EMMA STIBBON

SEA CHANGE | THE RÜGEN CYCLE

28 November 2026 - 6 February 2027

The newest body of work by British artist Emma Stibbon is dedicated to the island of Rügen and is based on the extended research hikes she made in Autumn 2025.

An essential reference for her work is the pictorial tradition of German Romanticism, personified in Caspar David Friedrich's iconic »Chalk Cliffs on Rügen« (1818). When Carl von Voß saw the painting in Friedrich's studio he described it as a »landscape from the island of Rügen: in the foreground a torn-apart chasm, behind it dazzling white chalk cliffs with wondrous jagged peaks, above which, as if suspended in the air, hangs the infinite distance of the Baltic Sea; a wonderful view that is peculiar to this coast«.

Revisiting the same precarious Rügen coastline Emma Stibbon has made a series of subtle black-and-white drawings created from white Rügen chalk gathered from her walks. The drawings evoke the chalk cliffs rising from the Baltic shore and the ancient beech forests perched on the cliff edge above.

The essence of her works seems to lie in the merging of the past, present and future of the places she depicts. The artist draws out the poignant, ephemeral nature of the boundaries between land and sea, making us witnesses to their inexorable transformation.

At the same time, Stibbon relates the fragility of Rügen's changing topography with the seemingly remote events of polar ice melt and sea level rise. Her large-scale drawings of dark oceans and polar ice fields connect us with the profound effects of climate change on the Rugen coastline.

»Sea Change | The Rügen Cycle« is Emma Stibbon's fourth solo exhibition at the gallery. The artist, who was born in 1962 in Münster, lives and works in Bristol. Her works are held in the collections of major museums such as the British Museum, the Victoria & Albert Museum, and the Royal Academy of Arts in London, as well as in numerous significant private collections worldwide. In Germany, Stibbon's work has been shown at the Stadtmuseum Berlin, the Kunsthalle Rostock, and the Sprengel Museum Hannover. In 2024, the Towner Eastbourne museum presented a comprehensive solo exhibition of her work.