

# GEOFF ROUTH

## NEW WORKS: INCLUDING THE POND SERIES



28 June – 27 July 2012

Private View: Wednesday  
27 June, 6-8 pm

Opening times: Tues –  
Fri 10-5:30. Sat 11-2

The abandoned Annie McCall Hospital and its environs in Stockwell, South London, have inspired and consumed the work of Geoff Routh since he and fellow artists transformed the wards into 'Stockwell Studios' over twenty five years ago. It had originally been built in 1915 as one of the first specialised maternity hospitals in Europe, although its use as a hospital came to an end in the 70s. In 1987 the derelict building with its imposing red-brick Edwardian façade, was a perfect sanctuary for the inspiration of artists and musicians. Today, Geoff Routh's studio is still there and continues to be the muse for his work.

Over time, Geoff Routh has painted a visual biography of the building, meticulously exploring the architecture and its growing relationship with nature. Routh insists on painting from life all year round, exploring these beautiful, man-made architectural facades being slowly taken over by natural life; weeds making their way through cracks in the windows, moss growing uninhibited on the brick walls by the drain pipes, and tendrils of ivy creeping up walls to the light. However, in this fragile, protected environment there is the constant looming threat from the violence of development. It is this sense of risk that feeds Routh's desire to record the minutiae of the place.

The most recent series of works by Geoff Routh, however, includes a fresh exploration into the nitty-gritty depths of this South London setting through the urban ponds that populate the environment. Routh's creative vision incorporates his own familiar theme of overgrown natural life, yet takes this new direction into unknown waters. There is an uncanny reality in the reflections of the pond, that draws you closer to the painting and nearer to understanding the history of this place forgotten by time.

L O N G & R Y L E

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