

The expression OCEAN LIGHT grew out of what I found myself preoccupied with in much of my studio practice during 2008; the pervasive influence of the sea on the landscape of the far west of Cornwall. The physical conditions that give rise to this phenomenon aren't hard to spot. There are high places in Penwith where one can trace the line of the sea's horizon around an angle of nearly 300 degrees and so often it's as if you were all but surrounded by a giant mirror laid on the surface of the earth. My hunch is that the light bounces off this giant reflector and becomes an ambience that bathes the coastal forms here. In places, the north-westerly coast of Penwith and Mounts Bay are barely 5 or 6 miles apart. So it's hardly surprising that, from some vantage points and at certain times of day and season, this phenomenon appears to penetrate well inland to the extent that the whole peninsula has about it an almost magical luminosity.

Perhaps there are many places around the world where something similar happens but in the case of Cornwall it's well known that generations of painters have thrived in this "ocean light" and I for one am convinced of its continuing appeal. To any painter for whom the experience of colours interacting on each other is as compelling as I find it to be, such ambient light is a gift from the gods. This is because, if you experiment with colour interactions you come to realize that the close tonal range produced by such ambient light allows an apparently internal glow of colours to be generated when carefully chosen mixed hues are placed side by side.

This vibrancy within the world these paintings became for me a celebration of OCEAN LIGHT and as I worked away at the series I realised that there was a further resonance for me to the image of the sea and of its influence on something as all pervasive as light. *"In a sense, the universe is a great ocean of life. This ocean is itself in a constant state of flux; it is continually moving and changing, performing the rhythm of birth and death."* This is how my Buddhist mentor Daisaku Ikeda used the image of the ocean* and this has haunted all my explorations of OCEAN LIGHT and given added significance to a growing awareness of its influence on the world around me.