Ian's own interest in word-play has found natural links to a tradition of wit and word-play in the maritime world.

*For someone from a fishing town or whose work connects them with the fishing community, the network of registrations is a cultural reference as valid as a classical column.*

Ian Stephen Wood Notes Wild: Essays on the poetry and art of Ian Hamilton Finlay

The boats Lea Rig and Hazelgrove were paired trawlers (ie. they shared a net). The first name has a pun in each word, emphasising the joining of land and sea, the second name furthers this with the woodland echo.

## Land, sea - absence, loss

Just as with the *Four Rose Benches* (Lower Gallery 2), Ian's *Boat Name* sculptures stand proxy for some vessel which is, or was, operating around the British coast. They mark an absence at sea. In a similar way, the bells have been separated from their boats. We are invited to contemplate the distance between these works and the real sea and the passage of time.

## One-word poems

Ian first developed the 'one-word poem' in the 1960s anthologised in his magazine Poor.Old.Tired.Horse.No.25. He has since developed them in a range of media including books and sculptures and as inscriptions. A one-word poem consists of a title and one word. As a form it links not only to concrete poetry and the Japanese Haiku but also to the poet Apollinaire and the tradition of poetic riddles. Ian makes us think about words, about what a poem is. What happens when one word is set against a title? Ian plays with words, with suggestive meanings, connections – the poems tease us with their enigmas.

### **Ships bells**

A ship's bell is an original fitting on all boats. Most bells would have the boat's name engraved on it. Before the days of radar, a ship's bell was used in fog to warn other boats and a series of signals would communicate a message to warn other boats. A ship's bell would also indicate a change in the ship's watch.

Ian has removed the bells from their boats. He has also replaced their engraved names with one-word poems. Separated from their normal context the twelve bells (one for each hour) take on a different presence within the gallery. They become intriguing objects. Their shape, shadows and words evoke the mysteries of the sea. Their potential for sound seems to emphasise the silence of a sea shrouded in mist and fog.

## Gallery 5 Ian Hamilton Finlay Maritime Works

In this room you will find a full-scale hand-made sailing boat in the context of a poem. *Dinghy* is a 'ready-made' sailing boat that has been brought into the gallery and placed next to a poem which reads:

One bow curves

Two bow cleaves

Three sail powers

Four sail steadies

Five rudder steers

Six tern stitches

Clinker-built copper-fastened sailing dinghy.

The poem evokes the movement of the boat. It also sets out a key to the functions and construction details of the boat. The numbers correspond to those placed on the boat itself, identifying the bow, sail, rudder and stern.

### Trigger questions

- What is this boat doing here?
- How do you think it got here?
- Where do you think it was before?
- Who made this boat?
- Look at the poem on the wall. What is it about?
- How does Ian link the poem to the boat?
- Imagine you take this boat on a voyage. Where would you go?

### Things to think about

**Is this boat a sculpture?** We are used to seeing constructed objects in galleries. But is this a sculpture? Who made it? It is a real boat made by Wootton Bridge Industries which specializes in the craft of hand-made Clinker built boats (see Glossary). Ian himself did not make the boat, but he has chosen to place it in the gallery.

**Objects and poems.** This display emphasizes the power of poetry when placed next to an object. The poem evokes the imaginative voyage of the boat, curving, cleaving and stitching through the seas. At the same time the poem lists the functions and particulars of the boat-making and operation. The poem becomes a diagram or key – the boat becomes a series of parts, rather like a kit that can be put together.

**Journeys and voyages.** The boat is ready to set sail, yet it is land-locked in the gallery. The poem takes us on a journey to sea. We take a mental voyage yet the physical reality of the boat keeps us rooted in the gallery. If you go upstairs to the cafe you can look through the round 'porthole' window down on to the display. How does this change of viewpoint affect the way you respond to the boat?

## Upper Gallery 2 Craft Show Case Studio, Courtyard, Café

You will find works by Ian in all areas of the building.

The **craft show case** in Upper Gallery 2 is devoted to a unique display of boats and other maritime works by Ian. This display includes model boats, tiles, carvings and inscriptions, boat names, tea caddies and fishing net weights. Many of the works here refer to ideas explored in another form in another part of the exhibition.

In the **Studio** you will find works that explore the subject of sailing and sails. REEF POINTS 1-9 is a series of aluminum reliefs based on the patterns of reefs (see Glossary) on sails. On their own this series demonstrates how Ian takes a subject and reworks it. On one level we can read these works simply as a series of abstract reliefs. However, exhibited next to the carvings PZ 492, YH 261, CN 16 and FY 27, the more metaphorical qualities of a reef are drawn out. The aluminum castings focus on the detail of the sail. The carvings give us the whole sail. One is a positive of the other negative. Within the carvings Ian includes 'patches' of different colour within the sail. Once again we think of the idea of stitching or patching a sail.

In the **Courtyard** you will find nine Caithness stones with inscriptions. The stones are placed in a circle rather like a clock face. The inscriptions which include FURY EX-LARSKPUR and RESTLESS EX-PERIWINKLE relate to Ian's poem *Ovidian Flowers*,  
*Veronica became Temptress*  
*Hibiscus became Spry*  
*Arabis became Saucy*  
*Periwinckle became Restless*  
*Calendula became Ready*  
*Begonia became Impulse*  
*Larkspur became Fury*  
*Heartsease became Courage*  
*Candytuft became Tenacity*  
(Blue Sail, 2002).

Within some real maritime history Ian has found a fascinating juxtaposition between land and sea. Apparently early in 1942 German U-boat successes resulted in a number of Flower Class corvettes (small warships) being transferred from the RN to the USN.

The stones tell us of this transition through their present and past names. Fury was once (but now 'ex') Larkspur. A name of strength and power has replaced the flower. The heroic has replaced the pastoral. Once again we think of Aphrodite and female strength.

To complement the exhibition, an unusual group of prints and multiples by Ian are shown in the **café**.

Ian has made a new pair of prints in the St Ives series, exclusively available from Tate St Ives. These prints entitled *Roses I and Roses II* are on display in the **Rotunda**.



## Resources available in the Gallery

There is an **Exhibition Study Point on Level 3** that has a selection of books relating to the exhibition and the film *Ian Hamilton Finlay: In a wee way* directed by Mark Cousin (1995). You can also access the Tate's **Collection Database** online at this point.

The **Tate Gallery shop** has a selection of books, catalogues, postcards and related materials.

The following publications have been produced in relation to the exhibition and are available to read at the Study Point or to purchase in the shop:

Waves Unfolding. Navigating the work of Ian Hamilton Finlay Susan Daniel McElroy, exhibition broadsheet. Price £2

Ian Hamilton Finlay Maritime Works with an essay by Tom Lubbock, published by Tate St Ives, 2002

Note: The artist **Hamish Fulton** currently has an exhibition entitled **Walking Journey** at Tate Britain (14 March – 30 June 2002). Further information at [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk) or online at the Exhibition Study Point.

## Further Reading

\* Indicates they are available in the Tate Shop

\*ABRIOUX, Y: *Ian Hamilton Finlay: A Visual Primer*, London, Reaktion Books, 1992 (a complete list of Finlay's publications can be found here)

BANN, S: *Ian Hamilton Finlay*, Scottish National Gallery, 1972

BANN, S: *Ian Hamilton Finlay: An Imaginary Portrait*, Arts Council of Great Britain, 1977

BLACK, K: *danger. garden: Ian Hamilton Finlay's Little Sparta*, South Lanarkshire Council

BOULTON, J: *Two Gardens*, The Redfern Gallery, 2001

EDELIN, F: *Ian Hamilton Finlay*, Atelier de l'Agneau, 1979

\*FINLAY, A (ed.): *Wood Notes Wild: Essays on the Poetry and the Art of Ian Hamilton Finlay*, Edinburgh, Polygon, 1995

\*FINLAY, Ian Hamilton: *The Blue Sail*, Glasgow, 2002

\*PATRIZIO, A.: *Contemporary Sculpture in Scotland*, Craftsman House, 1999

SCOBIE, S: *Earthquakes and Exploration: Language and Painting from Cubism to Concrete Poetry*, University of Toronto Press, 1997

WILLIAMS, E (ed): *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry*, New York, Something Else Press, 1967

\**Ian Hamilton Finlay: Works in Europe 1972-1995*, Cantz, 1995

## Other recommended reading

McKEE, ERIC, *Working Boats of Britain: their shape and purpose*, Conway Maritime Press, London, 1983

BROWN, D (ed): *St Ives 1939-64: Twenty Five Years of Painting, Sculpture and Pottery*, Tate Gallery, London. 1985.

CROSS, T, *Painting the Warmth of the Sun: St Ives Artists 1939-1975* Penzance & Guildford 1984

WHYBROW, M, *St Ives: 1883-1993: Portrait of an Art Colony*, Antique Collectors Club, Woodbridge, 1994  
VAL BAKER, D *Britain's Art Colony by the Sea* Sansom & Co 2000  
GRAHAM, W.S, *Selected Poems*, Faber and Faber, London, 1996  
GALE, M, *Alfred Wallis*, Tate St Ives publication, 2000  
JONES, R, *Alfred Wallis, Artist and Mariner*, Halsgrove, 2001

### **Stories and poems about the sea**

ARMITAGE, D, *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*, 1994  
HUGHES, T & MCDONNELL, F, *The Mermaid's Purse*, 1999  
ANDERSON, H.C, *The Little Mermaid*, Dover Publications, 1994  
MUIR, T, *The Mermaid Bride and Other Orkney Folk Tales Vol. 3*, 2000  
BROWN, M, *A Cavalcade of Sea Legends*, Random House, 1972  
McCLATCHEY, J D (ed), *Until I saw the Sea: A Collection of Seashore Poems*, 1998  
HERBERT, M,K, *Coasts: A Collection of Poems*, 2002  
BARBER, A, *The Mousehole Cat*, London, 1993  
RANSOME, A, *Swallows and Amazons*, paperback edition 2001  
LONDON, J & SINCLAIR A (eds), *The Sea Wolf and Other Stories*, Penguin, 1989

Note: for further research the **St Ives Library** and **Archive Study Centre** holds a range of material. The **St Ives Museum** has an interesting collection based on the maritime history of the town. A series of Tuesday Lunchtime talks has been organised to coincide with the exhibition *St Ives Maritime History* (26 March – 20 April 2002).

Further information:

St Ives Library, Gabriel Street, St Ives TR26 2LX

Tel: 01736 796408

e-mail: [archive@stives.trust.demon.uk](mailto:archive@stives.trust.demon.uk)

St Ives Museum, Wheal Dream, St Ives Tel: 01736 796005.

**The following websites can also provide useful starting points for further research:**

### **Directly related to Ian Hamilton Finlay:**

[www.jacketzip.com.au/jacket15](http://www.jacketzip.com.au/jacket15) *Brian Kim Stefans on Ian Hamilton Finlay*

[www.perlesvaus.easynet.co.uk/hippeis/gallery/little\\_sparta](http://www.perlesvaus.easynet.co.uk/hippeis/gallery/little_sparta) View pictures of the Finlay's garden and works at Little Sparta

[www.gardenvisit.com/b/finlay.htm](http://www.gardenvisit.com/b/finlay.htm) General information on the garden at Little Sparta

### **General Websites:**

[www.artnet.com](http://www.artnet.com) information on key artists and movements

[www.sculpture.org.uk](http://www.sculpture.org.uk) references to sculptors and sculptural movements

[www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk) Tate Gallery on line

[www.stivestrust.demon.co.uk/archivesite](http://www.stivestrust.demon.co.uk/archivesite) St Ives Archive Study Centre website

[www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com) References to artists and art movements

[www.artchive.com](http://www.artchive.com) information on key artists and movements

[www.artcyclopedia.com](http://www.artcyclopedia.com) information on key artists and movements

[www.britisharts.co.uk](http://www.britisharts.co.uk) gives information on individual artists and galleries

[www.xrefer.com](http://www.xrefer.com) reference search engine.

### **Cornish maritime history and museums**

[www.cornish-links.co.uk/museums.htm](http://www.cornish-links.co.uk/museums.htm)

[www.cornwall-calling.co.uk/lighthouses/lighthouses.htm](http://www.cornwall-calling.co.uk/lighthouses/lighthouses.htm)

[www.netpz.co.uk](http://www.netpz.co.uk)

**Information on boats and fishing ports**

[www.denholma.freeserve.co.uk/fishingports.htm](http://www.denholma.freeserve.co.uk/fishingports.htm)

[www.lemur.demon.co.uk/prints.htm](http://www.lemur.demon.co.uk/prints.htm)

[www.dracombe.co.uk/scaffie.html](http://www.dracombe.co.uk/scaffie.html)

[www.caithness.org/boats/scottishportregistration.htm](http://www.caithness.org/boats/scottishportregistration.htm)

[www.cosalt.plc.uk/heritage.htm](http://www.cosalt.plc.uk/heritage.htm)

## Glossary

### **Aphrodite**

In Greek mythology Aphrodite was the goddess of sea and the sacred grove. The Romans identified her with Venus the goddess of beauty, fertility, and sexual love. According the Greek poet Hesiod, Venus was born of the sea and she floated ashore on a scallop shell propelled by gentle breezes. The name Aphrodite may be derived from 'aphros' meaning foam. Venus is mother of Cupid and the three graces are her attendants. Among her attributes are a pair of doves or swans, the scallop shell, dolphins, her magic girdle, a flaming torch and a flaming heart. The red rose (stained with her blood – see rose below) and the myrtle (evergreen like love) are sacred to her.

### **Arcadia/ Arcady**

Although in reality a poor, sparse country, Arcadia has acquired a mythical identity. Widely featured in art and literature, it is most famous as Poussin's '*Et in Arcadia Ego*' series. Famed in ancient times for its serenity and perfection and the accomplishments and virtue of its inhabitants, Arcadia is viewed as representing classical culture and heritage at its utmost. Ian is very interested in the idea of Arcadia.

### **Barque**

A sailing ship, typically with three masts. Also another word for boat.

### **Bilge**

The area on the outer surface of a ship's hull where the bottom curves to meet the vertical sides.

### **Bow**

The front end of a ship.

### **Catamaran**

A yacht or other boat with twin hulls in parallel.

### **Catspaw**

These are little gusts of wind that blow off the land.

### **Classical**

This term is used to describe something in Western Europe that belongs to the classical period (Greece c. 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC, Rome c. 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BC to 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD) or is part of a tradition that has evolved from those periods. The term is often contrasted with *Romantic* and when there has been a revival of interest the term neo-classical is often used. More specifically the term **Neo-Classicism** is a style of decoration which originated in the mid-eighteenth century. Based on the art and ideas of Ancient Greece and Rome, it was a reaction against the frivolity of the preceding Rococo style. By reviving and ultimately adapting the classical art, literature, music and architecture of the past it is characterised by symmetry and an overall sense of order, harmony and purity.

### **Clinker boat building**

A method of constructing a watertight boat shell still practiced today which originated in central Asia and was adopted by the Vikings. Boats are built using wooden planking and ribbing which are fastened with copper boat nails.

### **Concrete Poetry**

A term introduced simultaneously in the early 1950s by Eugen Gomringer in Switzerland, Öyvind Fahlström in Sweden and a group of Brazilian poets known as *Noigandres*. It is a movement that has revolutionised both art and poetry and is regarded as bringing writing back to its roots. Concrete poetry involves texts arranged as much, if not more so, for their visual effects as their verbal, and can be presented across any surface (not just on the page of the book) in any order. Concrete poets experiment with typography, graphics, the ideogram concept', computer poems, collage etc. and acknowledge influence Dada, Hans Arp, Kurt Schwitters, Malevich and other visual artists. A truly international movement, it can also be traced to the work of the French poets Stephane Mallarmé and Guillaume Apollinaire, the writer Charles L Dodgson (Lewis Carroll) and George Herbert and artists such as Ezra Pound and Theo Van Doesburg. Ian is regarded as Scotland's foremost concrete poet. He expresses his own affinity with 17<sup>th</sup> century emblems and poems such as George Herbert's *Easter Wings* which uses the shape as well as the sense of a poem to convey meaning.

**Coble**

A coble is a flat-bottomed fishing boat.

**Cosalt**

A brand name of marine safety equipment. The name 'Cosalt' is a derivative of The Great Grimsby Coal, Salt and Tanning Company, founded in 1873 as a co-operative by fishing vessel owners.

**Conceptual art**

Art which gives priority to an idea presented by visual means that are secondary to the idea. Conceptual art emerged in the 1960s and all sorts of materials and techniques have been used. Concept art can be very elaborate or it can be very simple and of no material value. Much conceptual art challenges the tradition of the work of art as a unique crafted object.

**Contrail**

American term for vapour trail – especially from an aircraft (an abbreviation of condensation trail).

**Corvette**

A small warship designed for convoy escort duty.

**Emblem**

An emblem is a heraldic device or symbolic object used as a distinctive badge of a nation, organisation or family. More generally an emblem can serve as symbolic representation of a particular quality or concept.

**Hull**

The main body of a ship or other vessel, including the bottom, sides, and deck but not the masts etc.

**Iroko**

A tropical hardwood often used for the strakes in clinker boat building. The natural oils it contains make it resistant to moisture.

**Inscribe**

To write or carve (in words or symbols) on something, especially as a formal or permanent record. An **inscription** is a thing inscribed, as on a monument or in a book.

**Installation**

Mixed-media, multi-dimensional works that are created temporarily for a specific space or site, either outdoors or indoors. Installations only exist as long as they are installed, but they can be recreated for different sites. The works are perceived in time as they cannot be looked at like traditional art objects, but are experienced in time and space, and are interactive with the viewer.

**Maritime**

Maritime means connected with the sea, especially in relation to seafaring commercial or military activity. It also denotes anything bordering the sea (coastal) and a climate that is usually temperate owing to the influence to the sea.

**Matelot**

An alternative term for a sailor.

**Myrtle**

An evergreen shrub, sacred to Venus (Aphrodite). It symbolises everlasting love.

**Net markers**

Net markers, traditionally made of wood or cork were used to establish ownership of nets. They would be carved with the fisherman's initials or with the number of the fishing boat.

**Pastoral**

Pastoral refers to the keeping or grazing of sheep and cattle. It is used to define a work of art or literature that portrays country life often in an idealised, romantic or nostalgic form.

**Proem**

A proem is a preface or preamble to a book, speech or piece of music.

**Prow**

The pointed front part of the ship (the bow).

**Pre-socratic**

Relating to the speculative philosophers active in the ancient Greek world in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC, before the time of Socrates. These philosophers attempted to find rational explanations for natural phenomena. They included Parmenides, Anaxagoras, Empedocles

and Heraclitus. These philosophers are of particular interest to Ian.

**Red Lead**

An anti rust paint used on boats, the lead acting both as a pigment and as a drying agent.

**Reef**

Each of the several strips across a sail which can be taken in or rolled up to reduce the area exposes to the wind.

**Reef Knot**

A type of double knot which is made symmetrically to hold securely and cast off easily.

**Riddle**

A question of statement intentionally phrased so as to require ingenuity in gaining its meaning (often as a game).

**Rose**

The rose flower is particularly associated with the Virgin Mary who is called the 'rose without thorns'. In early Italian painting the Virgin is represented holding a rose. A red rose symbolises martyrdom, a white one purity. The rose was sacred to Venus (Aphrodite) in classical mythology and in Renaissance art the rose was likened to Venus because of its beauty and fragrance, comparing the pricking of its thorns to the wounds of love. The Goddess is often depicted removing a thorn from her foot, the drops of blood staining white roses red.

**Scaffie**

A traditional form of Moray Firth fishing boat.

**Sparta**

A city in the southern Peloponnese in Greece, capital of the department of Laconia. It was a powerful city state in 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, defeating its rival Athens in the Peloponnesian War to become the leading city of Greece. Spartans were famed for living a simple life, rejecting all luxuries and comfort. Ian has called his own garden 'Little Sparta', explaining that it stands in opposition to Edinburgh which is often described as the 'Athens of the North'.

**Stern**

The rearmost part of a ship or boat.

**Strake**

The continuous line of planking or plates from the stem to the stern of a ship or boat. It is also the protruding ridge fitted to an aircraft or other structure to improve aerodynamic stability.

## APPENDIX

### Ring of Waves

ring of waves

row of nets

string of lights

row of fish

ring of nets

row of roofs

string of fish

ring of light

(1968)

### The Net

netnetnetnet

netnetnetnear

netnet

netnear

netnetnetnetnetnetnetnet

netnetnetnetnetnetnetnear

net

near

netnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnet

netnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnear

netnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnetnear

*From Poor. Old. Tired. Horse 13*

### The Tug

Where the fishers wait for bites

Toots the little tug - in tights!

Round each river bend and loop

TOOT! - like through a circus-hoop.

The Towns say Tut, that boat's not black,

It's far more like a Union Jack!

The Steadings never even peep

Because they are all fast asleep!

So on and on, for hours and hours...

The sky is blue, each bank's all flowers.

And when for Tea the Captain whistles

The crew sit down to spangled rissoles!

From *Poor. Old. Tired. Horse* 13

### **Stonypath**

**(For Ian Finlay)**

KATHLEEN RAINE

To restore lost paradise, that imaginary place

Where beyond a mere wire fence

All belongs to the moles and the thistles

You have recovered

A stony parcel from Lanarkshire

Where

Each step, up or down, hedged by sweet scotch briar

Leads to the Hour Lady's hortus conclusus;

Brought back the other-worldly birch to hills laid bare

By Knox and Calvin of Sanctuary, shrine or sacred grove,

The lamp of Lothian put out, and all profaned.

Here are sunk pool and rising grove of young aeolian pine,

Wood, water, wind, within your containing image,

Restored to mental space

Which is the world's true place.

The Moslem on his prayer-rug in the desert

Kneels in this same garden;

Jung, stone by stone with his own hands built his temenos,

Yeats found his four-storied four-sided tower, and every day

Between five rocks disposed with meaning

A monk in the Roanje garden takes the sand.

Pushed, Milton says, by the horned flood

Where Oyyseus, navigator of the stormy world

All his long years sailed (or so Plotinus reads the story)

Towards his heavenly beginning, found in the end.

Here on dry land

The many names of ships, record of pride or prayer

Of men who set sail for no known shore

Across the seas of time and space

Where battleships have gone down, and submarines

In whose conning-towers you honour

An emblem of men not drowned under the *unda*,

You, who navigate with anti-diluvian charts,

Commemorate in green grove and flowery plot of every wanderer's dream.

(1977)

**To Ian Hamilton Finlay**

EDWIN MORGAN

Maker of boats,  
earthships,  
the white cradle  
with its patchwork quilt,  
toys of wood  
painted bright as  
the zebras' muzic  
in your carousel,  
patiently cut  
space cleanly!  
There's dark earth  
underneath, not far  
the North Sea,  
a beach goes out  
greyer than Dover's  
for ignorant armies.  
Scotland is  
the little bonfires  
in cold mist,  
with stubbornness, the woman knits  
late by a window,  
a man repairing  
nets, a man carv-  
ing steady glass,  
hears the world,  
bends to his work.  
You give the pleasure  
of made things,  
the construction holds  
like a net, or it  
unfolds in waves  
a certain measure,  
of affection.  
Native, familiar as  
apples, tugs  
girls, lettres from  
your moulin,  
but  
drinking tea  
you set for Albers  
his saucer of milk.  
(1966)