

# Q&A

## Garry Pereira

Garry Pereira captures the mizzled atmosphere of mountains in Wales and Scotland. He talks to **Mary Gilleece** about his grinding own paints, romance and walking

### So quite how hard have you been working?

Very! There are 44 new paintings in the show and it's taken from last summer when we first discussed the idea until now, I've been working on them solidly.

### Why mountains?

I live on the Norfolk coastline and like to get away from the extreme flatlands to holiday in Wales and Scotland, and mountains are very dear to me. I only paint what I love and will continue to paint mountains until something new comes along to inspire me.

### How much time do you spend outside?

I spent four months in Dumfries and Galloway and Corris in Wales working on this show and I am a great walker with my Jack Russell. I'm constantly thinking about what to paint, always on the look out, but that is part of the pleasure. I paint small panels outside and bring them back to the studio to work up larger pieces. Not that it matters but I don't take photographs.

### When did this all start?

When I was 15 on holiday in Corris I saw an artist working in the railway



above:  
*A Bohemian Hour*, Garry Pereira

station and decided that was the job for me. This was lucky as I was pretty useless at everything else. I studied at Loughborough, took an MA at Norwich, and was lucky to be taught by quite a few inspirational teachers. Most important to me was Gill Clifford, my A-level art teacher in Suffolk; she was exceptional. I really hated sports and maths and she let me stay in the art room where, as well as teaching me to be technically accurate, she also fired a real passion.



### Are you still learning?

Every painter is still learning. I'm still surprised by the way the paint works, how it sometimes tricks you into things. I don't use tubed paints, instead mixing my own colours which gives the works a real handmade quality. There are six painted slates in the show and it's quite important to me that they come from the place I'm painting and that I source old, sometimes Victorian slates.

### Of which paintings are you proudest?

I've had a few pieces that I thought were a real

breakthrough. Every now and then I make a wave painting that just sort of happens, where it takes over itself. And of course there are others that are a total disaster!

### Can you bear to let them go?

I've only got two of my own paintings. They need to go out and hang in nice places and interesting spaces, my house isn't right for them. They also bug me: I look at them and think I should have done this, I should have done that... Every sale is satisfying because it means that somebody has identified with an art work which is very touching.

### How much of an old Romantic are you?

My work is rooted in the British landscape tradition and I look back to Turner. If I get stuck I visit the Norwich Castle Museum, and looking at those traditional 18th and 19th century painters pushes me on. I think David Hockney has put landscape painting back on the map as a really serious subject. ■

*Dramatic seascapes and landscapes by Garry Pereira, 22 May–7 June, at Osborne Studio Gallery, 2 Motcomb Street, London, SW1X 8JU, [www.osg.uk.com](http://www.osg.uk.com)*