

GEORGE ROWLETT - *Paintings 2009* *East Kent the River Thames and Wast Water*

26 June – 25 July 2009



*Wast Water, Early Morning Sunlight,
Yewbarrow, Great Gable & Screes,*
oil on canvas, 61 x 122cm

Following residencies in the French Alps and Brantwood in the Lake District for his 2007 *Ruskin Revisited* project **George Rowlett** (b. 1941) is back on more familiar territory for this exhibition: the River Thames in London's Docklands, the shoreline and downs of East Kent, and the plants in the garden outside of his studio in Walmer. But Rowlett is a painter who responds to the challenge of painting in unfamiliar territory, and in the autumn of 2008 he returned to the Lake District and spent three intensive weeks working everyday on the shore of Wast Water to capture the essence of this awe-inspiring stretch of the English landscape.

With works that so strikingly balance the weight and density of paint with equal measures of refinement and delicacy George Rowlett continues to carve out his own distinct place in the evolution of landscape painting. These are landscapes that make their presence felt not only as lively, original and imaginative renderings of the busy Thames or the sublime grandeur of the Lake District, but also as weighty, tactile physical objects.

Robert Hewison writes in the catalogue essay of this exhibition "There is another kind of authority that Rowlett's paintings have to have; one that links the developing series of ... paintings to everything that he has ever done: the authority of work. The deep moulded, carved and scraped surfaces of his paintings are a record of the physical work that comes with the creative dance before the subject, and the mental and emotional effort then needed to bring it into his imaginative self, before being projected back into the image before him. 'I feel as though I am acting as the momentary focus, the subject comes from out there, and then it goes out again, it's instinctive, but also calculating. When I am painting in nature I am twice as good as I really am.' "

To mark the occasion of the exhibition a 36 page catalogue with 22 colour plates has been published.