

Sedimental

Stephen Turner

“Stephen Turner is a curator of the work of the river”

Caroline Collier, introductory essay to *Tide & Change*, 1998



Core 14 Stoke Salting (TQ 850742)

One of a sequence of six lino-cut prints depicting found objects from riverside locations alongside analysis of metallic contamination of the mud. Printed in ink made from River Medway mud. June 2011

Sedimental is a journey of (re)discovery for artist Stephen Turner; an exploration of significance in nature and a reflection on how this can be incorporated into his work.

For Turner, the Medway estuary reconnects people in our ever-increasing urban lives to the pulsing heart of nature. He examines threads interweaving geology with history, flora with fauna, hydrology and river archaeology, purity with contamination and other such contrasts that make being beside this stretch of tidal water an enlightening and enriching experience. The estuary's rich story, animated by people and defined by place over time is the subject of Turner's intimate conversation and impetus for connection, using the oldest and newest technologies - the muddy clay itself and digital audio and video in collaboration with the river. Caroline Collier so eloquently observes Turner's relationship with nature when she wrote in the catalogue for *Tide & Change* in 1998, "*Stephen Turner is a curator of the work of the river*".

The stories he tells are told from the perspective of the river and through its effects. It is an ongoing methodology and dialogue which has informed the entire body of work for *Sedimental* and which continues to underpin his desire to evolve a Manifesto for the River, by curating interrelated creative journeys, discussions and events that embrace natural history, social sciences, wildlife conservation and communities.

Turner's collaborations on this project continue to engage public, artistic and professional communities – sparking imaginations and encouraging interest and dialogue across creative, social and strategic narratives. This rich combination of active participation and public engagement has led to a successful and dynamic exhibition at Rochester Art Gallery, a site specific installation and a series of events which stir the imagination and senses.

Caren Bland, Visual Arts Development Officer, Medway Council



*Making **Oyster Green** Motney Hill (TQ 830688), 29 July 2011*



Photo © Gary Weston

Detail: **Oyster Green** Motney Hill (TQ 830688), 29 July 2011

Sedimental

Dialogue between Beatrice Mayfield and Stephen Turner,
House Carpenter's Shop, The Historic Dockyard, Chatham, 7 July 2011

Why is the exhibition called Sedimental?

It's a word that evokes erosion and accretion and the fine layers laid down by the movement of water in the estuary. It also alludes metaphorically to other kinds of layers that accrue over time, layers that record human history and which lend depth to our collective memories of places. I have always loved the quote by Marcus Aurelius that *'time is like a river made up of events which happen and its current is strong; no sooner does anything appear than it is swept away and another comes in its place and will be swept away too.'*¹ There is this sense of eternal flow and change, of a world in a state of constant flux.

The dynamics of water flow in the lower marshy part of the estuary also illustrates the dynamism of change in nature. Richard Mabey wrote that *'our conventional views about landscape can't cope with salt marshes. They are neither sea nor land and confound our notions of timelessness by never being the same in two successive hours. They can look for a while as comfortable as old meadows but twice a day they are fingered and reshaped by the sea.'*²

(1) Marcus Aurelius 121-180AD

(2) Richard Mabey, *A Tide in the Affairs, Collected writing*, Chatto, 1999

You can be walking on the hills of the South Downs and know that the chalk beneath your feet is being eroded by your boots, by the wind that is biting into your face and by that rain storm ten minutes away on the horizon; but no one can claim to see it happen. A time-lapse film over about four thousand years would do the job, but on a salt marsh you actually see this transformative power after every twelve hourly cycle of the tide.

I am interested in the geography and the geology of the process, in the sediments that record what occurred when the clay of the Medway Valley itself was formed over thirty five million years ago as the bed of another more primeval sea as well as the tracks of yesterday's drifting tide.

It seems like yesterday when I first took to a boat to explore the river and this exhibition is providing me with the opportunity to examine my own link to its narrative. The press cutting from the front page of Kent Today, 18 April 1994 reminds me of my first year on Hoo Island, or as the headline has it 'Rat Island'. I love and respect the river, 'warts and all'. I've the same regard for its varied moods and all its different histories and communities – even its rats.

I feel much for the Medway as Constable must have felt for the Stour as it meandered through the tiny part of east Anglia which provided him with a whole lifetime of creative possibility. However, ours is a different world to Constable's. On a visit to Flatford Mill a few years ago I photographed an Environment Agency sign prohibiting swimming in the Stour due to high concentrations of agricultural phosphates in the water. Man-made climate change is also causing rising sea levels which is swallowing the salt marsh habitats in all our estuaries too.

"The (City) trading estate – that at one time was all marsh almost right across and I can remember as a child seeing the river flood it and it looked like one vast lagoon. Where does that water go now?"

Alan Moss, Rochester Society, Medway Voyageurs, 16 May 2011

I love your use of the quote by Richard Mabey and I think rivers do show change more than other environments. In your Voyageurs Medway soundscape, I heard Kate Spencer say that maps made as recently as the eighteenth century record a very different river landscape to today's, and that was different again a hundred, two hundred years before that.

Yes, the landscape has changed enormously, and archaeologists have been telling me how they can identify the Iron Age for example from a seam of peat a few metres down in the mud. In Roman times the deep water channel off the Strand in Gillingham out to Hoo Island was possibly grazing marsh or even farmland.

Yes, and the fact that every time the tide comes back it is different and that is something you deal with, in the large gauze piece called *Oyster Green, Motney Hill (TQ 830688)*, 29 July 2011, which revisits the Tide Map canvasses.

It was the River Medway that started me off trying to reveal natural process in my work. I began placing large sheets on the river bed in 1995, intending that the river in washing over them would leave behind tracks of erosion and deposition unique to that one moment and place. It was like making a huge map of nature on a scale of one to one. It's a process I evolved using heavy cotton duck canvas but a newer work for this show employs a fine gauze instead, as I wanted something to filter the fine sediments being shifted around and that would be light and delicate in feel.

You were saying earlier that one can easily go wrong and can be completely knocked out by the rain for example, and so every single time those change, you would never get two the same.

So many factors can affect results. *Oyster Green, Motney Hill (TQ 830688)*, 29 July 2011 was made when the river was like a mill pond. Lots of *Oyster Green* and other seaweed, drifting by just as the tide went out, was left on the gauze and only a little of the mud was disturbed. And yes if there is heavy rain it can completely wash away the pattern and I have to start again. It is a process governed by the elements and I am merely a sort of guide. I set out a framework and nature writes the story. I am keen to give a voice to mute nature, to be a sort of amanuensis to the river.

And actually it means you're never going to run out of work to make on or about the river.

I could go to exactly the same place forever and never have the same result. The littoral at Motney Hill last week is a different landscape to the one I experienced in 1999 when I first initiated work there for my Millennium project *Time & Tide*. The whole flow of water around the edge of Motney Hill seems different now.

"This is known as oyster green or sea lettuce because it actually grew on oyster shells and was often used to pack oysters, barrels of oysters taken up to London. Sea lettuce was actually eaten in medieval times, it was actually collected, mixed with onions and boiled as a pottage."

Ian Titley, *The Natural History Museum, Medway Voyageurs*, 18 May 2011

Caroline Collier in the essay she wrote for *Tide and Change* described you as a curator of the work of the river and that you talked a little bit earlier about what you saw your role as an artist was, and looking at the work you're producing for *Sedimental*, it appears there is a more direct connection between you and the river developing. You seem to be questioning your role as an artist and how this work acts as a cultural commentary.

It's important to contemplate what art is and how it interlaces with nature and with society in the broader sense. My own practice has grown out of questions of this kind. When I found a two thousand year old cremation burial on the littoral at Sharp Ness I grew closer to archaeology and observing the

waterflow which uncovered it, which led me into a study of hydrology. More recently Kate Spencer's research on estuarine contamination has made me attempt to look with a geographer's eyes. I often feel curiosity is an artist's greatest attribute and the ability to draw a sort of cultural synthesis from it all. I need to research any aspect of the river's actuality that helps me to give it a voice.

Caroline Collier's quote about being a curator of the work of the river, feels really astute for these reasons too. I'd like to think I'm the river's caretaker.

I also want to share an idea of nature which is not people centric. There are more wildfowl out on the estuary than there are people in Medway and it's their place just as much as ours. However, there is a still prevalent Victorian idea of 'the great chain of being' with people at the top and the rest of nature below us waiting down there just to be (ab)used. It's important to understand that every species of flora and fauna is equally evolved, that we all have interesting interconnected roles to play in the world.

People have the heaviest footprints and we need to walk lightly and not leave a lasting trace. Unfortunately evidence shows we mostly do the exact opposite.

Dialogue continues on page 16

"I think that's the thing about the River Medway, it's that personal story isn't it. It is lovely to see some of it starting to be documented. I think it really is an inspiration for a never-ending story because there are more and more personal stories all the time."

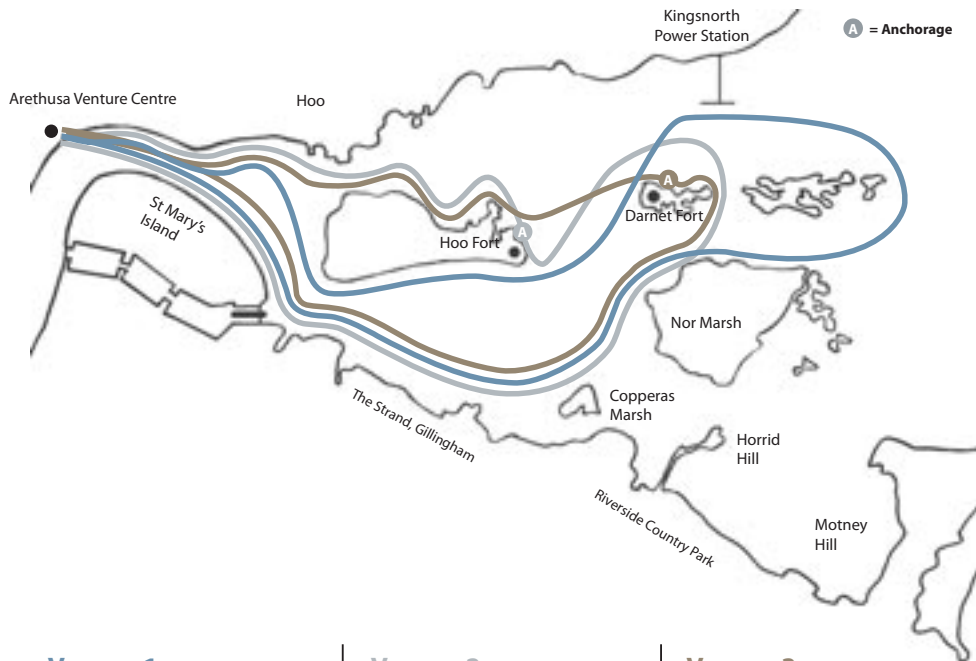
Paivi Seppala, Medway Voyageurs, 17 May 2011

Medway Voyaguers 2011

Artist Stephen Turner composed three unique journeys on the River Medway, with invited guests, who together shared their knowledge, experience and affection towards the Medway estuary. On the boat trips conversation between the river community, geographers, archaeologists, wildlife conservationists, architects and historians were documented. These conversations, together with the sounds of the river, were recorded by third year students from the University for the Creative Arts (UCA) and provided the ingredients for the Medway Voyageurs soundscape. Video recordings were also captured and edited to create short films by three new graduate artists from UCA.

A collaborative approach between all the supporting partners provided a rich environment that fostered a positive response from those involved, including those who were unable to attend the boat trips. This project highlighted a genuine interest in the River Medway and a community connection that extends beyond the here and now, offering untold possibilities.

Caren Bland, Visual Arts Development Officer, Medway Council



Voyage 1:
Mon, 16 May
Departure: 11am
Pre full moon

Chris Lamb,
*Executive Director,
 Kent Architecture Centre*
 Ian Jackson,
Archaeologist
 Alan Moss,
Rochester Historical Society
 Caroline Ware

Voyage 2:
Tue, 17 May
Departure: 12noon
Full moon

Gordon Allison,
RSPB Warden
 Caren Bland,
*Visual Arts Development Officer,
 Medway Council*
 Carole Donaldson,
Writer and Conservationist
 Andrew Laphorn,
Born on the Medway
 Paivi Sepala,
Co-director of LV21
 Dr Kate Spencer,
*Geographer, Queen Mary
 University of London*

Voyage 3:
Wed, 18 May
Departure: 12.30pm
Post full moon

Brian Goodhew,
*Medway Queen
 Preservation Society*
 Steve Nye,
*Assistant Curator,
 Guildhall Museum, Rochester*
 Joe Stokes,
Medway Queen Preservation Society
 Ian Titley,
*Seaweed expert,
 The Natural History Museum, London*
 Jane Pitt,
Artist



Photo © Nikolai Deaves

Voyage 2, Tue, 17 May 2011 Carole Donaldson, Gordon Allison and Kate Spencer

The way you are working now is very honest and it seems to be becoming even more so with your *Oyster Green, Motney Hill*, (TQ 830688), 29 July 2011 gauze tide map, which is one way but you also have film and sound in this exhibition taken from the river and filmed in the river itself.

I've talked a lot about the dynamism of erosion and it seems really appropriate to use video to log this in real time. Video can begin to actually show the flow of water itself as it catches the light, fine sediment caught up in its swirls and eddies. Quite often all you can see is a sort of liquid sandstorm, but this is the reality of the River Medway and I am trying to just hold onto a hint of its elemental force in action as a counterpoint to the gauze tide map which is made by this action. All the works are interconnected in this sense.

The *Medway Voyageurs soundscape* unfolds a collage of stories about the river which swirl and eddy their way from Upnor to Hoo Island and back. I curated three journeys and invited guests who have an interest in the River Medway, to travel together on three open boat trips to share in their own dynamic retelling of the river's meandering. Kate Spencer spoke about the heavy lead contamination in the mud of the Strand at TQ785695 whilst the next day on the boat Joe Stokes related how he once worked at the Novadel Lead and Paint mill which opened near the same location in January 1938. I remember making a drawing once of these works when it was called Akzo Chemicals in the 1980s. It's this patina of different narratives that seem to flow like the river itself and which inform the direction of my own creative work.

"You used to have lead and paint mills and people like that here at one time. It was just there where that building is being built, which is all covered in, you had that Novadels I think it was called, that firm called Novadels that used to make lead paint. In fact I used to work there for a period of time, but when you think of all the docks that used to be here because there was so much barge work in the early days, because you had cement works, brick works, brick fields all along this riverbank especially from Rainham, Otterham Quay right the way up to here, you had all that sort of industry going on, then of course you had all the farmers, their fruit picking and the hay all used to be barged out up the river, wherever, barge travel was the method in those days, so yes it was a very, very busy dock area"

Joe Stokes, Medway Voyageurs, 18 May 2011

Tell me about the importance of the timing surrounding the open boat trips.

I thought it would be auspicious for the three trips to straddle the full moon. In the largely urban lives we lead, it's good to tune into nature even in this somewhat symbolic manner. The 'nine to five' we impose onto daily life is suspended in favour of a timetable based on the tidetable – setting out 40 minutes later on each day.

You're referring again to the importance of the cycles of the moon and the estuary and marking time. When I worked with you on *Tide and Change*³ in 1998, we began that whole installation so the whole project began on a new moon and ended exactly a lunar month later.

Yes, the circular shape of the fort lent itself to that. I also invited a small group of people to stay with me on the island to do a Japanese-inspired celebration of the full moon in the middle of the installation period. In Japan they seem to understand this empathetic connection to nature. We looked out onto the wind and rain and the moon made a very brief appearance to do a sort of fan dance with the clouds. We cut the Moonview cake and drank to its health and power. Most nights we're treated to this fantastic appearance in the sky and like the sunrise or sunset, how often do we make time to sit and watch?

And interesting in that you are celebrating a normal cycle, rather than because there's an eclipse or something happening. You're bringing awareness to it being just there. It comes up every night and goes down every morning.

(3) *Darnet Fort was the location for Tide & Change. The action of the tides around Darnet Ness throughout August 1998 was recorded on large canvas tarpaulins fastened to the river bed. The resulting installation was shown in the fort from 20 September - 20 October, a complete lunar cycle, the new moon to new moon. The fort became the artist's home and eight visitors were brought out by boat each day when the tide allowed. Visits lasted for two hours, one hour each side of high water. Visitors stayed overnight on 5 October to celebrate the full moon and experienced the tide cycle for themselves.*
Beatrice Mayfield,
Tide & Change, 1998

There is always the feeling that we can go and look tomorrow because it's not going away. This applies to many everyday occurrences, situations and places. But lots of the ordinary or even unsightly things around us are incredibly beautiful once you start to see them. There's an aesthetic of rust, mud and rotting posts and of weeds and seaweed that's incredibly rich. Now that the riverside is changing so much, and heavy industrial use is being superseded by riverside living and associated leisure, we're in danger of losing something unique in the older environment that brings character and identity – of cleaning up too much and sweeping it all away.

People and how they use the river seems a very important part of what you do. And always has been as well.

I am interested in the interaction of people with nature and enjoy going to places where nature reclaims landscapes abandoned by people. Hoo Fort was newly constructed during the 1860s. Today, one of the finest structures that technology could devise is slowly sinking into the mud upon which it rests and blackthorn shrubs are pushing the heavy cut-granite stones apart. Left untended, in another hundred years it will be half underwater and fallen apart but its story can be preserved in the different narratives of those who know its story and will pass it on.

It's about growing up with local knowledge and handing it on to your children.

I was surprised one day on Bishop's Island surrounded by water at low tide, when three children appeared having had the confidence to walk all the way there from Gillingham Riverside across the mud to Copperas Marsh and more mud to Nor Marsh and across fifty foot of river to me. They knew paths that were in use up to the 1950's but only half-marked on any recent map. The locals are the experts in the places where they live.

I'm drawn back to the river now because it's becoming central to discussion about the future of the Medway as an urban area, indeed the pulsing tidal heart of all its new development. Somewhat suddenly the industrial land once occupied by Novadels on Pier Road for example, becomes economically viable as housing for riverside apartments and it raises issues about what's happening to the river, to what it means to local people and to what successful change might therefore look like.

We spoke a lot on the Medway Voyageurs journeys about the development of St Mary's Island from a salt marsh to naval dockyard and then to an area for desirable maritime living in just a hundred and fifty years and of course of the difficulty of getting this right. The Fishing Village on St Mary's Island is an interesting collection of colours, textures and shapes, but without the ropes and tackle, without the net mending and indeed the fishing boats and fisher folk it doesn't connect to the river. Yet people want desperately to keep their river connections and a repeated refrain on the Medway voyages was the neglect of the landing stages downriver from Rochester. As well as this lack of practical connection it is also about a more spiritual link as well; about being joined through the flow of time to the past and how to embed this into the shape of the future. It's a huge conversation but we need to try harder to give the river and its diverse communities a distinct voice in negotiations that go beyond just economics. I can foresee a need for a manifesto for the river.

"It's all a question of how you construct communities and it's very difficult. I don't know if anyone's really got to the bottom of how you build large scale communities, because they are actually quite individual and normally they grow organically, they have public space that means something and people are attached to it."

Chris Lamb, Executive Director, Kent Architecture Centre, Medway Voyageurs, 16 May 2011

And another way of you as an artist curating and capturing different elements of the river's story?

Yes, but it's important to consider the reality of the river in the early 21st century and it's no use looking back nostalgically with rose-tinted specs. I am not a neo-Romantic hankering for some mythic past, but neither can we allow anything but the very best of the new to add to the warp and weft of what's already there.

I'm trying to understand the reality of the river. Our conversation in the boat was tempered by the ever present 'voice' of the boat's diesel, the oily rhythm of contemporary life. It's harsh sound pervaded each trip, but it was truer for our own time than the quiet splash of an oar, or the flap of sail in the wind.

We made a point of turning off the engine on the boat each day and dropping anchor in the lee of an island. At first it felt completely silent, but the calls of the wildfowl made you even more aware of two different worlds and of the need to conserve and protect the fragile balance of one with the other.

While solitude is a part of what you seek you always make connections with people and the changing face of nature and place. I was rereading the diary from *Tide and Change*, although you were on your own you were never alone because the whole diary is about all the other things that were going on, on the river at that point. The video pieces in *Sedimental* absolutely show how much activity is in that river, and that it's constantly moving and things are constantly happening.

Sitting alone on a marsh watching the rise and fall of the river is a source of great creative contemplation and this kind of solitude isn't about isolation. I am engaged in many events unfolding around me, where there seem to be riches to glean from each ordinary minute in every mundane hour. In a fast and shallow world it's important to slow down and look deeper – sometimes even through a camera lens into the murky depths of the river.

***Sedimental* really does revisit all the strands of your exploration of the Medway and of other works as well, but it also relooks at how you're making work at the moment, and again goes back to that more direct relationship.**

My work about the river during the past sixteen years has led to the development of various related processes and themes. A study of sediment led to the idea of making pastels, paints and printing ink from alluvial mud. The river in effect mills the pigment for me and I simply need the finest grains to make a paint. The local clay works really well as a pastel. Fired in old bean cans over a campfire it gives a reddish colour which of course is that of all the terrace houses of Chatham – a true local

colour. I have used embers from fires as ready-made charcoal and chalk chipped from the river bank at Motney Hill as a white.

At a time when you can buy almost any colour under the sun it feels like less is more precious. I am now more interested in these as art objects than in actually using them to draw.

I think it also raises issues of how something absolutely valueless can become valuable, can gain value. Because of the association you give a material such as mud, it gains an additional value, not just because it gets created into a pastel or it gets made into a printing medium.

The value of mud is fractions of pennies but through association it can become incredibly precious as some kind of alchemical essence of place. It's just mud, yet it's what the landscape is made up of and it's what we have built the town out of.



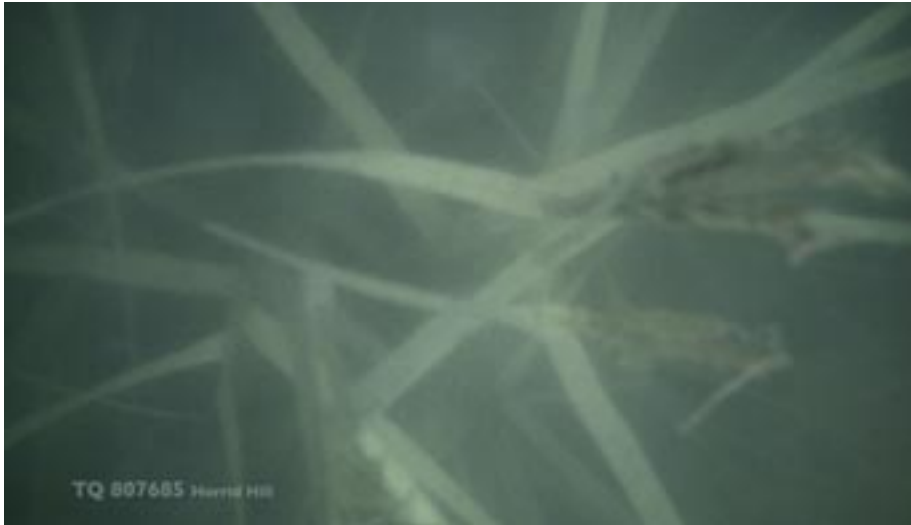
Beneath High Water Medway Estuary, 30 July - 13 August 2011, (TQ 758691),
Queen's Stairs (Historic Dockyard). Still from video.



Beneath High Water Medway Estuary, 30 July - 13 August 2011, (TQ 761711),
Lower Upnor. Still from video.



Beneath High Water Medway Estuary, 30 July - 13 August 2011, (TQ 787713),
West Hoo Creek. Still from video.



Beneath High Water Medway Estuary, 30 July - 13 August 2011, (TQ 807685),
Horrid Hill. Still from video.



Sedimental Fine water graded alluvial clay from Motney Hill, July 2011, (TQ 830688)



Local Colour Boxed set of handmade pastel sticks made from materials collected along the shoreline of the Medway Estuary; Motney chalk, Tin Can Bake, Medway Mud & Driftwood Black. May – August 2011.



Word Painting No.1 ref. *The Uncommercial Traveller*, a collection of literary sketches and reminiscences written by Charles Dickens, first published 1860. River Medway mud stencilled onto the gallery wall.

In the exhibition you have a piece called *Word Painting No. 1* referencing Charles Dickens, a quote painted onto the gallery wall and it's interesting you're using that, bearing in mind how nostalgic Dickens and Rochester can be seen in certain lights...

Well contemporary 'dickensification' has little to do with the social realism of a great man's work and the radical nature of his writing. I'm using part of an essay published in 1860 about Chatham Dockyard which appeared in a small book called *The Uncommercial Traveller*. Dickens is musing on the estuary at large and I've stencilled his words onto the gallery wall and painted them using mud from the river which inspired them.

In a letter to his friend Wilkie Collins, Dickens extols the virtues of rowing twenty miles a day in a small open boat on the Medway. He really understood both the little things and great things about the effect of watching the river and in just around four hundred words he says more than most people could in four thousand.

It demonstrates how awareness and effort are needed in order to really begin to see. I'm interested in Dickens' near contemporary John Ruskin from this point of view. Ruskin advocated the idea of 'word painting' as a sort of drawing and I have borrowed the notion for the title of my work, and to some extent the construction of the Medway Voyageurs soundscape.

In this I have used a selection of contemporary recollections of the river which you can hear as a sort of counterpoint to the Dickens. It sums up the conversation in my own small open boat, during those three journeys down river in May. While the two works share sentiments in common, they really contrast the Victorian confidence of a new industrial age with which Dickens was familiar and the waterway of our own post-industrial anxieties.

And I suppose it's celebrating those two different things, but absolutely of their time and of the same place - it's not a different place, it's the same place but in a different time.

Yes, we are all floating on Huxley's great river of life "*a great smooth silent river that flows so still, so still, you might think it was asleep. A sleeping river, but it flows irresistably.*"⁴

(4) *A Huxley, Island,*
HarperCollins, 1962

Acknowledgements

Sedimental is an IN-SITE commission. IN-SITE is supported by Arts Council England and Medway Council. Project partners for *Sedimental* include Rochester Art Gallery, Light Vessel 21, the University for the Creative Arts and Arethusa Venture Centre.

IN-SITE includes a programme of seven temporary artistic commissions and activities in the public realm across Medway between 2011-2012. The programme enables artists to develop and stretch their creative practice and intellect, through site-specific commissions and community engagement. It also supports and encourages artists and professionals to share and extend their creative development, experience and knowledge, through hands-on continuous professional development, artist-led activities, networking, artist discourse and a concluding creative seminar in 2012.

The IN-SITE programme will draw on the best talent that Medway, Kent and the south east has to offer and realise links to the most innovative art, artists, arts organisations and networks from across the UK, in order to provide a programme that is forward looking, ambitious and driven by artists, community and regeneration.

Rural, urban and industrial landscapes, open green spaces and community places across Medway and Kent are undergoing significant change. Artists and communities recognise, and see first-hand the effects of large-scale regeneration, including the benefits and periods of change. With this comes a responsibility to facilitate, nurture and support opportunities for creativity, growth, innovation and sustainability within contemporary art practice. This in turn supports the creation of high quality,

challenging, temporary art in the public realm, which resonates with people and place-making.

The artist would like to thank **Beatrice Mayfield** for her contribution to the Sedimental dialogue, and additionally for her particular contribution to previous projects on the Medway as Curator and Project Manager in 1997 and 2001; **Ian Campbell-Briggs** for his advice and assistance editing the series of Core prints; **Dave, Petra and KT**; **Steve Mace** for helping with the tidal gauze work *Oyster Green*; **Julie Turner** for location managing the video element of the show; everyone involved with the Medway Voyageurs river trips, including - **Gordon Allison**, RSPB Warden; **Caren Bland**, Visual Arts Development Officer, Medway Council; **Carole Donaldson**, Writer and Conservationist; **Brian Goodhew**, Medway Queen Preservation Society; **Ian Jackson**, archaeologist; **Chris Lamb**, Executive Director, Kent Architecture Centre; **Andrew Laphorn**; **Steve Nye**, Assistant Curator Guildhall Museum, Rochester; **Alan Moss**, Rochester Historical Society; **Jane Pitt**, Artist; **Paivi Seppala**, Co-director of LV21; **Dr Kate Spencer**, Geographer, Queen Mary University of London; **Joe Stokes**, Medway Queen Preservation Society; **Ian Titley** (with especial thanks for a collection of Estuary Seaweeds); **Caroline Ware** and to **Lesley Wright** and her team at the Arethusa Venture Centre for such enthusiastic support for the project.

The Medway Voyageurs soundscape would not have been possible without collaboration and support of the staff and recent graduates of the BA (Hons) Video Arts Production course of the **University for the Creative Arts, Maidstone**; **Conor Kelly** and **Gareth Polmeer** (Faculty) and new graduate artists **Cassie Beckley**, **Nikolai Deaves**, **Jamie Jenkinson**, **Korinna McRobert**, **Andrea Morris**, **Stephen Richardson** and **Golden Siapolya**.

Artist Biography

Stephen Turner's work is concerned with aspects of time and the dialectics of transience and permanence. His work often involves spending long periods in odd, abandoned places, noting changes in the complex relationship between nature and the man-made. Previous projects are strongly rooted in research which explore these themes.

He has been investigating the Thames Gateway landscape and architecture since 1995, creating in particular the Seafort Project at Shivering Sands, six miles off the north Kent coast in 2006.

He has had solo shows at Turner Contemporary in Margate, Trinity Buoy Wharf in London, The Metropole Galleries in Folkestone and in 2003 was in *Water*, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Toyota, Japan.

Turner has been artist in residence in King's Wood for Stour Valley Arts and in Rye for Coastal Currents. He won the Hunting Drawing Art Prize in 2003 and was lead artist for *Four Shores*, a public art project on the Isle of Sheppey in 2006.

Work from the Seafort Project was shown in 'Theatrum Mundi; performance architecture', at the Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art in Sunderland in 2007. He is currently working with the Solent Centre for Architecture & Design (SCAD), Artsway and PAD on a project to create and live in a large 'egg' on the estuary of the Beaulieu River in the New Forest National Park. From October 2011 he has been selected for the Bridge Guard Artist Residency in Sturovo, Slovakia.

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Sedimental

Stephen Turner

26 August > 11 November 2011

Rochester Art Gallery and Craft Case,

Medway Visitor Information Centre, Ground Floor,
95 High Street, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1LX

Opening hours*

Mon-Sat 10am - 5pm

Sun 10.30am - 5pm

*Opening times may vary during bank holidays and the winter period, please check in advance.

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