

Waterlog

Gallery Guide



1
The Memorial Walks,
after John Crome,
Grove Scene, c. 1830
(2006)



The east stands for lost causes, Sebald wrote in 'The Rings of Saturn', and of those things lost, to which he refers, perhaps the greatest is the vast expanse of woodland which grew upon the flatlands of East Anglia before being destroyed by settlers and avaricious landowners. Often, such woodland now exists only in the art of the region, most especially the paintings of the Norwich School, the first provincial art movement in Britain, and now the inspiration behind Simon Pope's latest project, 'The Memorial Walks' (2007). In this, an invited participant chooses a painting from the collection that portrays trees or woodland in particular, and then memorises it; they must then walk to a location of their choosing – which may be that in the painting, or a place which reminds them of it in some way – before then describing the picture from memory, a process of recollection which is then recorded on tape and photographed.

The paintings themselves are hung within the gallery although most are draped with black silk, reminiscent of the ancient Dutch ritual practised in homes in which there had been a death, whereby landscape paintings and mirrors were draped with mourning ribbons in order that the departing soul would not become distracted upon its final journey. Each week during the exhibition a different painting will be unveiled, and its description available for download from the 'Waterlog' website; the other paintings are left to reside in our memories, or our imaginations, and we must become participants, and not merely spectators.