

**Press Release**

JOHN RIDDY

*Palermo*

12 April – 1 June 2013

Frith Street Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new black and white photographic works by John Riddy.

This series of Black and White photographs of Palermo were made over a three year period starting in 2011. As with many of Riddy's previous projects, his interest was sparked by 19th century art – in this case, the photographs taken in Palermo by Gustave Le Gray, shortly after Garibaldi's entry to the Sicilian capital in 1860.

Riddy focuses on the same historic centre; an amalgam of ruin and renovation; working class communities and markets; alleyways and quaysides. Often neglected while other areas were newly constructed, this urban centre has a weight of texture and history that is clearly documented in Riddy's work. Despite the noise and energy of a modern urban centre, his photographs are silent, formally balanced and complex, exploiting the expressive power of the grey scale to make images with a stillness that is reminiscent of an empty stage.

He writes ... "so much has happened recently in terms of technique and process. At it's crudest we are all aware that a photograph can now be "made" at a desk. But the progression from subject to print can be refined and driven by individual sensibilities... for me that progression has to start outside my conceptual compass. I spend more time looking to make fewer photographs, and even longer trying to make a complete print. "

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John Riddy was born in Northampton, England in 1959 and studied Painting at Chelsea School of Art. His recent photographs have been included in *Never The Same River* (Possible Futures, Probable Pasts), Camden Art Centre, London, *Romantics*, Tate Britain, *Views from Shin-Fuji*, Victoria & Albert Museum, London 'Utopia' Museu Berado, Lisbon, 'Of People and Places' University of Massachusetts and 'Ruination' at The Djanogly Gallery, Nottingham

Riddy's works are held in major collections both in Britain and abroad including: Tate, The Government Art Collection, Arts Council England, The Victoria and Albert Museum and The Rubell Family Collection.