

# At the Talbot Rice Gallery – John Akomfrah

They always manage to get something rather unusual at the Talbot Rice and this exhibition is no exception.

The floor is covered with 25 tonnes of small stones in acclaimed artist and filmmaker John Akomfrah's first solo exhibition in Scotland.



Vertigo Sea has two epic video installations capturing the beauty and the cruelty of the sea, and *At the Graveside of Tarkovsky 2012/17* has also been reworked for the show.

With more than a nod to the refugees who often brave the elements of the sea to escape the three screen installation captures its power to move, displace and erase.



The pebbles fill the gallery wall to wall and you are not only permitted but you are encouraged to walk on them.

The University of Edinburgh's Sound Design Department has collaborated with Trevor Mathison to create a re-engineered soundtrack and immersive three dimensional soundscape.

The work creates a tapestry of sounds extracted from Russian director Andrey Tarkovsky's films to compliment a film Akomfrah made on the islands of Skye and Maui in Hawaii. It is a meditation on disappearance, memory and death, reflecting the personal losses Akomfrah suffered when he first visited the islands.



Talbot Rice's White Gallery, painted a dark aubergine colour,

features 'Vertigo Sea', one of the most celebrated works at the 2015 Venice Biennale, and which lends its name to the exhibition.

Since the founding of the Black Audio Film Collective in 1982, Akomfrah has become one of the the UK's most pioneering artists. This year he won the Artes Mundi Award, the UK's biggest award for international art.

James Clegg, curator of the exhibition, said: "Both films use the sea as a metaphor for those lost to both recent and historic memory. In the face of recent political events, *Vertigo Sea* presents an opportunity to meditate upon our place within the world, against the immense spaces and epic timescales evoked by the films. It reminds us of our interconnectedness and the diverse, ghostly community that shapes who we are."

The free show runs until 27 January 2018.

*Vertigo Sea* is presented with the support of Arts Council England, through the Strategic Touring Fund, and Creative Scotland. The *Vertigo Sea* UK Tour is led and managed by Arnolfini, Bristol, produced by Smoking Dogs Films and supported by Lisson Gallery.

